

# 360°

Fall/Winter 2023

## Asheville School Views



Vision & Values







# Vision & Values



Not far from Asheville School stands Mount Pisgah, the silent sentinel watching over our campus. At some 5,721 feet, the peak provides 360-degree views for miles. Quite a sight—especially at sunrise. Like the peaks and ridges that surround us, Asheville School students, faculty, staff, and alumni have set our sights high since our founding in 1900. And through the years, our vision has grown even clearer. We are a global community pursuing lives of meaning and service. And our values prepare us to persevere, excel, lead, and learn for life. The theme of this magazine, Vision & Values, reflects on the solid bedrock of Asheville School’s traditions while bringing in the fresh voices, bold ideas, and creative ways of thinking that will guide us into the next hundred years of Asheville School. Enjoy the climb, because up ahead, the horizon is bright.

4	<b>LETTER FROM ANTHONY SGRO</b> Head of School
6	<b>LIFE-LONG CURIOSITY</b> Meet Tucker Branham
8	<b>INTRODUCING OUR NEW...</b> Mission, vision, and values
10	<b>A LIFE OF SERVICE</b> 100 years of Mitchell Cabinet
14	<b>SPIRITUAL REFLECTION</b> A new course and three chapel talks
18	<b>INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY</b> With Radar Onguetou
20	<b>PERSONAL EXCELLENCE</b> Alumni Profile: The inspiring David Schaffer '10
24	<b>PERSEVERANCE AND RESILIENCE</b> True stories of triumph
28	<b>LEGACIES</b> The power of planned giving
30	<b>ALUMNI WEEKEND RECAP</b> Memories in words and images
40	<b>TOGETHER ABROAD</b> An unforgettable trip to Italy
46	<b>YEAR IN REVIEW</b>
60	<b>CLASS NOTES</b>
80	<b>CLASS OF 2023</b> And their college plans

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# Letter from Anthony Sgro

The Sgro family pictured at home in the Fall House. From left: Gigi, Faulkner, Huston, Anthony, and Bagley.



When Newton Mitchell Anderson and Charles Andrew Mitchell founded Asheville School in 1900, they had a well-defined mission. They wanted to establish a boarding school that would foster the development of students' minds, bodies, and spirits. They created a rigorous academic program by hiring a committed faculty and recruiting gifted students. The comprehensive athletic program offered competitive teams in the sports popular in the day. They formed a dramatic society that promoted the arts through regular theatrical productions. Students often took advantage of the setting by taking all-school outdoor hikes and going camping. Finally, students were encouraged to explore their spiritual lives through an active chapel program. The founders envisioned a school that would do all of this with an intentionally small student body who were boarders.

In the fall of 2021, the Asheville School Board of Trustees commenced a two-year process to evaluate the vision, mission, and values of the institution. The intention was to define these aspects of the school in year one. In year two, a strategic planning process grew out of the visioning work. This edition of the 360 magazine outlines the results of that two-year effort. This process has been comprehensive and has included input from students, faculty, parents, and alumni. I am grateful to the many people who participated in the process. It is a better product because it reflects the broad perspectives of our very diverse community. We look forward to sharing the final strategic plan with you later this year.

Interestingly, when the visioning and strategic planning processes were completed this past spring, you could hear the voices of Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Anderson in the plans. Their original mission for the school continues to guide us to this day. They were great educators who established a sustainable and mission-driven institution. We are indeed inheritors of a rich legacy. As you read this magazine, I hope that you will be as excited as I am about the future of Asheville School that builds upon a strong foundation.

If you have not been on campus recently, I hope that you will make a point of coming to visit. We would love to welcome you back.

Go Blues!

*Anthony H. Sgro*

Anthony H. Sgro Ed.D. '84  
Head of School, Asheville School



# Meet the Changemaker

*Guiding a new vision—with a respect for tradition—at Asheville School*

**T**ucker Branham, who graduated from the Asheville School in 1996, has returned to campus to help guide the school through a year-long strategic planning process. Through her company Change Develop Move, Tucker helps a wide variety of organizations articulate who they are, where they want to go, and how to get there. Tucker shares a bit about what's ahead for the school—and why keeping students at the center of decisions is so important.

**What were you like as a student at Asheville School in the 1990s?**

Asheville School gave me the space to grow up and mature but not to lose the fundamental things that made me me. I have deeply held beliefs, and I've always been curious. I push the envelope, and I like to challenge the status quo where it needs to be challenged. The school did not quench that in me but helped me channel it into positive lessons. The school pushed me to grow and learn more deeply. It was tough. It was not an easy school. But it wasn't the academics that I mostly remember. It was everything else. When you wake up, you're there—there's no escaping. The students are your friends, the faculty and staff are your people. When you go to Asheville

School, you are kind of going to college during high school, and that changes you. Independence is an essential piece of the experience.

**What kind of work do you do?**

My company, Change Develop Move, works with organizations to operate better. We do this through services such as strategic planning, leadership development, culture identification and development, fundraising assessment, training, campaign management—you name it and we do it to help nonprofits, companies, and individuals with all facets of organizational development. I'm a big believer that to have buy-in and change, you need to include people in the process. People are more likely to care about a plan if it's done with them and not to them. It's wise to get feedback from people who are doing the work and living it every day.

**What was the process of creating a strategic plan for Asheville School like?**

We interviewed students, alumni, teachers, staff, the board, parents—at least two hundred people. Everyone was excited to share their ideas. Covid fundamentally shifted our youth, the way we interact, our mentalities—across industries. There's been this massive evolution of human



Tucker Branham,  
Asheville School  
class of 1996

behavior and need based on the isolation. So, places like Asheville School are saying, we've got to do something. I think a lot of the organizations that have been around for a long time often become very strongly rooted in their traditions and the way things have always been done. There are great facets of that, but there has also been this shift that we needed to address. Asheville School needed to think not only about who and where they are but also where they want to go and who they want to be. The root of what makes Asheville School will always be in place, but the tools and mentality are shifting for what students need to feel successful and feel a meaningful connection in community. Schools all say that, but Asheville School wants to live it. That is exciting to me, especially as an alum.

**What were some strong takeaways from the process?**

Everyone expects Asheville School be a college prep school, and it's a great one, but kids these days are even more engaged, passionate citizens of the world. When I spoke with the students, I was amazed at how articulate and excited they are about the things that really matter to them. I'm excited to help them lay out a plan for getting what they want out of

their educational experience—the value of academics and the time and space to be a kid, a friend. The days of rote memorization are gone. Kids are all about curiosity—and Asheville School is, as always, preparing people to be lifelong learners. Another takeaway that came up a lot was this idea of joy. You'll see joy throughout the strategic plan. That doesn't mean that everyone's happy all the time, but it's about being able to do things they didn't know they could do. There's joy in challenges, in stumbles, and in success. Asheville School is all about being tough academically and having the teachers and staff to help students get through it. People are going to have an amazing experience stumbling, rising, and leaving here as wonderful and resilient humans.

**As alumni read the new initiatives, what do you hope they keep in mind?**

I'm really proud of Asheville School for doing this—they didn't have to. It was an intentional decision to say, we have been this amazing institution for so long, how can we make it even better? To go through this comprehensive of a process, you have to be willing to be vulnerable and open. That isn't easy, and it says a great deal about the leadership that this was the road they chose. The incredible people of Asheville School understand their strengths and want to build on this strong foundation of character. They looked at the pieces that weren't supporting students and said, how can we make this better? You must listen to your students. It's all about being student-centered to cultivate deeper areas of student interest academically, socially, and in co-curriculars. These deep conversations led them to really consider and understand the idea of joy. This idea that students can come, learn, be joyful and curious, and leave with this close group of friends and adults who support you and care immensely about you. It's remarkable—for you to be prepared to go to college, you have to have a level of independence and emotional strength. I love that Asheville School has set itself up for the next iteration to be even better than it's ever been.



INTRODUCING OUR NEW ...

# Vision, Mission, Values

*In June 2022, the final versions of the new vision, mission, and values statements were approved by the Board. These critical statements of commitment to the Asheville School community serve as the anchor for the strategic plan and the School’s priorities for the next five years.*

VISION

A global community pursuing lives of meaning and service.

MISSION

Asheville School is a diverse and nurturing community that challenges and supports the mind, body, and spirit of our students by developing their resilience, intellect, and character.

VALUES

PERSONAL EXCELLENCE

At Asheville School, we believe that excellence is striving for personal growth, a desire to discover and explore possibilities, and the courage to see opportunities in challenges. We foster critical and creative thinking skills in diligent pursuit of personal excellence in academics, the arts, athletics, mountaineering, and service. We challenge students to continually seek to understand how their decisions and actions impact their own lives and the lives of others.

INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

At Asheville School, we believe in intentionally seeking different perspectives and fostering equity. Our community is stronger when everyone’s voice is a valued and respected part of the conversation. We grow through exploration, understanding, and respect for the differences and similarities that are the foundation of the most essential piece of the Asheville School experience — our community.

PERSEVERANCE AND RESILIENCE

At Asheville School, we believe success involves hard work, dedication, and the courage to overcome barriers. Students learn to handle disappointment with grace and flexibility and move forward with renewed focus and fortitude.

LIFE-LONG CURIOSITY

At Asheville School, we believe that a lifelong love of learning is rooted in curiosity. We collaborate and challenge one another to discover different ways of thinking, to pursue interests, and to explore opportunities to develop our mind, body, and spirit. We encourage a hunger for learning, enduring curiosity, and a profound interest in the people and world around us.

SPIRITUAL REFLECTION

At Asheville School, we believe that spiritual reflection opens the door to a greater understanding and appreciation of oneself, others, and the connection to something greater. Rooted in our nondenominational Christian heritage, we welcome students of all faiths and beliefs and encourage everyone to explore spiritual connection through multiple pathways, striving to embark on a meaningful and life-long spiritual journey.



# 100 Years of Student Philanthropy

*Three cheers for Mitchell Cabinet*

Mitchell Cabinet is Asheville School's longest-running philanthropic service organization, founded in 1928 as a branch of the 1923-founded Mitchell Society. In its early years, the cabinet collected Sunday chapel offerings to make contributions to area charity organizations. In the century since its founding, the group has conducted hundreds of service projects and raised money for local, national, and international causes. Past president **Gracey Abernethy** shared what made 2022–2023 so special.



Gracey Abernethy '23

**Why do you think this club has been such a strong organization for so long?**  
Asheville school prides itself on emphasizing service and focusing their students' minds on the outward. Mitchell Cabinet has persisted through administration and policy changes. When required service stopped, Mitchell Cabinet pushed through in order to foster those valuable connections and experiences for the students. As service becomes less institutionally motivated, students in the organization recognize the importance of

service in our community; furthermore, Asheville School's responsibility to give back and reach outside of our bubble.

**What are the main values of Mitchell Cabinet as an organization?**  
Wide range engagement, giving back to local and global communities, and service education.

**Some of your favorite accomplishments while working with Mitchell Cabinet?**  
I loved the breast cancer awareness fundraisers. Specifically the pie in the face—I thought it was a super unique and engaging way to raise money. But every trash pickup was awesome! They were surprisingly exciting and a good time even despite the stench. My favorite part was the wide range of participators across grades, sports, and groups.

**Who has been a mentor to you at Asheville School?**  
Peter Shores was my biggest hype man, confidante, and role model. He was the reason I joined Mitchell Cabinet in the first place and inspired and supported every fundraiser and every service opportunity. He helped me navigate leading the group and was supportive in every way.



