



MIRA COSTA HIGH SCHOOL DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI 2016



LEONARD ARMATO

As founder and CEO of Management Plus Enterprises (MPE), **Leonard Armato** (Class of 1970) has been a visionary leader and trailblazer in creating and building "high growth" brands at the forefront of the convergence of sports, entertainment, marketing and technology. At MPE, he created a formula for converting celebrity into "brand" by launching and building Shaquille O'Neal's brand with a powerful coalition of marketing partners and positioning Shaq as a "tech influencer." Armato also developed the "Golden Boy" brand for Oscar De La Hoya, now the industry leader in boxing promotion. Armato used this sponsorship sales coalition formula to create the FIVB World Championships of Beach Volleyball and the AVP Pro Beach Volleyball Tour. In 2013, he did it again with the ASICS World Series of Beach Volleyball, the biggest sports/music/beach lifestyle event of its kind, with partner NBC Sports and sanctioned by the FIVB and USAV. From 2010 to May, 2012, Armato served as CMO of Skechers where he oversaw the company's creative agencies and orchestrated two Super Bowl campaigns. He also served as President of Skechers Fitness, launching the company's performance division. Before Skechers, Armato served as CEO of the AVP Pro Beach Volleyball Tour from 2002 until 2009, where he acquired an insolvent AVP and by 2007 grew the public company into a business valued at nearly \$40 million. Leonard Armato graduated from the University of the Pacific in 1975 and received his Juris Doctorate from the University of San Diego Law School in 1978.



RACHEL BLOOM

Rachel Bloom (Class of 2005) is the 2015 Golden Globe winner for Best Actress in a Comedy Series for her show, *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend*. Rachel is the co-creator, lead actress and Executive Producer of the show. Rachel's success did not happen overnight. After working hard to sharpen her skills all throughout middle and high school, she attended NYU's Tisch School of the Arts where she earned a BFA in Drama. She continued to perform, finding a home with the improv troupe, Upright Citizen's Brigade. She wrote and performed original scenes on a weekly basis. She also took initiative and created a series of

successful music videos she wrote herself. This led to online acclaim for her humorous and often parody-filled songs. She continued to self-advocate for herself, creating *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* while continuing to perform improv. The show was originally picked up by Showtime only to be dropped. Instead of giving up, Rachel and her team showed their pilot and pitched their show to other networks before eventually being picked up by the CW. Through her determination and hard work she was able to get her show on the air. The show has been heralded for its honest portrayal of the female form and for having a highly diverse cast. Rachel was listed as one of People Magazine's "World's Most Beautiful 2016: Faces of the Year." Exploring topics including mental health, empowering females, finding strength within and creating healthy relationships, *Crazy Ex-Girlfriend* encourages its watchers to embrace themselves despite flaws or mistakes.



KELLY GIBSON

While still a teenager at Mira Costa, **Kelly Gibson** (Class of 1983) was one of the best surfers in the world. California born-and-raised, his roots in surfing run deep. A surfer for more than 35 years, Kelly's competitive surfing milestones include winning the 1982 USA National Scholastic Surfing Association (NSSA) Open Championship at 17 years of age. He then turned professional, competing on the Association of Surfing Professional (ASP) World Tour and the US Pro Tour through the late 1980s and early 1990's. After getting married and having kids early in life, Kelly transformed himself in this 20s and 30s to become much

more than just a professional surfer. Through hard work, initiative, confidence, and saying "yes" to all sorts of challenges, he moved through a myriad of leadership positions in the surfwear industry. In 1992, Kelly became a sales representative for a number of leading brands in a range of product categories. In 1999, Kelly joined O'Neill Clothing USA as National Sales Manager, where he climbed the ranks to President in 2002 and later CEO in 2005. Kelly was later appointed President & CEO of Rip Curl USA in 2006. In the last five years, Kelly has been credited for re-establishing the Rip Curl brand in the USA market, acting not only as regional CEO but also as a member of the global executive committee. He also serves as president of Surf Industry Manufacturers Association (SIMA), which raises and donates roughly \$500K each year to ocean-related non-profits and humanitarian organizations.



