Carolina Friends School

Meeting for Worship
With Attention to Graduation

Saturday, June 8, 2019
10:30 a.m.
Carolina Friends School Gymnasium

Our Mission

Carolina Friends School is a vibrant and inclusive learning community empowering students to think critically, creatively, and independently. We foster active exploration and quiet reflection, individual endeavor and collaborative engagement. Inspired by Quaker values – pursuit of truth, respect for all, peaceful resolution of conflict, simplicity, the call to service – we teach our children that it is possible to change the world.

Congratulations to the Carolina Friends School Class of 2019

Oluwaseun Temidayo Ajasa
Sarah Aidel Meihui Bernstein
Leo Gilliom Bird
Christopher Board
Devin Frank Brader-Araje
Madison Brook Chandler
Jonah Soule Chapman
Duncan Thomas Charboneau
Tal Chatterjee
Alexander Parr Chilton
Matthew Goodwin Costello
Simon Harper Covington
Elise Nicole Cumberbatch
Elly Blue Cummins
Razak Dhesi
Lucy Rosales Dixon
Annika Emerson
Chloe Faith Gillespie
Emma Jane Hales
Benjamin Roderic Hodgins
Hallie Grace Huls
Isabelle May Huntington
Lukas William Irwin
Benjamin Bedier Kairys
Ahrianna Suran Keefe
Bennett Wheaton King
Sydney Deborah Kirsch
Jason Manning
Viviana Erika Martin
Gennarose Hersh McDermed
Jackson Douglass Meisner
Daniel Michael Nevius
Georgia Rui Paulig
Kevin Anthony Pignone
Hannah Ellington Porterfield-Winstead
Isabella Ann Pratico
Anderson Kyl Proescholdbell
Mia Rose Pungello
Mateo Luis Rimer-Surles
Jiatong (Joanna) Song
Eliot Peter Dugan St. Clair
Paul Samuel Youngblood
Anna Olivia Zuiker

Meeting for Worship with Attention to Graduation

At Carolina Friends School, we gather to honor graduates in the spirit of a Friends Meeting for Worship. The Meeting is grounded in silent waiting, which allows each person to contribute, whether through speaking or active listening.

Friends customarily do not plan in advance to speak at Meeting for Worship; neither do we plan to remain silent. Rather, we come expectantly, open to the leadings of the Spirit. Messages shared in Meeting for Worship are referred to as vocal ministry. In discerning whether to speak or remain silent, Friends ask:

- *Does this message come through me, having arisen from the Spirit that connects us all?*
- *Is this message intended for the gathering, rather than primarily for an individual?* If the message is directed toward a specific individual, we ask that you consider sharing it in a more personal way.
- *Has this message already been shared through another person's vocal ministry?* In a gathered meeting, it is common to have the experience that another person speaks one's mind, in which case we remain still.

We are asked to be mindful of the large number in attendance. Silence between messages can profoundly enrich a Meeting.

After about an hour, the Head of School reads a diploma and presents one to each graduate. Following the presentation of diplomas, we return briefly to silent worship and then close the Meeting by shaking hands with those nearby. All are invited to enjoy lemonade and conversation afterwards.

This program contains essence statements about the graduates. These passages have been composed by friends or family members chosen by the graduates and are meant to express some of that senior's special qualities. Essence statements allow us to single out each graduate for special recognition on this important day.

Thank you for joining with us in this celebration and congratulations to each graduate.

<u>Schedule</u>

10:30 Seniors process into the gymnasium
10:45 Welcoming remarks from Karen Cumberbatch, Head of School
10:50 Settle into Meeting for Worship with Attention to Graduation
11:40 Diplomas are awarded
12:00 Karen invites us to Settle Out for a few minutes of silence followed by guests enjoying lemonade in the gym lobby

Oluwaseun Temidayo Ajasa

The Durham Nativity School creed embodies beliefs to which our young men aspire: daring to dream big, never giving up, and striving to excel. Temidayo, you epitomize the DNS creed. From the day you stepped on campus, you showed flashes of character and desire that set you apart. Mr. Oliver tells of the first time he noticed you as a sixth grader. You were playing basketball with classmates during recess. Everyone was talking trash and trying to make Jordan moves. However, you weren't talking trash. You were dominating the game with some pretty good skills. Mr. Oliver was impressed with how you carried yourself on the court. Then something special happened. You crossed someone, and he fell to the ground. After making the shot, you went over to him, helped him up and said, "Sorry, you all right?" That first impression was a lasting one that framed your three years with us. You fell in love with math and the amazing feeling that resulted from solving a challenging problem and the competitiveness of the Mathcounts club. Your career goals centered on one day owning your own business. When as a seventh grader your grades began to slip, your father was there to provide a needed dose of reality. He told you that smarts only get you so far and that you will always have to put forth extra effort to truly excel. It seems like yesterday you were delivering a graduation speech to our DNS family. In it, you talked about beginning your journey as a studious young man who excelled academically but was painfully shy, struggling to make eye contact, and fearful of making new friends. However, introduced to public speaking at DNS, your confidence grew as barriers fell, culminating in your graduation speech. In that speech, you also spoke about playing sports and learning sportsmanship, humility, and empathy, staying grounded and aware of others' feelings and being modest when interacting with peers and adults. Lastly, you talked about the next leg of your journey at CFS. You looked forward to the opportunity to continue building on the life lessons learned at DNS: selfless service and respect for others, the confidence to go out and change the world, to follow your dreams, to persevere, and strive to be the best man you can be. You said that you would always believe that anything is possible, and do whatever you set your mind to, never giving up even when the going gets tough and settling only for excellence. I am confident that your four years at Friends heightened your character, and deepened your resolve to be the best young man you can be while contributing to the school culture and leaving a lasting impression. Congratulations on completing another leg of your journey. We are so proud of you. With your resolve, the love and support of your family and the DNS and Carolina Friends' families, rest assured that the best is yet to come. Dr. Vannelle

Temidayo Ajasa what can I say? I'm super proud of the young man you have become. It seems like it was just yesterday that we met, and people said, "He will be the scorer for your team." What they did not share with me is that you would also become my leader, someone who would help me grow as a person and coach and someone who would radiate good energy to all around him. As you celebrate today with friends and family and embark on this new chapter in your life, remember that greatness lies within you. Your potential is truly unlimited. Most importantly remember that you will always be loved regardless of your field of study and regardless of your achievements. Once again, I am extremely proud of your growth over the time we have shared, and I feel fortunate to have been your coach. I want you to know that if I can ever help you with anything, I am only one phone call or email away. I wish you all the best. Much Love, Coach Markeith Gary

Sarah Aidel Meihui Bernstein

I am so proud of what Sarah has accomplished. She is an intellectual who strives to learn for learning's sake. Her wide-ranging interests — spanning biology, English, diversity, art, and baking amaze me. That Sarah follows all her pursuits with total commitment and enthusiasm makes what she has done throughout her high school years that much more impressive.

Mom

I am very proud of all you have accomplished over the past four years and have enjoyed watching you grow as an individual. Your work ethic, intellect, and passion for academics are truly admirable. You have given back to the community in so many ways, including planning and leading school events, serving on search committees, and leading various clubs. I feel lucky to have been your advisor and teacher and am excited to see what amazing things you do in the next chapter of your life!

Will Fulkerson

Sarah, during the last four years, it has been a joy to nurture your love of biology, which has both fascinated and challenged you. Throughout EOY Peru, your adventurous spirit was evident during sorties into the forest to mist-net birds, to scan the clay lick for parrots and macaws, and as you hiked miles to identify butterflies and through the pitch-black forest of night to record frogs and insects. Working with the children of Salvación in their school biogarden, you enjoyed helping them to transplant seedlings and prepare new raised beds. I have so appreciated your endless interest in and support of the work of the Madagascar Club to raise money to bring solar lighting and clean water to families in Tsinjoarivo, Madagascar. We will miss you, Sarah. May your future shine bright! :)

Frances

The first time I got to know Sarah was by an accident of school geography. In order for me to easily reach my out-of-the-way classroom, I often pass through the classroom usually devoted to Spanish. Sarah, then in ninth and tenth grade, had heard that I taught US History to the juniors. She would pepper me with questions about the subject: "What are you covering now? What is your favorite topic?," etc. It was a tipoff to one of Sarah's essential characteristics: her curiosity, her irrepressible desire to research facts and collect data — to learn for the sheer pleasure of learning. Whether in learning history or biology (in particular), a good day for Sarah means knowing more about the world — its patterns and its beauty. She also loves to read- novels especially, the bigger and more character-rich the better (Zola, Tolstoy, Dostoevsky!). And then there's her creative side: this year rediscovering creative writing and drawing and painting. A second essential about Sarah is her direction — by now she has great self-confidence, in knowing where she wants to go, what she wants to learn, and who she is at this point. Lastly, there's her sense of humor: gentle, subtle, self-deprecating. She's headed now to Penn (my alma mater!), with her intellect in full flower, having used (and savored) every opportunity given by our little Quaker school. Godspeed, Sarah!

Bryce

Leo Gilliom Bird

Leo, my dear grandson, what a transformation we have seen in you in the last four years! You began an adrift child and have emerged as an anchored young man. I love remembering your commitment to achieve a successful completion of projects you undertook. I smile remembering your wit. I love remembering our conversations during our twice weekly trips to Crossfit, chatting about matters of mutual concern. Your capacity to be open with me, family, and friends shows your secure sense of self. You are well set to tackle the next four years and those beyond.

Grandpa

If you want to have a good conversation, find Leo. He leans in! When I used to pick him up from Friends School on Wednesdays before he could drive, from about ages seven to fifteen, I enjoyed his ability to talk about any topic and to bring things up on his own. Now when we go out to brunch, I know it will be interesting, fun, and meaningful. How does he do it? For one thing, he's present. He's also perceptive and what I would call psychologically-minded. He seems to understand people because he cares about them.

Bonbon

When you walk into a room, I see and feel your strength, your integrity, and your caring nature. And I love the way you get things done — like when you readily agreed to power wash our driveway and pool deck. And how you jumped into parkour, and really killed it in CrossFit, while being youngest in your gym! And most of all, how you clearly love and honor your family and your friends. Leo, you are heading for a wonderful life, and I am so glad to be able to watch and cheer you on.

Pop

Strong. Leo is strong. Clearly strong of body, earned through years of extremely hard work, dedication and persistence. But also uniquely powerful of mind and spirit. Astute at solving problems both in the classroom and under the hood. Soaring spirit, leading and lifting others while deepening his own life. Perhaps his greatest strength, though, is his ability to balance these wonderful assets.

Dad

Two essential parts of Leo are his humor and his wisdom. From a very young age, he has made us laugh. It's enough to "break my funny bone," as he said at age four. And his wisdom is far beyond his years. Leo, I will greatly miss your wise, funny self as you go off into the world, but the world will be better for it.

