



## **Facts and Figures**

**WALNUT HILL SCHOOL FOR THE ARTS** is an independent boarding and day high school offering a transformational educational experience purposefully designed for student artists in grades 9–12, and a postgraduate year. We offer unparalleled training in dance; music; theater; visual art; and writing, film & media arts, complemented by a robust and innovative academic curriculum. Every aspect of our program promotes our students' growth as bold artists, curious learners, and mindful citizens. Students from across the country and around the globe come together to form a dynamic community on our scenic campus located just west of Boston in Natick, Massachusetts. Guided by master teachers and supported by peers from a variety of artistic backgrounds, Walnut Hill students graduate prepared to succeed in college and beyond. Learn more at [www.walnuthillarts.org](http://www.walnuthillarts.org) or follow us @WalnutHillArts.

### **MISSION**

The mission of Walnut Hill is to educate talented, accomplished, and intellectually engaged young artists from all over the world. The School does so in a diverse, humane, and ethical community.

### **MOTTO**

*Non Nobis Solum — Not for Ourselves Alone*

### **LEADERSHIP**

Antonio Viva — Head of School

Susanne Carpenter — Assistant Head for Enrollment Management

Melissa Cassel — Dean of Students

Andy Faulkner – Director of Facilities and Operations

Ben Gregg — Director of Academic Studies

Jen James – Director of Administrative & Strategic Affairs

Marie Longo – Chief Advancement Officer

Jim Pugh – Interim Chief Financial Officer

Jim Woodside – Director of Artistic Studies

### **HISTORY**

Founded in 1893 by Wellesley College graduates Florence Bigelow and Charlotte Conant, Walnut Hill was at the forefront of education for young women for more than 80 years. Even as a traditional private boarding school for girls, Walnut Hill's arts programs were strong. The School was home to acclaimed Fenway Studio artist and teacher Marion Pooke, Class of 1901, and Pulitzer Prize-winning author and Poet Laureate Elizabeth

Bishop '30. In the 1970s, in response to the changing landscape in education, Walnut Hill became a coeducational school for the arts.

## **STUDENTS**

Affectionately nicknamed Walnuts, there are 285 total students in grades 9–12 at Walnut Hill. Approximately 80% of students board and 20% are day students.

29 U.S. states and 14 different countries are represented.

31% of students are from outside the United States.

37% of students are from Massachusetts.

54% of domestic students are from Massachusetts

14% of domestic students identify themselves as students of color.

## **TUITION and FINANCIAL AID**

Tuition FY16 \$57,880 boarding | \$43,680 day

Financial Aid In 2015–2016, Walnut Hill awarded financial aid to 42% of students,

with an average award of \$29,000.

## **FACULTY and STAFF**

Guided by core values of community, growth, excellence, creativity, and respect, faculty and staff at Walnut Hill are dedicated to preparing students to succeed in the arts, in their future studies, and in their lives.

48 full-time faculty

42 full-time staff

Student/Faculty Ratio: 6:1

The faculty and professional community at Walnut Hill mirror the incredible talent, commitment, and achievement of our students. Faculty and staff model thoughtful, creative choices about career and commitment to arts; many among them (including the academic faculty) are practicing artists themselves. A significant percentage of Walnut Hill faculty and staff hold advanced degrees from some of the world's best universities, and many have achieved the highest levels within their fields.

## **ARTS**

Walnut Hill offers a powerful combination of arts and academics. While completing a robust college-preparatory curriculum, students major in one of five arts concentrations: dance; music; theater; visual art; or writing, film & media arts.

### **Dance**

Walnut Hill's ballet-based program is designed to offer the highest level of training available to high school students. An emphasis on a pure, classical technique allows dancers to develop the strength and flexibility necessary to pursue their personal expression and to adapt to today's varied dance repertoire. Every faculty member has danced professionally and brings a nurturing approach to the studio, emphasizing wellness and injury prevention. Studio classes, master classes with renowned guest artists, and performance opportunities facilitate the growth of a complete dancer. Through course offerings such as pedagogy and choreography and unprecedented

partnerships with The Boston Conservatory and Ballet Austin, students graduate with an array of possibilities for future involvement in the world of dance.