Members of the 2022-2023 Mitchell Cabinet. Front Row L to R: Joaquin Jones '23, Sofia Kleiner '23, Owen Soccorso '23, Gracey Abernethy '23, Princess Adeyi '24. Back Row L to R: Prim Ngamsirijit '26, Eloise Durham '26, Reese Carlton '24, Vicky Ren '24, Jenn Xu '25, Lucy Lu '23, Peter Shores '23

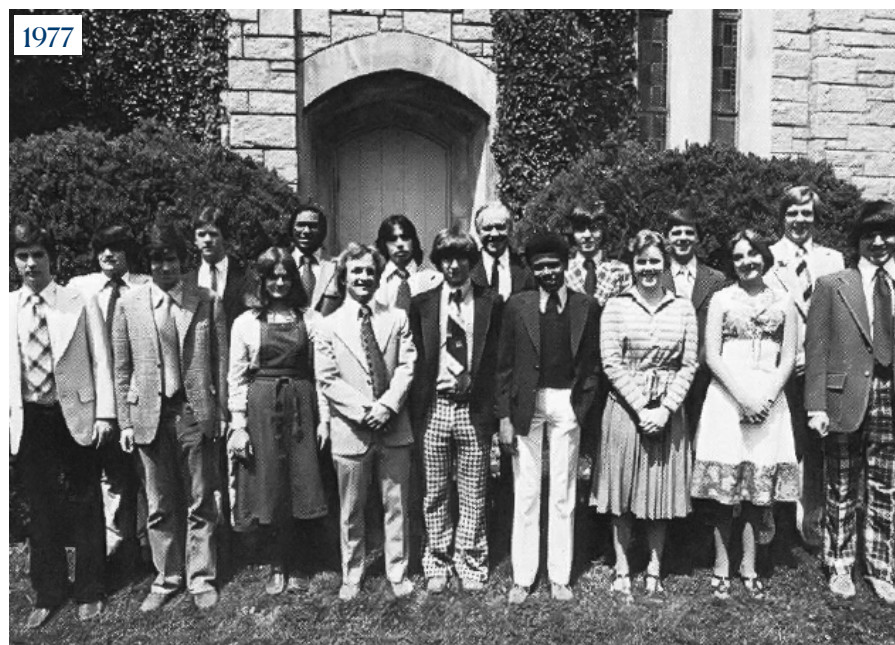


Mitchell Cabinet members from 1942-1943.



# Mitchell Cabinet 1960s–2000s

*Service through the decades*





A new course, chapel talk highlights, and a reading list you might want to jot down

# This We Believe

Here at Asheville School, we believe that spiritual reflection opens the door to a greater understanding and appreciation of oneself, others, and the connection to something greater. We are incredibly excited about a new initiative being added to our curriculum, beginning next year. Led by Chaplain Nate Sell, a new, trimester-long course will be added for all Fourth Formers called “This I Believe.” Students will explore spiritual autobiographies and stories from multiple perspectives. Students will also engage with spiritual exploration in film and podcasts such as Krista Tippett’s On Being series. The class culminates with each student writing their own “this I believe” statement, in the vein of renowned journalist Edward Murrow’s radio series. As Murrow put it, they “will write about the rules they live by, the things they have found to be the basic values in



Three seniors from the class of '23 (from left): Bertrand Lin, Owen Soccorso, and Meredith Carlton.



their lives.” Simply reading titles of famous “This I Believe” statements hint at the possibilities of such essays: Be Cool to the Pizza Dude, An Athlete of God, Science Nourishes the Mind, and We Are Each Other’s Business. Students will then revisit their “This I Believe” statements during the spring of their Fifth Form year in Humanities and write an updated essay (current Fifth Formers will have the opportunity to write their own “This I Believe” statement this spring). Over time, students will have the chance to see how their beliefs have changed and how they have stayed the same. Students wishing to give a senior chapel talk will then have the opportunity to present these statements in special chapel services. These services will continue our important tradition of senior talks and be a gift to our community as we celebrate the diversity of beliefs present on campus.



**Course readings will include selections from works such as:**  
*Night* by Elie Wiesel  
*Black Elk Speaks* by John Gneisenau Neihardt  
*Acts of Faith* by Eboo Patel  
*The Fire Next Time* by James Baldwin  
*Traveling Mercies* by Anne Lamott



# Highlights of Past Chapel Talks

“You drag yourself down from your bed every morning, sit through a whole day of classes taking note or repeating your classmates during discussions, compete in sports, somehow work through your homework during study hall, and either go to bed earlier like a good kid, or try to have a night life like me (just kidding). You try to maintain a good GPA for your classes and make varsity for sport, after all, college prep, right? Four years on the assembly line, then you are shipped off to your higher education, then work, blah blah blah. ... Something is missing from this picture of life, and you can't deny that. To quote Ivan Karamazov from *The Brothers Karamazov*: “What’s the point of living beyond thirty?”



Hmm, maybe now you are thinking, *this kid need some love, using his chapel talk to rant like this*. I confess, we all need more love in our lives. And that’s precisely it, there’s not a single drop of love in the life I have just painted.

...Real people don't live like stick figures in our minds; real people would cause us trouble from time to time, but who would mind helping a friend or their loved ones? I am not asking us to immediately become besties with one another and, with holding hands, dance like a giant earthworm immediately after chapel. No, that is too much for an introvert. However, I mean what Christ expressed in “love thy neighbors.” To strangers we can pay them due respect, understanding that they are travelers with their own past, their own dreams and their own futures to explore. To friends and close ones, we can be more open, communicative, and patient. We should see one another as full human beings, with our own agency and priorities in life. The virtues and qualities that we attach to our perfect stick figures are goals to strive for, not baseline requirements. This is the way of concrete love.

But how can one begin to love? Begin by noticing the details, perhaps not even of other humans, just of what you observe. Notice how flocks of birds, in fluent coordination, glide from rooftop to rooftop across our campus; how a random English marigold unfolds its petals in the middle of a vast grass field, how the orange rays of sunset paint a watercolor with soaked clouds, fresh from rain. You cannot help but stand in awe witnessing the grandeurs of nature, of the life that pours from all corners of our campus. To say it poetically, life dances hand in hand with love.

I sincerely wish that you don't just find love during your time at Asheville school, but that you can live and love throughout the course of your life.”

—Bertrand Lin ‘23



The hugs, handshakes, and group photos after senior talks are an important part of the experience.

“Horace, a famous satirist, wrote a whole story about being forced to hang out with someone he doesn't like, all the while begging to be ‘rescued’ by his real friends. Another poet writes letters to a friend saying how annoyed he is with his neighbors for talking so loud with their friends at night. I'm sure none of the boarders can relate to that...



The point is, we share similar experiences with these people from long ago. We might not wear togas, or have chariot races or gladiator battles, but we do have things in common. I finally understand what's important about learning Latin: It's about connection. We are connected to our history not just in the way it has rippled out to form our lives, but personally.

Think about all the people you read about. They weren't some mythical people, better than everyone else. They were just regular old people who happened to do cool things, regular people who complained about the lunch options, and woke up with bad hair days sometimes.

If you don't believe me about our connection to all people, just look at the science: Genetically, the similarities between people are inevitable; all humans are 99.9 percent genetically identical. That's wild. That means only .1 percent makes us all unique, .1 percent of us is responsible for our hair color, personalities, eye color, height, our unique fingerprints.

We have all landed at Asheville School in some unique way. Some of you are legacies; your family has been coming here for generations. Some of you knew your hometown was not where you were meant to be, some of you ended up here because of the pandemic. It doesn't matter how you got to Asheville School; we are all here now.”

—Owen Soccorso '23

“Jewel weed, a bush plant native to North Carolina, grows in abundance all over the state, including on the Asheville School campus. Its name comes from the sparkly dew drops that form on the smoothly textured leaves and the bush exhibits bright orange tubular flowers, spotted with red around the mouth of the opening. With the bright fiery oranges contrasting with various shades of green, the plant is beautiful to look at, and attracts a multitude of pollinators, including bees, hummingbirds, and a variety of butterflies. And, while it might be strange to consider a plant smart, it is also immensely intelligent. In a unique method of seed dispersal, the ripe seed pods of the plant pop open at a slight touch or pinch, flinging the seeds up to six feet away from the original plant. Personally, I find it comforting that the existence of the species is entirely dependent on interaction with other organisms within its environment. One of the most fascinating things about this plant, however, is that one can notice almost all of these key details about it, simply by taking the time to watch.



This past fall, every other day during E period, our nature journaling group of six ventured out into the daring wilderness of the Asheville School campus on a hunt for something to draw and write about for seventy minutes. While Jewel weed is one of my favorites, the extent of our exploration does not end there. From funky mushrooms to dead birds to transgender plants, we have seen it all. After sitting with these natural beauties, asking questions, jotting notes, and absorbing all of the details we could in only an hour, class ended with six renderings of the same thing, each with a new set of details, observations, and questions. Why does this species have that specific coloration? How does XYZ contribute to and interact with its environment? Why does this seed explode when I touch it? While asking all of these questions can lead to good answers, it also leads to even more questions, all of which are posed in an attempt to understand the complex interconnectedness of the world, and for me personally, my place in it.

In the fluidity of the natural world, everything has a place and a purpose, playing an important role for the environment to function. I strongly believe that this deeply woven web of dependence also applies to life outside of the natural world. Like plant and pollinator, habitat and inhabitant, we are all in necessity of one another, and the level of observation required to understand the connections is deeper than surface level. By paying close attention to each other, and the environment around us, we are able to form deeper connections and grow a stronger community.”

—Meredith Carlton '23



# A Sense of Belonging

*The importance of student-led community building and self-discovery*

**R**adar Onguetou is Asheville School's new Director of Community Engagement, Diversity and Belonging, as well as the Assistant Varsity Boys Basketball Coach. He looks back at his first year, including a powerful Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and shares how he finds the giftedness in every person.

**How does your upbringing inform your work at Asheville School?**

As a black man who grew up in Cameroon, a central African country of approximately 28 million inhabitants, I consider myself privileged in many ways. 'Race,' as a social construct, which has shaped the identity attributed to African Americans in the United States, was insignificant in my upbringing. Even when I became aware that my experience as a black man growing up in Africa is totally different than my experience in the United States, I never abandoned the deeply rooted values that have provided substance to my identity as an educated African black man, shaped my beliefs, and dictated my way of thinking, feeling, and behaving. Supporting our students and peers' efforts as they embark on a journey of self-discovery and pursue their own personal greatness is the

foundation of my work at Asheville School.

**What does inclusion mean to you?**

This question makes me think right away of the period of schools' "integration," when the presence of black students was simply tolerated as they were expected to assimilate and fit in. Inclusion means being accepted for who you are (authentic self). Accordingly, given that some people hide their most authentic identity in fear of being rejected for who they are, people who feel included usually find affirmation and a sense of belonging. Furthermore, people feel included when their needs and interests are considered, and their respective voices heard when making decisions that impact them. This is what inclusion means to me, the opposite of exclusion.

**What opportunities do you see for the future at Asheville School?**

The commitment and ability of Black Student Union (BSU) students was on full display when they hosted the 2023 MLK Jr Day/Civil Rights Day. My vision for the program was inspired by the following questions: "What if we shift the stance of teacher as knower to teacher as



learner?" and "What could we learn from our students?" I adopted a consultant stance, and it was a partnership. The only expectations for the students were to be their own selves. I believe that students must be front and center. I put my expertise at the service of this group of students by first learning everything I could about each of them individually and collectively. I inquired, interviewed, mapped, understood the dynamics, and saw their approach in preparation of the event. These students learned what mattered and discovered a pathway to their own creative genius. This is just the start. To borrow the words of the author and consultant Peter Block, the essence of this approach was to see BSU as a group of human beings, each with gifts in abundance, rather than as students with deficiencies or needs.

**In your first year here, what have been some of your proudest moments?**

The 2023 MLK Jr Day/Civil Rights Day, hosted by BSU, was one of my proudest moments. I am proud of the fact that BSU students, including Danae Pate, Princess Adeyi, and Justin Rowe, led the Q&A panel with Dr. Clint Smith. I am proud of the fact that many BSU students ran for leadership positions in the Asheville School Student Council. I am proud of the fact that Armani Wachacha hosted an event in celebration of the Native American Heritage Month. I am proud of the success of 'The Bridge' DEIB collaborative initiative with Christ School and Carolina Day School. I am proud of the fact that students are already inquiring about the 2023 Student Diversity Leadership Conference (SDLC) in St Louis following their experience at the 2022 SDLC in San Antonio.

**What are you most looking forward to next year?**

I am excited about the flexibility of the new daily schedule with meeting times embedded. Among other things, an event in preparation of the Native American Heritage Month in November 2023 is in the planning. I am also looking forward to BSU trips to HBCU in Georgia and/or South Carolina next fall.