Love, Mom

Leo, first off congratulations brodie! As we've grown up, I've been able to witness you grow into the person you are today. You are undoubtedly one of the most trustworthy people I know, and I could not imagine anyone else being my best friend. You are like a brother to me, and I am extremely proud of you and everything that you have done to get to this moment. Thank you for everything that you have contributed to my life, and I can't wait to see where the years take us.

Much love, Donovan

Devin Frank Brader-Araje

Great things are done by a series of small things brought together. — Vincent Van Gogh

DEVIN: Role Model, Chess Player, Reader, Lego Builder, Historian, Baller, Old Soul, Asks the Big Questions, Generous, Foodie, Intentional, Family Trailblazer, Independent, Intelligent, Hard Working, Rarely Confusidado, Imaginative, Nifty, Funny, Ethical, Great Friend, Loving, Handsome, Blue Eyed, Measured, Kind, Willing Volunteer, Chatty, Philosophical, Policy Wonk, Logical, First Who-Body, Conscientious, Athletic, King of the Backyard, AAU, YAG, Homework Helper, Scooby Doo Captain, Duck & Piggy Companion, Traveler, Linguist, Self-Motivated, Wise, Caring, Impactful, Difference Maker, Big Brother, LOVED....Devin, your Essence enriches everyone. We love you so much and look forward to continuing this journey together! Love, Mom & Dad

Devin (Whobody graduating from high school?), Happy Graduation from your three doodle-bangers. We wanted to say how much we appreciate that you are not only our brother but also our friend. From basketball to chess to philosophical discussions late at night, Trevor said it best: "You're special that way." To Zoe, "You are an inspiration and a role model," and we wish you luck in college! We know your future's bright, and Justin already can't wait for your first visit home! We love you to the moon and back! Love, Zoe, Justin, and Trevor

Devin, your inquisitive, confident nature has always impressed us. When you were three, Gee Gee pointed out the daytime's half moon, and you asked, "Where's the other half?" When Katie corrected your pronunciation of tsunami at the age of four, you confidently replied, "That's what I said – salami," (chomping your cheerios). You will make a difference in the world, as you have in ours.
Love, Grandma, Katie, and Charlie

Devin, mi muy querido Nieto, felicitaciones en tu graduación de la escuela secundaria. Yo estoy muy orgulloso de tí por este gran logro. Híciste un buen trabajo: tu inteligencia, dedicación y tenacidad te llevaron a lograr esto. Te deseo muy buena suerte en el nuevo capítulo de tu vida en la universidad. Pon a trabajar las mismas cualidades de inteligencia, dedicacion y tenacidad, y asi lograras los mismos resultados. Con mucho cariño, tu Abuelo, Abraham Araje

Devin, your love of learning is wonderful to witness: your eyes light up and you jump right in with eagerness and elation. How lucky your siblings are to have you as their big brother, and how lucky we are to be part of your journey. We will miss your gentle humor, unstoppable work ethic, and wonderfully kind way of showing up in all you do. Much love, always, Melissa

Whether he's in class or on the basketball court, Devin has proven himself to be an inquisitive learner who strives for perfection but is sometimes willing to settle for excellence. Devin is conscientious, patient, and selfless, but also frisky enough to rub in his victories when he has the chance. Devin is a natural leader — as seen by his valiant efforts to keep Investment Club afloat. Everyone has benefitted from having a little Devin in their lives whether they know it or not. Anderson Proescholdbell

Madison Brook Chandler

Mads you are the light that shines within my soul! Your name means Good (Madison) Stream (Brook) Light (Chandler) – You are Luminous! Kind, Loving, Smart, Beautiful, Listener, Patient, Creative, Peaceful, Loyal, Funny, Courageous, Singer, Actor, Dancer — Wise beyond your years, my teacher, my human lookalike, my sweet doodlebug. I am so proud of you! You inspire me to be a better me! You are changing the world, making a difference — your Light, your Truth blesses everyone! Live with no regrets, Love the life you live, and Own your life the way you own the stage! I will love you forever and I will like you for always, as long as I am living and always in my heart my baby you will be! All my love, Mommy

Madi, even in the relatively short time I've known you, it is amazing how much I've seen you grow as a person. From starring in musicals and plays at CFS to writing one at Governor's School to choreographing your own dance, I have seen you achieve so many beautiful things. I know you will take that same wonderful CFS energy everywhere you go. No matter where college takes you, I know you're going to be amazing. Love, Tanner

I blinked. You grew up. You went from "Are you 'bizzy' yet?" while swirling around in the air to "Let's go visit colleges!" Teaching me to play chess when you were six, trying on "church lady" hats … all of this turned into having coffee, watching you own the stage, and watching you take a stand for gun violence and equality. You are the definition of kindness, Madi. Keep that in your heart. Love you more than all the stars in the universe! Love, Cheryl

I wonder if you remember sitting at dinner at Aunt Lola's reciting an Ogden Nash poem when you were nine. I remember the witch we made that stood as high as you for your middle school project. I watched you on FaceTime sub queue a baby squirrel. I am deeply proud of Madi, my squeegee mop. You walked into my heart and sat down, where forever you will be. Never be small for anyone. My beautiful human. Love, KT

Madi — congratulations! You're graduating! You worked really hard for it, and now you're here. And I'm so proud of you. You're smart, funny, persistent and kind — I've been friends with you for eleven years, and you continue to amaze me as you grow and evolve into yourself. I can't wait to continue to see you do that! So much love, Isabel

"Everything is happening all of the time." Indeed, that is the mantra of your Upper School career. Thank you for trusting me to walk alongside you — the honor has truly been mine. All we experience makes us who we are, and you, my dear Madi, are one heckuva powerfully burning star in all you do. My everlasting wish for you is that you continually recognize the brilliance of your own light as you move through your precious, wondrous life. Love, Melissa

Madi, I once read that real intelligence is not so much in knowing how to do what you have learned to do, but in knowing how to behave in circumstances for which no prior experience has prepared you. From your first days of life to piano recitals, dance, challenging questions, and discussions we have had, I'm not sure who has learned more. I love your willingness to challenge, knowing when to be the zebra and when to be the chameleon. You are so loving, caring, talented, mature, and smart beyond your years. You have a dry wit that is captured by your Cheshire Cat grin. From the wacky and insightful world of Curious George, "Keep curious and carry a banana!" Love, Stephanie Rand

Jonah Soule Chapman

I can vividly recall laying in my bed as a child, wondering in the silence of the night about who my children would be. It was as if you already existed, deep in my heart, despite being decades away from joining us in this life. There was nothing in this world that could have prepared me for the gift of being you mama. The day that you were born, instead of crying, you made soft cooing sounds — just like that of a baby bird. The first time that I held you, you looked up at me — and as strange as it may sound, in an instant I knew that somehow you and I were both home. Watching you grow, learning, laughing and loving alongside you, has been one of the greatest privileges of my life. You have always had a remarkable way of making everything feel better, Jonah — all it takes is to be wrapped up in one of your big ol' hugs, or to catch the light of your smile, to set everything at ease. I continue to marvel at the way that you move through the world with a fire in your soul, a song in your heart, and a dedication to being your best. You never back down from a challenge without giving it your all. Your fiercely competitive spirit and your persistence in achieving your goals have been such a joy to behold as your greatest cheerleader. Whether you are on the field, on the court, or simply in the company of family and friends that you hold so close, your soul shines. I am forever inspired by your compassion and gratitude for the moments and people before you. You have taught me the beauty of slowing down and the importance of savoring every bit of joy and sweetness that this journey has to offer us all. I will miss the comfort of having you beside me beyond measure, but in this inevitable process of preparing for you to fly out of the nest, I have come to understand that you are so much more than that dream that I once held in my heart — you are my heart, with wings. So today, I celebrate your glorious flight. I could not be more proud of you, or more excited to continue to cheer you on as you soar with such strength into the warmth and brilliance of your future. Home will always be there for you, buddy, because it lives inside of you now. Please remember that if something makes your soul feel like it is finally home, pay close attention to it. No matter if it's an idea, a passion, a job, a person, or a place — follow it. Make this crazy beautiful life your own. And though you always say it to me…YOU are the best. I love you the mostest. ♥ Mama

Pony Boy, Jo Jo, Nickel, Jonah Soule, Soul3z, and soon, Graduate. You've been called by many names, leaving so many people feeling better for crossing into your sphere of influence. The one name you go by which has left the most profound and enduring mark on my world is Son. Witnessing the manner in which you execute a life so full of empathy, kindness, laughter, loyalty, and love is a true honor of mine. You have made me strive to be like you, and in doing so I have become a better person, spouse, friend and, parent. You have graced me with a life in which I get to hear my favorite three words every day, "I love you," followed by, Let's play catch." I love you. ♥ Dad

I don't even know where to start, Jonah has always had my back through thick and thin. He has made one of the biggest impacts on my life. He is not only my brother but he is my best friend; I can always count on him to support me and my decisions. He really, truly lights up my world, and I can't imagine my life without him and his contagious laugh and smile. Congrats big bro for graduating. You made it! I love you. ♥ Julia

I love Jonah so much because he loves me. He always plays with me and laughs a lot and tucks me in every night before I go to sleep. I love Jonah because he is the very best brother in the whole world. ♥ Jason

Duncan Thomas Charboneau

Duncan has been there for me in so many pivotal moments in my life that it's hard for me to think of a time when he wasn't right there next to me. He's supportive, reliable, and kind, the type of person who has manages to cheer me up even when I have nothing positive left to say. For more than half of our lives, Duncan has inspired me to work harder on my passion because he pursues his goals with the kind of work ethic that I aspire to have. Duncan, I couldn't have asked for a better best friend, and I can't thank you enough for all that you do to make my life and everyone else around you shine. Love, Mal

Dear Dustin, Even though our memories may be fading, Grandma and I will always fondly look back on our happy times with you and your brother Ethan. I hope you get over any scars (literally) you acquired by being our first grandson (remember crashing down the concrete sled run?). I am so proud of the kind of young man you've become. Your kind, caring, open, and fearless approach to life will carry you far as you go forward. There are a few things you may need to avoid for continued success: 1) pyromania (no magnifying glasses for you!); 2) falling asleep underwater (you're not really related to Aquaman!); 3) choosing which elders to believe (it's time you knew that I planted the arrowheads). But all in all, I'm sure your greatness will shine through. Seriously, we love you and hope you find peace, fulfillment, and love in whatever you pursue. Remember your roots, and what we say in Hawaii (eʻoluʻolu mai mimi i ka wai)! Aloha, Pop

Duncan, you're a great person and a great friend, and I'm privileged to know you. You are one of the most talented, athletic and driven people I know and simultaneously one of the humblest. You're quick to offer a cookie, a joke, or a bit of support. I enjoy matching wits with you, and geeking out about racing and movies. Your parents should be proud. They raised a good man. Lukas

