

SUMMER 2020

# shady side

academy



## Together Apart

Shady Side's Commitment to Community in the Age of COVID-19

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The Shady Side Academy Incident Command Team gathered in McKnight Hockey Center in March 2020 to discuss COVID-19 scenarios and plans. It was all hands on deck as the team, which consists of representatives from all four campuses, discussed various responses to COVID-19, as well as planned approaches to distance learning and campus closures.

# President's Message

## DEAR SHADY SIDE ACADEMY COMMUNITY:



We share this issue of *Shady Side Magazine* during a moment of profound challenge and opportunity for both our nation and SSA.

The disruption and havoc brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic has both impacted and tested us all. At the time I write this, our country has mourned more than 145,000 deaths and observed a range of devastating impacts of the virus on our economy, with unemployment numbers unseen since the Great Depression. All of this hardship considered, Shady Side's resilient shift to virtual instruction this past spring hardly seems worth noting.

And, against the backdrop of the pandemic, our country has wrestled visibly with race and our complex national history, with important calls for greater equity across every industry and segment of American society, including here at Shady Side.

We share in the pain and distress of these circumstances; we commit to listening and learning more as a community; and we renew our commitment to take the lead and inspire action in support of our health and safety, important educational innovation, and a more equitable and inclusive school, city, and world.

Since its inception, Shady Side has sought to develop leaders for Pittsburgh, an essential component of our identity and mission we have affirmed throughout our history. As we face the extraordinary challenges of the moment, this commitment will be more critical than ever. Our city needs us to do our part and help show the way forward: How might we reimagine teaching and learning in the midst of a pandemic? How might we inspire greater equity and justice? And how might we do it all in a way that restores a sense of unity and shared purpose?

I recently skimmed through *Inspire Us Through The Years: The 125-Year History of Shady Side Academy*. The book is replete with stories that put the tribulations of the present moment into important perspective – and it reminds us that, while our school must continue to evolve, it has throughout its history overcome daunting circumstances and contributed to important social change.

Did you know that Shady Side almost closed its doors permanently in response to World War I? Or that a saving financial gift from a group of community members helped the Academy not only stay open but build momentum for the

transformative construction of the Senior School campus in Fox Chapel?

Did you know that the Great Depression led to the merger of Shady Side and the Arnold School, a remarkable union that gave birth to our Junior School campus and SSA's ongoing footprint in the city of Pittsburgh? Or that in response to changing views of adolescence and the "rise of the teenager" during the 1950s, SSA founded the Middle School, the first of its kind in Western Pennsylvania?

Did you know that in the run-up to the Civil Rights Movement, Shady Side admitted its first Black student in 1958, years before the majority of independent schools in the region and across the country did so? Or that in 1993, SSA helped establish the Fund for the Advancement of Minorities through Education (FAME), providing generations of Black students in Pittsburgh access to an independent school education and a range of important supports?

We know that moving forward we have much work to do in order to fulfill our mission more fully and grow as an institutional citizen, but we can take heart in the fact that Shady Side has an original DNA shaped in formative moments like this one, as well as the necessary resolve to gain both strength and a sharpened focus through turbulent times.

We likely have a long road ahead, but we stand poised and ready to seize the moment, once again.

Glory to Shady Side,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bart". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B".

Bart Griffith '93  
President

## Trixie Sabundayo Named Head of Senior School

President Bart Griffith Jr. '93 announced the appointment of Trixie Sabundayo as the Academy's head of the Senior School, effective July 1, 2020.

"A highly accomplished and inspiring educational leader, Trixie's combined commitment to academic excellence and the whole child have helped her make a profoundly meaningful difference for students and families at a range of exceptional independent schools across the country," said Griffith. "Her appointment sets the stage for continued growth, innovation and community building at the Senior School – and further enhances our efforts to fulfill our mission and prepare students for a changing world."

Sabundayo previously served as head of the upper school at Princeton Day School, a PK-12 coed independent school in Princeton, N.J., where she led more than 400 students and 70 faculty in grades 9-12. Her responsibilities included strategic planning, faculty professional development, student support, and a range of projects aimed at enriching community life at the school.



Prior to PDS, she spent 14 years at Marin Academy, a co-ed independent day school with 400 students in grades 9-12 in San Rafael, Calif. There she held a number of leadership roles, including English department chair, dean of equity and inclusion, sophomore class dean, and faculty representative to the board of trustees. Earlier in her career, she taught and coached at Harvard-Westlake School in Los Angeles, and

Isidore Newman School in New Orleans.

A native of Maryland, Sabundayo earned a bachelor's degree in English from Johns Hopkins University, where she captained the field hockey and lacrosse teams, and she holds a master's degree in English from Middlebury College.

"My family and I are overjoyed," said Sabundayo. "In Shady Side we not only have found an extraordinary institution, one that genuinely values the minds and hearts of students; we also have found an incredibly inspiring community, a community we are so thrilled to call home."

## Brad Davies Named Head of Junior School



Shady Side Academy President Bart Griffith Jr. '93 announced the appointment of Brad Davies as the Academy's head of the Junior School, effective July 1, 2020.

"Brad brings a wealth of talent and experience to an already strong leadership team at Shady Side," said Griffith. "His personal warmth, extraordinary communication skills, strong support of faculty, and authentic

love for elementary school children make him the perfect choice to lead our Junior School."

Davies most recently served as K-8 director and associate head of school at Dawson School, a K-12 independent day school in Lafayette, Colo., near Boulder. His responsibilities included administering all facets of the K-8 program, supporting more than 40 faculty and staff members, and leading a range of curricular innovations, including a comprehensive review of Dawson's K-12 math program and the lower school's implementation of both Responsive Classroom and the Lucy Calkins Reading and Writing Workshop.

Prior to Dawson, Davies served as head of school at Evergreen Country Day School, a toddler through grade 8 independent day

school in Evergreen, Colo., outside of Denver. There he supervised the successful development of signature programs in computer science, robotics and outdoor education, as well as launching Summit Learning, a K-8 learning support initiative serving students with enrichment needs and language-based learning differences. Davies also spent nine years at Louisville Collegiate School, a PK-12 independent day school in Louisville, Ky., where he served as acting head of school, assistant head of school, and head of both the upper and middle schools. A classroom teacher at heart, Davies has taught Spanish, design thinking and a course he created called You University. He also has coached soccer throughout his career, twice being named Kentucky's State Soccer Coach of the Year.

A native of Minnesota, Davies holds a B.A. in American studies from Stanford University, where he captained the men's soccer team, was class president and studied abroad in Ecuador, and a Master of Divinity from Duke University, where he was a Lilly Fellow.

"I am overjoyed to join the Junior School and Shady Side Academy community," said Davies. "During my campus visit, I was inspired by the faculty's and families' optimism for the future of the Academy and Pittsburgh. With an impressive national reputation and ambitions to innovate further alongside a city that is doing the same, leading SSA's Junior School presents a once-in-a-lifetime school leadership opportunity."

### WSSA-TV Video Wins Regional Student Emmy Award



A team of eight Senior School students in the WSSA-TV Film Club won a National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences 2020 Mid-Atlantic High School Production Award, also known as a Student Emmy, for the short-form video *Grateful for Our Teachers*. The students who earned the award were seniors **George Grune**, **Nina Singh**, **Mason Tomlin**, **Arusha Nirvan**, juniors **Annabel Everett**, **Eve Mango** and sophomore **Andy Marous**.

### Student-Produced Short Film Wins ISA Awards



*Playlist*, a short film written and directed by senior **Grady Munroe**, won two awards in the March 2020 Independent Shorts Awards (ISA). Junior **Annabel Everett** won the Bronze Award in the Best Child/Young Actress category, while Munroe earned Honorable Mention in the Best Young Filmmaker category.

### Stage Crew Wins High School Drama Award



The Senior School fall play *DREAM* won the Prime Stage Theatre High School Drama Award for Best Crew. The stage crew included seniors **Charlie Brunner**, **Sam Tolmer** and **Daniel Xu**, juniors **Em Davidheiser**, **Zhuoxin Ma** and **Bridget Onest**, sophomores **Isabel Brunner** and **Georgia Horgan**, and freshman **Zach Kamenov**.

### Students Win Scholastic Art & Writing Awards



Two SSA students were national medalists in the 2020 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. Senior **Hyelim Lee** earned a Silver Medal in art for her mixed media piece *Inner Psyche*, while eighth grader **Leo Rickard** won a Silver Medal in writing for his Personal Essay & Memoir piece *The Heist*. Lee and Rickard were among 14 SSA students who advanced to the national competition after winning Gold Keys at the regional level.

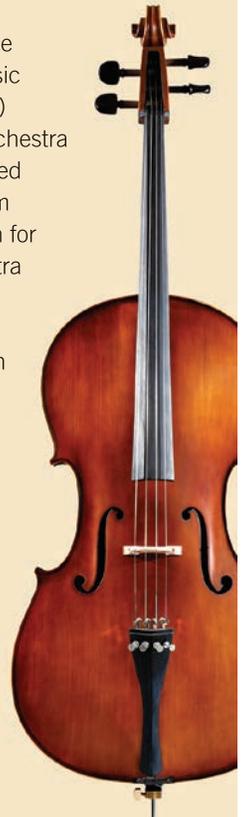
### Students Win Third Straight Congressional App Challenge

For the third straight year, a team of Senior School students won the Congressional App Challenge (CAC) for SSA's U.S. congressional district. Congressman Conor Lamb (PA-17) visited the Senior School on Feb. 19 to present juniors **Jason Wu** and **Nick Zana** with certificates for winning the PA-17 challenge for their math education app, Mathias. Zana has been part of all three of SSA's winning app teams.



### Sophomore Cellist Ranked No. 1 in State

Cellist **Daniel Lee** was selected to the Pennsylvania Music Educators (PMEA) 2020 All-State Orchestra as the No. 1-ranked cellist, making him eligible to audition for the String Orchestra at the National Association for Musical Education (NafME) All-National Honor Ensembles, held Nov. 5-8 in Orlando, Fla.



### SSA Receives NATA Safe Sports School Award

Shady Side Academy earned the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) Safe Sports School 2nd Team Award for its athletic training program, led by Head Athletic Trainer **Chris Rose** and Assistant Athletic Trainer **Brynn Mahoney**. The award recognizes secondary schools that meet recommended standards to improve safety in sports, and it reinforces the importance of providing the best level of care, injury prevention and treatment.

## Seniors Win College Scholarships

Senior **Maya Groff** was the first SSA student to win the prestigious Morehead-Cain Scholarship, a four-year, fully-funded educational experience at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Senior **Andrew Fergus** received an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, the equivalent of a four-year full scholarship. Senior **Giri Viswanathan**, who plans to attend Yale University, was one of 2,500 students nationwide chosen to receive a National Merit \$2500 Scholarship.

## Two Students Named 2020 Carson Scholars

Junior **Qingqing Zhao** was named a 2020 Carson Scholar, and eighth grader **Benjamin Bischoff** was named a 2020 Recognized Carson Scholar by the Carson Scholars Fund. Zhao received a \$1,000 college scholarship, as well as a medal and certificate. Bischoff was previously honored with a scholarship award and received recognition for his continued academic and humanitarian achievements.

## Speech & Debate Students Compete in National Tournaments

Four members of the Senior School Speech and Debate Team competed in the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA) National Tournament, held online June 15-20. Seniors **Akshay Amesur** (Informative Speaking), **Max Minard** (Humorous Interpretation) and **Giri Viswanathan** (Congress), and junior **Qingqing Zhao** (Congress) competed via video in the preliminary rounds, with Amesur advancing to the round of 60. Viswanathan also qualified to compete at the National Catholic Forensics League (NCFL) Grand National Tournament, but that event was canceled due to COVID-19.



## Katharine Fredriksen Appointed Chief Financial & Operations Officer



Katharine Fredriksen joined SSA as chief financial and operations officer this summer, succeeding Gil Schneider, who retired. As CFOO, Fredriksen is responsible for all financial functions, including budgeting, accounting,

financial planning, treasury management, investments, asset management and liability management. In addition to leading SSA's Business Office, she will oversee operations including human resources, facilities, campus safety, summer and auxiliary programs, and food service. Fredriksen brings a wealth of experience in industry and government. She most recently served in a series of executive roles, including president, at CONSOL Energy. Prior to CONSOL, she was acting assistant secretary for the U.S. Department of Energy and senior policy advisor at the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Fredriksen also serves on the boards of Carlow University and the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust. She holds B.S. in marine biology and an M.S. in environmental and civil engineering from Texas A&M University.

## Junior School International Fair Celebrates Cultural Diversity

On Feb. 10, the Junior School hosted its second annual International Fair. Families volunteered to host 16 "nationality rooms" around the school representing Australia, China, Ghana, Greece, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Sudan and Sweden. Students toured the rooms to learn about each country and its culture while enjoying food, stories and music.





## Junior School Holds Food Drive and Teacher Parade

The Junior School collected 75 boxes of non-perishable food donations for Wilksburg Community Ministry at the Canned Food Drive and Teacher Parade on May 22. Families were invited to drive up to the school, where a staff member safely collected their donation from the trunk. Teachers lined the traffic circle with cheerful signs waving hello to families along the way.



## Junior School Fourth Graders Collect for Humane Animal Rescue

The Junior School fourth grade collected seven carloads of donations for Humane Animal Rescue via the class' annual Furry Friends Project May 19-22. Families were asked to drive up and drop off donations at the school entrance during the week, including dog and cat food, clean blankets and towels, and hand and dish soap.



## “Together Apart” T-Shirt Sale Benefits Food Bank

In April and May, the Senior School Service Learning club designed and sold T-shirts with SSA's distance learning motto, “Together Apart,” with all proceeds benefiting the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. Nearly \$1,700 was raised, providing more than 8,000 meals for Pittsburgh families in need.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL BREAKFAST FOOD DRIVE

Middle School families donated three large crates full of breakfast food items during a food drive from Jan. 31-Feb. 14 that benefited the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank.

## Students Collect Donations for Women’s Shelters

Junior **Emory Anderson** used “extreme couponing” to collect more than \$4,000 worth of feminine hygiene and self-care products by spending only \$1,000, which she received through donations. In April she safely dropped off the donations to the Women’s Center & Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh. Freshman **Smrithi Shyam** worked with a group of six student volunteers from Pittsburgh to collect \$2,700 in donations and assemble 30 care kits with toiletries, masks, snacks and activities for residents of the Bethlehem Haven women’s shelter.



## Senior School Students Tutor Urban Pathways Students Virtually

With in-person sessions canceled due to COVID-19, Senior School students continued tutoring elementary students at Urban Pathways K-5 Charter School virtually via Zoom on Saturdays in April and May. SSA students were paired up with UPCS students and divided into Zoom breakout rooms to work together on math and reading. Tutors included **Elaine Gombos, Maya Leyzarovich, Crystal Zheng, Rohan Anand, Inyaa Ashok, Aasia Gabbour, Vanessa Han, Alex Kramer, Thompson Lau, Karen Linares Mendoza, Wilson Todd, Erin Canning, Carolyn Green, Qingqing Zhao, Alison Linares Mendoza** and **Clay Patterson**.

# SSA Serves the Community on the 2020 MLK Days of Service

Across all four campuses, Shady Side Academy students, faculty, staff and parents engaged in service learning projects and celebrated the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. during the 10th annual SSA MLK Days of Service in January 2020.

The format of the 2020 event was a bit different than in years past, with the Country Day, Junior and Middle Schools engaging in educational and service activities during school days in January, while the Senior School continued the tradition of volunteering at nonprofit organizations around Pittsburgh on the MLK Day holiday.

On Monday, Jan. 20, six teams of approximately 70 Senior School students, faculty, staff and parents volunteered at five locations across Pittsburgh, serving three different nonprofit organizations. Two teams prepared breakfast and lunch for residents at Ronald McDonald House in Lawrenceville, which provides housing and support to families of patients at UPMC Children's Hospital. Another three teams were at Family House's Neville, Shadyside and University Place locations, preparing a delicious home-cooked meal for families of patients in nearby hospitals. The final team was in Greenfield volunteering with the Thomas Morton Center's Book 'Em Project, which packages and sends donated books to prisoners in Pennsylvania. SSA also donated books to the project.