# Alumni Spotlight

*An Asheville School alumnus and doctor gets back to the basics of care*

David Schaffer, '10, MD, is the co-founder and policy director of One Tent Health, a Washington, D.C. based nonprofit that provides access to HIV screenings and care. The lessons and mentorship he received at Asheville School have never left him—including one phone call he'll never forget.

**Tell us about an important mentor at Asheville School and what they meant to you:**

Today, as an emergency physician and medical toxicologist, I still use the chemistry concepts I learned from Joe Lambert on a daily basis. Helen Plaehn, my first humanities teacher, challenged me beyond anything I had experienced before. I still remember her sitting down with me one-on-one after I wrote my first paper, and she totally tore it apart! Never once did Helen Plaehn let me get by without 100 percent effort, and I'm extremely grateful for that precedent she set. Josh Perlman, my fourth-form history instructor, kindled my love for music, teaching me guitar on occasional nights and weekends. And of course, Burt Gordon, Dean of Students at the time, offered relentless support; he's evolved from a selfless mentor to a cherished friend. There are many others I would love to call out but will stop there for the sake of brevity.



**A moment of learning at Asheville School that you still think about today:**

My classmates might remember that, particularly in the first two years at Asheville School, I was not always the most “well-behaved” student. During the summer before my fifth form year, I received an unexpected phone call from Arch Montgomery, Head of School at the time.

Opposite: David Schaffer, '10, MD.  
Above: A One Tent Health setup.



PERSONAL EXCELLENCE

We were on the phone for about forty-five minutes. That phone call changed my life. It was not a lecture. Instead, he asked me questions. We dove deep into a discussion about core values, life goals, my role in the community at Asheville School, and more. Once we had discussed these questions, he asked me what I should do to work towards achieving those goals. It felt like a light switch flipped, and to this day the conversation we had has influenced my choices and actions.

What steps lead to starting One Tent Health?

When I was a third-year undergraduate student in Washington, D.C., one of my professors showed us statistics on the prevalence of HIV in the city. We were stunned to see rates that rivaled or even surpassed many areas of the world we commonly associate with higher rates of HIV. A classmate of mine shared my intrigue. We noticed that some organizations doing HIV screening were turning people away who were uninsured, which baffled us. A few years later I was a medical student in North Carolina when that classmate and now close friend, Mackenzie Copley, called me up and said he thought we should revisit our ideas to do something about what we saw in D.C. Together we founded One Tent Health, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to HIV screening, linkage to care, and meeting people in the community outside of traditional healthcare settings. We launched in a canvas tent with just a few volunteers in 2017. Now six years later, we've amassed over 3,000 volunteers, conducted thousands of HIV screens and more than 10,000 COVID tests during the height of the pandemic, and added additional services such as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), naloxone education and distribution, voter registration, and more. All of this happens in the community—outside a grocery store, next to a laundromat, wherever.

What is your proudest accomplishment?

At One Tent Health, our work over the last several years culminated in a very proud moment for us: My co-founder and



One Tent Health, a Washington, D.C. nonprofit, provides access to HIV screenings and care.



I were invited to speak at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) this past February to share our work and experiences with their entire Division of HIV Prevention. We could not believe we had earned this type of recognition and are incredibly grateful to have learned from experts there during the discussion. We hope the future for One Tent Health is even brighter.

What are your goals for One Tent Health in the future?

We have dreams of expanding to other cities where we can operate the same model and have been contacted by health departments in a few of these cities who have requested our presence. Unfortunately, as anyone in the nonprofit space will surely understand, we operate mostly on funding from grants and donors. While we have been very fortunate to receive significant funding over the past six years, we need more funding if we want to continue to grow. If anyone reading this interview feels motivated to offer any support, you can find information to do so on our website at [onetenthealth.org](https://onetenthealth.org). Lastly, Mackenzie and I have begun working on a new project to address the need for increased medication adherence among individuals living with HIV. I would love to discuss this work further with any alumni who wish to learn more. Feel free to email at [dhschaffer@proton.me](mailto:dhschaffer@proton.me).



# Confessions

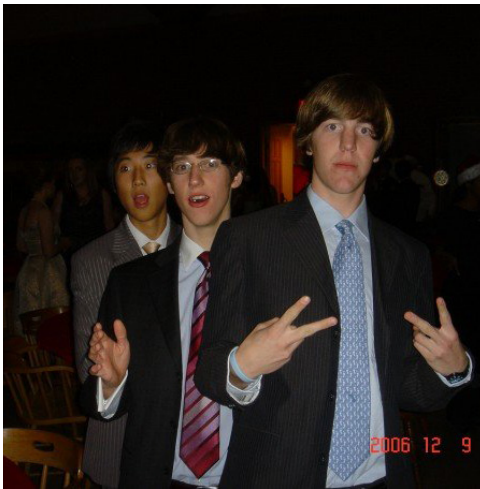
*No student sails through school without hardship. Often, the challenges end up teaching us more than the classes or activities where we easily excel. Three alumni tell their personal stories of adversity and ultimately, growth.*

*Ben Johnson '07*

I came from a family that was difficult to say the least. When I got to Asheville School, I reacted the best way I knew how when faced with difficult circumstances: I yelled and screamed about it. It was just a natural reaction. The thing that was different about Asheville School is that no one yelled back. In fact, I didn't need to yell to be heard. When I realized that being "bad" wasn't cool and that I wasn't going to get what I want in this way, things started to change.

My first year, I was sent to the Conduct Council for oversleeping WAY too much. I would miss class, I would miss breakfasts. It wasn't intentional on my part, at least consciously, but I kept messing up. When I was asked to change, I kind of laughed it off, assuming that nothing mattered. But then my advisor, James Pharr, stepped in to help. I just remember them asking why I was doing it. If I was staying up late, why couldn't I sleep? I realized, one, I wasn't going to get away with being bad or not caring about anything. And two, people were genuinely interested in seeing me succeed. At normal school, it was cool to be bad. At Asheville School, it was cool to be smart and on top of things. I was shown a different way of being.

James Pharr was instrumental for sure. He stuck with me. He really cared. And he listened. Even when I lashed out. I'll never forget just screaming at



Ben Johnson through the years, including as a student in the early 2000s. Blue body paint and a field hockey skirt were not required in those years but were certainly encouraged.

*The lessons that last long after graduation*

# of Champions

him that no one cared about me (and expecting a reaction) and he just sat there and listened. Like...who does that? It really changed my perspective. Being articulate was a better way to get what you want than just yelling. That was huge for me.

My whole goal junior year was to get honor roll and to be made a prefect for my senior year (the same people sitting on that disciplinary council I was in the year before). I buckled down and just worked hard. I'll never forget it: I was as motivated as I've ever been in my life. As I started doing better and better, I kept believing in myself more and more. As that self-belief kept growing, I kept improving. It was a positive flywheel. Good things just kept happening. I eventually was made prefect by the end of my junior year. I was so freaking happy. Then, as a prefect, I presided on a conduct council case of another new student that was oversleeping. I remember just trying to help him out and be there as much as possible. I also made honor roll and got the book prize (highest grade) for a finite math class. I had never really won an award before.

I'm now a Product Manager at Amazon. I got my MBA. During my MBA, I used a lot of skills that I had learned in Asheville School. Mostly, the ability to just grind and work hard. Now I always tell people, look, there's millions of people out there getting good jobs and succeeding...why not you? What's different between you and all these people you think are so good and smart and successful? Literally nothing.



### Carl Boland '99

Asheville School teacher  
and former Director of Athletics

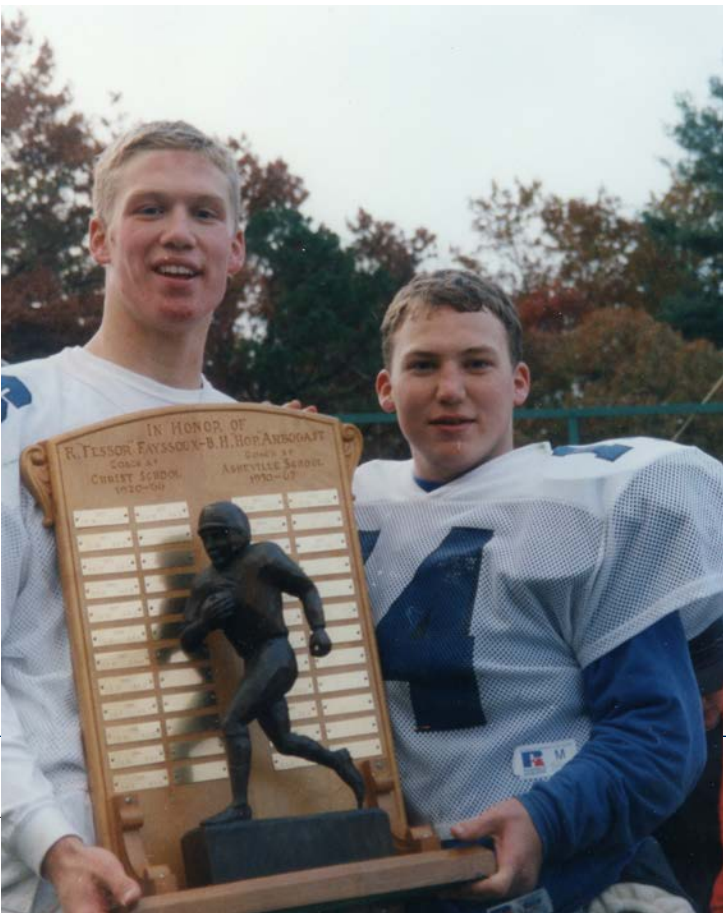
I came to Asheville School as a tenth grader from a public school in Montreal, Canada, and before that I had been in several different schools. I had a pieced-together academic background and I was not as prepared as many of my friends—I was out of my league. I was very weak in math, enrolled in Algebra 1, a course most of the other students had completed in middle school. I was stronger in reading and writing, but I had never even had to write a paper before. I hadn't ever done homework.

What made it all the more intimidating? The environment was competitive. I remember students talking about what grades they got, and it was cool to get the higher grade. Where I came from, it was cool to get the lower grade. I was a good athlete, and it was natural for me to go out on the court or field and excel. I didn't have to work for that.

At some point in the first year, a teacher changed everything. Pam Reid, who taught my Algebra course, told me to stop making excuses. She told me I could do this and that she was going to help me. It was the first time a teacher had told me that. I just assumed I was not a good student and it would stay that way. I didn't know you could get better at studying, at tests, at homework. She invested her time in me, but more importantly she invested her confidence. I figured out how to study. There's no magic formula—you just have to grind it out and work hard to be successful. But I went from being a tenth-grade C student to graduating cum laude.

Pam Reid retired, but I still see her sometimes and I always thank her. A big reason I went into education and am teaching today is because of that experience I had when someone put their energy and confidence in me. I've coached a bunch of different sports, have been the Athletic Director, and am going back into teaching full time next year. I always tell students that it's not just about academics or athletics—you need to strive for excellence both in and out of the classroom.

I share my story with students a lot. I know what it's like to transfer in, to be intimidated. At Asheville School, we get students from so many different backgrounds that come in with all kinds of different skill sets. We have to meet them where they are.



Carl Boland holds the famed Arbogast trophy after a decisive win over Christ School in 1999 (left).

### Katherine Queen C'22

Before attending Asheville School, I worked for my dad training horses, and I never prioritized school. The transition from being homeschooled to attending a boarding school was intimidating. I was forced to prioritize school because I lived on campus, and teachers were persistently checking on me and holding me accountable to complete my work.

I could create an extensive list of how different faculty members supported me, but my most memorable faculty member was my advisor, Mrs. Babaoff. She provided me with constant support in all aspects of life. I overcame many emotions throughout my four years. Each year I progressed mentally, understanding the intentions of my faculty members, and realizing they always wanted the best for me. I learned at Asheville School to give opportunities time. I learned to slow down and give something or someone a chance before making up the mindset that you are not content. You have to be willing to have an open mindset to accept change and get the most out of your experience. Looking back at my four years at Asheville School, I realized how fortunate I was to have so much support and create unique bonds with our community.