Duncan, moments after you were born, you smiled at me. I knew we'd be friends for life. Your wide-eyed innocence and smile were a harbinger for the good-natured adventurer you've become. Always up for a challenge, you took on swimming at the age of four and haven't stopped yet. Congrats on all the victories! You can be daring. From the 200 foot swing at Kings Dominion to an ocean full of jellyfish, you'll go where no one else will. You're a loyal friend and an honest man. You don't demand to be listened to, but always have something worth saying and will stand up for what you believe in — be it a coach or even your parents. I see you in your personal struggles. You don't fear failure but see it as part of the road to success. I think you will always find the success you aim for. You have been well loved, and it shows in your kindness to others. I am so proud of you and the man you're becoming. Now thank your parents, hug your brother, and enjoy the next phase of your life. It will be wonderful! Love you, Grandma

Remember, my sweet sunshine boy, to just be you. You are perfect and enough. May you be healthy, happy, and loved — these are and have always been my wishes for you. We love you and are so proud of you. Congratulations! Mom, Dad and Evan

Tal Chatterjee

Tal, you'll always be special to me because you're my sister, but I know with your strength, drive, enthusiasm, and love, you'll be much more than that. (Not that your worth is defined by your relationship to a man or anything lol <3). Seeing you thriving in LA and becoming the version of yourself that you love and want to be has been truly incredible, iconic, even. Keep acting, keep living, and keep texting me forever. I love you (and not zayn). Babu

Tali: snapshots of memories. Fearless four-year-old rushes ahead of family. Arms and legs wide for security scan for flight to Bogota, Colombia. Caring. Grandmother falls on concrete pavement in Roberson Place. Confident six-year-old says "Hold my hand. I will protect you." Protector. Patient teacher of computer, voice recorder, and smart phones to aging grandparents. Brave. Moves alone to Los Angeles after early graduation. May the Divine reward your hopes, efforts, and risks taken for pursuing your dreams of acting. Dimma and Tata

Tal. I first met you when you were four years old. Curious, engaging, and a little shy, you were smiling and beautiful. You and Babu became my honorary grandchildren: an honor I hold dear. I have watched you grow into the incredible young woman you are now: strong, courageous, talented, and gifted with an unusual degree of emotional intelligence. You are radiantly beautiful. I so admire your focus and your determination. I am so very proud of who you have become. I love watching your exciting journey. Sometimes the journey is more fun and rewarding than the destination. So, enjoy your trip, take good care of yourself, and be only who you are. I give you love from the depths of my heart. Mimi

Dear Tal, Amazing! You are already off in LA! Here are some final thoughts for the journey. Earn praise but don't put too much stock in it. Listen thoughtfully to criticism but don't worry too much. Balance success with humility. Stay grounded, focused and be brave. I believe in you! Wendy Ward

So incredibly blessed to have you in my life, Chatterjee girl! You have taught me so much about how to move through the world — with enthusiasm, with compassion for all living things, with curiosity, with grit, with integrity. You are so good at taking care of others — just make sure that you take care of, and have compassion for, yourself. Enjoy LA!! And make sure that everyone knows that if they mess with you, they will have to answer to me (and Bailey and Plum)! VShona

In your gaze I see the determined artist that was your grandfather, the joyful curiosity that is your great-grandmother (Magoma), and the too-acute empathy that is your grandmother (Dimma). In your voice I hear the questions of an engaged curiosity, an intelligent and openly authentic, balanced, tender maturity of a secure, grounded, independent thinker. In your smile I see your own playful, sunny, delighted joyousness with which you have approached the world since you were born (playing your first joke on me at nine months on the diaper table!). Tali, I see you as the boughs of a willow tree — gracefully arching, providing a sun dappled shelter, catching a breeze, playfully dancing, standing mighty after a storm — having let the force of the winds whoosh harmlessly through your tensile fronds. Graceful, warm strength is so rare. How did I get so lucky to have you born to me? Mama

Alexander Parr Chilton

Alex, what an amazing person you are! Genuine, sincere, outgoing, a born teacher! It is a pleasure to teach and interact with you. Never afraid to speak your mind, you contribute in class and in all aspects of school. You left an indelible mark in our Advanced Biology class: your focus was complete, you spoke your truth, you were even a voice-box for quiet questions from neighboring students! Your desire to understand deeply was always apparent and when we needed a jovial moment, you were quick to oblige. I appreciate the depth of your commitment to the school community where you share your many talents widely, happy to support other students and me as a most reliable and competent TA. I look forward to hearing of your exploits at college. Stay in touch, Alex! :)

Frances

Even when you were little, Alex, our neighbor would see you riding your bike and say, "That boy is a fireball!" And it's true. You have always brought an adventurous and positive spirit to everything you do, and your commitment to putting in the hard work to achieve your goals — whether in Tae Kwon Do or in science — is an inspiration. Your positive attitude, your laugh, and your spirit bring joy to your family, friends, and classmates. And we cannot wait to see where you are headed and what you will accomplish. We love you, Alex! Congratulations!

Dad

Alex, you have always been a body in motion, with lots of opinions and many, many, words. You are up for a challenge even when it tastes nasty, looks dangerous, requires a lot of commitment, or is probably a very bad idea. It has been a delight and a joy to watch you discover your gifts and strengths. You have channeled your need for motion into a fourth degree black belt, Ultimate, and soccer. You have found constructive ways to use your words: you teach, tutor, and give tours. Your opinions have been transformed into meaningful action in Student Ambassadors and Clerks. You are not afraid to put yourself out there, to be the voice for a group, to lead an activity, to serve on a panel, or to emcee an event. Your light shines brightly, and you are finding so many ways to use your gifts for the good of others. As you leave CFS, I am looking forward to watching you grow your passion, use your many powers for good, and find your way in the world. I know you've got this! Love you always, my sweet, sweet boy.

Mom

Matthew Goodwin Costello

Matthew, since birth, you have been such a tender, kind, calming person. I am constantly amazed at everything you do and how well you do it. You are always watchful and thoughtful before acting, in your schoolwork and interactions with others. You have a gentle soul and people are drawn to you. You don't judge and have empathy for friends and strangers alike. I know you will be successful in whatever you choose to do...believe it! Love, Mom

Matthew, when you showed up with no handbook, I couldn't believe the hospital let us take you home! In preschool, your rock-steady nature and strong sense of social justice lead you to speak out about the boys' exclusion of girls from the playground fort. From Thomas the Tank Engine days, thru the barefoot-ouch of Legos, and into computer gaming, your ability to imagine outcomes not visible to the rest is amazing to behold. Your path was not always easy, yet you navigate it with a fierce pragmatism that bely your years. Quietly observant, when you speak others listen. The trajectory of your growth as an athlete continues to inspire. You show up every day, you practice hard, you are highly coachable. Most importantly you celebrate your teammates' successes — a consummate team player. We are fiercely proud of the outstanding man you are. Know that you will always have our unconditional love. Always remember who you are, yet look to the stars! Dad

Matthew is a kind and gentle person. Someone who will always do what he can to help others. He is level-headed and sensible, always with good intentions. Matthew can make others laugh at all the right times; he has been close to me for years and is still my best friend. Matthew has a kind heart, and his graciousness is valued greatly. Your strength and perseverance will carry you far. Paul

Some say you cannot measure the success of a coach until you look at their players five to ten years down the road. If my success is contingent on your future, then I feel good about where we are headed. As you move into this new phase I wish you a ton of success. Please remain teachable throughout your life. Continue to learn valuable lessons from others around you. Remember the people you surround yourself with will have a significant influence on the life that you create. Thank you for welcoming me into the CFS community and making me feel as though I've always belonged; I am happy to have been your coach. Congratulations on this milestone. It has been an honor getting to know you. Much Love, Coach Markeith Gary

Matthew, you have walked a steady path to this ceremony and step into the next phase, a stretch at college. Upper School was an amazing journey and one I appreciate having experienced with you, from Intro Biology through Advanced Biology. You have squeezed in a plethora of science classes, while sports have been a constant social outlet. As I write this in March, you look forward to a two-week adventure in Costa Rica, studying Spanish and exploring its fabulous natural world. A great role model, you have given so much to Intro Biology this year. To commit to every class for the whole school year is a great service; I thank you for all your work. Wishing you the very best! :) Frances

Simon Harper Covington

It's a bit audacious to think that I could even approach grasping Simon's essence. If I stretched my vocabulary and positioned all the words in perfect order, however eloquent they might be, it would still fall significantly short of conveying Simon's core. And yet I'm losing track of the times Simon has done just that with his spoken word performances, encapsulating a challenging subject with grace, striking at the heart of the issue, expounding its essence. My first recollection of connecting with Simon was over Al Green's "Love & Happiness." A phenomenal song that has a stunning intro, so while you read these words, if you know song, try to have the guitar, organ, and drums playing in your head. Got it? Alright here we go…Simply put, Simon is amazing. We all know this. Simon is daring and courageous. He is willing to confront and challenge his community and himself. Simon is brilliant and inspiring. His spoken word performances are like lightning, illuminating the dark in flashes that sustain, leaving indelible marks, forcing us to see anew, to think differently, and encouraging action. Simon is profound and bold. Simon is caring and generous. Simon is more than any set of words could ever describe. Simon is amazing. Know that!

Jonathan McGovern

Simon, you're an adventurer — not just on land and water and in learning, but with people — always looking for ways to explore, learn, and connect. Always coming from a good place. You forge strong relationships — with peers, octogenarians, and children alike — sliding between generations and personalities effortlessly. You are at home everywhere, which helps everyone find a home within you.

Mom

Simon, you burst with positive energy and a dedicated mindset. Your passion towards spoken word lights up even the dullest of rooms. You contribute your words to any occasion, strung out in the most beautiful tones. No one's voice would I rather hear rapping about injustice and inequality. You captivate everyone with your skill of speech. When you put your mouth to the mic and your heart towards the sky, your S's sizzle down into silent symphonies, and you dominate the room. Nothing can hold you back. You will go very far. You've proven yourself to be an incredibly hard worker. You go far for your education but even farther for your family. When you go off to college, I'll miss jamming out in the car with you. I'll miss Chick-fil-A runs with you. I'll miss car rides in the morning to school with you. Always playing a familiar song. Never a quiet ride. Above all else, I'll miss midnight talks with you where we catch up on our lives and spill the tea. Stanford is so lucky to have you; I wish you the best as you navigate college. Try your best to make the smartest decisions. Don't get into too much trouble, but never forget to have fun. Come back in one piece. I love you more than words can describe.

Pilar

Elise Nicole Cumberbatch

Elise [ih-lees]: m. From the Hebrew Elisheba, meaning either oath of God, or God is satisfaction.