In January, Middle School students watched Dr. King's "I Have a Dream Speech" in advisory groups, then discussed and reflected on his legacy and message. They prepared creative responses to the speech, sharing their own dreams through poetry, artwork, posters or music at a breaktime concert on Jan. 21. A dress-down day and donation drive collected funds, clothing and toiletry items for Catholic Charities of Pittsburgh. At a Jan. 23 assembly, students presented ways they want to help in the greater community in the future.

The Junior School celebrated the MLK Days of Service in school on Jan. 16. At an assembly, students heard from a guest speaker from Team PSBG and met several displaced people of Pittsburgh who spoke about their experiences. Students, teachers and parents worked in teams to make fleece blankets that Team PSBG provided to displaced people. Senior School Service Learning Club students assisted in the activities. Students also heard the children's book *Martin's Big Words* and Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech read aloud.



Country Day School students studied civil rights heroes in January and created photo word cloud posters of them, which they shared at an MLK Days assembly on Jan. 17. They also sang songs and learned more about Dr. King. Then students, teachers and parents worked together to make fleece blankets for displaced people in Pittsburgh and cards for children who visit the Highmark Caring Place for support when they lose a loved one. Middle School Community Service Committee students assisted.



1. Junior School Virtual Pre-Kindergarten Alphabet Parade
2. Country Day School Second Grade Virtual Wax Museum
3. Junior School Second Grade Virtual Fairy Tale Parade
4. Junior School Third Grade State Fair
5. Junior School Fourth Grade Virtual Greek Museum
6. Middle School Musical, *The Addams Family*
7. Senior School Winter Musical, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*



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# TOGETHER A PARTNER

## SHADY SIDE'S COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY IN THE AGE OF COVID-19

In the spring of 2020, schools worldwide faced a historic challenge – how do you quickly pivot from a bricks and mortar classroom model to fully online instruction in the midst of a global pandemic? And, for a school like Shady Side Academy, how do you do so without sacrificing the high academic standards your community fully expects? It was by no means a simple task – and it wasn't always pretty either. But as it has done throughout its 137-year history, SSA found a way to reinvent itself in the face of adversity and deliver on its mission in new ways – all while keeping its community “together apart.”

In January 2020, SSA leaders began to closely monitor news of the global spread of COVID-19. Under the leadership of President Bart Griffith '93, the Academy's 40-person Incident Command Team (ICT) began meeting regularly in February and March. The group was charged with assessing the potential impact of COVID-19 and creating response plans for every area of the Academy – academics, student life, health services, facilities, communications, auxiliary programs and more. Decisions were made quickly to cancel spring trips, to work with international boarders to find domestic spring break arrangements, and to increase preventative cleaning and hygiene measures. The school heads and educational technology team began formulating a distance learning plan and training faculty on new software platforms to support it. A COVID-19 web page was launched as a centralized communications hub for families.





On March 13, the last day of classes before spring break, Griffith announced the difficult decision to close SSA's four campuses for an additional two weeks after break, during which PK-12 classes would move fully online. It would mark the first time in Academy history that school remained "open" while the campuses were physically closed.

"While we will not be on campus together, we can take comfort in the fact that Shady Side Academy is much more than a physical place," said Griffith.

As teachers spent much of their spring break preparing to teach in a whole new way, a comprehensive Distance Learning Family Guide was sent to families. At the same time, COVID-19 began spreading in Western Pennsylvania, pushing SSA to extend its campus closure through the end of April. Eventually, Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf would order all schools closed for the rest of the 2019-2020 school year.

"For many years, educational leaders have been discussing and exploring the value of online learning as a complement to traditional schooling," said Griffith. "These complex circumstances, while difficult for educators and families everywhere, provide us the chance to explore such innovations more fully – and with clear justification. This global crisis will test the spirit and resolve of our community, but it also offers us opportunities to re-evaluate our conventions and behaviors, explore new possibilities, and live out our mission in fresh and unifying ways."

When distance learning launched on March 31, PK-12 students turned on their devices and tuned in to virtual

classrooms with an age-appropriate mix of synchronous (live) classes and asynchronous classwork. Rising to the challenge, the SSA faculty found new and creative ways to teach the curriculum remotely while preserving the close student-teacher relationships that define the SSA experience.

At the Junior and Country Day Schools, students shared reading, math and writing lessons with classmates and teachers in live video sessions via Zoom, and uploaded science experiments, art projects and Spanish assignments using the SeeSaw app. Children enjoyed virtual all-school assemblies and dance parties. Some annual projects were reinvented in a virtual format, such as the Junior School's Fourth Grade Greek Museum and Country Day's Second Grade Wax Museum.

Middle School students followed a new two-day alternating schedule with just the right amount of structure. Each day, students were greeted with a fun morning announcement video from Assistant Head Brian Johnston before logging on to their iPads to download assignments and attend live Zoom classes and advisory group meetings.

At the Senior School, teachers leveraged the Zoom platform to invite professionals from across the country to speak in their classes. Community assemblies, although virtual, continued to feature senior sages, guest speakers, musical performances, and important ceremonies such as Cum Laude and Senior Awards Day. *The Shady Side News* published the first digital-only edition in the newspaper's 125-year history, and the Senior Project program was revamped to enable 17 seniors to complete serious learning experiences outside the classroom in the final three weeks of the year.

Across all four campuses, teachers went above and beyond to make distance learning engaging and fun. In response, the Academy launched a Distance Learning Teacher of the Week recognition program, which quickly became a Distance Learning Teacher of the Day honor as the nominations poured in from parents and students. Teacher Appreciation Week took on a whole new meaning, and the SSA Parents' Association created a heartwarming video of students personally thanking their teachers for their amazing efforts.

For the Class of 2020, the spring of their senior year was nothing like they envisioned, and the sense of loss was very real. While nothing could compare to spending their final days of high school in person together, SSA found ways to celebrate the seniors – from personally delivering yard signs to their homes to cheering them on during the first-ever Senior Drive-Thru Celebration around the quad on May 29, the original date of Commencement (see story on page 20). The Academy planned to host an in-person, on-campus Commencement Exercises on July 31, after the county's stay-at-home order was lifted.

Griffith, who undoubtedly never imagined steering SSA through a global pandemic in his first year as president, provided strong and caring leadership with near-daily emails to keep families informed and feeling connected. Putting the pandemic into a bigger historical perspective, he reminded the community that SSA had overcome even more daunting circumstances throughout its history, including two World Wars, the Great Depression, and several mergers and physical moves.

**“THIS GLOBAL CRISIS WILL TEST THE SPIRIT AND RESOLVE OF OUR COMMUNITY, BUT IT ALSO OFFERS US OPPORTUNITIES TO RE-EVALUATE OUR CONVENTIONS AND BEHAVIORS, EXPLORE NEW POSSIBILITIES, AND LIVE OUT OUR MISSION IN FRESH AND UNIFYING WAYS.”**

– President Bart Griffith '93

“Shady Side has an original DNA shaped in formative moments like this one,” he reflected. “The traits of resilience, devotion, and ingenuity are coded into every member of our community – and give rise to our future and its many possibilities.”

One parent reflected on the Academy's handling of the pandemic by saying, “I have never doubted our decision to enroll the kids at SSA. The foresight, coordination and communication from teachers over the last month as we anticipated the consequences of the pandemic have served to validate further our school selection. Shady Side Academy's staff is at the forefront of COVID-19 preparation, always proactive and rarely reactive. Shady Side Academy is a leader in this community. For this, I am grateful.”



# Board of Trustees Unanimously Votes to Discontinue Indian Mascot

On June 30, 2020, the Shady Side Academy Board of Trustees voted unanimously to discontinue the use of the Indian as Shady Side's mascot and the name of its competitive teams, effective July 1, 2020.

**July 1, 2020**

**Dear Shady Side Community,**

I write today to share some important news about Shady Side Academy. On June 30, 2020, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to discontinue the use of the Indian as the Academy's mascot and the name of our competitive teams. This decision is effective today, July 1, 2020.

As this is a significant change in the life of our school, I wanted to inform you how and why the Board of Trustees made this decision.

In 1936, Shady Side's legendary Athletic Director William "Cap" Palmer, a retired military captain, announced that Shady Side Academy's teams would be known as the "Indians." Palmer, with the input of the students running the *Shady Side News*, adopted this name as a tribute to the physical location of Shady Side Academy's Fox Chapel campus, which in the 1700s served as an encampment for a Seneca Indian tribe led by Chief Guyasuta. Palmer thought that the name would also build school spirit, as it was much easier to cheer for a team that actually had a name. On January 11, 1936, Shady Side Academy's basketball team became the first team to play as the "Indians," defeating the Arnold School 24-15 in what the *Shady Side News* described as a "listless contest."

In the early 1990s, SSA alumni, students and faculty began discussing whether the Indian should continue as the mascot and team name. This discussion centered around the question of whether the Academy's use of the Indian name, and certain Native American imagery in particular, was appropriate. In 1996, the Board of Trustees voted to reaffirm the use of the Indian so long as it was used in a respectful and honorable manner. Consistent with this mandate, the Academy removed all inappropriate Native American imagery from its branding and uniforms the following year.

In 2018, a full generation later, our student leadership again sought to have elevated discussions about the Academy's use of the Indian. As part of these discussions, several students raised concerns that the continued use of the Indian made it difficult to generate school spirit, to cheer at athletic events, and had become something that was dividing us instead of uniting us. Our student leadership continued this discussion throughout the 2019-2020 academic year, and provided the administration with survey data demonstrating that more than 64% of the Senior School student body supported changing the name. The Board had planned to discuss this topic in the spring; however, the Academy's response to COVID-19-related issues became our focus.

The Board of Trustees convened on June 30, 2020, to review this issue and to take an honest view of the Academy's continued use of the Indian. In analyzing the situation, the Board recognized that a significant portion of our community feels that it cannot embrace the Indian as the mascot and team name. For years, fans

at SSA sporting events and competitions have cheered "Go Blue!" or "Go Shady Side!" but in 2020, few in the Shady Side community feel comfortable using Indian cheers. This perspective is not unique to Shady Side, but has also been widely discussed at the collegiate and professional levels. The use of the term Indian by those who do not have a direct association with Native American history has become a passionately contested issue.

The Board of Trustees also reviewed Shady Side's 85-year history with the Indian name. Shady Side has always sought to treat it with great pride and respect. Over the years, there have been numerous meetings with members of the Three Rivers American Indian Council and other Native American groups. After each meeting, and with their support, Shady Side adapted its use of the name and imagery in accordance with the consensus reached by these groups.

The Board of Trustees is keenly aware that our Shady Side community is comprised of more than 8,000 students and living alumni, whose experience at the Academy spans more than 90 years. The Board's decision to change the name should not be construed, in any way, as a decision to change or erase our history. The Board of Trustees and administration remain fully dedicated to appropriately recognizing this chapter of our history in our archives.

Our Mission, as an institution, is to Think Expansively, Act Ethically, and Lead Responsibly. Viewing Shady Side Academy's continued use of the Indian through the lens of our Mission and Guiding Principles, the Board of Trustees unanimously voted to discontinue the use of the Indian as the mascot and team name.

The Board of Trustees has charged the administration with developing an expedited process for the selection of a new mascot and team name. This collaborative process will involve the engagement of alumni, students at all divisions, parents and faculty. We will share details about the process and timeline as they become available. The Board of Trustees will make the final decision on the Academy's new mascot and team name in the late fall, and we hope to announce it to the community by December 31, 2020.

While we recognize that this change will cause some to be disappointed, there is no doubt that this is the right decision to move Shady Side Academy forward. Consistent with the wishes of Cap Palmer, we are excited to develop a new mascot and team name that will once again unite Shady Side Academy, and that will provide our community with something to cheer about for generations to come.

Glory to Shady Side!

**Jonathan M. Kamin '91**  
**Chair, Board of Trustees**

# Building



## Fostering Connections and a Sense of Belonging at SSA

BY VALENTINE J. BRKICH  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES KNOX

# Community

In 1982 a federal court ruling mandated the merger of Pittsburgh's predominately Black General Braddock school district with the predominately white districts of Churchill, Edgewood, Swissvale and Turtle Creek, creating the Woodland Hills School District. Lillian Grate, Shady Side Academy's director of equity, inclusion and community relations, was a student at the time and in one of the first groups to go through the new system.

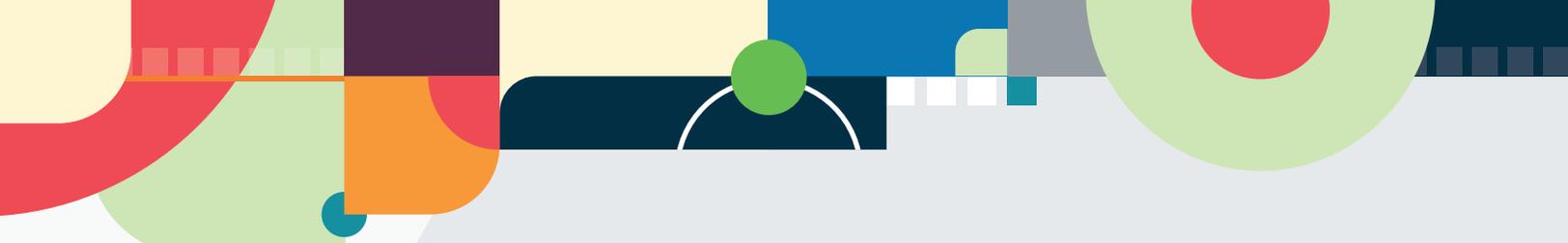
"A lot of people were angry it was integrated," said Grate. "But I am grateful for the experience. It taught me how to negotiate my surroundings and build community; how to collaborate

with people with different perspectives and life experiences. And it gave me the foundation for the work I'm doing now."

Today, Grate is leading the Academy's diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts. In this role she collaborates with the administration and oversees the progress towards equitable and inclusive policies and practices at all four SSA campuses. She also trains and supports faculty and staff in DEI, educates and supports students, connects and supports parents and alumni of color, and builds upon SSA's community service work.

It's a lot of responsibility, but Grate sees it as vital work, both for the Academy and the region at large. "Shady Side has always been a beacon of education," said Grate, whose son, Terrance, started at SSA in sixth grade. "It's also a reflection of Pittsburgh itself, which is changing demographically. It's important that SSA reflect this shift and that we make sure to respect and appreciate what every individual brings to our community."





At Shady Side, diversity isn't just another initiative, it's a fundamental part of the institution as a whole. SSA's students and faculty come from all ends of the globe, representing numerous cultures and ethnic backgrounds. Thirty-seven percent of the Academy's population is comprised of students of color, compared to just 15 percent of the Pittsburgh metro area's population. Currently nine different countries are represented in the student body, and more than 35 different languages are spoken in the homes of SSA families.

These figures certainly justify the Academy's DEI efforts. But for President Bart Griffith '93, promoting DEI is

essential to academic excellence and a generative learning environment.

"Diversity of thought and experience are critical to a community's efforts to realize intellectual rigor and discover truths of head and heart," said Griffith. "All of the research tells us that students learn more effectively when they feel included. They are also more likely to maintain a relationship with their school throughout their life if they feel they have been a member of a community, rather than just another customer pursuing a diploma."

Griffith is more than pleased with Grate's efforts. "Lillian is one of the most effective DEI leaders I have worked with in my almost 25 years in independent schools," he said. "She has built trust across a broad range of constituencies at

SSA, established common language that allows us all to better understand these topics, reimagined a range of systems in order to promote greater equity, and equipped our leadership team tools that improve our capacity to better connect with and support a diversity of community members. And she does it all with a winning spirit and important sense of humor."

Grate, who joined SSA in 2018, grounds her work in three overarching goals, the first of which is to create an inclusive environment where all students feel welcomed, valued and appreciated. "It's all about feeling respected and appreciated," said Grate. "I try to help each student feel they have a seat at the table and that they are part of the conversation."



**"She has built trust across a broad range of constituencies at SSA, established common language that allows us all to better understand these topics... And she does it all with a winning spirit and important sense of humor."**

– President Bart Griffith '93

# An Alumnus Reflects on Grate's Work

Back in 2018, **Roland J. Criswell '95**, a long-time member of Shady Side Academy's Board of Trustees, was part of the search committee led by Chair Jonathan M. Kamin '91 that hired Lillian Grate.