Michael Owen, Director of Dance

“Walnut Hill’s Dance Department provides an encouraging environment where each student is challenged to reach his or her full dance potential with a strong sense of self-worth and accomplishment.”

## **Music**

Walnut Hill’s Music Department is the only high school program linking a major conservatory, New England Conservatory (NEC), with an independent school. This partnership engages our students in a comprehensive music curriculum delivered both at NEC and at Walnut Hill. Students can major in an orchestral instrument, piano, voice, composition, or jazz. The curriculum is enhanced by innovative performance projects, master classes by dynamic guest artists, and the thoughtful integration of contemporary topics like entrepreneurship and civic engagement. Walnut Hill’s proximity to Boston allows students to attend a wide variety of concerts by major ensembles and soloists at the city’s world-class concert halls. Our program, offered within an inspiring creative community, prepares graduates to thrive in a conservatory, university, or college setting.

Jennifer Elowitch, Director of Music

“Walnut Hill trains emerging artists with a variety of professional aspirations, both musical and otherwise. We value the study of great masterworks and the music of living composers, and draw inspiration from the many other artistic endeavors on campus that allow us to see music in a broader context.”

## **Theater**

The Theater Department at Walnut Hill offers a comprehensive program designed to engage passionate, dedicated, and curious young artists. Our approach is Stanislavsky-based and actor-centric. This intensive training of the mind, body, and voice develops an actor who communicates an honest, compelling story through the use of text, movement, and song. In addition to offering unparalleled actor training, the program fosters an appreciation of design and production through coursework and practical application. Faculty members cultivate a supportive culture and inspire students to engage in their craft with a seriousness of purpose. Through studio work, performance opportunities, and one-on-one coaching, student artists develop the professional skills and attitudes needed to excel in college or university conservatory training.

Joe Cabral, Director of Theater

“As head of the Theater Department at Walnut Hill School for the Arts my greatest inspiration comes from working with young actors who possess intellectual curiosity and a sense of creative adventure. Keen intellect and a limitless imagination are the foundations for all of the work an actor does.”

## **Visual Art**

In the Walnut Hill Visual Art Department, students master fundamental artistic concepts while exploring varied techniques and mediums. Student artists acquire foundational skills and hone their creative impulses through personal practice, faculty guidance, and exposure to the work of peers. Classes ranging from drawing, ceramics, and painting to photography and apparel design are taught by faculty mentors who are also professional artists, attuned to the continual evolution of the arts world. Throughout the department, process is valued, focus is balanced by fun, and experimentation is celebrated. In addition to producing a portfolio of work, purposeful artistic practice allows students to build greater self-awareness and confidence, and develop an open mind-set crucial to their success in future pursuits.

Jim Woodside, Director of Visual Art and Director of Artistic Studies

“Visual art students at Walnut Hill immerse themselves in the studio art-making process. While learning to experiment and think independently, they become creative problem-solvers and develop a real sense of their own artistic voice.”

## **Writing, Film & Media Arts**

Walnut Hill’s Writing, Film & Media Arts Department offers a possibility-rich environment in which students can develop an original voice and vision. Through studio courses, practicums, and master classes with notable guest artists, students invest in the process of creating dynamic stories with words and images. Technique is woven seamlessly into the curriculum in classes such as fiction, screenwriting, poetry, and filmmaking. After being exposed to various mediums through core classes, students can shape their course plan based on their primary artistic interests. In all areas of study, supportive faculty help students cultivate the skills and habits necessary to approach their college pursuits with a creative and technical edge.

Margaret Funkhouser, Director of Writing, Film & Media Arts

“Our philosophy is that the mediums of text and image are natural companions, and that the exploration of one skill enhances the other. Through writing, a filmmaker is able to articulate and hone the narrative; through the lens, a writer notices, frames, and discovers new imagery.”