Most will delight in your various, God-given gifts. And while I will admit to (on occasion) marveling at your abilities as an artist and a fierce athletic competitor — my greatest joy is not in seeing you perform or compete. It is instead in those brief moments where, whether simply amused or genuinely excited, you have graced me with your radiant smile. How disarming yet truly welcoming it can be! How very important your happiness is to me. I look forward to seeing that smile on Graduation Day. Pride is an easy thing for a parent to feel — and I do feel pride. I, however, am more excited for the world and what you are about to bring to it. Congratulations! World – be prepared. Daddy

I can hardly believe that the graceful dancer, fiercely competitive soccer player, artist, and singer who willingly puts her innermost self on public display is the same little girl who hid behind my leg if a stranger was near. So much of your life has been spent with your family perhaps a little too close. I know to have your brother and me at the same school as you was a challenge at times, but you were able to find your own place and your own voice nonetheless. Perhaps it was a bit selfish, but watching you interact with your teachers and friends every day has been one of my greatest joys. I will miss having you beside me in the car each morning. Regardless of whether we spoke, your presence was enough. As you move into this next stage of your life, I am so happy that you will finally have the opportunity to define your own space and identity unencumbered. I can't wait to see how you will continue to claim your space in the world. No longer the little girl behind my leg. Love, Mommy

Congratulations on graduating from Carolina Friends School. I know the change from SSFS to CFS was hard, but I think you adjusted well and made the best of the change. I have been privileged to see you grow and develop over the years, and it excites me to see what else you are capable of. I know whatever school you choose to go to next will be better for it and will thoroughly enjoy your moody self, as much as I have. Wishing you the best in the next step of your life's journey. Love, Justin

I'm so proud of you for graduating, and I wish I was there to celebrate with you. I am so excited to be close in distance again (three hours) and I will definitely be visiting as much as possible. Thank you for being my best friend, my go-to and for making me laugh. I wish you all the best in the future and I know you will do amazing things with dance. I love you so much, and I can't wait to see you soon. Love, Pippa

There are no words that can fully describe you and how much you mean to me. You are one of the most beautiful dancers I've ever seen. Without you, senior year would have been literal trash. I can't thank you enough for all the support you give me and I hope I can support you in your future dance career. With so much love, Hannah
P.S. you will be getting front row tickets for Sleeping Beauty when I'm in the corps de ballet and I have to play a fake instrument in the back, lol.

Elly Blue Cummins

You were ready for the world before the world knew what was coming!! You came into our home like a lightning bolt — our somewhat calm and scheduled days of young parenthood were turned upside down by this tiny little feisty girl with no understanding or patience for walking before running or looking before leaping. You were the Yin to Boone's Yang, and you two brought out the best in each other on most days (as long as he let you be the one in charge). Your "old soul" determined eyes were present looking up at me the first time I held you — just as intense and as set on a purpose then as they are today. You always brought us big belly laughs and kept us on our toes in every way possible right from the start!

You are my Fast-thinking, Wise, Loyal, Fair, Kind, and Sensitive-when-no-one's-watching Child. You are my Fierce, Just, and Generous Blue Bird. I am thankful to you for always teaching me to look at every side of a story, especially the side I agree with the least. You have pushed my boundaries like no one on this earth ever could, and you have made me a better person by doing so. Man oh man, do I love you.

I am immensely over the top and insanely proud of you. My biggest wish is that you take what you are made of, those awesome traits, the experiences you've had, and your history, and go forward and give life your ALL. As a wise and sarcastic little girl once told me, "Be You, everyone else is taken," and don't forget to choose joy. Big, big love to you Elly Blue, Mom

Where to begin Elly? I guess I will start by thanking you for everything you have brought to our lives. Your openness, strength, and humor have always made our days brighter. You have bravely asserted your independence from the minute I met you while still managing to make me laugh…most of the time. You have a few scars to show for this, literally, but you have also learned much and become confident and truly capable. As evidence of this ability to learn you have never repeated losing your phone by dropping it off of a roller coaster or from jumping a dirtbike into our pond. Kidding aside, I think I am most proud of your kindness, the value you place on others, and the efforts you make to be there for your friends and family. There are so many more superlatives that describe you, but for fear of running out of space I will just say how blessed I feel to be some part of your story and to have learned so much from you. Congratulations on all that you have accomplished. I know you will keep working hard at life, love, and happiness for you and others. Love you so much, Dad

Dear Belly, it's your three favorite people; we are so, so proud of you for everything you have accomplished and everything you will accomplish. You have grown so much on all of us and a life without you is like a life without water. You are the most optimistic and strong woman, and you bring so much fun and excitement to all the people around you. Congrats Elly! UNC '23

Katie, Elaine, and Rhys

P.S. Super sorry for pushing you into the door when Boone and I chased you around.
P.P.S. Don't know how we made it through dealing with Katie, but we did it together. Love u forever xoxo.
P.P.P.S. You are not done dealing with us yet — looking forward to many more years of friendship.

Razak Dhesi

Razak is down to earth, wise beyond his age, and a kind soul. He is a people person and the way he interacts with his family and friends is a clear reflection of his true self.

Mom

Lucy Rosales Dixon

"You will always be too much of something for someone: too big, too loud, too soft, too edgy. If you round out your edges, you lose your edge. Apologize for mistakes. Apologize for unintentionally hurting someone profusely. But don't apologize for being who you are." — Danielle Laporte

Lucy, you feel everything at a higher amplitude than most — compassion, irritation, loyalty, anxiety — all of it. I know that can be a lot sometimes, but I also know you've got what it takes to handle it. Just remember that handling it requires a combination of inner strength, a strong support system, and a willingness to let go when necessary. Stay true to yourself, speak truth to yourself, and be good to yourself. You are silly but you're also smart. You are sassy but you're also sweet. Best of all, you are things you don't even know yet, and I am excited for you to discover more of yourself as you move on from CFS. Personal growth is stunted by hanging out in your comfort zone, so embrace the experiences and opportunities that will reveal your latent strengths and sharpen your sense of purpose. You've got this — go out there and do your thing!

Love, Abby

Lucy, we have been friends for as long as I can remember. You have been here for me through the best, and the worst, and I can't picture a future without you a call away. You are brave, sassy, and fiercely loyal, and at times I find it hard to even comprehend how much you mean to me. We have grown up together, and I barely recognize the little girl playing her Hannah Montana guitar behind the strong and passionate woman she has become. We have had so many amazing adventures together throughout the years, but I know this has only been the first chapter of our lives. I can't wait to hear about all the fantastic things you do with the next chapter. You are my right-hand, my best friend, and most importantly you are my family. I love you, thank you for everything.

Love, Vivi

Dear Lucy, I remember the first time I saw your picture and I cried with joy. Adopting you was the best thing I've ever done. Over the last seventeen years we have been through thick and thin together. When you were very young, and already wise, you told me that whenever one of us went through something challenging, the two of us grew closer. We have grown very close and it's hard to imagine what my empty nest will be like as you head off to all that life has to offer you. I am so very proud of you and the young adult that you have become. You have shown loyalty and compassion as a friend, determination and perseverance as a student, care and insight as a teacher of young children, perceptiveness and concern as a member of the community, and humor and playfulness with those you trust. As you move on to your next adventure, I see you taking on each challenge and opportunity with the strength and wisdom you have developed along the way. I can't wait to hear all about it. I love you to infinity and beyond,

Mom

Annika Emerson

Annika, congratulations for all your hard work through school! Cherish the friendships and memories you made here, I know I will. I am indebted to you forever for showing me the importance of family and friends. Teaching me how to appreciate the little things, like the beautiful trees lining the gravel road on the farm on the way to your house or the community garden you worked so hard on. I love you so much and cannot wait to see you continue to grow through new challenges and great adventures.

Much love, Elly Blue

Annika, Minutes after you were born, I weighed you in a grocer's scale. I could hold you in one-hand and believed intrinsically that I could protect you from the world with the other. I didn't want you to grow-up, so I sought to preserve the free-spirited six-year-old sprite in silks and angel wings who never failed to remind me of the importance of playtime. But you have been through more than most, and even as I was trying to hold onto who you were as a child and shield you from the world, the challenges you were facing were transforming you into a richer, multi-dimensional young woman. You are still goofy and playful, making silly jokes and starting impromptu dance parties. You are still inventive and adventurous, seeing the world through your own unique lens. But you are also a caring friend, loving sister, and devoted daughter. I'm amazed by the depth of your empathy and your sincere support of your community. Facing your challenges transformed you, and facing them with you has transformed me, enabling me to see the courageous, persistent, strong young woman you have become. Thank you for letting me join you on your journey.

I love you, keep going, Dad

Dear Annika, I have wanted to talk to you your whole life. Last night I felt your mother guiding me what to say to you. Elena is part of me, but she was all about you. You were a faerie child with and ethereal quality about you, an otherworldly translucence, light that emanated from you. You were air and hard to define. We asked over and over (and over and over), where did you come from, why were you here, who were you. YOU were the child she was waiting for to explain the mysteries of the universe. She was utterly intrigued by you. Annika, you were born to chase the light.

With great love and affection, Carolyn

My lil' bug, Annika, how you have risen through the heavy rain and continued to radiate an infectious strength has been a gift to experience. The world is forever better for the deep-seated love within you that has mirrored your heart. Your light is reflected in your laugh, your demeanor, and your beautiful smile. Thank you for holding me, for staying up all night with me, and for being my soul sister. I hope you always hear your voice, always see your space, and most importantly, always soak in the sun. I will forever be your angel, and you will forever be my lil' love bug.

Love always, Tsehaye

Chloe Faith Gillespie

Chloe is such an amazing person: her personality is so radiant and beautiful, she fills my day with such light that it's impossible for me not to smile when she says hello. Every time she asks me if I want to hang out with her I know that it's gonna be a blast, because she just has that type of adventurous spirit. My whole life, Chloe has been my sister. My whole life, Chloe has been my hero, but these past four or five years Chloe has become my best friend.

Ben

There is a beautiful tree that sits right outside my bedroom window. This tree embodies love in everything that it is. Its roots spread so deep into the earth; it will forever remain grounded no matter how hard the wind may blow. Its trunk, long and strong, is decorated with the scars of it's experiences that only make it more beautiful. As the sun rises each day, from the trunk, branches grow far and wide. These branches are the life force to the forest around; they provide shade for the plants underneath and a home for the birds. The tree is simple in stature, full of wisdom, through its awareness of the natural beauties in this world. Chloe is my tree outside my bedroom window. She is love. She is grounded: integral, strong, compassionate, spontaneous, true, and the epitome of wisdom. She has been my constant for all my years at CFS and I am grateful for her love and light. I admire her for everything she is, and she inspires me to find all the incredible things this life has to offer. She has everything to be proud of; she is a talented artist, a creative and thoughtful thinker, passionate about what she loves, and she radiates light yet remains the most humble and gracious person I know. Chloe, I love you more than I could ever express. I am in awe of the incredible woman you have become, and I don't know what I will do without you.