"We were well aware of Lillian's good work in and around the Pittsburgh community," says Criswell, president of Coston-Criswell Funeral Homes and managing partner of Kimbo Realty LLC. "She has an innate ability to bridge people of different cultures and backgrounds. Now she's brought that skill to Shady Side Academy."

Criswell, whose two sons attended SSA's Junior and Middle Schools until the family moved in 2020, has seen a marked improvement in the Academy's diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in recent years, something he largely credits to Grate's work. "When I was a student at SSA, we basically just had the Black Student Union. Now there are a number of clubs and groups to support our diverse student body. It's really been a huge transformation."

One of these groups, the African American Parent Association, was developed by Grate and Criswell's wife, Bethany, who serves as an SSA Parent Ambassador. "It's enabled us to reconnect with African American alumni who previously may have felt

disconnected and help bring them back into the SSA community."

SSA's focus on DEI is vital, says Criswell, because it gives students an international perspective that will benefit them in the global workplace. "Today you have to embrace diversity and be comfortable with people of different backgrounds. A few years ago, we hosted students from China and Germany, and it was such a great experience. My sons still talk about it today."

As for Grate, Criswell says her real value comes from respecting the opinions and wisdom of others. "She listens first and doesn't assume she has all the answers. She values what everyone brings to the table and partners with them, knowing they bring a diverse perspective. We couldn't have chosen a better person for the job."



Her second goal is to foster a community of diverse perspectives to better prepare students for a global society. The third is to cultivate a community of cultural understanding, respect and social responsibility. "When you get down to it, it's like Mr. Rogers always said: it's about just being a good neighbor," she said.

One of Grate's main responsibilities is working closely with the four school heads to develop and execute equity plans for each school. "In my mind, equity is actionable," she said. "You receive the support you need, so that you can have the same outcomes as everyone else."

During the 2019-2020 school year, Grate focused much of her energy on the Middle School. "A lot is happening in those three short years. These kids are in an age that's key in human growth and development," she said.

Working closely with Middle School Head Amy Nixon and Assistant Head Brian Johnston, Grate has reviewed curricula and support structures for students to ensure inclusivity and to help students engage with authenticity and compassion.

Last summer, she collaborated with eighth grade English teacher Camille MacRae to craft terminology and definitions related to social justice. They then incorporated these terms into the design of this year's curriculum. This shared language helped the students build empathy and understanding, and taught them to think critically.

"We created interactive lessons with lots of inquiry-based instruction that illuminates the importance of these concepts," said MacRae. "Our school is filled with a diverse population with

many cultures and perspectives, and it's important that these differences are welcomed and celebrated."

Another one of Grate's regular duties is DEI training and support for the faculty. To facilitate this, she created an Equity and Inclusion Committee made up of faculty members from all four campuses. Through this committee, Grate trains volunteer members in DEI work so that they can then go and train colleagues on their own campuses.

Last October she led a daylong PK-12 faculty in-service program, where they discussed things such as structural inequality and the importance of language. She also brought in Natalie Gillard, creator of "Factuality"— an online game similar to Monopoly, where players learn about structural inequality by seeing the world through someone who

# “Visuals are important. Seeing someone who looks just like you, or nothing like you at all, is incredibly impactful.”

– Lillian Grate, Shady Side Academy Director of Equity, Inclusion and Community Relations

identifies differently than them. “Our city is very segregated,” said Grate. “This game gave our faculty the chance to step into someone else’s shoes and see things from a different perspective. It didn’t take long for them to engage and start becoming their character, which helped them have greater awareness and empathy.”

One of Grate’s most important duties is advising and supporting SSA’s students. During her second year, she helped create the Senior School Perspectives Club, which provides a safe space for students to have conversations and share their unique perspectives on various issues. Student leaders come up with the topics and do the research. Grate then helps to facilitate the discussions. “Everyone gets to be heard,” she said. “Most important, it teaches civility. It exposes them to different perspectives and teaches them how to respond with respect.”

Grate also supports and consults with faculty advisors of other clubs such as the Diversity Leadership Club, Gender Sexuality Alliance and Black Student Union, to name a few. In addition, she’s working on forming an alliance between various student affinity clubs to unite them and provide a support system for them.

Just by being an adult person of color, Grate said she’s serving as a visible

advocate and example for so many students. “Visuals are important,” she said. “Seeing someone who looks just like you, or nothing like you at all, is incredibly impactful.”

For the African American students, who share her identity, Grate is someone relatable in a majority-white space. “Just being there for them and having them seeing me in my position is powerful,” she said. For the non-minority students, Grate’s presence helps to offer another perspective. “They can ask me the tough questions,” she said. “It helps them break down biases and see people for who they really are.”

Charlotte McDaniel, a rising senior at SSA, is co-president of the Black Student Union and a leader of the Diversity Leadership Council. She said Grate has been an excellent supporter of the many DEI-related groups on campus.

“She’s been an incredible asset in terms of checking in with us and helping us pinpoint and achieve our goals,” said McDaniel. “Her work at the Middle School in particular, supporting the BSU there, has had an impact on students that I am certain will be long-lasting.”

McDaniel said that Grate is deeply committed to success and well-being

of the entire student body. “Though perhaps certain groups often need more support than others, DEI inherently cannot be sufficiently achieved without all members of a larger community working together and feeling equally valued. Ms. Grate wholeheartedly trusts, respects and supports all students’ abilities to learn, teach and make the school a better place.”

Something Grate has been focusing on that’s just in the beginning stages is the establishment of alumni and parent affinity groups. One, which is still in the planning stages, is the Black Alumni Advisory Council. The other, an African American parent group, is already active. There are also plans for a parents of color group.

Grate said she’s excited to get these new groups up and rolling. “People need spaces where they can come together and create community. For parents, groups like these can be supportive and build connections.”

In addition to building a sense of community internally, Grate has also taken steps to enhance the Academy’s DEI efforts as they apply to service learning and community relations. One such step was re-envisioning and restructuring the annual SSA Martin Luther King Day of Service. “This year we wanted to make sure students had an understanding of Dr. King and his messages,” she said. Each campus focused on Dr. King’s question: “What are you doing for others?”

In the Junior School, Grate saw the day as a good opportunity for the students to learn about social justice. They discussed things like what it means to be a good neighbor. “The little ones just seem to get it,” said Grate.

“One first grader told me, ‘Kindness is contagious, and even if I help someone, I shouldn’t expect something in return.’ It showed an understanding of empathy and selflessness.”

In the Middle School, students listened to MLK’s famous “I Have a Dream” speech and then discussed it in light of the Tree of Life tragedy and how they might apply King’s words to making an impact in their own communities. They also organized a collection drive to benefit Catholic Charities.

At the Senior School, members of the Service Learning Club focused on building community at places like the Ronald McDonald House, Family House and the Thomas Merton Center.

Another one of Grate’s priorities has been building relationships with community leaders and organizations. One such partnership is with Dr. Andre Samuel and the Citizen Science Lab in Pittsburgh, whose mission is to expose and explore life science for children and adolescents. “This will be a great partnership as we share similar interests with our science programs at SSA,” said Grate. “It’s all about providing access to opportunities and resources.”

When the COVID-19 pandemic forced the campuses to closure this spring, Grate, like many others, was forced to find alternative ways to continue her work through distance learning. “The online learning space offers a layer of complexity in that it’s more intimate but at the same time distant,” she said. “Through technology, we have access to each other’s homes and personal spaces, but there’s no physical interaction. I am very sensitive to the social and emotional impact of the many losses associated with the effects of this pandemic. A lot of my work is centering the social, psychological and emotional components and bringing it into the forefront in decision making.”

At the onset of the shelter-in-place order, Grate worked with various

members of SSA’s executive and administrative teams to help ensure care and equity for both students and faculty in order to uplift the Academy’s guiding principles in an online space. She also created a working document entitled “Equitable Care in a Digital Learning Environment” to help guide conversations with faculty and staff, and to provide

language with inclusive concepts to keep at the forefront when teaching online.

Grate said the irony is not lost on her that the catchphrase for the pandemic has been centered around the idea of togetherness. “If you think about it, it could also apply to the message I’m trying to spread here at Shady Side,” she said. “We really are all in this together.”



On July 15, SSA announced its Equity and Inclusion Action Plan. Read the plan and learn more at [www.shadysideacademy.org/dei](http://www.shadysideacademy.org/dei).



CLASS OF 2020

SENIOR SCHOOL  
YEAR-END  
CELEBRATION





**Shady Side Academy celebrated the 94 members of the Class of 2020**

at the Senior Drive-Thru Celebration on Friday, May 29, the original date of Senior School Commencement Exercises. Graduates and their families drove around the main quad in decorated cars while teachers lined the sidewalks holding signs and cheering, with stops along the way to receive gifts and take socially distant photos with Senior School Head Sophie Lau. A drive-in commencement exercises and fireworks show was scheduled for July 30. (look for photos in the winter issue).

For additional senior celebration photos, videos and a list of senior award winners, visit [www.shadysideacademy.org/celebrations-2020!](http://www.shadysideacademy.org/celebrations-2020!)



# THE CLASS OF 2020

## BY THE NUMBERS

### COLLEGE MATRICULATION

- ▶ Admitted to **158** colleges and universities
- ▶ Will attend **60** colleges in **22** states plus D.C.
- ▶ **68%** will attend college out of state

# 94

## GRADUATES

**100%** of those seeking merit scholarships earned awards

**11%** will attend an Ivy League or Ivy Plus school

- ▶ **62%** will attend a Barron's "most competitive" college

**12%** will play college athletics in **6** sports

**50%** will attend a *US News & World Report* Top 50 National University or Liberal Arts College; **29%** will attend a Top 25 school

- ▶ **60%** overall admit rate vs. global average of 38%

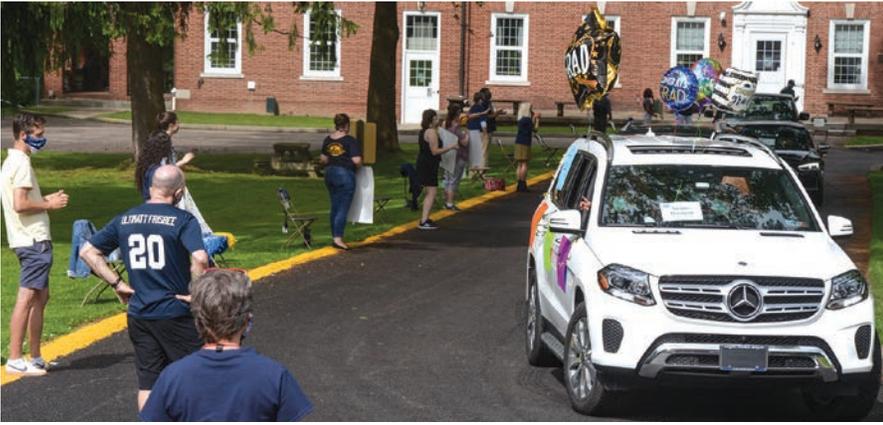


- ▶ **14%** Ivy League admit rate vs. global average of 7% (2x higher)

### SSA EXPERIENCE

- ▶ **15%** are "lifers" who attended SSA from grades K-12 
- ▶ **49%** attended SSA Middle School
- ▶ **22%** participated in the Senior School boarding program
- ▶ **23%** participated in a global or off-campus program 
- ▶ **29%** completed an independent study or senior project
- ▶ **37%** participated in the performing arts (theatre production or musical ensemble) 
- ▶ **83%** lettered in at least one varsity sport; **53%** lettered in two or more
- ▶ **13%** were recognized by the National Merit Scholarship program 





# CLASS OF 2020 COLLEGE CHOICES

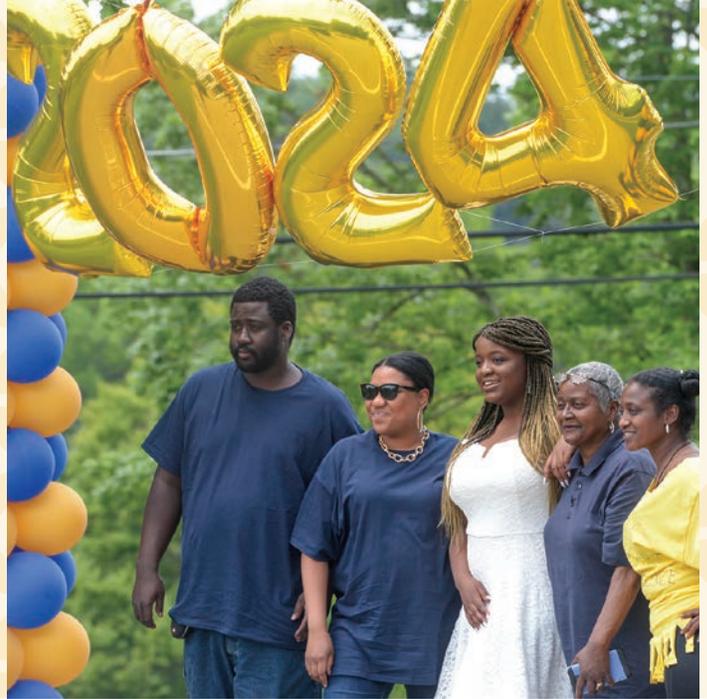
Boston College  
 Boston University  
 Brown University (2)  
 Bucknell University  
 Carnegie Mellon University (4)  
 Colby College  
 College of Charleston (2)  
 College of the Holy Cross  
 College of Wooster  
 Columbia University  
 Cornell University  
 Denison University  
 Duke University  
 Duquesne University (2)  
 Eckerd College  
 Elon University  
 Fordham University (2)  
 George Washington University  
 Hobart and William Smith Colleges  
 Ithaca College

Johns Hopkins University  
 Lafayette College  
 Lehigh University (2)  
 Loyola Marymount University (2)  
 Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
 Michigan State University  
 Middlebury College  
 Montana State University (2)  
 Northeastern University (2)  
 Northwestern University (2)  
 Norwich University  
 Ohio University  
 Pennsylvania State University (3)  
 Rhode Island School of Design  
 Rochester Institute of Technology (3)  
 Sarah Lawrence College  
 Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania  
 St. Olaf College  
 Texas Christian University  
 Tulane University (3)

Union College, NY  
 United States Military Academy  
 University of California, Los Angeles  
 University of Chicago  
 University of Denver  
 University of Miami  
 University of Michigan (2)  
 University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
 University of Notre Dame (2)  
 University of Pennsylvania (2)  
 University of Pittsburgh (6)  
 University of Rochester (2)  
 University of Southern California  
 University of Virginia  
 Villanova University  
 Virginia Tech (2)  
 Wake Forest University  
 Washington and Lee University  
 Yale University  
 York College of Pennsylvania

# MIDDLE SCHOOL YEAR-END CELEBRATION

The Class of 2024 was officially promoted to the Senior School on Wednesday, June 3, at the Middle School Closing Exercises and Drive-Thru Celebration. Eighth graders and their families began the day by watching the virtual closing exercises ceremony video, featuring remarks from school leaders, Form II awards and student speakers Jack Engel and Abril Linares Mendoza. Then graduates and their families drove to the Middle School campus for a drive-thru graduation celebration. The parade of cars made its way up the campus drive as the Middle School faculty cheered the eighth graders along the way. At the top of the hill, graduates stopped to receive their certificates and awards from Middle School Head Amy Nixon and to have some photos taken.



# JUNIOR SCHOOL YEAR-END CELEBRATION



The 33 members of the Junior School's fifth grade class were officially promoted to the Middle School at the Closing Exercises and Drive-Thru Celebration on Tuesday, June 2. After watching a virtual closing exercises video in the morning, fifth graders and their families gathered on the Junior School field in their cars, then drove around the traffic circle lined with cheering teachers, making a few stops to take photos and receive graduation certificates and gifts from Interim Junior School Head Dr. Peter Mathis.

# COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL YEAR-END CELEBRATION

The 17 members of Country Day School's fifth grade class were officially promoted to the Middle School at the Closing Exercises and Drive-Thru Celebration on Monday, June 1. The day began with a Zoom virtual gathering, featuring fifth grade videos and presentations from the faculty. Then graduates and their families drove around the Country Day School campus, waving to cheering teachers along the way. Families made a few stops along the way to take photos and receive gifts and graduation certificates from Country Day School Head Dr. Jennifer Asmanga.



# POSNER AWARD WINNERS

The Posner Award for Meritorious Faculty Performance is presented annually to up to two faculty members at Shady Side who, through their special 'gift of teaching' and mentoring, have affected, in a highly special way, the learning, development and lives of one or more individual students.



## CAMILLE MACRAE

Camille MacRae joined the Middle School English faculty in 2014. Known for her passionate approach to teaching and unique classroom décor, MacRae is credited with helping students step out of their comfort zone and explore new ideas. Whether she is reciting Shakespeare in the classroom or encouraging students to take the stage for a Middle School drama production (for which she serves as director), MacRae has proved time and time again to be an extremely valuable member of the Middle School faculty.

"I wish I had space to tell you all about the emails, notes, and talks; the advisory group discussions and Socratic seminars; the family/student conferences – the precious time that she spends with her students and their families," said one parent. "She is an invaluable treasure, and she has changed my son's life for good, forever."

Another parent wrote, "She has turned her classroom into a setting within which all her students are lovingly encouraged to express themselves in ways personal, varied and compelling. She inspired in our child perspective and principle, empathy and passion, and we will be ever grateful."



## PAM BOEHM

Pam Boehm joined the Senior School history faculty in 2014. Known for her kind, calm and open-minded nature, she is willing to tackle tough topics and encourages her students to do the same. Boehm currently serves head advisor of the Morewood House girls' dormitory and advises the Diversity Leadership Council (DLC).

"Ms. Boehm is a multi-talented person who has made a big impact on my life," said one of her former students. "As a member of the DLC, I witnessed firsthand her passion for social justice and diversity. She encourages all of her students to be accepting of others, regardless of their differences. She truly changed my life."

A parent wrote, "She made an indelible impact on the high school educational experience of our son at Shady Side Academy – through her mentoring and thoughtful direction, through her passion and caring, through her deeply-rooted support of our son through thick and thin. I cannot think of a more dedicated and deserving teacher than Ms. Boehm."

## FACULTY AND STAFF AWARDS

### Farrell Award for Exceptional Interactions with Students

**John Curry**  
Middle School Mathematics Teacher

**Melissa Petitto-Kenny**  
Junior School Senior  
Pre-Kindergarten Teacher

### Farrell Award for Going Above and Beyond

**Kendal Broderick**  
Country Day School Kindergarten  
Teacher

**Lauren Cannon**  
Middle School English Teacher

**Emily Fields**  
Junior School Music Teacher

**Tara O'Brien**  
Senior School History Teacher

### Farrell Award for Innovative Educators

**Gregory Weiss**  
Senior School Science Teacher

### Class of 1961 Faculty Award for Excellence

**Elizabeth Vuchinich '12**  
Senior School Mathematics Teacher

### Kenneth M. Raymond Vasko Memorial Award

**Mandy Fong**  
Middle School World Languages  
Teacher

### Ruth and F. Walter Jones Service Prize

**Jody Kokladas**  
Technology Integration Specialist

### President's Award for Distinguished Staff Service

**Mark Smith**  
Country Day School Head Custodian



# winter sportsbriefs

## Girls Swimming

by Maya Groff '20

The girls swimming team had a phenomenal season, finishing with a 8-5 record. Each swimmer trained hard morning and night, pushing themselves to become stronger and faster. This hard work and dedication paid off as girls improved in their races and beat personal records. Eight girls competed in WPIALs: senior **Maya Groff**; juniors **Ashley Chu**, **Emory Anderson** and **Rory Engel**; sophomores **Alexandra Jaffe**, **Kira Meyers** and **Crystal Ma**; and freshman **Chloe Wells**. The 200 medley relay team of Groff, Jaffe, Meyers and Wells placed fourth, while Groff also placed fourth in the 100 breaststroke to qualify for PIAAs. Although four strong seniors will be leaving the team, the girls expect to realize even greater accomplishments next year.



## Boys Swimming

by Sean Kelley '20

The boys swimming team had an incredible season, finishing with 9-4 record. All swimmers contributed throughout the season, which was highlighted by big wins against Knoch and Deer Lakes. The team balanced a meticulous work ethic with a willingness to help each other improve and have fun. Six boys competed at WPIALs: seniors **Sean Kelley** and **Will Roberson**, juniors **Andrew Liu** and **Stefan Stratimirovic**, and freshmen **Kevin Johnson** and **Sam Tan**. The 200 medley relay team of Johnson, Liu, Stratimirovic and Kelley placed sixth, while Stratimirovic placed fourth in the 100 butterfly and fifth in the 100 freestyle to qualify for PIAAs. Congratulations to the team on a great season!

## Girls Prep Ice Hockey

by Scout Spong '20

With a competitive, strong and impressive group of girls, the prep hockey team ended the season with a record of 12-7-5. The team worked hard, participating in morning practices, intense workouts and challenging team practices. The girls' dedication and efforts helped the team to second place finish at the WIHLMA playoffs, after a nail-biting overtime loss in the championship game. Due to the strong presence of the underclassmen and the solid leadership of senior **Scout Spong** and junior captains **Aubrey Suttelle** and **Sara Burr**, the team is excited to work hard next year to bring the WIHLMA banner back home to SSA.



## Boys Prep Ice Hockey

by Drew Fergus '20

The boys prep hockey team had a historic season, which included hosting a Thanksgiving tournament and playing in the Czech Republic and Germany over winter break. After a slow start, the team went on a 17-game win streak and placed second in the MPHL. The team broke the school record for wins (previously 27) with a record of 29-4-3. This success was driven by coaches **Jonathan Johnson** and **Stu Smith**, along with the strong senior class and captains **Jake Mancz**, **Drew Fergus** and **Sawyer Smith**. Johnson was named MPHL Coach of the Year, juniors **Jean Gilbert** and **Will Laychur** were named MPHL All-Stars, and Laychur, Mancz and seniors **Michael DiMarsico** and **Tucker Lamb** finished in the top 10 for points in the league. After losing 10 seniors, the team will see a lot of new players stepping into impact roles next season.

## Seniors Sign With College Athletics Programs

Nine additional SSA seniors committed to playing NCAA college athletics during the winter and spring. They include **Zoe Conomikes** (Field Hockey, Rochester), **Callie Davis** (Soccer, Denison), **Brice Delaney** (Golf, Ohio U) **Eric Evensen** (Lacrosse, York College), **Eddie Faulkner** (Football, Slippery Rock), **Tucker Lamb** (Ice Hockey, Middlebury), **Thomas Muse** (Lacrosse, Union), **Scout Spong** (Ice Hockey, St. Olaf) and **Mason Tomlin** (Football, Columbia).



## 2019-2020 WINTER SPORTS RECORDS

Varsity Teams	W	L	T	PCT.	Team Accomplishments
Boys Basketball	10	11	0	0.476	WPIAL First Round
Girls Basketball	7	15	0	0.318	
Boys Swimming	9	4	0	0.692	WPIAL 11th Place
Girls Swimming	8	5	0	0.615	WPIAL 10th Place
Boys Prep Ice Hockey	29	4	3	0.879	MPHL Runner-Up
Girls Prep Ice Hockey	12	7	5	0.637	WIHLMA Runner-Up
Boys Var. Ice Hockey	3	0	0	1.000	
Boys Squash	1	5	0	0.167	
Girls Squash	4	4	0	0.501	
<b>Totals</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0.601</b>	



## Boys Basketball

by Grady Munroe '20

The boys basketball team finished the year with an overall record of 10-11. The team was led by senior captains **Mason Tomlin**, **Grady Munroe** and **Thomas Muse**, and coaches **David Vadnais**, **Kyle Smith**, **Paul Jack** and **Andy Paklar**. The team qualified for the WPIAL playoffs with its hard-nose defensive style, but fell short to eventual champion North Catholic in the first round of play. The team looks ahead to next season with a promising group of talented juniors and underclassmen.



## Girls Basketball

by Nyla Rozier '21

The girl basketball team continued to grow and develop throughout the season, finishing the season with 7-15 overall record. Under new Head Coach **Caroline Fitzgerald**, the team was comprised of young players, including an entire freshman squad, with the exception of two juniors and four sophomores. With a strong mindset and heavy core of returning players, the team next year has potential to come back next season stronger than ever.



## Girls Prep Squash

by Callie Davis '20

The girls prep squash team, led by senior captains **Avery Guyaux, Nicole Caputo** and **Callie Davis**, had a great season under the direction of Head Coach **Lucas Frankel**. Starting off the season strong with a win against Winchester Thurston, the team ended with an overall record of 4-4-0. The team also introduced the first-ever senior night, highlighted by a faculty vs. student match. The team had a competitive season and remains excited for next year.

## Boys Prep Squash

by Ahmer Shaikh '20

The boys prep squash team, led by seniors **Will Gleason, Tony Zhang, Ahmer Shaikh** and sophomore **Lars Barkman**, had a competitive season, focusing on efficient practices and overall improvement. No. 1 player Barkman and No. 2 **Robert O'Brien** led the team against difficult opponents University School and Mercersburg Academy, which not only helped to secure wins but boosted team morale. The team finished the season with an overall record of 1-5. With many skilled players returning next season, the team is looking forward to another successful year.



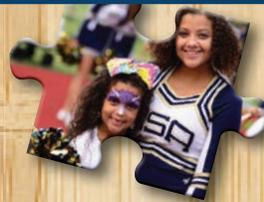
# THANK YOU

*You were a piece of our success!*

We are so thankful for your incredible commitment and generosity to the 2019-2020 Blue & Gold Fund. Together, we were able to raise \$1.8 million, surpassing our \$1.6 million goal.

During these trying times, please know that your contribution is more important than ever before. Your gift is being used daily to update classroom technology and materials, assist with student scholarships, and to construct and transform our four beautiful campuses.

Even through challenging times, Shady Side's culture of generosity prevails. For more information, visit [www.supportssa.org](http://www.supportssa.org).



**BLUE & GOLD**  
FUND





DRIVEN BY  
HIS PASSION FOR  
EQUALITY, WILLIAM  
GENERETT BRINGS  
COMMUNITIES  
TOGETHER

# WILLIAM GENERETT JR. '89

BY CRISTINA ROVALIS / PHOTOGRAPHY BY JAMES KNOX



**William Generett opened up to his favorite teacher as he walked around the quad of Shady Side Academy Senior School.**

As an African American student, he didn't see many others who looked like him either on campus or in the surrounding neighborhood. It was the late 1980s, and he was upset about racial inequality across the country. Even going to the senior prom was a painful reminder that the world wasn't fair. While he was allowed to go to the dance at the country club where it was being held, they didn't have any Black members back then. Should he even go?



Dr. John Sutula, his philosophy teacher, listened intently as they walked around the campus together.

Sutula encouraged Generett to share his frustrations. He also told him to pair his passion with logic so he could make the best arguments to fight for the causes he believed in.

Generett had already read about Malcolm X, Dr. Martin Luther King and other civil rights leaders in the United States. Sutula further broadened his worldview by directing him to books about Bishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa and other activists around the globe.

“I was a kid who was angry about inequality,” he said. “Dr. Sutula really helped change my life. He helped me translate that anger into motivation to do better. He challenged me to look at my arguments from a logical perspective.”

When Generett returns to campus now, he sees a student population that is much more racially diverse – with 38 percent identifying as people of color, and a leadership team dedicated to inclusion.

But one thing hasn't changed: Generett's commitment to economic and racial equality.

As the vice president of community engagement at Duquesne University, he has helped forge and strengthen partnerships with surrounding neighborhoods in Pittsburgh – from the Hill District and Uptown to Hazelwood and the Mon Valley.

Though the Catholic university has a long history of community service, Ken Gormley made it a top priority when he was named president of the school in 2015. One of his first acts was to create a new Office of Community Engagement, and he

went looking for a cabinet-level vice president to head it with a wealth of experience.

“Bill’s name kept coming up over and over,” Gormley said. “He was highly respected. As soon as we sat down to talk about this, I knew he was the perfect person.”

The projects that Generett’s office supports are wide-ranging. For example, he works with the Center for Integrated Health, run out of the School of Pharmacy, on its asthma prevention work. Dr. Jennifer Elliott, an associate professor of pharmacy, and students hold asthma clinics and screenings in Hazelwood and schools in the Mon Valley.

“We have some of the worst asthma in the country here in this region,” Generett said. “They work with school nurses to provide comprehensive treatment, anything from inhalers to the right kind of medicine to working with parents.” He said the number of asthma-related emergency room visits from children in the neighborhood has dropped precipitously.

Through his expertise in governmental relations, Generett has aided the university’s plans to open up a new College of Osteopathic Medicine by the year 2023. Generett has reached out to government and community leaders seeking funding for a second medical school in the city. “He has great ties to the foundation community and is greatly respected,” Gormley said.

Generett is a board member of the Pittsburgh Foundation. Lisa Schroeder, president of the foundation, said Generett is “a big-picture thinker. He is not afraid to step up and meet really sensitive issues in the community, including race.” He also serves on the board of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, the Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh and Shady Side Academy.

To support economic development in the Hill District, Generett has been working with the August Wilson House nonprofit to help restore August Wilson’s childhood home, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The vision to transform the dilapidated house into a museum and cultural center with a residency program for artists is dependent on substantial fundraising efforts. “It’s a pretty small house, but it’s going to take \$7 or \$ \$8 million to make it function like a small museum, community center and arts venue,” Generett said.

The project gained national attention in 2018 when actor Denzel Washington came to Pittsburgh to announce a combined gift of \$5 million from himself, Oprah Winfrey and other

celebrities. Generett met Washington at the groundbreaking ceremony, who both starred and directed the movie adaptation of the August Wilson play *Fences*.

Gormley called Generett “the consummate professional. He is a gentleman. He’s also very action-oriented and decisive. He is my kind of person.”

Generett’s problem-solving skills became even more crucial this spring when the COVID-19 pandemic changed campus life. To minimize health risks, Duquesne and universities throughout the country were forced to move to online classes, losing revenue in the process.

Overseeing the University’s government relations, Generett helped Gormley lobby for funds through the higher education portion of the federal stimulus. Some of those funds are designated for health care programs that can train workers who are on the front line of treating people with COVID-19. “Duquesne University has some of the best health care programs – nursing, pharmacy,

physician assistant, OT, PT – in the United States, and the university has plans to open a medical school in 2023 that has a focus on graduating family practitioners who remain in the region,” Generett said. “The coronavirus has shown us that there is more need than ever for more workers in all health care fields.”

Also devastated by the statewide closings were small businesses in the neighborhoods Generett has supported through economic development programs. As executive in residence at the Duquesne University School of Business, he has worked with the university’s small business development center to help as many entrepreneurs as possible, starting with the

application process for stimulus funds.

Generett grew up in Point Breeze in a family that was passionate about civil rights.

His mother’s uncle was a prominent civil rights attorney who was best known for representing Martin Luther King, Jr. and the student who integrated the University of Alabama. His father, William, who was a medical doctor, and his mother, Mona, who was a Ph.D., a civil rights leader and a retired vice president of community development at Dollar Bank, both stressed the importance of education and fighting for racial equality.

Generett attended Shady Side Academy from kindergarten through high school. “I was the second African American lifer,” he said. He was one of the founding members of the Black Student Union at the Senior School.



**“BILL IS A THOUGHT LEADER WHEN IT COMES TO TECHNOLOGY-BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. AT HIS CORE, HE IS PASSIONATE ABOUT HELPING OTHER PEOPLE.”**

– Sheri Collins, Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development



Dr. Sutula, his philosophy teacher, said he had a great sense of humor. “Sometimes when people would disagree, he would diffuse it with his sense of humor while still adhering strongly to his side.”

On their walks together, Dr. Sutula remembers how the young man expressed how he wanted to be part of the larger group but sometimes felt separated from his white classmates. “It was difficult to feel like a representative of his race, such as being good at basketball or knowing rap, rather than finding himself,” Sutula said.