Katherine's mother, Elizabeth, adds: "From the very first time we drove through the gates at Asheville School, I felt a huge amount of peace. Even though Katherine didn't know it yet, I knew that she was going to love it there. While Katherine was at Asheville School, I trusted everyone there completely. The staff helped us raise her. Derry Babaoff made us feel so welcome from the very beginning. She is truly the most amazing mentor that Katherine has had in her life. While she was there, she gained so much confidence and developed into a very determined young lady. Katherine has to work hard for her grades. It took a while, but with the help from her teachers and staff, she became a very good student."

Katherine now studies business with an emphasis in real estate at the College of Charleston.



Katherine with her advisor, Derry Babaoff, at graduation in 2022.



# The Power of

Each day in the Philanthropy office we are honored to be the stewards of donors' gifts to the school. Ensuring that the funds are appropriately applied, stewarded, and creating meaningful impact are some of the most important parts of our work. This is especially true with legacy gifts. These gifts, because of their deliberate intent, really speak to the influence Asheville School had on the lives of the donor and are profound in their impact of helping sustain the school in perpetuity for endless generations of Blues.

The Peck Society was established in 1997 to honor former math teacher Wilbert Peck who left a sizable gift from his estate in celebration of his more than thirty years in the classroom at Asheville School. Peck's legacy of giving back to sustain the school in perpetuity is honored today each time new members of the Blues community make provisions to create a legacy with their philanthropy.

We're pleased to share the story of the generosity of alumnus Jim Gault '46 with you in this issue. "If any of my AS classmates and friends are reading this," he wrote in 2020, "I hope you will seriously consider joining me as a member of the Wilbert Peck Society with a legacy gift." We hope his words and encouragement inspire you to consider your own legacy at Asheville School. We would be honored to help you create it.

Gratefully,  
Ashly Maag  
Director of Philanthropy

## Thoughtful Foresight

Jim Gault '46 died on May 21, 2023. The week before he died, he initiated his annual Blues Fund gift from his IRA. The check was cut and mailed on May 22. Many years earlier, Jim named the Asheville School as a beneficiary in his will.

In 2020, he wrote us this email:

*Hi Burt, This is Jim Gault (Class of 1946) checking in to join the Class Notes parade.*



# Planned Giving

*I plead guilty for never having written a single item for the Class Notes since graduation in 1946. And now, after 74 years have passed (mostly in San Francisco), there is not enough time or space to permit me to write a summary of those years.*

*I can only say that I have been fortunate over all these years, blessed with a wonderful wife and family. I am sorry I have not been able to visit the school more often, but the memories of my three years there remain vibrant. I continue to read the news about AS with pride, following the inspiring progress of the school as carefully as I can. I wish our new Head of School, Anthony Sgro, the best of success.*

*If any of my AS classmates and friends are reading this, I hope you will seriously consider joining me as a member of the Wilbert Peck Society with a legacy gift.*

"The most important part of Jim's life was his marriage to Margaret (Maggie) Evans," noted his obituary in the San Francisco Chronicle. "Maggie (died March 2020) was a wise and strong companion. They had a loving and effective partnership for 68 years. Her intelligence, character, integrity, and strong ethical standards were the most important influences on him throughout their married life. Jim did not adhere to any particular religious faith, but believed, as did George Eliot, one of his favorite authors, that an individual's moral and ethical behavior can aid in the betterment of the local community and beyond."

Thank you, Jim Gault, for the memories, your words of encouragement, and for your generous planned giving to Asheville School.

Jim Gault '46 through the years.



### Did You Know?

44 is the average age people make a will.

Have you made plans for your legacy? Have you had a life event? Wedding? New baby? Milestones are a great time to think about making a will and preserving your story.

Asheville School's planned giving society is the Peck Society, named after former math teacher Wilbert Peck, who taught from 1920 to 1958. He loved the school so much he provided for a sizable gift from his estate.





## *Alumni Weekend Recap*

# CONNECTIONS ACROSS GENERATIONS

**D**ear Asheville School Family,

I am still reflecting on what a tremendous alumni weekend we shared! Over 275 of you joined us from places as far-flung as California, England, Spain, Ireland, and points in-between. The weather graciously cooperated and gave us a beautiful spring weekend in the Blue Ridge Mountains. My personal highlights from the weekend included the Class of 2018 showing up in full force; observing so many of you take advantage of our special tour options; and I want to say special thanks to the class of '93 and '94 who adopted me on Saturday night!

The Class of 2018 reunion was particularly special, as it is always a treat to see our young alumni fresh out of college and figuring out their next steps. They had twenty-nine members of their class in attendance, and I expect to see just as many at their 10th reunion. I was pleased to see our oldest alum, class of 1950, sitting with members of the class of 2018 at lunch; those opportunities for cross-generational connections are what make us strong. I was thrilled to see how many of you took time to return, in person, to reconnect with one another and with this special place. We hope you will plan to join us again soon.

Sincerely,  
Burt Gordon  
Director of Alumni Relations





The Shambaughs.



Gail Strietmann,  
Midge Silberman.



Bethany Bilbrey, George Bilbrey '83.



Derek Liu '23, Cici Lu '23, Tony Su '23.



Maggie Lindsey Harney '13, Maggie Harney's husband  
Zach Harney, Austin Lynk, Emily Williams '13.



Katie Smith.



Danae Pate '23 discusses the successes of the Black Student Union.



Front: Leila Wright '03.  
Back: Dorothy Goodman '03.





Class of '73.



Robby Archer '08, son James, and Emma Archer.



John Chewning '62.

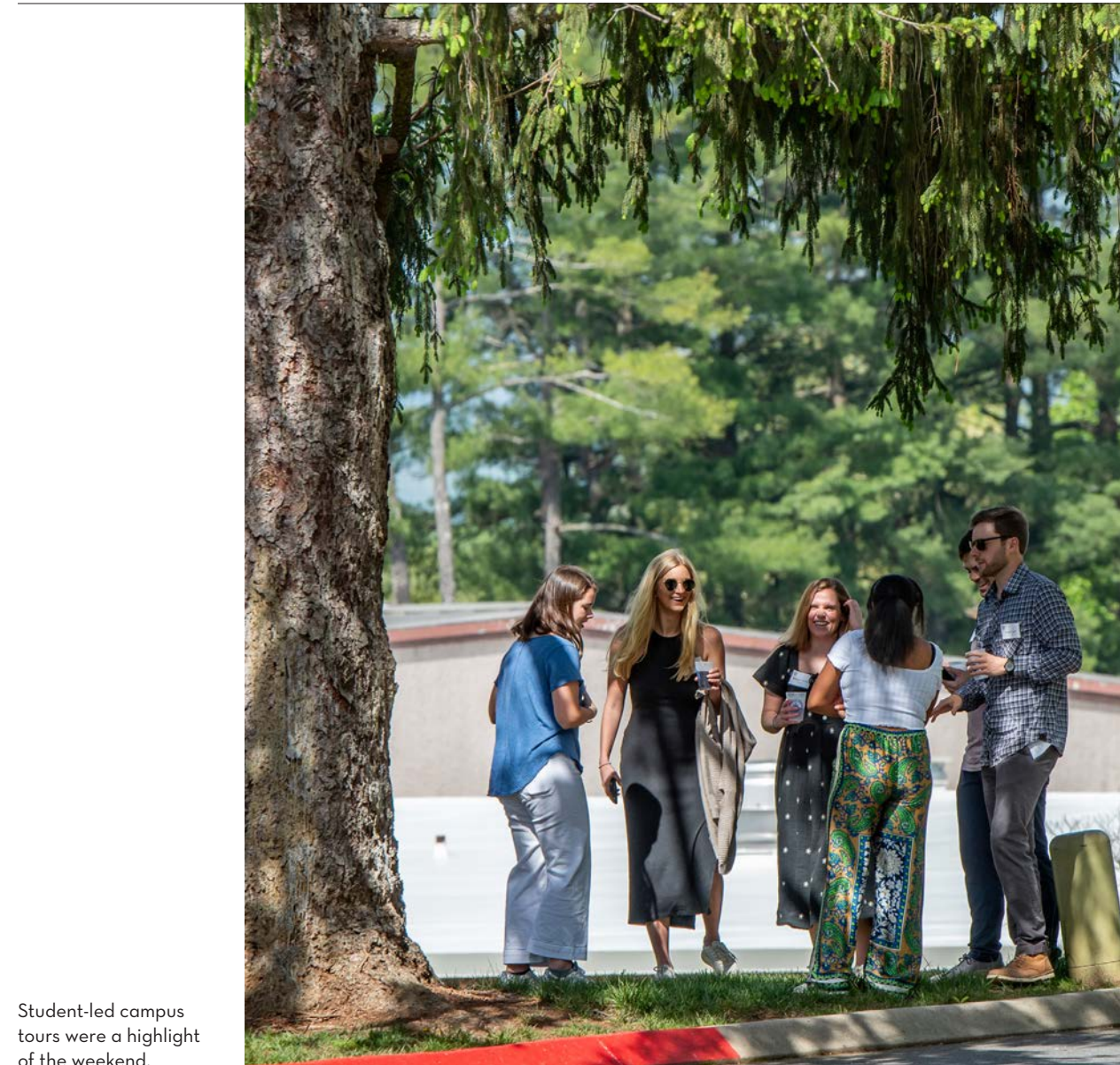


Front row:  
Mary Mac Johnson '18,  
Lily McLarty '18;  
Back row:  
Rylynn Pierson '18,  
Bethany Bunce '18,  
Peyton Campbell '18,  
Nina Mendoza '18.



Lyndie Lavender '18,  
Bethany Bunce '18,  
Eleanor McRae '18,  
and Rylynn Pierson '18.





Student-led campus tours were a highlight of the weekend.



Frank Kriegler demonstrates the joys of beekeeping to interested families.



Andy Silberman '73, Bill Strietmann '73, Steve Levin '73.



Kate McLemore '18, Nina Mendoza '18.



Christine Jones.



Olivia Bledsoe '18, Will Sowers '18, Jack Temple '18, Sam Northup '18, and Sarah Frye.





John Smith-Ricco '03 catches up with Coach Ron Bromley.



Candace Bruchs '03, Leila Wright '03, and Dorothy Goodman '03.



Front row: Natalie Balck '03, Ellen Patrick '03, Rich Odame '03, Amy Odame, Tex Smith '03. Back row: Lauren Northup '03, Evans Pennington '02.



Mike Smith '73, Eugene Wade '73, and Portia Wade.



Elaine Emblar '83, Ron Bromley, Leslie Bromley Peterson '85.



Natalie Balck '03, Ellen Patrick '03.



Above: Robby Archer '08 with son James  
Left: Evan Kim '18 and Miles Loftis '18.



# TOGETHER



# ABROAD

By Jay Bonner

It started with a note I filed for the next trip: no one quite clear about the exact meeting spot. Some travelers arrived at Terminal 1, having just spent time with their children in Europe. Others had taken cabs back to FCO (Rome's international airport) after a few preliminary nights in Rome. And I was the only constant as a known Asheville School entity. But with the magic of cell phones accessing the airport's Wi-Fi, we all, a lucky thirteen, finally gathered with our bus driver, Manuel. We hefted or rolled our luggage, loaded the elegant touring bus, and headed to Spoleto, a magical hilltop town in Umbria, whose cobblestone streets and alleys, archeological excavations and

castle, evoked centuries well before the date Columbus, an Italian, set sail to discover what he expected to be a passage to India—and changed the course of history in the West.

## *Witnesses to the Italian Spectacle: Adventures in the Apennines*

Greeted by our local guide and maestro, Lorenzo Muti, who escorted us to our thirteenth century palazzo, so began our April 2023 adventures in Umbria and Tuscany—the inaugural Asheville School alumni/ae (and parents—current and past—and friends of the School) program for international travel.