All my love, Mimi Rose (and bennett even tho i didn't actually contribute ily)

Chlo, last year you were the one to speak about me at Senior Night. Now it is my time to speak about you: your dedicated character, your endless creativity, and all the ways in which you have changed my life and others'. It is an honor to sit here today and watch you cross the floor into this new stage of life. I am beyond proud of you. I will never be able to thank you enough for providing me with such a genuine friendship. You've called me the wise one, but the way in which you choose to see the world has shown me that you are, in fact, the wise one. You are an artist in all ways. From your stylish and quirky outfits to your sweet dance moves, you are unique and unafraid. The art you produce is another reminder of that. With a camera around your neck, you have captured priceless moments and printed them out to memorialize the smiles, the love, the friendships, and the adventures. Through the ups and downs it has remained a constant for you. What you cannot say with words you convey through photography. I hope that as you transition from student to alumna, from high school to college and beyond, you continue to capture the world as you see it through a camera lens. Find the hidden trails that give way to the best sunsets. Hang up your hammock and settle into the meaningful moments.

With love and admiration, Lauren

Emma Jane Hales

Emma...what can we say other than 'we are so proud of you!'? You are such an amazing young lady. We have watched you grow from a baby into the beautiful person you have blossomed into. You are a strong, independent, vibrant young lady with a heart for God. We stand in awe at the way people look up to you, not only because they may appreciate your balling skills, but because of your genuineness and humble heart. You're a wonderful big sister — what better role model could she have than you? Always stay true to who you are! We are truly blessed beyond measure that God gave you to us. We love you!

Mom, Dad and Autumn (and Blue too!)
Nanny and Pappy
Posthumously, Grandma and Papa (We know they would've been so proud of you!)

Hales, Rosa Parks said that "Each person must live their life as a model for others." You've already been a model for a number of peers and younger children. Many times I've shared the story of your middle school basketball teammate whose goal was "to be like Emma." I told her that she'd have to emulate your effort, commitment, and character to have an opportunity. In a 2016 reference letter I said that "Emma is an extremely driven and mature athlete who welcomes responsibility. Her work ethic is truly exemplary and she keeps me on my toes constantly trying to find new ways to challenge her." Your coach, Justine Allpress, describes you as "supportive, kind, and gracious with her teammates." You are driven to improve and excel in an uncommon way and these traits will take you far in sports and in life. I encourage you to continue to live as a leader and example for others. Stay coachable and kind. Stay driven and committed. It has been a joy to watch your journey so far, and I look forward to seeing where you go from here.

Aden Darity

Emma, this Essence Statement could be all about what a fantastic basketball player you are and how you strangely shoot a layup better left-handed than right-handed, but I feel that there is so much more to you than your playing abilities. When I first met you, I saw a kid who was reluctant to stand out and shine. Maybe it was because you were a new kid at a new school or maybe it was because you wanted everyone on the team to be seen. Over the three years that you have been at CFS I have watched you rise into yourself. I now see a young person with greater confidence, true humility, compassion, and the ability to lead through both example and gentle nudges to others. Your work ethic has seen you succeed in both sport and school and it is this core principal of who you are that will see you accomplish great things. Remember to grasp opportunities when they present themselves to you, don't sell yourself short, and be proud of who you are and what you have achieved. You are an absolute gem of a person, and you deserve all the great things that are coming your way. I can't wait to continue the journey as your number four fan. #FIDDLESTIX #BALLER

Justine Allpress

Benjamin Roderic Hodgins

Ben, It really is remarkable to reflect on your journey from the NICU to the well-balanced young man you have become today. You have always had an amazing inner strength and ability to persevere perfectly balanced by a positive energy that truly makes you special. You are an accomplished student, musician, athlete, brother, son, and friend, but most importantly you are just a great person who always brings humor and joy to those around you. As you move on to the next phase of your life, please remember that we are very proud of you and you have a supporting foundation of family and friends who will always be there for you. Go make music, play ultimate, kick possum in the shin, figure out what you want to study in college, hug Teo oh so tenderly, figure out what makes you happy, and apply that inner strength and "Benergy." We know you will be successful.

Mom and Dad

P.S. What the hell are you doing in the bathroom all the time anyway…give someone else a chance.
P.P.S. Call your mom

Dearest Ben, there are no words for the love that I have for you. Whenever I think of you I smile and want to giggle. We've shared so many laughs over your short lifetime. I'm so excited to continue to watch you grow and see where life takes you. Know that your aunt loves you so much and will always be a part of your life. If you need anything, at all, I'll always be there for you, no matter what! Congratulations, Ben!

Aunt Kate

Over the last sixteen years you have been such a great role model to me and I couldn't ask for a better brother. More than just a brother — a best friend. You are the funniest, nicest person I know, and you never fail to make me smile. Thank you for having one of the best music playlists ever, "Ben's music," that I now finally enjoy after two years (most of the time.) I'm gonna miss listening to music with you, talking to you, playing sports together, not having you at home, and, last but not least, having the fun drive to school with you. Have a fun time in college. I will miss you very much.

Seb

Ben, we have known each other since I can remember, and you have always managed to put a smile on my face. You always seem to know how to light up a room, even if there are unfamiliar faces. Your loyalty never wavers, even to those who don't deserve it. Do me a favor and never change who you are, because you are you, and you are extraordinary.

Chris

Hallie Grace Huls

When you were born we thought we knew just about everything we needed to know about life, living, and even parenting a bright-eyed baby girl. You taught us that there is always more to learn, always a way to grow, always an unexpected moment when someone we love fiercely and forever can reveal to us an undiscovered truth about life, about living, and about parenting a now-bright-eyed young woman. You make us better people, Hallie, and we are so grateful to you, every day and in all sorts of ways. We admire and cherish your strength, your independence, your beauty, your devotion to people and creatures you love, and your determination to find your own path. We are excited to see where you go from here! Wherever that may be, we'll be your number one fans.

All our love, Papa and Dad

Hallie is untrustworthy with certain things, such as remembering socks, or shoes, or her tennis racquet. You didn't expect a negative to start this statement off did you? That said, in the larger scheme of things these are trivial matters. When it matters, Hallie is someone you can rely on. You want the truth? Ask Hallie. You want honesty? Again, check with Hallie. She will tell you like it is. She will challenge you. Moreover, she doesn't fold in difficult situations. Refreshingly, when she stumbles, as we all do, she admits responsibility and is willing to make amends. To say she messed up. To apologize. Hallie is fierce, resolute, and resilient. She's the person you want to have your back in any situation. If she's your friend, you're lucky; you've got something special. Yes, Hallie is special. Sometimes when you fit this mode you are misunderstood, mischaracterized. No matter. Hallie's someone you can trust, unless you need socks.

Jonathan McGovern

Isabelle May Huntington

Dearest May, your essence is of spring's light, of wonder splashed with joy (and a bit of salt & vinegar badass), of alone-time contemplation and compassion, of thinking outside, of motion outside, always outside, always in the water, a creature at home in this natural world. We are forever inspired and amazed by you — your bright spirit, your easy laughter, and your artistic whimsy grounded by elephant steps, brave scientific questioning, and stubborn independence. You don't have to do everything "all by ya'self," but we know you need your alone time with your dogs and your music. Then you show up in your community (be it for family, friends, school, dogs, or turtles) to share yourself and your gifts — your brave heart, your quiet wisdom (Live OUT LOUD, child!), your creative, ever problem-solving brain, and your fierce love and advocacy for all you believe in. Continue to grow and unfold and stretch tall — your roots are deep and your reach extends from the Wisconsin Northwoods to the Florida coast and beyond. Live your contradictions; hold the writer and the scientist in you together — both...and gives space and grace. Here is Mary Oliver's question, "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"

Love, Mom, Daddy, Zoe & Ben

May, you are someone I am truly proud to call my friend. Through tough times and good times, you are a steady rock, a supportive friend, and a calming energy to those around you. You have a way of balancing out everyone around you and I regularly watch you bring out the best in the people around you. You are one of the most resilient, determined, and caring people I know. Because of this, I know that wherever you end up next year, you will do something amazing. May, you are my confidant, my partner in crime, and, most importantly, you're my family. I will miss every moment big and small, but I know that we are on our way to forging amazing new ones and I can't wait to meet over at Max Brenner's.

Love, Vivi

"A strong person is not the one who doesn't cry. A strong person is one who is quiet and sheds tears for a moment, and then picks up her sword and fights again." May, to me your essence is compassionate, conscientious, caring and curious. Although wonderful assets, these traits are double-edged swords that can sometimes become heavy to hold. Trust that you have the strength to wield them but recognize that you must also muster the courage to seek help and rely on others from time to time. Be bold and brave. Take risks and try new things. Remember that mistakes are learning tools, not fatal flaws, and don't be afraid to make them. Most of all, stay true to yourself and never relinquish your yardstick to others when measuring your worth or success.

Love, Abby

Lukas William Irwin

Lukas Love. We are proud – enormously proud – of you. Our hearts are full of love and joy and gratefulness for you. You. Your face lights; your dimples flash; your eyes sparkle. We swoon. We know you mean it. You are honest and sincere. Always. You are kind, compassionate, quick-witted, funny, loving, generous, creative, strong, sensible, service-minded, fast (look at you run!), and powerfully thoughtful. You are you. It is the you-ness of you that warms our spirits and brings a smile to our faces. You love a good story, a good laugh, a good challenge. You love a walk in the woods, a plunge in the ocean, a walk barefoot in the sand. You love a good chat, a good run, a good debate. And always, always, you love these things with your dogs – your dogs who love you, truly, as we do. You have always been, from the moment we met on the day you were born, full of delightful surprises and curiosities that energize our souls and bring joy to our hearts. From "yobob" blurted as a baby, to Blastons crafted in comics with Tucker, to (for better or worse) "f-ity-f-f" uttered (with a grin) as a senior, your creativity and powerful use of language reflects your keen wit and sharp mind. Your insatiable curiosity about words, then wheels, then dinosaurs, and then matters of the universe…and about chess, then Lord of the Rings, then Greek mythology, then love, justice, freedom, and adventure…and then about relativity and quantum physics, then Game of Thrones, and then, well, really, everything…We've joyfully (and with shortened breath) raced to keep up. Your generous inclusion of us in your dialogue of discovery toward understanding has educated all of us. Your determination, willingness to work — and work hard — to realize your goals, and willingness to work even harder when your effort is in service of or for the benefit of others inspires us. Your example reminds us to be better versions of ourselves. Our words do not do your essence justice. We love you; we admire you; we are proud of you; and we embrace you, always, wherever you go with our whole hearts.

Mom, Dad, Tucker, Scout, Lucy, Fuzzy

Lukas, you have been one of my best friends since I started CFS in eighth grade. You are the most genuine and true person I know. You are never afraid to share your opinions and be yourself. You are witty and the smartest person I know. I will never forget our ponderings of the universe or how you always bring a smile to my face. I hope that you can continue to show the world all you know and how amazing you are. I can't wait to learn about the things you will accomplish.

Duncan Charboneau

Stubborn: A doubled edged descriptor. Forged with a sense of direction. A focused work ethic. Tempered with a willingness to adapt. Lukas.