Generett grappled with the decision of whether to go to his senior prom at a country club with no Black members. “I had to ask myself, ‘Do I go or do I protest?’ I decided to go along with my Black classmates, but we felt bad celebrating in a place that did not see us as full humans.”

Generett said he was grateful for his years at Shady Side. “It was a great liberal arts education that served me well throughout my career.”

Upon graduation, he chose to attend Morehouse College, a historically Black college and the alma mater of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Generett majored in political science and interned for Congressman John Lewis, the civil rights icon. “He was just as nice and caring as you see in his public persona. Usually people in Congress don’t talk to interns. He made a point to talk to us.”

As a new lawyer, Generett practiced at a corporate law firm started by an African American woman that primarily served minority-owned businesses. That set him on the path to help businesses in distressed communities in Pittsburgh. As the region

reinvented itself from a steel town to a medical, educational and high-tech center, too many African Americans were left behind, he said. “When you look at African Americans in Western Pennsylvania, it has some of the worst metrics in terms of success, health or wellness.”

His goal was to help turn that around. “We tried to provide opportunities for African Americans to participate in the newfound prosperity our region sees. We helped a lot of tech and innovation companies to go into moderate and low-income neighborhoods, so the economic prosperity could spread out and not just be concentrated in Oakland.”

From 2007 until 2017, Generett was the inaugural president and CEO of Urban Innovation21, a private-public partnership that supports the growth of entrepreneurship and innovation in underserved communities.

The nonprofit held grant competitions for entrepreneurs in the Hill District, Homewood and other underserved neighborhoods, and participants attended business education workshops before making their pitches. The group was instrumental in getting many high-tech companies to start, relocate and grow in the Hill District/Uptown area. Urban Innovation21 also became part of Kiva, an international organization that offers microloans to low-income entrepreneurs around the world.

“Bill is a thought leader when it comes to technology-based economic development,” said Sheri Collins, senior director of the Office of Corporate Relations for the Pennsylvania Department of Community & Economic Development. “At his core, he is passionate about helping other people.”

He was also appointed by President Barack Obama to the U.S. Department of Commerce’s National Advisory Council on Innovation and Entrepreneurship (NACIE).

Generett first met Gormley after working with Duquesne University to launch The Citizen Science Lab, where Duquesne professors and students worked with kids from underserved neighborhoods who didn’t have access to top laboratory equipment. “It was a deep dive into science, and very creative,” Gormley said.

Generett feels at home at Duquesne, where his assistant and office manager, Joan Hilton Hayek ’08, is a Shady Side graduate, too. He also loves returning to Shady Side, a place that has a much different cross-section of students than when he was there.

“Shady Side has changed in remarkable ways,” he said. “You just look at the leadership of Bart Griffith and how he has successfully dealt with inclusion at his previous jobs. Also, I am excited about the work of Lillian Grate, the director of equity, inclusion and community relations. Shady Side is doing a whole lot better with issues of diversity, and I look forward to working with the board and Bart to continue to build upon this progress for many years to come.”

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# home

## Sloane Davidson '97

Sloane Davidson  
alongside Hello Neighbor  
mentors and mentees



# Helping Refugees Feel at Home in a City She Calls Her Own

BY CRISTINA ROVALIS  
PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED  
BY SLOANE DAVIDSON '97



In 2017, Sloane (Berrent) Davidson '97 was making regular runs to Pittsburgh International Airport to pick up refugees who had been forced to flee Syria, Afghanistan, Myanmar, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Bhutan. She was the first point of contact for families arriving in a bewildering new world, often after spending years in refugee camps. Unable to speak English, they looked totally overwhelmed as they peered out of the car window on their way to new apartments in a new city.

Through her part-time job at a resettlement agency, Davidson learned that federal laws provided new refugees with 90 days of support. But starting on day 91, the refugees were on their own.

Thinking back on her own life, Davidson knew it had taken her more

than 90 days to get settled into a new city – and she was born in this country and grew up speaking English. How much harder it would be for a refugee without any family support or familiarity with the language? “After three months, their heads were still spinning,” she said.

At the same time, Davidson befriended a Syrian family she had met in her Highland Park neighborhood. She invited them over for a big Thanksgiving dinner, and then family birthday parties, and eventually her family went over to their house for a meal. As their friendship deepened, she became their American family. She started telling her friends about her experience, and they asked how they could do something similar.

Unable to find an organization that did this, Davidson founded her own nonprofit called Hello Neighbor, which

provides mentorship to refugees resettling in Pittsburgh.

Hello Neighbor pairs volunteer mentors with newly settled refugee and immigrant families to help improve their lives. Mentors receive training on refugee resettlement and English as a second language (ESL) while being matched with an experienced mentor for guidance.

Volunteer mentors help new refugees and immigrants with tasks such as writing checks, finding a new apartment and enrolling in an English class. Life skills are mixed with fun activities to make the new neighbors feel less socially isolated. They might go on an outing to a local park, attend a Hello Neighbor event or share a holiday dinner. Each family compiles a set of goals, and the mentor helps them work through it. “Really, there’s no goal too big or too small,” Davidson said.

In just three years, 122 volunteers have worked with refugee families from 13 different countries and provided more than 5,000 hours of mentoring.

“We’re not a social service agency. We’re not social workers,” Davidson said. “Often what they need more than anything is not just a mentor, but an ally and advocate, a friend, a supporter. And ultimately, the mentor becomes like their American family.”

In recognition for her founding of Hello Neighbor, Sloane was named a 2020 Presidential Leadership Scholar. The 2020 class includes 60 leaders across the country spanning many fields – physicians, public servants, scholars, corporate leaders, nonprofit executives, etc. The goal is to bring people from diverse fields together to make a difference in the world as they learn about leadership through the bipartisan lens of the presidential experiences of George W. Bush, William Jefferson Clinton, George H.W. Bush and Lyndon B. Johnson. They will visit all four presidential centers next year, with plans to meet former presidents Bush and Clinton.

Sloane and her sisters, Victoria Mistick and Adriana Mistick '08



“It’s a tremendous honor,” she said. “It’s been transformative as far as the leadership skills that will help me grow as a leader and ultimately grow Hello Neighbor and impact the Pittsburgh region. It speaks to how much the former presidents value bringing together people with different backgrounds and different interests with a common goal of making the world a better place.”

This past year, she was named a Woman of Influence by the *Pittsburgh Business Times*, a Woman of Achievement by Cribs for Kids, and was named Top 40 Under 40 by *Pittsburgh Magazine* in 2019.

Hello Neighbor aims to break the feelings of social isolation for new refugees. That task became much more complicated this spring during the COVID-19 pandemic, after the state enacted social distancing measures to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus.

“We’ve always said the phone is the hardest medium when you are learning a new language,” she said. “It makes it incredibly challenging to help them navigate American systems and customs from afar. Our whole program is built around breaking social isolation, and doing it remotely changes everything.”

“We just had a Mentor Town Hall on Zoom to check in. We launched a Refugee Assistance Fund recently, which is a cash assistance program to get some cash in the hands of families to help them pay for rent, utilities and food. New partnerships with local organizations have helped us navigate issues like food insecurity and supporting new moms with baby essentials. We have also worked with school districts on computer distributions and online tutoring resources. We have weekly distributions happening since the quarantine began that include delivering masks, food, book, new baby needs and craft bags. It’s really important to provide some kind of supplemental support. I’m still keeping everything going, just from a distance.”

Davidson arrived at Shady Side Academy in 10th grade as a seasoned volunteer.

In fourth grade, she had organized a recycling program at her elementary school. By seventh grade, she was volunteering at the Children’s Institute of Pittsburgh, helping kids with pool exercises as they recovered from traumatic accidents. In ninth grade, she took a bus to Wilkinsburg to volunteer for the Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force, becoming a youth chairman of the Pittsburgh AIDS Walk.

No one ever told her she should do it. She just wanted to do it. “I always knew that I had a heart to help people,” she said.

As a new student in the Senior School, she wanted to help other students get involved too. Some seemed eager to try it but seemed unsure how to go about it. “You don’t have to do something forever,” she told them. “You can just try something and see if you like it.”

Davidson soon seized the opportunity to get students involved. In the summer before her junior year, she worked with student leader Chris Ward ’96 and history professor Carol Wilson on organizing the first Shady Side Academy Day of Caring – years before many corporations held such events. They spent summer days calling senior centers, animal shelters and nonprofits and finding service projects where students could volunteer. It was a massive undertaking, and Ward and Davidson stepped up, said faculty advisor, now Carol Wilson Gonzalez.

“Sloane was wonderful to work with,” Gonzalez said. “She was very active in all things community-service oriented.”

The event, held her junior year, was a big success.

Sean Gray ’97, her classmate and fellow volunteer, said Davidson had the same passion for service even as a teenager. “She was very outspoken and determined to get her voice heard on behalf of others. One of her strengths is

**“I’ve always felt like giving back is a muscle, and it’s a muscle that strengthens over time. I just happened to start my giving-back muscle really early, and I’ve spent a lot of time cultivating it.”**

Sloane, her husband, and two sons



to say why it is so important to get others involved and garner that support in ways that are impactful for people in need.”

At Shady Side, she not only brought her volunteering spirit to the school, but she also flourished academically, exploring various disciplines. “Shady Side really helped me develop a sense of independence,” she said. “I loved the English electives, the ability to choose what you are learning about.”

After graduation, she received a bachelor’s degree in political science from the University of Vermont. Then she spent the next 15 years traveling around the country and the world. In 2009, she was named a Kiva Fellow, a volunteer position in which people learn firsthand about microfinance and social enterprise by going into the field. Through the program, she traveled to the Philippines, where she worked with a host microfinance institution. She also got involved with development projects in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Haiti, Guatemala, Ecuador and the Philippines.

From 2008-2015, she wrote a blog, *The Causemopolitan*, focusing on cause-based topics. She posted a Giving Manifesto that started: “Give a little. Give a lot. Don’t feel guilty for what you can’t do. Feel empowered for what you can.”

Her travels to remote, impoverished areas in developing nations made her realize what refugees gave up when they came to the U.S. – tight-knit extended family and village support.

In 2016, six months pregnant with her first child, she and her husband returned to her hometown of Pittsburgh so she could be near her own family and support system.

She pursued a master’s in public policy and management from the University of Pittsburgh’s Graduate School of Public and International Affairs and told her professors she wanted to concentrate on immigration issues. In 2016, she started volunteering part-time at the former Northern Area Multi-Service Center, a resettlement agency that has since closed.

The idea for her own nonprofit became a reality when the Heinz Endowments gave her a grant for a pilot program. Another early funder was the U.S. arm of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a national and international funder.

On April 27, 2017, she graduated from Pitt with her master’s degree and started Hello Neighbor the very next day.

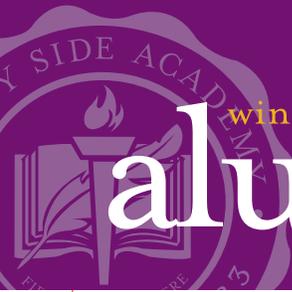
The population she helps are true survivors. Only about one percent of the world’s refugees are resettled from an asylum country to a third country. “Refugees who have made it here are incredibly resilient,” she said. Our refugee families have been in Pittsburgh between six months and five years - some have started their own businesses or are buying homes.” Still, 100 percent of the families Hello Neighbor assists are below the poverty level, and many have young children at home.

Hello Neighbor started a new program called Smart Start that provides extra support for new refugee mothers.

“We have had 17 new babies that have been born in the last two and a half years,” Davidson said. “These mothers are all giving birth here in the U.S. for the first time. And anyone who’s a mom knows it’s a scary process to navigate, even if you understand the language and the culture. Doing it without that can be really daunting.”

Davidson believes that helping people is a skill she has built up over the decades of her career. “I’ve always felt like giving back is a muscle, and it’s a muscle that strengthens over time. I just happened to start my giving-back muscle really early, and I’ve spent a lot of time cultivating it.”

“I think that I’ve always just been really aware that ultimately we’re just all human beings, and chances are, everyone’s trying to do right by themselves, by their families, by their communities. I think I’ve always felt that, you know, sometimes someone else is going to need a little bit of extra help. And one day, it might be me – and if it’s me, hopefully someone will give me a little bit extra help. So I think that’s the way we all help each other and what makes the world go round.”



# winter/spring alumni events

## ALUMNI GATHERINGS

To kick off the new year, President **Bart Griffith '93** and members of the Alumni & Development Office, traveled to Naples, Fla., for a gathering of alumni, past parents, grandparents and friends. The event was hosted by Board of Visitors member **Bruce Wiegand '65** and his wife, Barbara, and held at the Port Royal Club on Jan. 23.

The next stops on the travel schedule were in sunny California. More than 20 alumni gathered at the Rose Venice in Los Angeles on Feb. 19 to meet our new president. The following evening, an intimate gathering was held on Stanford University's campus at the home of Board of Visitors member **Dr. John B. Taylor '64** and his wife, Allyn.

On March 3, members of the Alumni & Development team journeyed to New York City for a gathering at The Princeton Club of New York. The event was hosted by Board of Visitors member **Bill Wallace '66** and his wife, Suzanne, and more than 45 alumni were in attendance. Unfortunately, due to the impending COVID-19 pandemic, President Griffith was unable to attend as he was needed on campus to begin planning for distance learning. The April 2 Washington, D.C., gathering at the home of **Bill Reichblum '78** and his wife, Amalie, was also postponed due to COVID-19.

The Alumni & Development Office is grateful to all of the hosts for their continued support of the Academy and to all of the alumni who attend events throughout the year. Be safe and we look forward to seeing you soon!



## Palo Alto, CA



Naples, FL



Los Angeles, CA



New York, NY



## VIRTUAL EVENTS

The Alumni & Development Office held its first virtual event, “A Virtual Alumni Gathering with President Bart Griffith ’93,” on May 12. In a Zoom webinar, Griffith shared observations about his first year as president and discussed the Academy’s COVID-19 response. He also spoke about SSA’s commitment to cultivating a community of learners and recognized the exceptional efforts of the faculty and staff.

On May 28, in “A Virtual Interview With Best-Selling Author **Kerry Hannon ’78**,” Hannon discussed her new book, *Great Pajama Jobs: Your Complete Guide to Working From Home*, with alumni, parents and faculty/staff via Zoom. Long-time friend and classmate **Marcy Holquist ’78** led the interview and shared insight into their childhood days at Shady Side.

On June 11, SSA hosted “From Bricks & Mortar to Distance Learning: A Faculty Perspective,” where a panel of faculty members from all four campuses shared their distance learning experience with alumni via Zoom. The panel consisted of teachers Karen DiFiore, Laura Grief, Lauren Cannon and Adam Janosko. A few veteran faculty members were surprise guests and also shared their challenges and successes during this historic time.

On June 24, the Alumni Council sponsored “Pandemic Perspectives From SSA Alumni,” featuring Associate Professor of Medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University **Dr. Curt Beckwith ’88**, President/CEO of American Textile Company **Lance Ruttenberg ’86** and President & Chief Executive Officer of the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank **Lisa Scales ’78**. The three alumni discussed how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected their organizations and what they have done to help.

Through these virtual events, we were able to connect with and unite alumni from more than a dozen states and two countries. As we continue to digitally engage our SSA community, please share any thoughts or ideas for future events at [development@shadysideacademy.org](mailto:development@shadysideacademy.org).



# HOMECOMING 2021

## HOMECOMING & REUNION WEEKEND 2020 POSTPONED TO FALL 2021

Based on guidance from public health and government authorities, and with the health and safety of alumni and community members top of mind, Shady Side Academy has decided to postpone Homecoming & Reunion Weekend 2020 to the fall of 2021, when it will be part of SSA’s first-ever double reunion year. Plans are underway for a historic celebration in 2021 that will be bigger and better than ever. A specific date and more details will be provided in the spring.

“We know that many of you, especially our reunion classes, were looking forward to Homecoming this year, and we understand your disappointment upon learning about its postponement,” said President Bart Griffith Jr. ’93. “However, as an alumnus I know the experience of being together in person, back on campus, with cherished friends and classmates is something that simply cannot be replicated virtually.”

Please contact Manager of Alumni Programming and Special Events Lisa Page at [lp@shadysideacademy.org](mailto:lp@shadysideacademy.org) with questions.