We arrived after Easter, so the crowds were larger in Siena and





Florence. The small Umbrian hill towns we visited—home base in the cultural town of Spoleto, olive oil in Trevi, wine canteen in Montefalco, spiritual center in Assisi—were not inundated with throngs. Siena, with its duomo, shops, and language and music institutes, was much busier. Florence, just as it eclipsed Siena’s grandeur through its military and economic might centuries earlier, surpassed the crowds of them all, culture and commerce side by side for the visitors and the natives. Florence numbers swelled with the addition of Erica Mitchell Filidoro ’95, who lives outside the Tuscan city, where she studied for a time during her college years; she joined our group to offer her knowledge and perspective on Florence. History suffuses all the towns: art intertwined with the patronage of the Church. Mary Grace Hinkle ’05 wrote me afterward that the towns, sights, and experiences were “a true feast for the senses.” (Mary Grace’s classmate Leigh Baugham was on the same trip and Mary Grace’s mother, Joy, also participated—family and friends together.) Spend time in each town and the primary role of the Church in the Renaissance is indisputable—even as, ironically, the resurgence of humanist thought split the Church’s grip on political and cultural and spiritual power.

Our eyes took in the artistic grandeur and the sights of the hills and valleys, but our senses were also immersed with sumptuous regional fare and rustic vino rosso. We simply ate well. The Palazzo Leti, a thirteenth century residence restored as a bed and breakfast, provided our morning meals. From the terrace and garden we enjoyed breathtaking views of some of Spoleto’s most iconic landmarks—including the former home of American artist Sol LeWitt, who resided in Spoleto during the 1980s. For lunch we were on our own in the various towns; artichokes were in season, and we ate our share of the local crop: Steamed or fried, we delighted in the various presentations. Late afternoons found us generally enjoying the pleasures of an Aperol spritz alongside an astonishing array of meats and cheeses and breads that might well have been sufficient for dinner. We used these afternoons for the occasional voluntary discussion of the readings. At dinnertime, we gathered in one of Spoleto’s superb dining spots (in a region famous for its meat and pasta dishes, the early central Italy growing season did allow us to feast on various greens). Wine flowed freely from carafes.

At the Montefalco vineyard, we purchased a few bottles of rosé and red to enjoy on our final nights. The palazzo staff provided the glasses and corkscrew, and we sat in the comfortable parlor and enjoyed the wine while discussing highlights of our travels.

What’s not to enjoy? Food, drink, art, architecture, and history on every corner and in every alley. What proved even more impressive, nonetheless, was the rapport that these Asheville School members established with one another. If we flagged in the heat or in the Florence hordes, someone was quick to fall in step and aid that person, to help with carrying an item or with assisting across the street or up the hill. Already, the group’s members have decided to stage an October reunion in the North Carolina Triangle when Lorenzo Muti, our local guide and accomplished musician, conducts his chamber orchestra. They left Italy, as do the countless graduating classes, adherents to our School song: “friends bound together / by the mighty white and blue.”

*Jay Bonner has taught writing and Humanities at Asheville School for thirty-five years. He coached girls basketball and boys soccer at the beginning of his tenure, and he has subsequently served as a Dorm Head (Kehaya), Assistant Dean of Students, Dean of Faculty, Assistant Head, and Associate Head. Currently he serves as Ambassador for Constituent Outreach and Senior Humanities Teacher. Bonner has had the pleasure of working with the last four Heads of School.*



April 2023’s adventure in Umbria and Tuscany was the inaugural Asheville School alumni/ae (and parents—current and past—and friends of the School) program for international travel.



## Traveler Memories

Given the rich history of Italy and its incredible culture, scenery, and cuisine, I knew my visit there this spring with my wife would be a unique, once in a lifetime trip. What I hadn't factored in was the impact on the visit by Asheville School teacher Jay Bonner and our tour guide Lorenzo Muti. It elevated a travel experience that would be incredible by any measure into something extraordinary. This might seem like hyperbole, but I feel like it accurately describes the vacation. While other tour groups we saw in Italy had large buses with dozens of disconnected people, our group was small, close-knit, and had a shared reference point

given our connection to Asheville School. We were able to talk at length to each other and to Lorenzo to learn about the rich history of Italy and the cities we visited.

What stands out about the tour? Visiting both well-known Italian landmarks as well as lesser-known locations in Central Italy. Being surrounded by Asheville School Alumni and people related and emotionally invested in Asheville School. Having fresh pasta at dinner every night and stimulating conversation while drinking wine with my newly discovered friends. Go on this trip if you want something most people will never be able to experience.

—SEAN AND KARIN DAVIES



Raise an Aperol Spitz to Asheville School for creating a wonderful, humanities-driven tour through Umbria and Tuscany. Here are three reasons the inaugural trip was simply fantastic:

1. Maestro Lorenzo Muti, a symphony conductor who once taught art and opera at Duke University, lead our group as only a native could. No fresco was unseen, no nuance of history unexplored.

2. The ever enjoyable and knowledgeable Jay Bonner herded us, kept count of us, and was always available to discuss the books we read, what we saw, and what we had yet to see.

3. Only Asheville School could gather a random sample of folks with whom you could taste olive oil, drink wine, dine, sightsee, log a million steps, and then depart celebrating a dozen new friendships.

As I left our home-base palazzo on Spoleto's mountain top, a stone's throw from Paolo Soleri's famed art studio, I was struck by that same expression of joy we blurt-out as we step off a ride, exhilarated from wonder and excitement: Can we do it again?!

—LESLIE CASSE



# 2022 YEAR IN RE VIEW 2023

## STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TITLES



**BOYS' VARSITY FOOTBALL** won our school's first ever state championship in football. The Blues roared past the Lions of Covenant Day School (46-10) to earn the NCISAA Division II Championship title.



**BOYS' & GIRLS' VARSITY SWIMMING** had a monumental season with the boys' team notching their fifth championship title in a row and the girls' team achieving a back-to-back championship.



**VARSITY GIRLS' TRACK & FIELD** Blues athlete Journey Morrison '24 raced a swift 15.16 in the 100m to claim the State Championship title in this event.



**GIRLS' VARSITY LACROSSE** defeated Fayetteville Academy (17-8) in a historic win at the NCISAA Division II State Championship to secure the program's first state title.



MOUNTAINEERING



**CLIMBING** The Paulsen Outdoor Center is expanding with a dedicated Climbing Complex to support the growth of our Climbing Program. // The Varsity Climbing Team consistently competed in USA Climbing Region 72 Youth Lead/Top Rope and Bouldering competitions throughout the year. // Zyah Kavar '26 and Jim Bradshaw '26 advanced to the Youth Lead/Top Rope Regional Championship. // Stella Baggett '25, Logan Brunk '23, William MacLeod '24, Jinhoo Yoon'23, Raina Yowell '23, and Gloria Zhang '23 qualified and competed in the Bouldering Regional Championship.



**OUTDOOR ADVENTURE SPORTS TRIATHLON** Asheville School's Mountaineering Program and Christ School's Outdoor Program hosted the 1st Annual Adventure Sports Triathlon! The relay format included kayaking, mountain biking, climbing, and a sprint run for a friendly (and hilarious!) competition. Kearney Sword '26 (Asheville School) and Lansing Lewis '26 (Christ School) were recognized with the Excellence in Sporting Camaraderie Awards.

ACADEMICS



**MOREHEAD-CAIN SCHOLARSHIP – Yoyo Zheng '23** Yoyo Zheng '23 joins the ranks of the Morehead-Cain Class of 2027! The highly competitive program fully funds four years of study at UNC-Chapel Hill for students who demonstrate exceptional leadership, character, scholarship, and physical vigor. This is the second year in a row a graduating Asheville School senior has been selected for this prestigious program.



**BONNER SCHOLARSHIP – Danae Pate '23** Danae Pate '23 joins the Bonner Scholar program at Spelman College. The Bonner Scholars program was founded in 1990 with a goal of increasing the access of low-income students to a quality college education while also transforming students, communities, and campuses through service. Students serve and learn by working in cohorts made up of twenty fellow Bonner Scholars in each class. Bonner Scholar cohorts receive leadership training while working on projects in the neighborhood or abroad. Students become, in effect, part of a service-learning community designed to strengthen human communities, meet individual and social needs, promote intercultural literacy, and enhance their development as leaders, citizens, and neighbors.

**LESTER B. PEARSON INTERNATIONAL SCHOLARSHIP – Nikolai Van Niekerk '23** Nikolai Van Niekerk '23 is a recipient of the Lester B. Pearson International Scholarship at the University of Toronto. Nikolai was selected from an extremely competitive global applicant pool. The Lester B. Pearson International Scholarships provide an unparalleled opportunity that covers tuition, books, fees, and full residence support for outstanding international students during their undergraduate career. The scholarship program is intended to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional academic achievement and creativity and who are recognized as leaders within their school. Nikolai will put this scholarship to excellent use as a double-major in architecture and history.





**COOKE COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM – Liz Atem '23**  
Liz Atem '23 is among forty-five high school seniors selected to participate in the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation's Cooke Young Scholars program during their undergraduate career. The Cooke Foundation will provide up to \$55,000 per year for up to four years to complete a bachelor's degree through the College Scholarship Program. Cooke College Scholars also have access to comprehensive academic and career advising, funding to study abroad, internship and conference stipends, and a thriving community of motivated peers in the Cooke Scholar community.



**NATIONAL SPANISH EXAM** The World Languages Department celebrated Grace Shi '24 for her commitment to Spanish language acquisition. She put her skills to the test and attained national recognition for excellent performance on the 2023 National Spanish Exam, earning a Gold Medal.

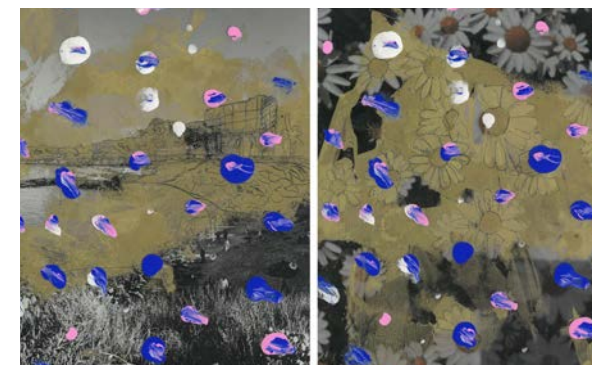


**2022 NORTH CAROLINA STATE COMPETITION FOR NATIONAL HISTORY DAY** Kate Choi '23 authored an award-winning paper for the North Carolina State Competition for National History Day. Her paper, "The Silent Debate: The two-and-a-half-year campaign outside the White House that led to political freedoms for women in America" received special recognition and was the winner for the Women's History Award sponsored by Altrusa International of Raleigh.

## SCHOLASTIC ART & WRITING AWARDS



**REGIONAL SCHOLASTIC ART AWARDS:** Asheville School students earned three Gold Keys, seven Silver Keys, and sixteen Honorable Mentions. One student, Jack Flournoy '23, was chosen as an American Visions Nominee.



**NATIONAL SCHOLASTIC ART AWARD CEREMONY:** Jack Flournoy '23 was recognized at Carnegie Hall during the National Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Ceremony in June 2023. His painting entitled 'Unfolding Consciousness' earned a Gold Medal and an American Visions Medal in the painting division of the National Scholastic Art and Writing Awards. The Alliance for Young Artists & Writers is celebrating its centennial and Jack joins the 100th annual class of national medalists in the nation's longest running and most prestigious program for creative teens.



**REGIONAL SCHOLASTIC WRITING AWARDS (EAST REGION)** Six Asheville School students became award-winning authors for their illustrious and creative submissions.

Margaret Harris '24: Honorable Mention for her poem "Focal" and Gold Key for her poem "Under the Battlements of Lady Macbeth."

Cedric Kenan '25: Honorable Mention for his poem "I'm Fine."

Yanin "Prim" Ngamsirijit '26: Silver Key for her poem "you."

Tianlu Qiao '25: Gold Key for her poem "Phoenix of Humanity."

Natasha Van Niekerk '23: Gold Key for her personal essay "Memories at a Chessboard."

Jennifer Xu '25: Honorable Mention for her short story "A Shipwreck in the Ocean of Void."



## FINE ARTS



**TWENTY YEARS OF DANCE:** Our Spring Dance Performance, “Led Into the Inferno,” transported the audience through the nine circles of Hell. This was the fourth iteration of the original multi-media adaptation of Dante’s infamous poem. The production celebrated twenty years of dance at Asheville School.