Dave Worden

Benjamin Bedier Kairys

Dear Ben, as you graduate, I'm reflecting on all the ways you've grown and changed, and also noticing what has stayed the same. Ever since you were a little boy, you've shown an acute awareness of other people's feelings, and the desire to make others happy. Those admirable traits have been a constant thread throughout your life. What also remains constant is your family's infinite love and belief in you. You are excited for the independence and adventure that lies ahead, and I know you will succeed, because you have the curiosity to question norms, the courage to face new challenges, and the strength to see them through. You have gone from a boy building Lego towers to a young man rebuilding a second hand sailboat, from a quiet, shy toddler to a confident, humorous extrovert, from a cautious boy to an adventurous quick thinker, jumping into action with daring energy, and from a little boy playing basketball in the driveway, discouraged by a missed basket, to a determined student and athlete, conquering what once seemed impossible — on the court or in the classroom. Once captivated by Power Rangers and Buzz Lightyear, now you are enamored with Led Zeppelin and rap that will always be too rough for my ears. I treasure your insistence on sharing it with me though, and convincing me to give it a chance. I will even miss you cooking in the kitchen at midnight. As you take these next steps in your journey, I'm reminded of *The Runaway Bunny* that I read to you as a toddler. The little bunny declares, "I am running away." The mother responds: "If you run away, I will run after you. For you are my little bunny." Meant to be sweet, it always sounded oddly controlling to me, with the exception of one line: "If you become a bird and fly away from me, I will be a tree that you come home to." So fly away with your full-grown wings, and come home to the tree…every now and then. Bring your laundry.

All my love, Mom

Ben, Thank you for being such a great older brother. I don't say it often, but I love you. I'm super proud of you for getting into UNC and graduating with good grades. I'm kinda sad you won't live here anymore. I'll miss wrestling with you, and going on random car rides to gas stations and off roading. It is good you'll be so close though. Don't worry, I won't come to your dorm and embarrass you or anything. But we can still hang out every once in a while. We've had a lot of cool memories together. Like that time we had a big water fight in the backyard, or when we built a huge fort in your room and had a sleepover. Even tiny things like playing Xbox with you sometimes is really fun. You're a great brother. You're definitely a good influence and you helped me be who I am today. I'm so proud of you. Live it up, Ben. You worked hard and deserve to be happy. Happy graduation!

Sawyer

Ahrianna Suran Keefe

Ahrianna, you are lovely and lively with an intense intellectuality and a wonderful, unpredictable sense of humor. You have an admirable drive to explore the world and you will succeed on whatever path you choose.

Love, Mom

To my dear sister, Ahrianna (be glad I did not use your nickname). Although we fight and bicker, the laughter and joy that you bring into my life, and I hope I bring to yours, always outweighs these things. Although I know this is only a "see you later," it will not be the same. Whose clothes will I steal? Who will go on the biggest, scariest, tallest roller coasters with me? Who will I gossip with, get chai tea with, see all Marvel movies with, and all the million little things that make up our friendship, and more importantly our being sisters, so incredible special? Whether you are ten minutes or ten hours away, know that I hope for you the best and happiest life. Know that you can always call, and I still expect you to let me wear your clothes. But in all seriousness, the house will not be the same without you, and I cannot fathom how I will spend my free time, or how I will actually do my homework without you.

Love, your best friend and sister, Smamalie Smulia Smeefe

Ahrianna, The first time I met you, I remember thinking that we would become good friends. I am so glad I met you and have had these last four years to get to know you. You always bring so much positivity to school each day, which is so contagious. You are such a hard worker, and I am inspired by all the amazing things you have accomplished. I loved being in dance with you and running track these last few years, where we had so many fun times together and bonded. I was so glad you got to be in my dance this year and share some of the wonderful moments with me. I have seen you grow in so many ways these last four years and become an amazing friend, student, and sister. I am sad that our time together has come to an end, but I know we will see each other again. I can't wait to see where this next adventure takes you and all the wonderful things you will accomplish. You are going to do so many great things in college and have an amazing time. Good luck with everything that is to come!

Anna

Ahrianna, I am so proud of the young woman that you have become. Your grasp of science, your interest in learning, and your awareness of the world around you make me enthusiastic for the future that you will help usher in. I love your sense of humor and I am in awe of your work ethic and dedication. When our family grew to three kids, we couldn't have done it without you. We will miss your help and we will miss your entertaining stories at the dinner table but look forward to hearing about your college adventures.

Love, Dad

Ahrianna you are a great sister, and I will miss you very much when you go to college. Love, Noelle

Bennett Wheaton King

Still, he will rise. Bennett is one of the strongest people I know. If anyone, he has been around the sun a few times, collecting the wisdom of many years and shining his light all around. When you get to know him you find the most beautiful things: he is compassionate, caring, wise, and thoughtful. Though he remains constant in his care, he is still full of surprises. He is aware — he is aware of the gift that this life is and does not take a moment for granted. Whether it's a spontaneous trip to the beach at night, or a trip into nature to photograph its beauties, he will not rest until he has captured all of the light in this world. Watching him come alive is a sight to see. He will find the magic in a moment, grasp it, and create something incredible. In his eyes, you can see the compassion he holds in his heart. He is unapologetically himself and lives in this world as one was meant to live. He doesn't change for anyone, but remains true to himself, living his most genuine, true, life. Bennett lives a life to be proud of. He is smart, well rounded, and thoughtful, and I know he will create amazing things in his future.

Mimi Rose

Sydney Deborah Kirsch

When the travel ban was announced, I called Sydney to see if she would come with me to the airport to protest. I was too late — she had already made signs and arranged to go with her friends. Sydney's commitment to social justice and engagement in the world around her has blossomed throughout her time at CFS. Whether she is organizing park clean-ups in East Durham or tutoring ESL students at El Centro Hispano, her drive to make the world a better place is constantly shining through. Sydney is also an amazing friend, who shares empathy, joy and wisdom with a wonderful peer group. It's easy to find Sydney anywhere — she is the one laughing loudly with friends as they explore trails, swimming holes, or thrift shops. Sydney, your joy, sense of adventure, close friendships, vision of injustice and commitment to repairing our broken world are blessings. They are great qualities to take with you on your exciting journey ahead. We are proud of you always and love you very much.

Mom and Dad

Sydney, I think I speak for all of us when I say we love you! To have a friend like you is to know what true friendship is. Your care and compassion for our wellbeing, listening skills and advice, and humor make our lives so much better. If we're being honest, you're the funniest person we know. On a more personal note, I'm not quite sure where I would be without you. You have set the standard so high for what a good friend is. You go above and beyond to be there for me: reminders to take care of myself, commuting 40 minutes to see me, and always being a phone call away. Thank you. I could write endlessly about how much of an amazing friend you are but then I would embarrass you, and SSK and DKirsch would have nowhere to write. One more thing, stop doubting yourself. You are one of the most humble people I know. You care so deeply about your local community and the global community, yet you are incredibly modest. I am inspired by your fierce independence and intrinsic, values-based motivation.

With love and admiration, Matti, Eliana, Noam, and Jason

Jason Manning

Jason, after fifteen years at Carolina Friends School, I could not be more proud of the man you have become. You are as deep as the ocean, as steady as a rock, and absolutely steadfast in the face of an uncertain world. You are sure of yourself, yet quick to seek out and listen to the opinions of others. Like your mother, you've grown to be a quiet leader, the one who can always be counted on to "get it done." CFS has been a constant in your life since you were three years old. There is no way to overestimate the impact it has had on you. As you enter the next phase of your life, we can both be thankful that you have been touched by so many caring, dedicated, intelligent educators. From Sue and Debbie in Early School, to Michael in Lower School, Mary Deborah in Middle School, and Rob and Augie in Upper School, you have learned far more than academics. Their collective wisdom, gentleness, and morality have played an important part in making you the person you are, and this is a great gift. And just as your teachers were a positive influence on your life, so were your friends. There was Reuben in Early School, Dane in Lower School, Mateo in Middle School, and Matthew, Kevin and Ben in Upper School. And of course, from start to finish, there was Alex. You have been fortunate to have such great people for friends, and you will keep them forever. This, too, is a great gift. CFS has provided you with an excellent foundation for a happy life. You are intelligent, curious, grounded, and self-confident. You are ready for whatever life brings, and this is the greatest gift of all. I can't wait to see the next chapter.

With greatest love, Dad

Viviana Erika Martin

And one day she discovered that she was fierce, and strong, and full of fire, and that not even she could hold herself back because her passion burned brighter than her fears.

Mark Anthony, "The Beautiful Truth"

To know you can navigate the wilderness on your own — to know that you can stay true to your beliefs, trust yourself, and survive it — that is true belonging.

Brené Brown, *Daring Greatly*

Vivi, you are the most wonderful of juxtapositions — fierce and gentle, strong and tender, independent and community-oriented, steadfast and adaptable, feisty and kind. Your trust is not easily earned, but for a chosen few you are the most loyal and supportive of friends. As you set forth on your journey, call upon your courage and let yourself be vulnerable — vulnerable to possibility, vulnerable to hope, and vulnerable to love. You have my utmost admiration, respect, and appreciation and I miss you already!

Love, Abby

Vivi, you are one of the strongest, most determined, funniest people I know. You have been there for me through everything, even when I was at Conserve, you would always be one call away. You are insanely creative and can write poetry like no one else. You are hilarious and can always make me laugh with a perfectly timed sassy comment. I will miss going on car rides with you after we get bored of SAT studying and writing history essays. One of the things I admire most about you is how much you care about the people around you. Sometimes you know our friends better than they know themselves, and whenever one of us is upset you know whether we just need someone to listen, some tough love, or some positive advice. I will miss you so much. I have no doubt that you will thrive in college, and I can't wait to see your next adventures.

May

Thirteen years of friendship, thirteen years of some of the highest highs and lowest lows, but those thirteen years were spent next to someone that has become more than a best friend, my family. I am so lucky to have grown up watching you become a beautiful person. You have been there for me through all my hardships, and throughout all my successes. You have continuously pushed me to be a better version of myself. Aside from all that, you are one of the most caring people I know. You always put others before yourself. I'm excited to hear about all the amazing things you will do in your life! I hope you will start to prioritize yourself and your needs, because you are amazing and deserve the world. You simply are the light of my life! I love you more than words can express. <3

Lucy :)

Gennarose Hersh McDermed

Genna is and has always been a supportive and warm member of the community. “She is love, she is light” - Mimi A-B. She is a grounded and mature soul who lifts the people around her. Genna cherishes her friends and family and will most definitely flourish in the coming chapters of her life. She is artistic, grounded, easygoing, and warm. I will forever be grateful for the times I have spent with her. NC State and the people in her coming community will be lucky to have her.

Wishing you the best, Leo Bird.