## **ACADEMICS**

The academic program at Walnut Hill is designed to leverage and foster the habits of a young artist’s mind—careful observation, critical thinking, and a desire for deep and enduring understanding. Through a process-orientated approach that emphasizes hands-on and project-based learning, our college-preparatory curriculum encourages students to recognize and value multiple perspectives when considering complex challenges. The academic schedule allows students to focus on fewer courses at a time, resulting in meaningful engagement with subject matter, promoting natural curiosity, and solidifying learning. Students master both the subject matter and the skills necessary for future academic success, while gaining valuable context for their art-making and growing in their understanding of the world around them.

## **MATRICULATION**

Walnut Hill students are admitted to the top-ranked colleges, universities, and conservatories in the world. Over 95% of each graduating class matriculates to a four-

year degree program directly after Walnut Hill, with a focus in their particular art form or concentrated in a variety of subjects within the liberal arts. A small percentage of Walnut Hill graduates move directly into pursuing their art at a pre-professional level, most often by joining a dance company or enrolling in an arts-specific certificate program. About 75% of students receive either a Bachelor of Music or Bachelor of Fine Arts; about 25% receive a Bachelor of Arts.

## **FACILITIES**

The beautiful 30-acre Walnut Hill campus is located in a residential neighborhood in Natick, Massachusetts, 17 miles west of Boston. Current facilities offer diverse resources:

**Academic and Technology Center** includes computer and science labs, a media arts studio, a fitness center, two multiuse studios, classrooms, and faculty offices.

**Jane Oxford Keiter Performing Arts Center** houses a 343-seat mainstage theater and 80-seat Riggi Black Box Laboratory Theater; scene shop, costume shop, dressing rooms, and green room.

**The Delbridge Family Center for the Arts**, which opened in Fall 2016, is a multi-arts facility that houses a flexible performance space with seating for up to 170, a lobby art gallery, a dance studio, and offices. The building opens onto a courtyard space that can be used for outdoor events.

**Boswell Recital Hall** seats 80 people.

**Somers Music Center** includes 20 soundproof music practice rooms, many of which are outfitted with new Steinway pianos.

**Dartley Visual Art Center** includes a clay studio; kiln room; sculpture, apparel, and painting studios; drawing/printmaking studio; senior studio space; and new media laboratory.

**Pooke Gallery** features work by visiting artists, faculty, and students.

**Dance Center** includes five studios with sprung floors; one of the larger studios is outfitted with TRX suspension training equipment.

**The Writing, Film & Media Arts (WFMA)** program occupies a newly renovated three-story building that includes a black box filming space, classrooms, and a screening room. These students also utilize the **Media Arts Studio** in the Academic and Technology Center, which includes 16 editing stations and a sound suite. Each WFMA student is provided with a Mac laptop and use of a Canon SLR digital camera.

## **ALUMNI**

Here's but a snapshot of successful Walnuts . . .

- **Susan Paresky '64**, Senior Vice President for Development, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Boston
- **Judith Hoag '81**, Television actress (*Nashville*)
- **Christian Finnegan '91**, Actor and stand-up comic based in New York City

- **Sara Newkirk Simon '95**, Partner at William Morris representing Usher, Lady Gaga, Bruno Mars, and others
- **Dr. Jennifer Caudle '95**, Physician, on-air health expert, author
- **Jack McCollough '97**, Founder and Owner of high-fashion brand Proenza Schouler
- **Matan Chorev '01**, U.S. Department of State
- **Zac Young '01**, Executive Pastry Chef for all David Burke restaurants
- **Ashley Blanchet '05**, Three-time Broadway performer (*Memphis, ANNIE, Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*)
- **Briga Heelan '05**, Television actress (*Ground Floor*)
- **Joe Walsh '06**, Principal with San Francisco Ballet
- **Laura Love '10**, Runway and fashion model for brands including Vera Wang, Anthropologie, and *Vogue*
- **George Li '13**, Pianist, silver medalist at the 2015 International Tchaikovsky Competition

### **MEMBERSHIP**

National Association of Independent Schools  
 Association of Independent Schools in New England  
 The Association of Boarding Schools  
 Art Schools Network

### **ACCREDITATION**

New England Association of Schools and Colleges

### **CONTACT**

Web                walnuthillarts.org  
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 Instagram       walnuthillarts

### **MEDIA CONTACT**

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