## DRAMA PERFORMANCES



**FALL PLAY: EURYDICE** The Fine Arts Department presented “Eurydice” by playwright Sarah Ruhl at the Black Box BeBe Theatre in Downtown Asheville. “Eurydice” reimagines the classic myth of Orpheus and Eurydice not through Orpheus’s infamous pilgrimage to retrieve his bride, but through the eyes of its heroine. Dying too young on her wedding day, Eurydice must journey to the underworld, where she reunites with her father and struggles to remember her lost love. With contemporary characters, plot twists, and a script written to be a playground for designers, the play is a fresh look at a timeless love story.



**NCMEA HIGH SCHOOL HONORS CHORUS** Every year Asheville School chorus students audition for the North Carolina Honors Chorus. The audition process is rigorous and competitive for only 180 spots. Around 1,000 Chorus students throughout the state partake in workshops, rehearse the audition repertoire, and practice sight singing for the opportunity to perform with the top high school singers in the state. We are pleased to share that Sasho Yang ’23 was named to the NC Honors Chorus (Bass 1) for 2022-2023.



**WINTER MUSICAL: MERRILY WE ROLL ALONG** The Fine Arts Department presented “Merrily We Roll Along” as the Winter Musical! An all-star student cast carried this thrilling and compelling Broadway fable about friendship, compromise, and the high price of success. Stephen Sondheim and George Furth expertly blend the excitement and energy of a backstage musical with a poignant and emotional contemporary story about the importance of staying true to one’s ideals.



STUDENT LIFE



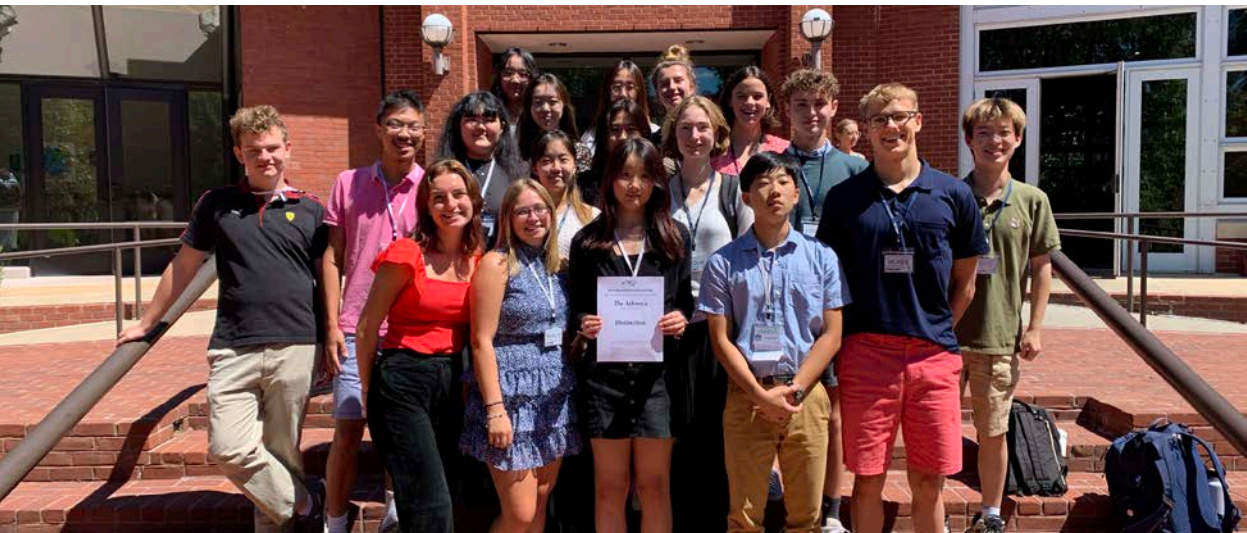
**BRIDGE PROGRAM** Asheville School hosted students and faculty from Christ School and Carolina Day School on October 16 for the inaugural event of the BRIDGE Program experience. We are excited to work with our area institutions to foster dialogue around topics of diversity, inclusion, belonging, and global engagement. We look forward to more opportunities for our school communities to share and learn from one another.



**POC & DIVERSITY LEADERSHIP CONFERENCES** Asheville School students and faculty attended the People of Color and Student Diversity Leadership Conferences in San Antonio, Texas. This annual gathering is the flagship of the National Association of Independent Schools' commitment to equity and justice in teaching, learning, and sustainability for independent schools.



**CIVIL RIGHTS DAY PROGRAM** Our Black Student Union facilitated an educational Civil Rights Day convocation to promote peer-to-peer learning, examine the realities of what it means to be a student of color at Asheville School, and explore ways to continue the necessary work to pursue Dr. King's dream.



**THE ASHNOCA** *The Ashnoca*, our student-run newspaper, was recognized with distinction in a statewide media contest organized by the North Carolina Scholastic Media Association.



**ROBOTICS COMPETITION** Our Robotics Team, Blue Shift, hosted a **FIRST® Tech Challenge** competition—a first for Asheville School—at the Athletic Center on February 4, 2023. Twenty teams from North Carolina showcased their robots at this qualifying event. The robots are built from a reusable platform, powered by android technology, and can be coded using a variety of levels of Java-based programming. Blue Shift (NC FTC Team 5549) encountered a few hurdles leading into the competition, which required a near re-build of Athena the Robot. The team was resourceful with their parts and made strategic adjustments that landed them into the semi-finals! A huge thank you to our Robotics Coaches, Dr. Haugh and Mr. Brewer, for supporting these budding engineers.



**ASHEVILLE'S GOT TALENT** We had a wonderful time partnering with Carolina Day School and Christ School for the first-ever Asheville's Got Talent competition on January 28, 2023. The judges were unanimous in their decision to crown Kahzi Sealey '23 from Christ School as the most talented act of the evening! Kahzi captured the audience's attention with an impressive original rap performance detailing his journey from Bermuda to the Blue Ridge Mountains. Our very own Zoe Park '23 and Carla Bonillo '24 earned second and third place, respectively, with their gorgeous dance and piano performances. It was a tremendous evening celebrating the creative talent of our area high schoolers.



GUEST SPEAKERS LIST  
(ACADEMIC CONVOCATIONS & CLASS PRESENTATIONS)



**DR. ARTHUR C. BROOKS** What better way to cap off our first full academic day than an evening with world-renowned social scientist, best-selling author, and esteemed Harvard professor Arthur Brooks? Over the summer, Asheville School faculty read *From Strength to Strength: Finding Success, Happiness, and Deep Purpose in the Second Half of Life* as part of our professional development curriculum, so having the author visit us here on campus was a particular treat. Brooks is a professor at the Harvard Kennedy School and the Harvard Business School, where he teaches courses on leadership and happiness. He is also a columnist at *The Atlantic*, where he writes the popular “How to Build a Life” column.



**DR. RICHARD CHESSE** Dr. Richard Chess, a published essayist, poet, and former director of UNCA's Center for Jewish Studies, joined us for chapel. In our service, he began by leading us in singing part of Psalm 84 in Hebrew. Dr. Chess then talked to us about paying attention to those important voices that guide us—voices from poetry, from the divine, and our own inner-voice.



**DR. CLINT SMITH** We had an engaging academic convocation, thoughtful student discussions, and enriching classroom sessions with bestselling author and writer at *The Atlantic* Clint Smith. He read aloud his profound poetry, shared personal stories of grappling with the past and its indelible mark in the present, and encouraged our students to appreciate the fullness of life that is yet to come after their time at Asheville School. Thank you to our Humanities Department for facilitating extraordinary educational opportunities for our school community!



**BECKY BONNER** We were pleased to host Becky Bonner for a special academic convocation and thematic conversations. Becky is in her sixth season with the Orlando Magic, serving as director of player services/pro personnel. She works closely with the Magic's scouting department on both the college and professional levels, while also supporting players, coaches, and members of the front office through the organization's player development programming. She has a storied background as a trailblazing female athlete working in professional basketball.



**IMAN ABDULLAH ANTEPLI 'P22** Imam Antepli is a globally recognized interfaith scholar and leader of cross-religious and cross-cultural dialogue. He is an associate professor and served as the first-ever Muslim Chaplin at Duke University. He has built multiple organizations and initiatives to facilitate religious and spiritual life across America's college campuses, sowing seeds of understanding between religions while upholding their cultural integrity and dignity.



**MIKE WILEY** As a lead-in to our Civil Rights Day programming, playwright and actor Mike Wiley captivated our school community with a thrilling performance of “One Noble Journey: A Box Marked Freedom.” The play recounts the experiences of enslaved African Americans Henry “Box” Brown and Elizabeth and William Craft who through their bravery seek freedom. His performance and discussion framed the harsh realities of our not-so-distant past and how the civil rights movement has achieved progress for black communities.



**APARNA KESHAVIAH** Aparna Keshaviah is a classically trained dancer and composer who blends Indian and Western artistic traditions to modernize Bharatanatyam dance and music. She offered a fascinating lecture and compelling musical and dance demonstration to our 4th Form Humanities students for their unit about India. Our students thoroughly enjoyed her artistry of cross-cultural storytelling infused with the power of dance and percussive footwork.



**SHERONE PRICE AND KHALID ABDUL N'FALY** We were honored to host Sherone Price and Khalid Abdul N'Faly Saleem from Appalachian State University for a unique interdisciplinary experience in our humanities department. Sherone and Khalid co-direct the Diyé African Dance and Drum Ensemble, a diversity and community outreach program that celebrates the African diaspora through music, dance, and culture. Our 4th form humanities students learned traditional dance techniques to the rhythm of African beats.



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT



MARY ELIZABETH MARTIN,  
BURCH FORD KALEIDOSCOPE  
AWARD

We are thrilled to announce that our own Mary Elizabeth Martin has been awarded the inaugural Burch Ford Kaleidoscope Award by The Association of Boarding Schools (TABS) in recognition of her commitment, creativity, and excellence in student and residential life.

Ms. Martin has served at Asheville School for seventeen years as a classroom teacher, dorm parent, dean of students, coach, and advisor. During our school's recent self-assessment process, Mary Elizabeth stepped forward with the idea of a four-year curriculum that focuses on life skills for students. She now directs this multi-tiered educational program called Blues CORE.

Blues CORE is a school-wide initiative designed to help prepare our students for college and for life; to allow time for our students to talk with adults in small group settings about life issues; to create opportunities for belonging; and to educate our students so they can make informed decisions. We caught up with some of our students recently to discuss Blues CORE and its impact on our community. We are immensely grateful for Ms. Martin's dedication and commitment to enriching the lives of our students and preparing them for life after Asheville School.





# Class Notes

## 1948

### Bob Kimberly

Bob wrote that he was very sorry to miss his class’s 75th anniversary in April and to see any of his classmates, but travel is difficult, and his wife passed last December. He added that, “I am continuing to live at Aegis Assisted Living although I am, thankfully, still in pretty good health. I am continuing to volunteer at our hospital, attend a weekly writing group, join in activities here, and do my daily pages and write poetry, which keeps me comfortably busy.”

## 1963

### Peter Robertson

Peter continues to research his family’s connections to Asheville School, and he is working on a family biography of his grandfather, his father, and his eldest brother—each named Reuben Buck Robertsons. Reuben, Sr. was a Board member in the 1940s. Reuben, Jr. graduated in 1926 and served as a Board member in the 1950s. Reuben, III was a 1957 graduate of the Asheville School. The biography also encompasses Peter’s great-grandfather Peter G. Thomson, who founded Champion Papers and built its mill in Canton, NC. Peter Thomson’s son, Logan, was a member of the class of 1902. Peter’s other brothers, Dan and George, also attended Asheville School, as did numerous other Thomsons and Robertsons and various cousins. Two of Peter’s pieces about his family have been run in *The Mountaineer*, a Waynesville newspaper. In addition, Peter has written two op-eds about the recent closing of the Canton mill, which had been in virtually continuous operation for 115 years since it started up in 1908, one appearing in

*The Mountaineer* and the other in the *Asheville Citizen-Times*. He has also been asked to submit profiles of his great-grandfather and his grandfather (who ran Champion’s Canton operations for more than thirty years and became president of the large paper making enterprise in 1946) for a commemorative issue on the mill that *The Mountaineer* ran in June 2023.