I will never forget the day I met you, Gennarose. Your arrival was so special and so much better than I ever imagined. In my eyes you are mysterious and complicated when you want to be, also joyous, loving, kind, and adventurous, with a very creative heart and soul. Growing up, you were the Technicolor kid, wearing bold and colorful clothing with your beautiful face and hair shining above. You were also the lap kid, always looking for a safe haven in someone’s lap, happy to give and receive love freely. I wish you a clear head and heart as you begin this next stage of your life. It’s time to let the artistic Gennarose come into her own. Let that Technicolor kid loose. You are unique, with special gifts that only you can refine and share. I wish that you will be true to your heart, ignore the negative distractions, continue to be fearless, and always, always love yourself. I am so looking forward to your next moment! This world is a better place for having you in it. Go forth and shine, Gennarose!

All my love and support to you, Di Di

Genna, you have a passion to build and create that has shown up over generations in our family — sometimes belatedly, as with your aunt who didn’t answer the call until age 50. The urge is strong and you live in a time when there are opportunities to pursue that passion as a career. It can be a powerful, fulfilling force to build a life around, especially if you can tap into it at an early age. You have set a course for starting that exploration. It is a continuum that can last a lifetime: one project leads to the next. Why did the bear climb over the mountain? To see what’s on the other side. (More mountains).

Love, Dad

Gennarose, The depth of insight and observance you have is a unique gift! As you grow, this gift will open the world up to you, because you can see it! Your gentle nature is beautiful and rare; you radiate calm and groundedness and this is a gift to all of those who are lucky enough to be around you. I love you and am so grateful you were born!

Love Mom

My Baby Sister, curious and inquisitive, you’ve always been a seeker. You notice things invisible to most and pay attention to details easily glossed over. The world needs your perspective: your grounded and calm demeanor, your thoughtful sensitivity, and your artistic expression. Keep creating and exploring with your heart— I know this next chapter is going to be so exciting for you!

Carina

Jackson Douglass Meisner

Jackson, what a joy watching you grow into a wonderful young man. We are extremely proud of who you are — a thoughtful, humorous, kind, compassionate person with endless heart and soul. We can only smile as you go onwards to further discover your inner/outer self and give back to your friends (old and new) and family. Continue the GRIND.

Love, Mom and Dad

Jackson, what a gift and honor it has been to have a front row seat to your CFS career. Your lightning-fast intellect, mischievous sense of humor, and deeply caring heart are an immensely powerful trifecta. From sledgehammers to banjos, cats to Danny Devito, dabbing on the roof to OA, "No, Jackson" moments to heartfelt conversations, thank you for the many memories I will forever cherish from your tenure here. We will miss you dearly, and know you will continue to thrive wherever you land.

Melissa Kotacka

Jackson Douglass, Puzzle-Man, Jack Rabbit, J-Man, Jackie, Action Jackson, Possum. Our son, Ava's brother, and friend to many! We love you so much. You have and continue to fill our lives with so much joy (and yes, just a bit of excitement and drama too!). It seems like just yesterday that we were holding you in awe and now we are letting go so that you can move on to the wonderful adventures ahead. Don't forget to come back from time to time, and, yes, we will do your laundry.

Love, Mom, Dad, and Ava

Daniel Michael Nevius

¡Hóla, Daniel! Felicitaciones en su graduación. No, I'm not going to do the whole thing in Spanish. I'm so glad you went to CFS instead of any other school, and I know you've done well there. The Friends School ethos and way of looking at life is a big part of me, and now, I'm sure, of you. I wish you all the best as you go on to college. I'm sure you'll do well there, too. ¡Buena suerte con su educación!

Love, Granny

Congratulations on your graduation, Daniel! We are very proud of you and wish you every success.

Torie, David, and Alexander

Dear Daniel, I am so proud of you! Not only of your academic accomplishments but also of the wonderful young man you have become! You are venturing into a new segment of your life, embrace it and have fun. Your mom would be so happy and proud to see what a great man you are! Remember.

Love you, Irene & Bob

Dear Daniel, It's hard to believe the time has arrived that you're getting ready for college. We wish you the very best of the future to come, and lots of fun right now.

Uncle Jerry and Aunt Mary

Daniel, the past eighteen years have been a lot of fun. From the start you were creative, unique, funny, irreverent, focused, nice, methodical (when you want to be), a good example to others, a leader, entertaining, courageous, resilient, analytical, skeptical, and intelligent. I have always been proud of you, not only for what you have achieved but for who you are. I am proud of you and I like the adult you are becoming. Stay true to who you are. You are unique. I look forward to seeing how you will serve the world with your abilities. You are now ready to go out into the world and find your place. I can't wait to see what comes next. 01001001 01101110 01110001 01110101 01101001 01110011 01101001 01110100 01101001 01101111 00100000 01100001 01110100 01110001 01110101 01100101 00100000 01101001 01101110 01110110 01100101 01110011 01110100 01101001 01100111 01100001 01110100 01101001 01101111 00100000 01110110 01100101 01110010 01101001 00100000 01100101 01110011 01110100 00100000 01110000 01110010 01101111 01110000 01110010 01101001 01100001 00100000 01101000 01101111 01101101 01101001 01101110 01101001 01110011 00101110

Dad

Georgia "Gigi" Rui Paulig

Gigi, imagine Yunnan Province. You sit snuggled in your sling on my lap, Baba to our right and behind the driver, and Grandma perches in the next seat abaft. We have a BIG view all around! Your wide eyes gaze curiously, taking it all in as we drive on a road that is only grooves in the dirt to the rock formations in Yunnan's Stone Mountain to experience a bit of your home. These unusual rock formations are stepping stones from the other side of the earth to so many people who adoringly cared for you, to Children First, Duke School, and now CFS. Wow! Even then, your equanimity was clear. Your intelligence glowed, as did your steady temperament, tremendous observational skills, and excellent physical abilities. I am grateful to your birth parents. We are all grateful to CFS, where you melded your natural potential and early experiences to truly express your powerful voice. Thank you for being my daughter.

Love always, Madre

Gigi is incredibly talented and has brought so much to our community in academics, athletics, friendship, and stewardship. Her thoughtfulness and engagement inspire us. We are excited for the amazing things she will contribute to the world. Will & Leah Fulkerson

Gigi is one of the most well-rounded people I know. She embraces new experiences with optimism and shares with her namesake grandmother a great, practical problem-solving ability. I know for sure that my world, and the world writ large, will be richer, more fun, and more compassionate because of Gigi.

Aunt Gretchen

You're a wonderful cousin, student, athlete, and person. You are creative, emotionally intelligent, endlessly compassionate. We love you and can't wait to see the impact you make on the world. Karl & Tristan

My beautiful, kind, intelligent niece. Like the air we breathe, you are essential. A spirit who unites, wise beyond your years. I am a better person because of you. Aunt Heidi, "slug buddy"

Adventurous, kind, thoughtful, and bold. Who naturally makes a connection between disc golf and ultimate. Who determines that a cold-weather college is something exciting. Who does whatever you can to help you do whatever you need. That, and much more, is the essence of Gigi. Uncle Brad

When we met, you were a quiet, curious, focused, talented but raw sixth-grade basketball player. My father, one of your early fans, raved about your shooting form and ability to get into passing lanes. At CFS I've watched you hold down the soccer back line and perform multiple roles on the Ultimate field, exuding calm confidence that assures your teammates. You are trusted by coaches as a leader and beloved by teammates as kind, fun, and talented. You still possess the composed, calm, fiercely competitive spirit that you showed in sixth grade but are a bit less quiet. As you graduate from CFS, you'll be missed here, but you have many fans who are excited for your next accomplishments and eager to support you along the way. Mae Jemison said, "Don't let anyone rob you of your imagination, your creativity, or your curiosity. It's your place in the world; it's your life." Go on and do all you can with it, and make it the life you want to live. Aden Darity

I'm here in spirit and I love you to pieces! Grandma

Kevin Anthony Pignone

There was nowhere to go but everywhere, so just keep on rolling under the stars.

Jack Kerouac, *On The Road*

Kevin, from the beginning, we have appreciated your strong sense of trust, your optimism, and your ability to connect with others, whether through Ultimate, your love of the outdoors, or your interest in making the world a better place. You have an amazing ability to adapt to new situations (making new friends and playing cricket with your classmates in Australia or becoming a part of the CFS community as a soon-to-be freshman during cross-country workouts come to mind). You exemplify determination, tolerance, patience, and grace under pressure — characteristics that are hard to develop and harder to sustain. You bring kindness and empathy to your daily life in service to others, whether on the field helping the freshmen learn the intricacies of zone offense, your work to refurbish the CFS cross-country trail, or through your Quaker Advocacy class's efforts on immigration reform. We have been fortunate to see you grow into a young adult with diverse interests and talents, and to learn from you, whether about the causes of avalanches, your latest woodworking project, or the interesting book you just read. We look forward to the next chapter of your story as you start college. We are certain that many new adventures await! Congratulations, we love you! Mom and Dad

Kevin is a river. Or, more specifically, a stream. Steady succession of words, a ready supply. Always an answer to an unspoken question, armed in his soft way—crawfish and algae and the smoothest of stones. Kevin flows through life in the most natural way; nothing could be simpler for a stream! He does not push past life with force. Instead, unperturbed by obstacles, tactful and considerate, he patiently finds another path. He is, like a stream, in constant flux (a new idea—or project—or book! Ask him about kombucha, quiz him on prokaryotes and eukaryotes or Mahāyāna Buddhism). He holds fragments of the earth, and like a stream, unconscious of his courtesy, deposits soil to create a miniature island, a planet, a cosmos (were we just a single cell instead of a multitude). Continuously changing, he is the action of flowing. Kevin, just like a stream, is reminiscent of childhood laughter echoing through a drizzling forest. At times overflowing, at times in a drought, he is constant metamorphosis (Kevin- aren't you glad I didn't write about Kafka?). If you know Kevin, he has probably told you that a rainy day is his favorite type of day (I believe this is true because rainy days are the days on which you can wear rainpants, and Kevin loves rainpants). If you don't know Kevin, go talk to him. His presence, pure and swift, may bring the same tranquility as sitting beside a gentle stream. And who knows—maybe he has changed his mind about rainpants! Sydney

I cannot express the amount of love and pride I feel to call you my big brother. You have become the best version of yourself yet. Thank you for being patient with me and constantly supporting me as I navigated my transition to high school. Thank you for always taking me home when you could have stayed and played frisbee with your friends. Thank you for always looking out for me (and criticizing my form whenever I throw a flick). I love you, I'll miss you no matter where you are, and I'm so proud of you. Kaley

Hannah Ellington Porterfield-Winstead

Hannah is the kind of person who has always known what she wanted to do. What is incredible to me is that she stuck with it and put in the work. I am amazed by her dedication and willingness to accomplish something even when it isn't easy.