## ANNUAL BOARD OF VISITORS MEETING GOES VIRTUAL

On April 24, the Board of Visitors came together on Zoom for its first-ever virtual meeting. The participation and enthusiasm throughout the day was amazing and could even be felt through the screen. BOV members came to work and joined two separate sessions on Friday. During the morning session, co-chairs **Anne Gailliot ’94** and **Linda LaMagna ’83** welcomed President **Bart Griffith ’93** to discuss the Academy’s COVID-19 response and planning at all four SSA campuses. Members were then divided into Zoom breakout rooms to share their advice and expertise with SSA’s leadership team based on their experiences with other schools and organizations during the pandemic. After a break for lunch, the BOV joined the Board of Trustees for an afternoon strategic session via Zoom. While BOV members missed seeing campus and each other in person, the convenience and productivity of the virtual sessions proved to be a tool the group can use moving forward. Many thanks to Anne and Linda for shifting the meeting into a successful virtual event.

# Hillman Series Adjusting Plans for 2020-2021 Season

BY CHRISTA BURNEFF

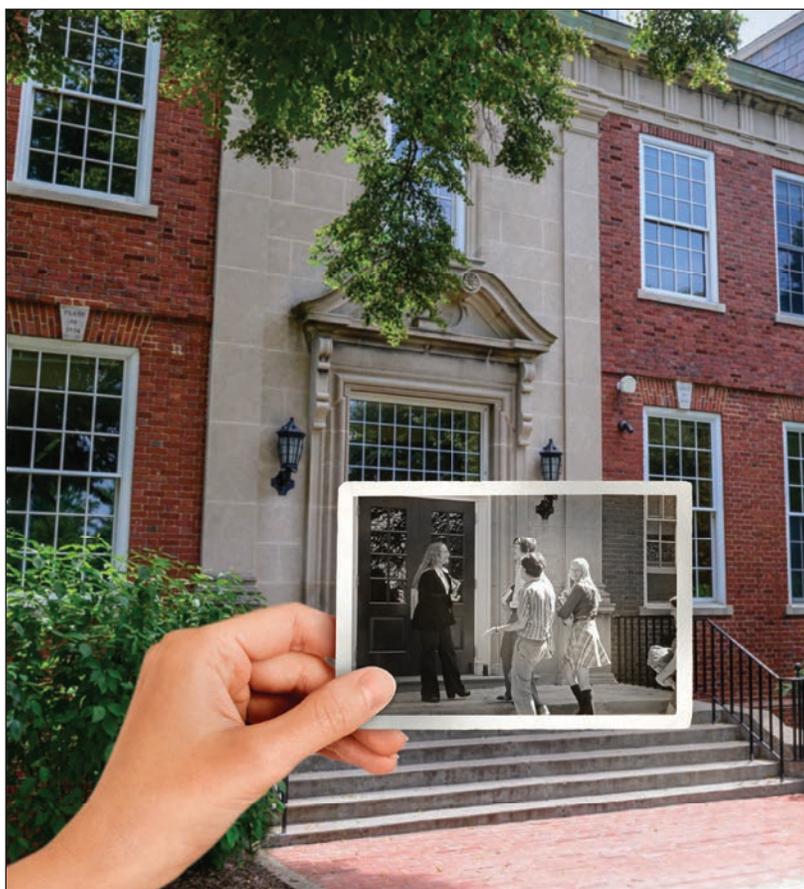


This spring, as the Hillman Center was gearing up to announce its 2020-2021 season, the COVID-19 pandemic hit, throwing a wrench into those plans. As Shady Side's campuses closed, the final two shows of the 2019-2020 Hillman Series had to be cancelled, and a handful of artists booked for 2020-2021 made the decision not to tour next season. While the staff continues to make informed decisions with the goal of sharing some incredibly talented artists this coming season, an official announcement regarding the 2020-2021 Hillman Series could not be made by press time.

In an industry in which the primary focus is to bring people of all ages, races and backgrounds together for an evening of entertainment, the question has become: where do we go from here? Many theaters have shut their doors indefinitely, while others are looking at ways to create during a time of incredible uncertainty.

For the Hillman staff, the ability to pivot and make quick, thoughtful changes has enabled planning to continue moving forward for the 2020-2021 season. At this moment, it has become clear that the addition of the Black Box series two years ago may be what gives the Hillman the ability to bring the community together safely. These smaller music acts will allow for multiple performance options with socially distant seating, giving audience members piece of mind and the opportunity for an enjoyable evening away from home. In this ever-changing environment, the Hillman Center remains committed to bringing some of the best entertainment to the community while keeping everyone safe – and looks forward to doing that again soon.

For the most up-to-date information on the Hillman Performing Arts Series, please visit [www.thehillman.org](http://www.thehillman.org).



## Your Legacy, Our Future

For more than 135 years, the generosity of individual donors has enabled Shady Side Academy to grow into one of the nation's top private schools. Now, you can leave a legacy that will impact generations of students to come. With numerous planned giving options, you can support Shady Side Academy while gaining a variety of personal benefits.

For more information on planned giving options, visit [plannedgiving.shadysideacademy.org](http://plannedgiving.shadysideacademy.org) or contact Dr. Allison Saras at **412-968-3077**.





# classnotes

Included in this section are news items received through May 1, 2020.



## 1960

**Charley Todd** writes: “My family was in Washington, D.C., last summer, during my “celebrity chef” daughter-in-law’s U.S. book tour. Her first cookbook will soon be reviewed in *The New York Times* food section. The boys are currently creating an online series of short story episodes about two kids (one in Korea and one a kid living in the imaginary state of New Jersey) they’ve invented, and their adventures during the coronavirus pandemic. Each episode, of course, leaves us with a cliff-hanger.”

## 1962

**Tom Celli** writes: “My wonderful wife, Jeannie, ascended to heaven in September 2018. We had 50 years of a passionate and delightful marriage. I was very lucky. In July 2018, I sold my architectural firm, Celli-Flynn Brennan Architects and Planners, to Bucharthorn Architects, who approached us because of our reputation in higher education planning and architecture and a burgeoning practice in historic

restoration. I am still working as a senior architect but now I have a boss for the first time in 45 years. Bucharthorn has more than 200 people in 11 offices, including Germany, and large groups in transportation engineering and water resources engineering. I have had the privilege over many years to participate as director/trustee of several community organizations, including Urban League, Order of Malta and Catholic Charities. But the most fascinating was a nine-year stint on the board of the American University in Bulgaria. I also had the privilege to design two prep school buildings in Sofia. Now I live on the family homestead in Greensburg, Pa. If any of you are in the area you are more than welcome to stop. I have stayed in touch with **John Mullin** as a great friend and have seen Kent from time to time. I am fortunate that my two kids are close by, Delta-marie and **Michelangelo '91**. Best wishes to all for 2020 and beyond as we power through the current pandemic.”

**Mead Over** writes: “Has it been really been eight years since our 50th reunion? It’s hard to believe. My wife, Beth King, my daughter, Alexandra, and I are sheltering in place here in Northwest D.C. I am reminded of our reunion each time my daughter wears the SSA pullover that I brought back from our 50th reunion, thanks to the generous “loan” from **John McGee**. I still owe John the \$75 he lent me when I was caught without my wallet in front of the swag table on the football field! In June, I transitioned from senior fellow at the Center for Global Development to senior fellow emeritus, losing my office and a regular paycheck. I was still going in to a borrowed desk twice a week until traveling to Paris in January for my annual stint as an adjunct at Sciences-Po and then assembling my daughters, their boyfriends, my nephews from Seattle

and my wife at a ski lodge in Park City on March 7. Like the rest of the country, the ski lodge shut down on March 15. My nephews and sister-in-law flew back to Seattle on March 16, but Beth, Alexandra, Veronica and I stayed in the virtually empty ski lodge until March 24. During that latter week, an earthquake in Salt Lake damaged and closed the airport for one day. We finally boarded the plane fearfully with face mask and hand sanitizer, endured a stopover in a virtually empty Cincinnati airport and gratefully accepted an Uber ride home. Rather than returning to their apartment in Harlem, both daughters came home with us. Veronica has since joined her boyfriend in Connecticut, where she is telecommuting to her job at an engineering lab at Columbia University. She has been admitted to the Ph.D. program in advanced manufacturing. Alexandra is madly studying for her medical boards which are scheduled for June, while occasionally wearing her SSA jersey. Beth and I are enjoying our garden, which is benefiting from extra rain. Having retired from the World Bank three years ago, she is working as hard as ever, coauthoring papers and drafting books on the economics of unpaid care and on the rate of return in the job market to non-cognitive skills. I’m working on papers on how the governments of low- and middle-income countries could improve the efficiency of their pharmaceutical procurement and on the determinants of women’s reproductive choice in the developing world. I’m also taking time out for computer games, especially StarCraft, which I play with my daughters and their boyfriends and also with my brother and another friend. I wonder if any of our cohort play computer games. Today I must turn to grading the papers that my 11 Sciences-Po students have just submitted on the economics of the AIDS epidemic in a country of their



## 1965

Josh Robinson writes: “I wanted to share a fun little picture of myself with **John W.C. Succop**, better known as Bill. We are currently at Concordia at Rebecca personal care and quarantined here to keep everyone safe. We’ve been trying to have fun theme days to pass the time and recently had a “Dress like your favorite athlete” day. So Bill and myself dressed like his famous 1964 track and field team. I had yellow tank tops made with the iconic SSA printed on the front. Bill suffers from a rare genetic disease called Huntington’s Disease. One of the things that has always brought a smile to his face is when we talk about his track and field team and how he broke the mile record when he clocked a 4:28.6 time against Bethel Park. I’ve worked privately as his primary caregiver for eight years and I can’t tell you how proud Bill is, and always has been, to be a graduate of Shady Side Academy. Here’s our picture reppin’ SSA!”

choice. My last in-person lecture on Feb. 22 was on the mathematics of the COVID epidemic. (That whole “flattening the curve” thing. I am still grateful to Dean Leaman for that calculus class my senior year at SSA). Since March the students have all returned to their homes, wherever that may be. Most are somewhere in France, but one student each is in China, Hungary, Germany and Italy. Since March they have all faithfully attended our weekly Zoom class, including

even a couple of extra optional classes. The students are finding that their study of how to finance the control of epidemics in developing countries is much more relevant to their daily lives than they realized when they signed up for our course. We offered them extra credit if they could offer coherent advice to the Minister of Finance of Uganda, Burundi, Algeria, South Africa, Pakistan, etc., about how the COVID-19 epidemic should affect health care financing. Since I have no idea what I would say, I will grade them extremely leniently! Best to all of you. I’m hoping that by 2022 we will all be able to meet in person at Shady Side for another big reunion.”

## 1966

**Chris Abernethy** and his wife, Bif, celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on June 6, 2020.

**Scott Becker** writes: “The most notable matter I have to report is that my WWII vet dad, who will be 95 in a few months, is relatively healthy and doing well. I keep him up to date about our class news thanks to *SSA Magazine*. Dad lives in an assisted living facility named Canterbury Place, in the heart of Lawrenceville, which you may recall is the neighborhood between Bloomfield and the Strip District. I haven’t been able to visit him since mid-March due to the virus, but we talk numerous times every day. As for me, I assume being “quarantined” here in Pittsburgh is no different than anywhere else. Our governor has been pretty strict about “reopening” as Pennsylvania has been relatively hard hit, especially at the other end of the state. Wish I had something more interesting or relevant to report from home base. My appreciation of **Jeff Varadi** for being the class ‘glue.’”

**Rich LaMagna** writes: “We are pleased to announce that our son, Daniel, graduated from Yale Law School in May 2020, and our daughter, Rachel, graduated from the Academy of the Holy Cross in June 2020. Daniel will begin a one-year clerkship with a U.S. circuit judge in the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals in Louisville, Ky., beginning in August. After the clerkship, he will work for the law firm of Cleary Gottlieb Steen and Hamilton in NYC. (We are delighted to be in touch with **Jay Pottenger ’67** who is a professor at Yale Law School, although

unfortunately, we will not have a chance to see him due to COVID-19). Rachel will attend The Fashion Institute of Technology in NYC to study fashion design in the fall. It’s been great to have connected with **Rusty McCready ’67**, who works for Holy Cross and has been such a good friend to Rachel.”

**Jack Smiley** writes: “It’s a beautiful sunny day in Ventura, Calif. With the courts virtually closed, I work one day a week handling domestic relations restraining orders for a county with a population of one million and 35 miles of gorgeous Pacific Ocean coastline. My wife, Lynn, is happy with the color of the dining room, so I’m painting the kitchen cabinets ‘platinum’ gray, which is to be distinguished from regular gray. Thanks for asking.”

**Bill Wallace** writes: “I participated in a Board of Visitors virtual meeting in April where I had my first exposure to **Bart Griffith ’93** (our classmate’s son) in his role as Academy president. Obviously, the current mess was center stage in the conversation, and I can say that I was blown away by how thoroughly he had thought through all the scenarios and the quality of leadership he is providing to the staff and the school community as a whole. Bart is super impressive in his new role. Some people are just built to lead, and I think he has that trait in spades. And my sources tell me that the faculty adore him. He is a star.”

**Joe McClinton** writes: “Since Céline Ricci, the artistic director of our little opera company, has put this shaggy thing up where anybody can see it on YouTube – which I had not expected, I thought it was just for a grant application – I guess you guys should be able to see it too if you want. How I supertitle a 350-year-old Italian opera, in 25 words or less, can viewed online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-14oxYJ9R4&t=1s>. You can also visit the Ars Minerva YouTube Channel to view.”

**Casey Wolff** writes: “In early April, I was elected to the board of directors of the ACLU of Southwest Florida. For years I chaired the legal section, which receives and evaluates complaints. Most folks do not know what the ACLU does. Its mission is simple: protect individual liberties (see Bill of Rights) from adverse government



## 1968

**Bill Mullins** writes: “Our daughter Katherine is a second year internal medicine/social medicine resident at Montefiore Hospital in the Bronx, the largest hospital in the highest COVID-19 incidence borough of New York City. Her life for the past two months has been akin to the medics in London during the Blitz in WWII, with critically ill patients overflowing into every spare bit of floor space in the hospital complex, while the overwhelmed staff endures shortages of vital equipment and medication. She is undergoing a life-altering experience, as are Pat and I as we have listened to her daily stories on long Skype calls. She

has seen hundreds of COVID-19 cases. We have learned from her about each of the growing list of complications from this complex virus days or weeks before the reports appear in the medical literature: cardiac arrests, the risk to young obese males, the bizarre blood clotting complications, ARDS, cytokine storm, and on and on. We are deeply thankful that Katherine contracted a relatively mild COVID-19 infection early in March, and recovered, before we knew to be frightened, so she now has at least some immunity. Many, many health care workers at Montefiore have been infected; thankfully none have died yet. Sadly, Katherine tells us that it has been acutely obvious from the Montefiore experience that people of color are faring disproportionately much worse in the pandemic for many reasons: decades of inadequate health care, inaccessibility of healthy eating choices, crowded living conditions and consignment to high risk jobs where exposure to infection is unavoidable. Pat and I are in the war zone, but further back from the front lines. My rheumatology office infuses vital drugs for inflammatory arthritis, so we never closed. We are doing approximately 70% televisits, but many arthritis patients require exams, so we do have patients coming in. Pat’s endocrine practice is doing almost all televisits. Both our offices are controllable environments so we can keep transmission risk low. COVID-19 is one of the most complex diseases in all of medicine. It is likely going to be a long time before we can confidently control and/or prevent this disease. My warmest regards and concern to my dear classmates, take care of yourselves and your families. Social distancing is absolutely vital, especially indoors. Wash hands frequently. Beware of careless risk-takers as we start ‘opening up.’ And, stay off airplanes.”

actions. Florida is a hotbed of issues such as COVID-19, internment of immigrants, voter suppression, human trafficking, racial profiling and governmental non-accountability. The ACLU uses litigation to remedy government excesses and trial lawyers love us. Please understand that you have this job for life.”

**Don Lynn** writes: “I enjoy rotating my shoe trees and relaxing my dental floss. I was supposed to spend this month in Italy but

my trip tanked. I assuaged my wanderlust by getting a boat to cruise the islands and named it La Dolce Vita!”