## 1986

### Graham Eubank ›

Ray Cruitt, former assistant headmaster, recently visited Graham Eubank at his Ford dealership in Charleston, SC (Palmetto Ford). They enjoyed talking about their great friend and former football coach Ron Bromley who was honored last fall with the dedication of the Ron Bromley Field at McNaughton Stadium. Graham won the Valier Award for Excellence in Football as a Fifth Former and, as a Sixth Former, Graham captained the Blues in their 27–7 victory over Christ School.



## 1989

### Pete Kennedy ›

Pete has been charting his own course for years, and he has been the feature of a number of articles about his passions. Most recently, Pete was interviewed by Graham Averill who wrote, “Pete owns Pisgah Map Company which makes trail maps for hikers, bikers, hunters, and anyone else who wants to explore one of the national forests or recreation areas of Western North Carolina.” Check out the complete interview and Pete’s story in the *Bitter Southerner’s* January 3, 2023, edition. And, when you are in the area, pick up a map!





# Class Notes

## 1990

### Dev Sethi ›

The ties that bind continue after all of these years! Dev, Arthur Rogers '88, Joe Lanier '88, and Michael Rogers '90 had a mini-reunion in Las Vegas. He was kind enough to send us a picture of the four, but we didn't ask any questions, because what happens in Vegas...



## 1991

### Reaves McLeod

"I am excited to announce that I have opened McLeod Law & Mediation, LLC," Reaves says. "The firm will be handling civil and family court mediations. The firm will also be taking clients in need of legal services for personal injuries, family court matters, and all other general practice areas, such as magistrate level offense, wills, and contracts. Please contact me at mcleodlandm@gmail.com. The firm will have a state-wide footprint."

## 1993

### Mark Sweeney

Mark married Hannah Edwards on December 22, 2022, and they attended Alumni Weekend with a few of his classmates.

## 1994

### Azell Archie

Azell has joined the sales team at Dun & Bradstreet in New York City.

### Robert Edwards ›

Another group of Blues classmates who continue their friendships—Here, Robert is on a ski vacation with Judd Garbarino and Billy Whitehurst. You're in good hands on the ski slopes with two doctors along!



## 1999

### Brian Wright

"Leading ACM Global Laboratories for the last four years has been an honor and a privilege," Brian says. "I look forward to seeing their continued success. I am excited to announce that I am starting a new position as Principal at Sole Source Capital LLC!"

## 2001

### Nat Wittstruck

Nat and his wife have moved to New York City, and he is now the Senior Creative Director at George P. Johnson Experience Marketing.

## 2003

### Stuart Campbell ›

Stuart married Kelsey Burton on June 3, 2023, in Birmingham, AL.

### Tim Heo

Tim married in 2013, and has a son who will soon start third grade. Tim started working in Manhattan in August 2022. He works for SK, which is the second largest conglomerate in Korea. He is currently working on mergers, acquisitions, and investment for the electric vehicle charging infrastructure field.





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# Class Notes

## Noah Francis

Noah continues his work as a civic engager, and he has started a new position as a Corporate Advisory Board Member at Brotherhood Crusade. He says, “I look forward to supporting the mission of improving the quality of life of underserved individuals in South Los Angeles and beyond.”

# 2004

## Charla Hughes

Charla shared that she started a new job and is now the Executive Director at Prince William Sound Stewardship Foundation.

## Yaw Odame

Yaw announced that he received a promotion at Crescent. He is now the Lead Frontend Senior Software Engineer.

# 2005

## Jon Brock

Jon is now an Account Executive at Ramp. When Jon is not in the office, he is honing his skills as a cyclist.

## Hye Young Cheong

Hye Young (Heather) is now the Chief of Staff to the Executive Director at The Boston Dynamics AI Institute.

## David Emigh

David has spent “the last three years fulfilling a lifelong career goal of serving as the Fire Chief at the Togus V.A. Medical Center in Maine,” he says. “I recently had the opportunity to transition to a new role with FEMA at the Center for Domestic Preparedness in Alabama. Living in New England was a blessing for myself, my wife Ashleigh, and our two daughters. Hopefully, this next chapter will be wonderful as we return closer to family for this new adventure with FEMA.”

## Savannah Engel

Savannah is the Founder/CEO of Savi. “Savi is a community-first focused integrated communications group based in New York City,” her company’s website describes. “We manage all elements of building and guiding brands and founders towards their goals, while cultivating communities around them.” Savannah Engel has endowed Savi with her extensive network and expertise that she has “cultivated through decades of experience in the fields of fashion, lifestyle, hospitality, technology and more.”

## Sarah Gehring Musicaro

Sarah and husband, Matt, welcomed their first child! Charles “Charlie” Ripley Musicaro was born on March 22, 2023.

## Louisa Peyronnin White

Louisa gave us an update that she and her husband, Alex, “have been living in Virginia for two years now and are busy with work and kids, and our two crazy dogs,” she says. “Gus is two and a half, and we welcomed Ted Clifford White in August 2022. Adjusting to two kids has been something else, but five months in, we are getting into our groove. I am working at a group therapy practice as a Clinical Psychologist and do teletherapy and psychological evaluations—testing to help people determine what diagnoses they have. Alex is loving his job on the Hostage Rescue Team, which is a part of the FBI.”

## Yoo Jin Yoon

Yoo Jin (Kate) has a new job as the vice president, head of Financial Planning and Analysis, Asia Pacific, for Mastercard.

# 2006

## Justin Ange

Justin is keeping very busy with work, and he is engaged to Ashley Bradley.

## Valerie Clarke

Everyone needs a marketing firm, and there is no better ally than your own blood and sister. Lissa Clarke ’09 gave an update on Valerie, who is building an amazing record as a collegiate field hockey coach. Lissa writes, “One conference championship for a program only six years old is impressive. Back-to-back conference champions is a statement! They are 17–2 on the season this year, but



# Class Notes

I know the Valkyries won't stop there! My sister is more than just the head coach, she's built this program from the ground up and she's leading the program to success. It's everything off the field that people don't see, from recruiting, to scheduling and figuring out transportation, to budgeting and fundraising, to even still doing the players' laundry. Valerie has poured her heart and soul into this program and I'm so proud that we get to watch her and this team's success." Way to go, Valerie!

## Zeke Jordan

Zeke is still living in New York City, and in November 2021, he went out on his own and created his own interior design firm. He is a partner in Loudermilk Jordan, LLC.

## Mary Pat Riddle McCallum

Mary Pat and husband, Mac, added to their family. Marianne Scott (Scottie) McCallum was born, and big brother, Duncan, was excited to meet his sister!

## Max Paderewski ›

Max is the founder of Lone Star Injury Attorneys in Houston, TX. In August 2022, the Fantasy Football group reunited! Max wrote, "This year we added Peter Donahue '04, and my brother Sam '08, to the fantasy football league. In the photos you'll also see Daryl Brown '05, Rob Kehaya '05, Jon Brock '05, Patrick Haas '05, Brian Sutherlin '05, and Adam Kraemer '05. We went to a Broncos preseason game one night and hired a professional poker dealer another night!"



## Kevin Seo

Kevin shares that he is now the Chief Strategy Officer for Pomerium.

# 2007

## Fabeah Adu-Oppong Newton

Fabeah shares her news of her new position at BridgeYear as the Chief Program Officer.

# 2008

## Martin Buckley

Martin married Sammy Colarelli on October 15, 2022.

## Anne Archer Hinkle

Anne Archer and husband, Farley, welcomed their second child, a boy, Robert Woodford Stephenson.

## Rodrigo Lemarroy

Rodrigo is enjoying life in Mexico City, and after working for Morgan Stanley for three years, Rodrigo has recently started his own company, Cactus Capital Partners.

## James Sim ›

James and his wife, Seah, welcomed their first child, a girl, Sulla Sim.

# 2009

## Zach DeBenardi

Zach and his wife, Dana, welcomed their first child, a boy, Monti.

## David Pless

David shares that he has a new position as regional Vice President for Adult Beverage Sales and Retail Expansion at Inmar Intelligence.

## Jake Kane

Jake is the founder, president, and consultant with PM Harbour.





# Class Notes

## 2010

### Rebecca McKee Barron

Rebecca McKee married Issac Barron '08 at Camp Merrie-Woode in Sapphire, NC. It was a rainy weekend, but that did not dampen the love and well wishes of so many family and friends who were invited to witness the joyous reunion. The weekend proved to be a huge contingent of Blues and Davidson College alumni. The bridesmaids included sister of the bride, Liz McKee Lemaigre '12, and Melanie Haas Stabler '09. Groomsmen included Erik Davies '08 (best man), Matt Patton '08, and Andrew Bradshaw '08. Alumnae present: Raven Barron '00, Sarah Barron Yoder '01, Caitlin Barron '05. Of the many guests, there were current and former faculty members: Helen and Tim Plaehn, Leah and Joe Lambert, Jay Bonner, Heidi Gruber, Sarah and Trey '95 Wilson, and Burt Gordon '86.

### Margaret Regnery Jones

Margaret and her husband, Will, welcomed a new baby, Katherine "Paylor" Jones, on March 13.

### David Schaffer ›

David is continuing his work in medicine as a resident at UVa. He is engaged to be married on September 9, 2023, to Carly Cianci in Philadelphia. They are currently living in Charlottesville, VA, where David is also a co-founder and policy director of a non-profit health organization called One Tent Health.

### Katy Miller

Katy has been promoted to vice-president for Experiential Marketing at Shamin Abas, Ultra Luxury Brand Marketing & Business Development.

### Madeline Olsen

Madeline and her family dropped by campus recently while she was in town planning her November wedding at the Grove Park Inn. She is currently teaching third graders.



## 2011

### Sarah Bicknell Berning ›

Sarah married Walker Berning on Sea Island, GA, on April 29, 2023.

### Web Bleynat

Web shares that he “moved to Cordova, TN, to marry my wife, Siyao, and we’re about two months away from our first child. I’m working as a data analyst for a trailer parts company.”

### Gabe Darab

Gabe married Jodi Askew in Charlottesville, VA, and present were brothers Patrick Darab Hartigan '05, and Connor Darab '14.

### Ashley Heslop Hoesli

Ashley married Cory Hoesli in Greenville, SC, on May 6, 2023.

### Min Ki Kim

Min Ki and his wife, Ruby, welcomed their first child, a son. Hajoon Henry arrived three weeks and one day earlier than his due date, but happy and healthy!

### Autumn Stone

Autumn writes that she is living in Laurel, MD, and is working at a level 2 trauma center as a Physician Assistant in Orthopedic Trauma.

### Philip Stone

Philip writes that he left the military in January 2022, and he started working for Fiserv as a Project Manager. He and his wife, Sara, and their daughter, Ella, live in Cumming, GA.

### Elizabeth Stover ›

Elizabeth married William Anderson on June 17, 2023, in Winston-Salem, NC. She is now studying for the NC Bar Exam.

### Kelly Koon Whitehouse

Kelly married on November 22, 2022.

### Parker White

Parker shared the news that he has re-enlisted in the US Navy.





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# Class Notes

## 2012

### Song Chae

Song married Jae Bin Lee on April 9, 2022.

### Malik Evans

Malik married Madison Boatwright in Mount Pleasant, NC. Blues attending the event were parents Paul and Tish Szurek, Walker Szurek '11, Ben Szurek '15, Desmond Gray '12, Mitchell Muir '12, Dessa Raymond '12, and John Volquez '13.

### Liz McKee Lemaigre

Liz and her husband, Max, brought in the new year and welcomed their first child, Maeve Elizabeth Lemaigre, on January 23, 2023.

### Shaunteri Skinner Miles

Shaunteri and husband, Rodney, welcomed twins, Rayaana and Rodney, October 7, 2023.

### Natalie Kuehl Powell

Natalie and husband, Tyler, welcomed their first child, a girl, Logan Wiley, on June 13, 2023.