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NOAH MAMET

If anyone embodies the dream of a Mira Costa Model United Nation's student, it would be **Noah Mamet** (Class of 1987). Confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to Argentina by the U.S. Senate in 2014, Ambassador Mamet's tenure has focused on themes of innovation, entrepreneurship, renewable energy, and educational exchanges. In March 2016, Ambassador Mamet hosted President Obama and the First Family's historic trip to Buenos Aires, the first bi-lateral presidential trip in nearly 20 years. Ambassador Mamet also led the first of its kind delegation of 30 Argentine leaders to California to

further build economic ties through technology, innovation and clean energy. In 2007, he was a member of a high level international delegation to Sierra Leone, representing the National Democratic Institute, to monitor and report on the first openly democratic election since that country's civil war. Ambassador Mamet has worked closely with national and international political leaders, including President Bill Clinton, Secretary Hillary Clinton and Secretary of State Madeleine Albright. Outside the world of politics and international affairs, Ambassador Mamet has worked on numerous philanthropic causes, including education reform efforts in California. He served on the executive board of Green Dot Public Schools, the largest public charter school operator in California. In addition, he was a board member of NatureBridge, a nonprofit organization which teaches math and science to students through innovative approaches, including field trips to national parks throughout the United States. A graduate of UCLA, Ambassador Mamet enjoys playing tennis, golf, baseball and of course, soccer.



HEIDI GHENT SNYDER

Heidi Ghent Snyder (Class of 1998) is an accomplished entrepreneur, innovator, and philanthropist. After graduating from Brigham Young University as valedictorian with a master's degree in Exercise Physiology, Heidi embarked on a creative journey, founding several successful businesses in the health and wellness arena. In 2011, Heidi co-founded The Color Run™ with her husband, Travis. Known as "the Happiest 5K on the Planet," The Color Run™ is the largest running series in the world with 200 annual events and more than 2 million participants in countries throughout North and South America, the UK, Europe, South Africa,

United Arab Emirates, Australia, and Asia. Heidi keeps things fresh while driving innovation as the VP of Creative Development. She founded the genre of Color Dash which combines fitness with a party atmosphere. The Color Dash concept has revolutionized the 5K world. The motto is "Be Healthy, Be Happy, Be You." Heidi has inspired millions to get fit who have not done so due to the intimidating nature of run events. Since its inception, The Color Run™ has donated more than \$5 million to local and international charities throughout the world. Global Poverty Project is The Color Run's global charity partner. According to a 2013 Huffington Post article, "Color Runners around the country will have the opportunity to not only run in the happiest race ever, but also get involved in the movement to end extreme poverty through GlobalCitizen.org, where they can learn about issues, take actions, and raise funds for non-profits."



RENEE WILLIAMS-SMITH

As a student at Costa in the 1970's, **Renee Williams-Smith** (Class of 1979) was on the first ever girls Cross Country, Track and Soccer teams. After running cross-country at El Camino, she received an athletic scholarship to Kansas State, where she was a member of the first women's championship cross country team in the school's history. While most at Costa know Renee as our 15-year Cross Country coach, what they don't know is that Renee's coaching career followed a successful career in the business sector. She

began her career with the 1984 Olympic Committee where she experienced firsthand the success of commitment to teamwork. She then worked with executive teams of major retail corporations on designing and implementing programs to improve methods, procedures and customer service. During this time, she learned to appreciate all that each individual brings to make the best possible team. Renee began as an assistant coach at Costa in 2001 and became the head coach in 2004. During her tenure, the team has enjoyed great success including: Bay League champions in Cross Country seven of the last ten years; 2-time qualifiers for Nike Cross Country National championships, six individual finalists in state track and field championships, and in 2014 she was awarded the Brooks National Inspiring Coach of the Year. While she feels good about these achievements, what she gets most fulfillment from is creating a team culture where girls gain confidence and a sense of self in an environment that is inclusive, loving and, of course, competitive.



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