**Jeff Varadi** writes: “Our garden is doing very well despite being planted late. Our mid-May peaches are doing well, as are the meyer lemons although they produce later in the year. Tomatoes getting bigger, onions and garlic coming up and though we didn’t do any leafy veggies we have cucumbers coming, as well as squash.

Believe it or not, we don’t do zucchini very well. What’s that all about? As usual, our herb garden is doing well. Hard to believe that a kid from Hazelwood who never even mowed grass before moving to Las Vegas is now a master gardener (as is Laura). In Hazelwood, we didn’t have grass at our house. Most people didn’t.”

## 1968

**Tom Vilsack**, former Iowa governor, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and member of the board of directors of Feeding America, was interviewed by *GZERO World With Ian Bremmer* on the topic of food supply chain during the pandemic. On a lighter note, Vilsack was also in the news in February for winning a prize in the Powerball lottery.



## 1969

Bernkopf Goodman attorney **Eric Allon** was recognized as one of the leading commercial real estate influencers according to *Globe St. Real Estate Forum*, a national real estate publication. Eric was named as a Net Lease Influencer in the individual category among a group of 11 founders, brokers, national real estate developers, CEOs and investment bank executives. Eric was the only attorney recognized.



## 1970

**Don Shaw** visited Sue Whitney's Senior School AB Calculus class on Dec. 13 and talked about the benefits of SSA and how it prepared him for college. He is a financial representative with Northwestern Mutual in Pittsburgh.

## 1971

**Gus Succop** writes: "I retired in June 2019 after 38 years of pastoral ministry. I entered the Junior School in the fall of 1958 (Mrs. Williams' kindergarten class was in the basement). I am now looking forward to our 50th class reunion in 2021."

**Frank Morgan** writes: "After 43 years in public education, the last 16 as a superintendent, I retired in 2018 and am living in Camden, S.C. While I still do some consulting, I'm really enjoying doing volunteer work and traveling with my wife, Jean. I hope to see a lot of classmates at our 50th reunion."

## 1978

**Kerry Hannon's** new book *Great Pajama Jobs: Your Complete Guide to Working From Home* was released in summer 2020. She talked about the book with SSA alumni and parents in a Zoom webinar on May 28.

Film producer **Carl Kurlander** appeared on CBS *Sunday Morning* in the segment "How the Fight Against Polio Was Won." He spent 10 years researching and co-producing a documentary about polio, *The Shot Felt 'Round the World*.

**Lisa Scales**, president and CEO of the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, and her team have made national headlines for their tireless work feeding local families in need during the COVID-19 public health crisis. In late March and early April, Scales was a guest on several national news shows, appearing on NBC's *TODAY*, MSNBC and CNN. She said the number of people the food bank is serving increased dramatically in a short amount of time. To learn more, visit [www.pittsburghfoodbank.org](http://www.pittsburghfoodbank.org).

## 1981

**Lisa (Cohen) Gloninger** writes, "I'm still living in Pittsburgh. I've owned my own women's boutique, Cajoli, since 1995. My daughters Katie and Lucy are grown! One is in grad school at Pitt, and the other works in the restaurant business in Denver. I play a lot of racquet sports and am staying busy and healthy, which is a good thing in these weird times!"

**Gary Middleton** writes, "I'm celebrating the completion of 20 years living in Fort Lee, N.J., and teaching mathematics at the Dwight-Englewood School, just outside of Manhattan. I specialize in teaching statistics and am developing a data science curriculum. Distance teaching via Zoom has been a huge challenge in the era of

COVID-19. I miss Broadway shows and being out with friends most of all!"

## 1984

In response to COVID-19, **Sean Casey**, owner of Church Brew Works, and his team partnered with Sysco Pittsburgh and 412 Food Rescue to hold a Pop-Up Produce Giveaway on March 31 to provide fresh produce and milk to more than 400 families in the Lawrenceville neighborhood of Pittsburgh.



## 1986

On May 7, SSA student volunteers joined President **Bart Griffith '93** and **Lance Ruttenberg** in helping to unload a shipment of personal protective equipment that arrived in Pittsburgh by plane. The shipment included thousands of reusable cloth face masks that were produced in the El Salvador factory of American Textile Co., a manufacturing company headquartered in Duquesne, Pa., of which Ruttenberg is the CEO.

## 1989

On Feb. 24, the Junior School welcomed **Adam J.B. Lane** and David Slavin, the illustrator and author of *Odd Gods*, a light-hearted graphic novel series about the Greek gods who didn't quite fit in. Lane is an award-winning author, illustrator and cartoonist. He attended Harvard University and the California Institute of the Arts, worked for the Walt Disney Company and authored two previous picture books for children, *Monsters Party All Night Long* and *Stop Thief!* In his spare time he draws comics for *The Boston Globe*.

## 1991

**Christian Borle** reunited with the cast of *Falsettos* on May 7 for a private Zoom conversation in support of the Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS' COVID-19 Emergency Assistance Fund & BroadwayEvolved programming.

## 1992

**Bentley Weiner** is an executive producer of the HBO special *24/7: Kelly Slater*, a documentary that offers a revealing look inside the surfer's life as he prepares for the Billabong Pipe Masters in Oahu, Hawaii.



## 1995

**Jon Daly** appeared in episode 2 of season 10 of the HBO comedy series *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, playing Larry David's mailman. The episode first aired in January.

## 1996

**Geoffrey Melada** was named communications director for the Treatment Advocacy Center, a national mental illness policy nonprofit. He previously was associate VP for communications at Hillel International and editor-in-chief of *Washington Jewish Week*.

## 1997

**Sloane (Berrent) Davidson**, founder and chief executive officer of Hello Neighbor, was named a 2020 Presidential Leadership Scholar. In addition, she was one of 26 winners of the 2020 *Pittsburgh Business*

*Times* Women of Influence Awards. See the alumni profile on Sloane on page 36.

## 1998

**Ariel Brice** was the virtual guest artist in **Scott Aiken '79's** Senior School ceramics class on May 7. During the Zoom class, Brice shared pictures of his recent artwork while talking about experiences that have influenced his work over the years. Brice, who creates objects and installations that explore the territory between sight and touch, has amassed an extensive list of regional and international artistic accomplishments and achievements in a short period of time. He lives in Los Angeles, where he is an adjunct assistant professor at ArtCenter College of Design and teaches sculpture at the University of Southern California. Learn more at <https://www.aribrice.com/>.

## 1999

**Matthew Mallet**, president of Broudy Printing, was featured in a December 2019 article in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. Broudy Printing, a family owned business, has been operating for more than 60 years.

Sama Eyewear, a premium eyewear company in which **David Wiggins** is a

partner and global brand ambassador, has reconfigured its manufacturing and supply chains in response to COVID-19 in order to provide hospitals and medical professionals with personal protective equipment such as KN95 respirators, protective eyewear and face shields.

## 2002

**Bari Weiss** won a 2019 National Jewish Book Award for her book, *How to Fight Anti-Semitism*. Weiss won the Myra H. Kraft Memorial Award in the category Contemporary Jewish Life and Practice. Hers was one of two 2019 books on anti-Semitism cited as "important and timely" in the Jewish Book Council announcement. She wrote the book in response to the 2018 attack on the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, where she celebrated her bat mitzvah 21 years earlier.

## 2006

In December 2019, **Anastasia (Rygle) James** became the new curator at the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art in Charlotte, N.C. She has worked at museums across the U.S., and came to Charlotte from Los Angeles, where she was curator at the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art.



## 2005

Beth Camphouse and **Jack Dingess** were married in Allison Park, Pa., on Sept. 28, 2019. In attendance were alumni (left to right) **Katie (Dingess) Maikish '03**, **Ric San Doval '01**, **Jake Klinvex**, **Tiffany Shento**, **Matt Orié**, **Ben Schmerin**, **Mike Hootman**, **Katherine Egan**, **Jim Ambrose** and **Nick MacPherson**. Jack and Beth currently live in Alexandria, Va.

**Jake Rogal** is a producer of *The Last Dance*, an ESPN 10-part documentary miniseries about the life of NBA star Micheal Jordan, which debuted in April 2020. Rogal coordinated 108 interviews with 106 people, helped to edit the entire docuseries and pitched in on creative decisions.

## 2007

**Mara Leff**, director of innovation for the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, helped to launch the Virtual Senior Academy platform in response to the increased need for interaction and companionship among the senior population. A story about the Virtual Senior Academy was recently featured on TribLive.com.

## 2008

SSA Board of Visitors member **Remington Jackson** was featured in an alumni profile by the College of Wooster. Read the article by visiting the news section at wooster.edu and clicking on alumni profiles.

## 2009

Yale Assistant Professor of Political Science and Data Science **Josh Kalla** co-authored a Vox article sharing research he completed on the electability of the Democratic presidential candidates. The research was also cited in a *New York Times* opinion piece on March 2, 2020.

**Joel Rubin**, who was the Jewish outreach director for Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign, was featured in a *Washington Post* story on March 18.

## 2010

**Jon Halpern**, president of Pineapple Payments, was the featured guest at Senior School assembly on Jan. 31, as part of the "Alumni Fireside Chat" series. Halpern answered questions and discussed his career path as well as the ups and downs of being an entrepreneur. After the assembly, he visited Tara O'Brien's economics class.

## 2012

**Reggie Mitchell** became certified as a sports agent last year and represented his former Pitt teammate Saleem Brightwell



## 2011

**Makenna Krebs** married Marc Bentley on Sept. 14, 2019, in Pittsburgh. Alumni in attendance included (left to right): **Jay Deal '09**, **Ben Fownes**, **Philip Elias**, **Sam Swarts**, **Hanna Brouman**, **Anne Marie Bilott**, **Ellen Boyle**, **Erika Maruca**, **Anthony Elias**, **Andrew Black**, **Peter Scott**, **Maggie Scott '14** and alumni parent Ric San Doval.



## 2011

On May 16, 2020, **Nick Loyacona** received his J.D. from University of Notre Dame Law School in South Bend, Ind.

in the 2020 NFL Draft. He also represents Mount Union linebacker and fellow SSA alum **Louis Berry '15**.

## 2014

**Maddie Taylor**, her younger sister, rising SSA senior Claire Taylor, and her friend, Souki Eljamri, teamed up to launch Feeding the Frontline PGH, a grassroots effort to support local restaurants while nourishing health care workers fighting COVID-19, all at the



## 2016

On April 17, **Doc Szlachetka** was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant and on April 18 he graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy. Doc led the Air Force men's lacrosse team in ground balls and was a four-year letter winner.

same time. The organization later merged with Off Their Plate Pittsburgh. Learn more on the Instagram page @ftfpgxotp.

## 2017

**Colby Poerio**, a junior midfielder on the William Smith College field hockey team, was named to the 2019 Zag Field Hockey/NFCA Division III National Academic Squad. Poerio is a biology and environmental studies double major.

The Academy expresses its deepest sympathy to the families of the following Shady Side Academy alumni and friends. Although we are unable to include remembrances of all, we sincerely value the special involvement in and contributions to the Shady Side Academy community during their lives. These listings include all information received by May 1, 2020.

### **RICHARD M. HUNT '44**

Richard M. Hunt passed away April 10, 2020. He was a graduate of Yale University and received an M.A. from Columbia University and a Ph.D. from Harvard University. He later joined the faculty at Harvard and held a number of positions, including university marshal, director of the Mellon Faculty Fellowship and associate dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. He was a founding trustee of the Roy A. Hunt Foundation, named after his father, who served as president of Alcoa for 30 years. In 2015, he and his wife established a fund at The Pittsburgh Foundation, making the largest donation of its kind by a living donor in the foundation's 70-year history. He was founding board member and vice chair of the National Center for Family Philanthropy. Hunt is survived by his devoted wife of 65 years, Priscilla Stevenson Hunt; their three children, Dr. Helen (Joe) Bouscaren, Susan (Mark) Hollingsworth and William (Janet) Hunt; and eight grandchildren.

### **DR. ROBERT BLUME '44**

Robert Blume passed away April 8, 2020. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Yale University and attended medical school at Temple Medical School and the University of Pennsylvania. He served in the U.S. Army as a doctor during the Cold War before moving on to Mercy Hospital, where he served as the treatment center director for the Myasthenia Gravis Association of Western Pennsylvania until his retirement in 1993. Dr. Blume was the first chairman of neurology at Mercy Hospital and served for many years as chair of neurology at St. Clair, St. Margaret and South Side hospitals. He also was a clinical professor of neurology at the University of Pittsburgh. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Elizabeth Blume; children, Peter (Patricia) Blume, Claire (Evan) Blume and Charles Blume; 12 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

### **C. TAYLOR MARSHALL '44**

C. Taylor Marshall passed away Oct. 2, 2019. He joined the U.S. Army Air Forces at age 18, during World War II. He lost two brothers during the war, and his father secured a promise from Dwight D. Eisenhower, the supreme allied commander in Europe, that the third son would not see combat. He returned unscathed and graduated from the University of Virginia. He began his career employed by Henry L. Hillman, working his way up through the executive ranks of Hillman-affiliated companies Pittsburgh Coke and Chemical Co., Shenango Inc., and Edgewater Steel, retiring as CEO. He was predeceased by his wife, Laura Love Marshall, and a daughter, Roberta Love Scott. He is survived by his children, Ashby Marshall, Margaret Marshall and Anne Kelley; six grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

### **RICHARD S. FRANKEN '46**

Richard S. Franken passed away Jan. 23, 2020. He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Judy Klein Franken; children, Marc (Theresa) Franken and Jo Ellen (Perry) Reiter; seven grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

### **HOWARD M. MULERT '46**

Howard M. "Scotti" Mulert passed away April 20, 2020. He began his insurance career with the Justus Mulert Co., founded by his grandfather in 1889, and went on to work with various other Pittsburgh insurance brokerages. He was the recipient of numerous awards, including the YMCA of Greater Pittsburgh's Racial Justice Award, the Minority Enterprise Corporation's Pillar Award and the Byrd R. Brown/K. Leroy Irvis Civil Rights Award. He is survived by his wife of 69 years, Jeanne Vaux Mulert; children, Sandy (Bob) Doyle and Jeff (Tracey) Mulert; four grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

### **DAVID M. CURRY '47**

David M. Curry passed away March 30, 2020. He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Natalie Hulme Curry; children, Jennifer Curry, William (Jill) Curry II, Jeffrey (Suzanne) Curry and David (Nancy) Curry Jr.; and 10 grandchildren.

### **JUSTUS C. GILFILLAN JR. '47**

Justus Clyde Gilfillan Jr. passed away April 8, 2018. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth, and his children.

### **LAWRENCE B. GORDON '47**

Lawrence B. Gordon passed away Oct. 19, 2018. He attended Washington & Jefferson College and spent his career as an investment adviser/stockbroker for the Pittsburgh firm of Parker/Hunter. He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Sara Gordon; children, Alan (Linda) Gordon and Michael (Darcy) Gordon; and five grandchildren.

### **MARTIN SNYDERMAN '48**

Martin Snyderman passed away Dec. 20, 2019. He attended Carnegie Mellon University and served in the U.S. Army. He spent his career in Washington, D.C., at the Smithsonian Science Information Exchange. He is survived by his wife, Lois Snyderman; children, Ellen Snyderman (Christopher Lash), David (Lila) Snyderman and Gary Snyderman (Shauna Babcock); and one grandson.

### **JOSEPH V. REINEMAN '51**

Joseph Vilsack Reineman passed away Dec. 29, 2019. He attended Trinity College, earning a B.S. in engineering, math and physics. He served in the U.S. Air Force as a pilot, and later in the Air Force Reserves as a commander. He began his career in the engineering department of

General Telephone Company (GTE) of Florida. In 1970, he transferred to the GTE headquarters in New York City to develop long distance calling services, later living in Connecticut, California and Florida after becoming GTE vice president of engineering. He is survived by his wife, Betty; five children, Linda (Jeffrey) Wingate, Deborah (Guy) King, Nanette Reineman, Joe Reineman Jr., and Ginger (Richard) Chapman; and seven grandchildren.