### Taylor Smith

Taylor married Francesca Frere on Saturday, October 15, 2022, in Stafford, VA. Taylor's brother, Hunter '15, was the best man, and Anthony Cammarata '12 was a groomsman.

### Mary Elizabeth Munday Swecker

Mary Elizabeth shares that she has started a new position as Operations Engineer at Gulfstream Aerospace.

### Ryan Somogyi

Ryan married Alyssa Meyer in Hendersonville, NC, on Sunday, October 23, 2022.

### Dabney Close Stevenson

Dabney married Crockett Stevenson in Fort Mill, SC, on October 22, 2022.

### Mary Page Troxler

Mary Page and Will welcomed their first child on March 25, 2023. Welcome Ann MacRae (Annie Mac) Troxler!

### Lawrence Waller

Lawrence married Hannah Boone at Mountain Land and Cattle Ranch, a wedding venue outside of Asheville, on April 22, 2023. Dylan Morris '13 provided the music for the ceremony.

## 2013

### Nabiel Abuyazid

Nabiel continues his studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is a Postdoctoral Fellow | Plasma, Electrochemistry, Semiconductors | Electrochemical methods for defect engineering applications.

### Patrick Wood

Jay Bonner caught up with Patrick, who continues to work largely in a remote capacity for a firm that enables international students opportunities to study and intern in the United States: visa advice and health insurance and such.

## 2014

### Dylan Bilski

After graduate school in London, Dylan is excited to report that he has a new job. "I'm happy and grateful to share that I'm starting a new position as a Global Markets Analyst at Cr dit Agricole CIB!"

### Claire Hansen

Claire shared that "After a really wonderful and fulfilling year in London earning my MA in Creative Writing: Literary Nonfiction at Royal Holloway, University of London, I'm really excited to be back at *U.S. News & World Report* as a staff writer on the news team covering all things politics and justice." Be on the lookout for her articles!



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# Class Notes

## Michael Holowesko

Michael passed his exams with flying colors, and he was called to the Bar of England and The Bahamas Bar Association. What a huge honor for Michael!

# 2015

## Lauren Klepper LaSure

Lauren married Trey LaSure in Fairview, NC, on May 27, 2023.

## Elise Niven Holmes

Elise married Phil Holmes in Waynesville, NC. Blues in attendance at her wedding were Isabelle Bonner '15 and Abby Willis O'Brien '15.

## Jasmin Lopez

Jasmin has begun a program at UCLA Anderson called the Riordan Pre-MBA Fellows. “This program is going to be instrumental in helping me apply to and gain admission to a top MBA institution,” Jasmin says. “Since starting the program, I was elected as co-chair of my cohort and head of my case study group. I also have taken on the responsibility of fundraising for the UCLA Foundation. Throughout the year, I am responsible for fundraising for the Riordan Scholars program, which prepares high school students from underserved communities to enter a top-tier university and find a path to career success. This initiative means a lot to me as I can relate to many of the students participating in this program.”

## Leo De La Cruz

After Furman University, Leo is now at the University of Cincinnati – College Conservatory of Music (CCM). He is studying in the Masters of Music program for Oboe Performance and Music Theory.

## Carter Boone

Carter married Catherine Hair on New Year’s Eve, December 31, 2022, in Nashville, TN.

# 2016

## Conor Fenn

Conor shared that he has been promoted to Logistics Planner at WestRock Company in Atlanta.

## Austin Letson

Austin posted on LinkedIn that he has begun a new job as a software developer at Uncommon Schools in New York City.

## Ted Henson

Ted has moved to San Francisco, and he has shared that he has a job as a Basketball Analyst with Cleat Street Capital, a sports betting company.

## Talal Houssoun

Talal works for Aspen Technology in Houston, TX, as a Solution Consultant.

## Chris Ritthikarn

Upon graduating from the University of Rochester, he moved on to work on his Masters at Columbia in NYC. He is working toward a Masters of Science, Management Science and Engineering. While at Columbia, Chris is a research intern at the Max Planck Institute for Informatics.

# 2017

## Eleanor Clifton

Eleanor shared that she is now a Marketing Manager at IMG Entertainment Providers.

## Azana Green

Azana shared that she is currently pursuing a Masters at the Teachers College at Columbia University. She wants to become a bilingual speech pathologist. Currently, she is working toward certification in Teaching English as a Foreign Language.



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# Class Notes

## Joseph Heck

Joseph now works for Green River Preserve. He started there last summer, 2022, and is now part of the year-round staff. Joseph got to meet members of the class of 2023 when they went to Green River for the class retreat in May prior to graduation.

## Jon Krupnick

Jon is a Field Geologist (bedrock mapper) at New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources.

## Walker Mims

Jay Bonner met up with Walker, and he wrote, “Walker works with a cell tower company based in Raleigh, though Walker lives on the Outer Banks. Walker covers the entire east coast, Florida to Maine, for his job. He has been working with this company since graduating from Chapel Hill. Sarah, his sister, '17, is working as a vendor manager for hospital systems out of Nashville.”

## Rashad Morrison

Rashad shared that he is starting a new job as the Budget Management Analyst for the City of Boston.

# 2018

## Kate Cavanaugh

Kate posted on LinkedIn that she is headed to Wake Forest School of Medicine this fall, class of 2027.

## Paul Hill

Paul was written up in *Vogue*! “This weekend in Manhattan, amid a bustling crowd of the city’s cool kids, Strada opened a new exhibition, at the same time celebrating its one-year anniversary,” explained a September 2022 article. “Just behind noisy Washington Square Park, the gallery was making noise all its own. Founded by 23-year-old Paul Hill, Strada is first and foremost an art gallery and online marketplace, prioritizing transparency, fair representation, and equal opportunities for its band of emerging and established creatives. (Strada counts over 400 artists and collectors in its orbit.)” Check out the full article online.

## Connor Schulz

Connor is pursuing a degree in pharmacology and is attending The Fred Wilson School of Pharmacy at High Point University, class of 2026.

## Oliver Smith

Oliver moved to California and is working at Paramount Pictures as a Studio Page in Los Angeles.

## Jack Temple

Jack is currently at the Business School at Wake Forest. Upon graduation in 2024, he has accepted a job with Cirba Solutions as a Procurement Buyer. There is a new EV battery materials facility in South Carolina.

## Raven Walters

Raven is in a Masters of Public Health program at the Gillings School of Global Public Health. She just served as External Planning Coordinator for the conference, and she wrote this: “The Minority Health Conference was held this past February. This is the longest and largest run student-led health conference in the nation. The theme for this year’s conference was Practicing Health as a Human Right: Policy, Ethics, and the Law. Conversations about abortion surveillance, white health as global health, the right to eat, housing insecurities, and more were happening throughout the day.”

## Mac Waters

Mac’s mother, Melanie Bullard, says that Mac is doing very well in graduate school at Dartmouth. Last summer, Mac was invited to showcase his music in Czechoslovakia, and this summer the same thing is planned in Italy.

# 2019

## Heath Chase

Heath shared that following graduation at Ga. Tech, he is “super pumped to share that I have accepted an offer to work as a Network Engineer with AT&T here in Atlanta following graduation this May.”



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# Class Notes

## Major Eason

Major shared that he is continuing his education this fall as he will pursue a Ph.D. in Sociology at Harvard University.

## Rachel Kuehn

Rachel Kuehn won a tournament earlier this year at Grayhawk Golf Club, leading Wake Forest University to its first ever National Championship, over Southern Cal!

## Sam Shealy

Sam was accepted to the University of South Carolina School of Law, class of 2026.

## Grayson Sword

In May, Grayson graduated with Highest Distinction from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, earning a B.A. in Public Policy and minors in Business Administration and Biology. She was inducted into The Phi Beta Kappa Society, and she graduated as both an Honors Carolina Laureate and a Buckley Public Service Scholar. Grayson wrote, “I am so proud to be an alumna of this incredible university. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to the Morehead-Cain Foundation for supporting my collegiate endeavors and for inspiring me to be the best version of myself each and every day. It was the honor of my life to be a member of the Scholar community. This summer, with the generous support of Morehead-Cain, I will conduct independent research in Southeast Asia before moving to Atlanta to begin my career at Bain & Company. I am so grateful for the experiences that have shaped me over the past four years, and I look forward to a new chapter of life in Atlanta. As always, it’s a great day to be a Tar Heel!”

## Tristan Thompson

Tristan recently graduated with a finance degree from the Cox School of Business at SMU in Dallas. He shared that last summer, he had the opportunity to intern at AT&T in the Sales Development Program as a client solutions executive. He has decided to remain in Dallas in work in the commercial real estate sector.

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# 2020

## Scott Burns

Scott has been named a Chancellor’s Scholar at Vanderbilt.

## Matthew Hettleman

Matthew shared that his major/concentration is Sports Administration, and he has been accepted into the UNC Shuford Program in Entrepreneurship.

## Sara Frances Jones

Sara Frances shared that she “has been accepted into the Mortar Board National College Senior Honor Society. The Mortar Board is a national honor society that recognizes college seniors for outstanding achievement in scholarship, leadership, and service. Since its founding in 1918, the organization has grown from the four founding chapters to more than two hundred chartered collegiate chapters with nearly a quarter of a million initiated members across the nation. Mortar Board provides opportunities for continued leadership development, promotes service to colleges and universities, and encourages lifelong contributions to the global community.”

## Jake Sim

Jake shared that he is an IR&A intern at CBRE. He is currently a student at NYU at the Sterns School of Business.



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# Class Notes

## 2021

### Kennedi Green

Kennedi is a Presidential Scholar of International Affairs and Environmental Science and a Minor in Journalism at The George Washington University. She also shared that she is starting a new position as an intern at LiLi The First, a Fashion Boutique focused on “creative women who are looking to add a little edge to their look, while at the same time staying classy and wear age appropriate, comfortable, high-quality clothing. The boutique introduces emerging American and International designers.”

### Melissa Sleater

Melissa shared the news of her summer 2023 internship at Gallagher in the Durham, NC, office. Melissa writes, “Joining the 2023 Internship Program will provide me with a great sales experience, including insurance industry training, leadership exposure, participation in sales competitions and professional development. I look forward to learning more about business sales throughout the internship.”

### Crow Thorsen

Crow and his Emory University Swimming and Diving teammates won, for the second year in a row, the NCAA DIII National Championship held in Greensboro, NC, in March 2023. As a result, the team received an invitation to visit the White House on June 12, 2023, as part of the first-ever College Athlete Day, a collaboration between the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the White House. At the NCAA championship meet in Greensboro, Crow Thorsen earned All-America status in the 500 Free with a time of 4:27.52. Crow earned his second All-American finish in the 400 IM earning bronze at 3:52.07. Crow continued to make great things happen for the Emory swim team in the 800 Freestyle Relay. Crow and his three other relay members set the national record with a time of 6:26.98. Watch for more great happenings with Emory Eagles Swimming as McKee Thorsen '23, joins the team this fall.





# College Bound

*Our seniors have enrolled at the following colleges and universities:*

- Appalachian State University

Barnard College

Beloit College

Boston College

Bucknell University

Cardiff University

College of Charleston\*

Colorado College

Colorado School of Mines

Cornell University

Dartmouth College

Duke University\*

Elon University

Emory University

Franklin University Switzerland

George Washington University

Hampton University

Johns Hopkins University

Kenyon College

Macalester College

McGill University

Methodist University

Middlebury College

Montana State University

New York University

North Carolina State University\*

Penn State University

Purdue University\*

Rhodes College\*

Seton Hill University
- Sewanee: The University of the South\*

Spelman College

Texas Christian University\*

Tufts University

University of California - Berkeley

University of California - Davis

University of California - Irvine

University of California - Los Angeles\*

University of California - Santa Barbara

University of North Carolina - Asheville

University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill\*+

University of North Carolina - Charlotte\*

University of North Carolina - Wilmington

University of Alabama

University of Bristol

University of Georgia\*

University of Miami

University of Minnesota

University of Pennsylvania

University of Tampa

University of Toronto

University of Vermont

Wake Forest University\*

Washington and Lee University\*

Washington University in St. Louis

Wofford College
- \*Indicates multiple student enrollments

+Indicates a Morehead-Cain Scholar







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