### **WILLIAM HOUSTON '56**

William Houston passed away Dec. 4, 2019. He attended Haverford College and Duquesne University School of Law. He started his career in Pittsburgh with Rust Engineering, then worked in corporate law with Litton Industries in Connecticut and Wisconsin, and later moved back to Pittsburgh to join his brother, John, and father, James, in private practice at the firm founded by his father. He was an integral member of the Allegheny County Bar Association. He is survived by his wife, Jean Houston; sons, James Houston and William Houston; and two grandsons.

### **RANALD M. STEARNS '58**

Ranald M. Stearns II passed away March 19, 2020. He received his B.S. from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and held master's degrees in chemical, electrical and civil engineering, and business administration. He also served in the U.S. Army. At age 26, he was one of three men who made the first documented descent into the Cave of Swallows in San Luis Potosi, Mexico – the largest known cave shaft in the world. He worked as a chemical engineer his entire career, earning a patent for his work in water treatment. He was preceded in death by his wife of 47 years, Patricia Anne Harris Stearns. He is survived by three children, Ranald M. Stearns III (Stacey Bashara-Stearns), Emily Stearns and Nathon Stearns (Osa Ohman), and four grandchildren.

### **DAVID HUBBARD '62**

David Hubbard passed away Feb. 7, 2017. Trained as a research chemist, he spent his career at Proctor & Gamble. Upon his retirement, he embarked upon a new career in capital management. He is survived by his wife, Antoinette Hubbard; daughter, Ashlie (Max Maccoby) Hubbard; step-daughter, Carolyn (Vaughn) Hanson; two grandchildren; four step-grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

### **MARTIN MONK '62**

### **ROBIN FLOWERDEW '65**

Robin Flowerdew passed away Feb. 5, 2020. He earned his Ph.D. at Northwestern University, and worked as a professor at Lancaster University in England and the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. He is survived by his wife, Jennifer Flowerdew, and step-children, Tom Weeks and Sophie Weeks.

### **MICHAEL T. KUTSENKOW '70**

Michael T. Kutsenkow passed away April 4, 2020. He attended Saint Vincent College, Carnegie Mellon University and the University of Pittsburgh before joining the U.S. Air Force. After serving his country, he continued his education and pursued various professions during his lifetime, including within the field of drafting, later becoming a skilled machinist. He is survived by his wife, Kathleen Kutsenkow; children, Steven Kutsenkow and Andrea Kutsenkow; step-children, Heather Smith, Suzanne Milbee, Alicia Doro and Michael Doro; and eight grandchildren.

### **DAVID A. ENGEL '72**

David A. Engel passed away Dec. 23, 2019. He attended Carnegie Mellon University and worked for Area for the Aging for more than 20 years. At four months of age, Engel's pediatrician discovered a tumor called a neuroblastoma, which was treated with radiation. He was the first infant to survive this type of cancer. He was predeceased by his father, Robert Engel. He is survived by his mother, Edythe Engel; brother, Dr. Phillip (Lila) Lynch; and many cousins.

### **KEVIN S. WARREN '74**

Kevin S. Warren passed away Nov. 11, 2019. He is survived by his former wife, Deborah Silleck-Warren, and siblings Sean (Ann) Warren, Sheila Anderson, Brendan (Kelly) Warren and Siobhan (Barry) Foster.

### **ELIZABETH (KUKULOWICZ) GILL '81**

Elizabeth (Kukulowicz) Gill passed away Jan. 23, 2020. She earned an undergraduate degree from Harvard University and a graduate degree from Stanford University. She worked as a lead marketing executive for Disney, Davies Law Firm and Danier, and was head of the Childhood Cancer Foundation in Toronto, Canada. She is survived by her husband, Shayne Kukulowicz; daughter, Caitlyn; son, Ryan; stepdaughter, Halle; and father, Dr. Thomas J. Gill III.

### **RICHARD D. PERKINS JR. '88**

Richard Dowling Perkins Jr. passed away Dec. 4, 2019. He was a graduate of Emory University and received an M.B.A. from the University of Pittsburgh. He is survived by his wife, Allison Perkins; daughters, Emma and Aubrey; mother, Elizabeth Thompson Wainwright; and sister, Sarah (Stephen) Stallings '90.

### **DUANE GLENN '90**

### **DANIEL A. STAFURA '04**

Daniel Alexander Stafura passed away Dec. 8, 2019. He was a graduate of Ithaca College, earning a degree in professional writing. He was the founder and COO of Thrive, a software company in Pittsburgh. He is survived by his father, Joseph (Penny) Stafura; mother, Kathleen Cunningham; brother, Joseph (Jocelyn) Stafura; and fiancée, Sarah Savitz.

## FAMILY AND FRIENDS

**Joan Apt**, mother of Jay Apt '63

**John Bitzer**, father of Sam Bitzer '22

**Kay Childs Bissel**, wife of Bill Bissel '56 and mother of George Childs 83

**Sarah Jane "Sally" Brown**, mother of Junior School faculty member Karen DiFiore and grandmother of Riley DiFiore '18

**Mercedes Dauer**, mother of Junior School Admissions Director Maggie Dauer Marquette and Rob Dauer '82; grandmother of Michael Colville, Caroline Colville '16, Sophia Marquette '20, Jack Marquette and Maggie Marquette '25

**Mary Davis**, wife of former Board of Trustees Chair John P. Davis, Jr. '42

**Elisa Egan**, wife of Murray Egan '44; mother of David Egan '74 and Jamie Egan '77; grandmother of Marney Egan '03, Kathryn Egan '05, D.J. Egan '07, Jamie Egan '08 and Tim Egan '09

**Virginia Lee Heinz Leslie**, mother of Craig Leslie '87 and Scott Leslie '78

**Aura Hulme**, mother of Charles Hulme '73 and Milton Hulme '72

**John Kartsonas**, father of Dean Kartsonas '83

**Joseph Katarincic**, father of Jay Katarincic '83, Julie Katarincic '81 and Jim Katarincic '87; grandfather of Jack Katarincic '16

**Dennis Ledden**, father of Brian Ledden '92 and Alicia Ledden Heine '03

**Bill Mausteller**, husband of Senior School Library Assistant Kathy Mausteller

**Dr. William McMahan**, father of Christine Tumpson '78, Patrick McMahan '79, Marjorie Obod '80, Julie Sorkin '82, Kerry Iazard '84, Rodrick McMahan '87 (Barbara McMahan '89) and Maria Bryan '89; grandfather of William McMahan '16, Corinne Tumpson '16, Alicia McMahan '17, Sophia McMahan '19, Patrick Bryan '23, Natalia McMahan '23 and Grady Bryan '24

**John Mihm**, father-in-law of Director of Enrollment Management Katie (Hoopes) Mihm '83; grandfather of Claudia Mihm '14 and Henry Mihm '16

**Mary Miketic**, mother of Joyce Miketic '78

**Rosemarie Papincak**, mother of Nicole Papincak '01, Michael Papincak '03 and Danielle (Papincak) Kernan '05

**Lurline "Lee" Pavlovich**, wife of predeceased faculty emeritus Joe Pavlovich; mother of Philip Pavlovich '78 and former trustee Karen Pavlovich West '75; grandmother of Stewart West '05

**Joaquim "Jack" Silva**, father of Assistant Athletic Director Katy Phillips' partner, Katrina Silva

**Martin "Barry" Sobovitch**, father of Junior School faculty member Jillian Velotta

**Leslie Scammon Jr.**, father of Steven Scammon '80 and Lee (Scammon) Kubishta '82

**Guthrie "Rod" Smith**, father of Lisa (Smith) Fisher '84; father-in-law of Gordon Fisher '79; grandfather of Abigail '13 and Eliza '18 Fisher

**Chad Stack**, father of Kelcie Stack '22

**Bill Tadler**, former Senior School faculty member (1971-1989) and father of John Tadler '81 and Jen Tadler '83

**Theresa Trenz**, mother of Athletic Department Administrative Assistant Terri Trenz McPherson

**Laura Wizzard**, mother of Senior School faculty member John Wizzard

## CORRECTIONS

*In the In Memoriam section of the winter issue, there were several omissions from the obituary of **Rev. John D. Dennis**: he was senior pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Corvallis, Ore.; attended Wesleyan College prior to Princeton Theological Seminary; was ordained at the Shadyside Presbyterian Church, and served in the Germantown Presbyterian Church prior to his position in Oregon. Also, **James E. Stinson** was misspelled. Our sincere apologies.*

*Note: All obituaries appearing in Shady Side Academy Magazine are edited to a consistent size and format.*

# Shady Side's Polio Pioneers

As COVID-19 continues to impact the world, the vital search for a vaccination is underway. Almost 70 years ago, a Shady Side Academy Senior School student played a critical role in ridding the U.S. of another epidemic – polio.

**Bill Kirkpatrick '54** was a Senior School student who had just been elected president of Shady Side's sophomore class and was preparing for football tryouts when he was diagnosed with the dreaded disease.

In a 2002 interview with the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Bill shared that he “could feel horrible pain... like someone taking a sledgehammer and beating it against your spine. I could feel my legs get soft like jelly and, all of a sudden, I couldn't move them. I thought maybe I had cancer.”

The boy nodded, a little surprised to have been asked. Salk took up the syringe, slid the needle into a vein and withdrew a vial of blood. “Thank you,” he said, “for going first.”

Not long after that, Dr. Jonas Salk, the famed University of Pittsburgh researcher and virologist, began a search for children to serve as “Polio Pioneers,” volunteers who would be test subjects for a then-experimental vaccine. Bill wanted in right away, ultimately convincing his parents to let him do so. In fact, he became the very first child in America to participate in the trials – or “Subject No. 1,” as he became known.

In 2005, *Smithsonian Magazine* recounted young Bill's first conversation with Dr. Salk as the physician held out a long needle and readied to begin with initial blood testing:

“OK if we proceed?” Salk asked.

The boy nodded, a little surprised to have been asked. Salk took up the syringe,

slid the needle into a vein and withdrew a vial of blood. He regarded the vial closely for a moment, then labeled it carefully.

“Thank you,” he said, “for going first.”

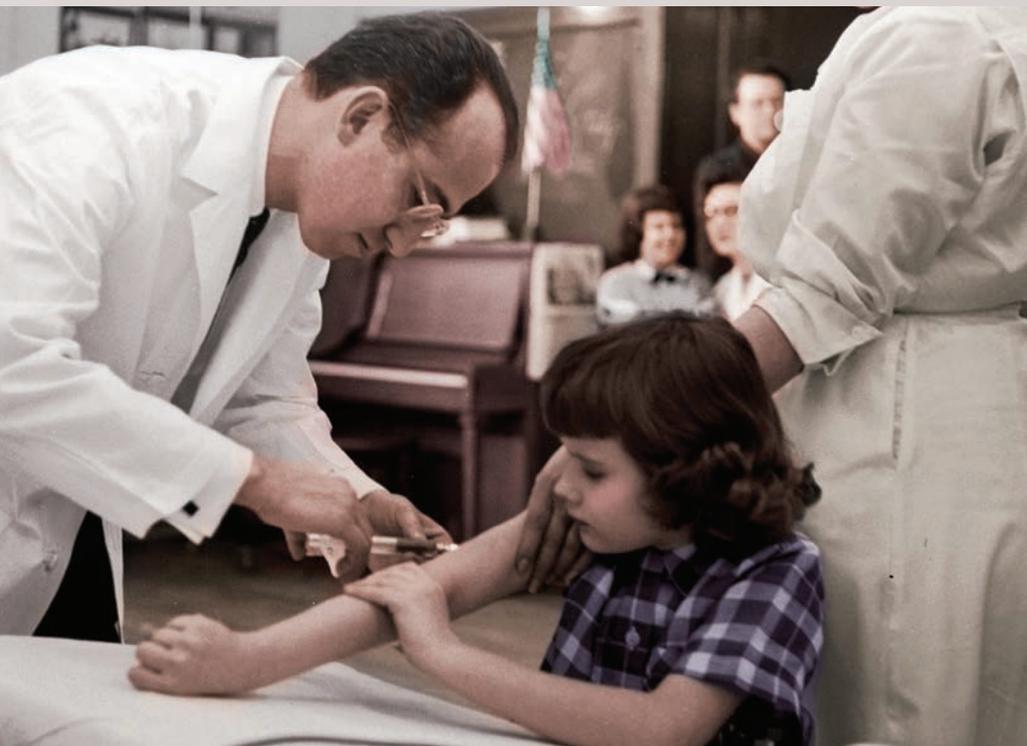
Bill shrugged. “I have two nephews. I don't want them to get what I had.”

As Salk's vaccination ultimately proved effective in ending polio, Bill found his picture in newspapers around the world and participated in a host of interviews with major media outlets across the country. After SSA, he graduated from Franklin & Marshall College and embarked on a life of deep faith, serving others as an Episcopal minister until his death in 2003.

**Carl Kurlander '74**, director of *The Shot Felt 'Round the World*, a documentary that tells the story of the University of Pittsburgh research team and the Pittsburgh community's roles in the creation of the Salk polio vaccine, said Bill began his trial in 1953, and vaccine testing actively began in Pittsburgh in 1954. And, some of the first children in the United States to receive the trial vaccine were Shady Side Academy Junior School students. On April 12, 1955, the federal government declared the Salk vaccine “safe and effective” after the largest medical field trial in history, involving 1.8 million Americans.

“We've dealt with something like this before,” Kurlander said. “Now, we are awaiting history to repeat itself.”

If you or a family member was an SSA Junior School student who participated in the polio vaccine trials, we would love to hear your story. Please email Lindsay Kovach at [lkovach@shadysideacademy.org](mailto:lkovach@shadysideacademy.org).





# SHADY SIDE ACADEMY

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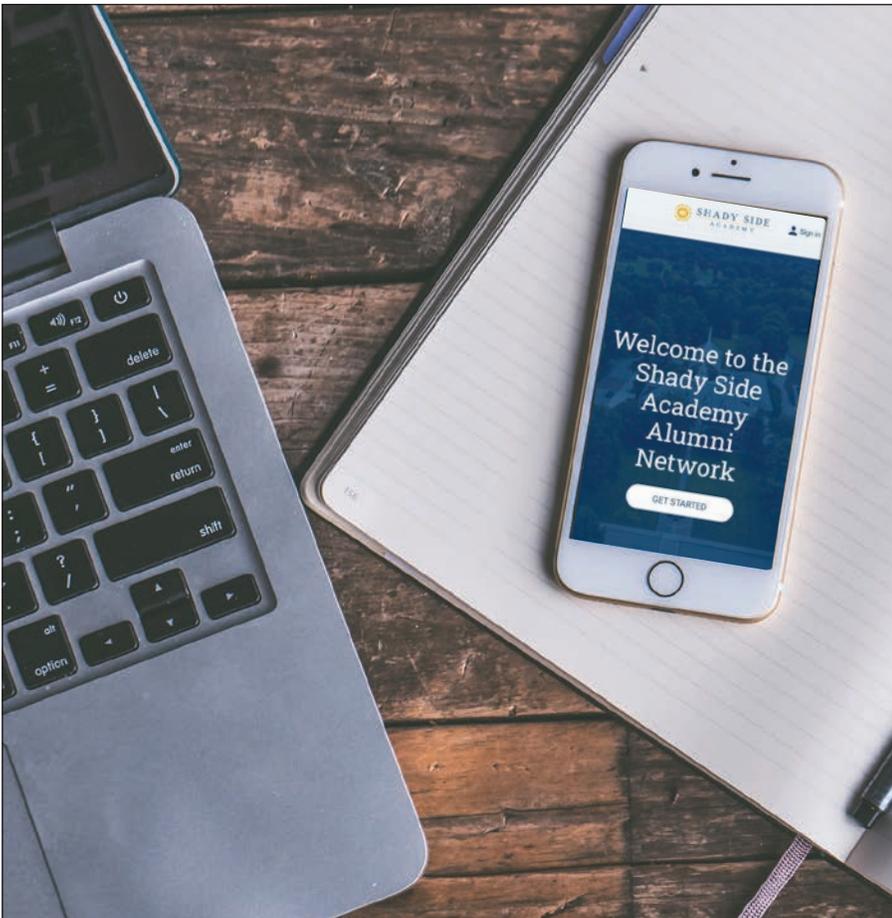
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