Love you, Emily

Like unwrapping a surprise present from a treasured friend, it is impossible to capture in words the rush of feeling that comes from knowing Hannah. Her gifts sparkle beneath the surface and reveal themselves over time. Joy, depth, strength, fragility. Radiant energy spinning through space, a mesmerizing dancer who feels at home on stage. She can be experienced from multiple perspectives and has never ceased to surprise me. Organized, creative, methodical, imaginative. A twinkle in her eye and a resilient spirit. No-holds-barred honesty. Laughter that tickles your heart. Hannah touches those that see her expansive wholeness and makes an indelible mark on their world. Love & light,

Annie

There are many things I could say about Hannah. She is among the most talented people I know and I am so lucky to be able to call her one of my best friends. Dancing with her brings me so much joy, and I can say with confidence that I would not be the dancer I have grown to be without her. I love how dedicated Hannah is to her art, and having her around pushes me to be my best. Every moment we share together tops the last, and I can't wait to create more memories together. I am so excited to witness her future in dance, and I'll be sure to be front row for her first performance!

Elise

Hannah is such an amazing person. She is a talented, smart, and beautiful individual. I am blessed to have her in my life.

Erin

Dancing in flip flops, filling the room with joy and unbridled giggles — delighted by the world and a huge heart for family, friends, puppies, kittens, gerbils, snakes…Snuggling on pancake Saturday mornings, carefully observing every inch of the world, demanding love and kindness and justice from it. Full of love and wonder, dancing or painting or sculpting your truth, never giving up, determined and boldly landing brighter on the other side when the world disappoints. Insightful and compassionate, you see beyond the surface to the very heart of the matter. Smiling through adversity, you fight the good fight with a big tender heart. Your strong, gifted, and graceful movement is pure art. Thinking on your life until this day and looking forward to your fabulous future, our hearts burst with love and joy and pride in who you are — our beautiful, passionate, creative, generous, amazing, cherished daughter. You are a blessing, and we are so happy to be on this journey with you. With so much love beyond what words can really say,

Mom and Dad

Isabella Ann Pratico

It feels like just yesterday we were playing on the swings in the backyard at the house in Naperville, running through the neighbors' backyards, taking all the shortcuts possible to get to where we wanted to go. Hard to believe that was almost a decade ago. I am so grateful to have four years on you because that means that I have simultaneously watched you grow up, and grown up with you. In a lot of ways that let me hold onto my childhood for just a bit longer. While I may not have been around as much the past three years, I know for a fact that you are smarter than I was when I was graduating high school (and in many ways are smarter than I am now). I know you are bound for great things, and I can't wait to see where life takes you. Logan

Congratulations on your graduation and so many things. Think of it: theatre work, lacrosse, volunteering with animals (and other volunteer work), art work (for some of which I am the lucky recipient). Now onto the next phase in your life, and it will be a good one. One of the best, I think. Your choice of working with animals is so great, as you have always loved them. Doing what you love — how perfect! Wherever this phase will take you, you'll do well, because that's you. And please remember, enjoy the journey, because that's very important! I love you, Izzi. May God bless you.

Grandma Kathy

Dear Izzi, it is crazy to me how much I've learned about you in the time I've known you. From how great of an actor and singer you are to how much you love animals, especially dogs. You make me smile every single day, even if you annoy me from time to time. You are an amazing person inside and out. The world doesn't know what you can do. It better watch out, because you are going to do great things in this world. I am so proud of you and congrats on graduating. Love, Kei

Izzi, the qualities that have made you the beautiful person you are today were obvious from the start: your compassion for animals, your determined nature and your expressive personality. You move through life with kindness, integrity, and strength. Always smart and curious, we are amazed at your persistence and hard work while never failing to advocate for others and yourself. It's impossible to capture your depth in a mere paragraph, but we can say you bring light to our lives every day. We're happy that you have found so many things that bring you joy and that you always strive to share them with others. Your passion for acting started at two, and singing even earlier! It has always been fun to watch your talent shine on stage. More recently, a love of ceramics seems to bring you peace and energy. We admire your new-found focus, experimentation, and continued growth. Don't ever lose your unbridled love of animals as this can provide clarity and guidance as you maneuver through life. Our only advice to you is to take risks, let yourself be vulnerable, and do what makes you happy. Our lasting wish for you is for an engaged life full of love, happiness, deep connections, and purpose. We are unbelievably proud of you, we love you very much, and we eagerly watch as your next adventure unfolds! Love, Mom and Dad

Anderson Kyl Proescholdbell

Anderson, you love the thrill of the search like your grandpa Bob and the mountains more than the beach like your dad. You are conscientious like your mom, fun-loving like your sister, and thoughtful like your grandma Barbara. You persevere like your great-grandma and namesake Irene and you can talk to anyone like your grandpa Glen and your great-grandma Faye. You can tough it out like any number of your family members, including grandma Ruth and your great-grandpa Dallas. You enjoy thinking like your grandpa Bob and possess the gift of math like your grandma Barbara and your great-grandpa Burton. You got the spelling gene from your mom and the allocentrism/directions gene from your dad. You excel in word games like your aunt Darby and are interested in history like your grandpa Glen. You are neat and mischievous like your uncle Scott and have a strong work ethic like your aunt Karen. Like your mom, you are cooperative and not competitive and you have your dad's dry, wait-a-beat and there-it-is sense of humor. You are consistently kind like your aunt Holly and your great-grandpa Bob. You love animals like, well, most of your family! You come from this family that loves you deeply, and yet you are your own person. You are non-assuming, care about fairness, "get" people, and are considerate of individuals and the group at the same time. As you go forward from these first eighteen years, may you share yourself fully in life and stay open.

With love,
Mom, Dad, Zamaria, Bob, Barbara, and Ruth

Mia Rose Pungello

Mia Rose, as you've heard so often before, when you first learned to talk, you talked non-stop. Truly, every thought that came into your head was shared with all the world. It was amazing. But, in a big family, that changed and got even bigger, with many people who have lots of opinions; it was hard to get a word in without interrupting. So, you began to share less and were fine with letting others lead the conversations. Then, over the past few years, something incredible happened: you found your voice again. And, oh what a voice it is! It's strong, smart, and really funny! It has been a privilege watching you grow into the wonderful person you have become. You've taken challenges and made them strengths, and while you are not one to suffer fools, you also have a fierce loyalty and generosity of spirit that inspires us. Words cannot express how proud we are of you. Congratulations!

All our love, Mom, Dad, Monica, and Dario

Mia sees the truth of what's going on around her. Even though I was born years before her, in this respect she is years beyond me (she's actually an old lady; just kidding, probably more like middle-aged). There is no doubt in my mind that I should trust her perspective more than most, including my own. That isn't to say that she is in any way predictable; Mia has an energy (zap zap) to her which is all her own and captivating like no other. So much so that I've admittedly spent countless hours trying any way to engage her (often much to her annoyance). Her hard-won attention is distinguished by a clever humor that has just the right amount of bite, yet it is not without a goofy side that can only be described as endlessly endearing. And when interacting with her, one notices that she exhibits a self-awareness that can only belong to someone incredibly genuine, intelligent, and hard-working. Mia, in so many ways, you enrich the lives of those around you. I have so much respect for you, and my love for you is both desperate and borderline obsessive. But like in a good way probably.

Love you forever (and ever and ever), Your Sister

Mateo Luis Rimer-Surles

Mateo – you are kind, loyal and fearless. I can always count on you to have my back. Love you buddy.
Seth

Teo – every picture I conjure of you includes a joyful smile with a threat of mischief and adventure. You are fun, creative, caring and dependable. I love watching your warrior energy unfold on the beach and on the ultimate field. I am thankful that the Lee boys have grown up with you – you are "family" in so many ways. Love, Jan

Mateo, It is impossible to capture your personality or what you mean to me in so few words. You are one of the most compassionate and supportive people I know and I am so fortunate to have gotten to know that side of you. Thank you for always turning even the worst days into good ones and never failing to cheer me up with your smile or childish sense of humor. I'll miss you in math next year. Love, Monica

Extremely low maintenance. Not much drama with Teo either. He is just solid and positive and hard working and matter of fact. When you ask Teo how he is doing, he gives his patented "I'm good" response, even in personal situations like injury or pain that might make another person be "not so good." Having coached Teo since he was just an eighth grader, I feel privileged. I know you will be an asset to whatever team you are on in the future, in any context. Much love, Augie

Mateo, You are gifted, wonderful, thoughtful, driven, unassuming, and confident. And if that last adjective isn't always true, it should be. The determination that bubbles within you, emerging on the ultimate field or in math class or in countless other arenas, should and does feed your self-belief. I can't wait to behold the continued actualization of your potential as you take your next steps. You are ready for the fight that life sometimes becomes. Your composed intensity will serve you well.
Jonathan McGovern

We love the term "essence" because it is a word we have always associated with you. You show your essence all the time, and that's one of the most beautiful things about you. The light in your eyes makes it easy for people to connect with you, because you are genuine. Your smile – as we have always said - lights up the room, or the field, or wherever you are. You make people feel welcome and happy. Your kindness, caring, and playful spirit all show through – as you talk and banter and scheme with your brothers, family, teammates, and friends. Now it's time for you to go out into the world to share your gifts with others. We love you!
Your moms

Jiatong (Joanna) Song

Joanna, I am so lucky to have met you and to call you a friend. These last few years have been wonderful, and I have loved getting to know you and hanging out with you. I loved going on the End of Year trip to the Great Lakes with you and beginning our friendship there. I enjoy talking with you every day in French class and find that time together to be great. You are such a hard worker and I am so inspired by how much you focus on your school work, and all the activities you manage to do. I am sad to think that this is the last time we will see each other before we go our separate ways, but I know you will thrive in a new environment and will have so much fun in college. I hope this new chapter in your life will be just as wonderful as CFS was and I can't wait to see what you do. Good luck with everything!

Anna

Joanna is a really sweet, kind, and generous person. Her maturity really shows through her wisdom, the way she carries herself, and her approach to life. Whether we were working in the cold or sitting and doing cross-stitch in Ken's room, Joanna always found a way to make me smile and laugh. I feel incredibly grateful to be her friend and have enjoyed all of the time I've spent with her.

Sarah

Joanna, you are wonderful, humble, committed, and show grace with everything you do. You showed such perseverance when you got a concussion during Advanced Biology and still took the exam. Your commitment to detail shines through in your artwork during ceramics. You are a phenomenal frisbee player; you are always willing to put your body on the line for the team. You are continually trying to better yourself as an ultimate player and it shows when you practice your throws on the sideline during a game. If there is something you want, you chase after it, like putting in the time to try out for the Chinese National Ultimate team. As you move on to your next adventures, we wish the best for you. Keep chasing your dreams and know that we will support you wherever you go.

May and Gigi

Eliot Peter Dugan St. Clair

If you can't love yourself, how the hell you gonna love somebody else? These thirteen words capture your essence. As my baby brother, Eliot, you strutted your stuff with a confidence that infected everyone around you with a desire to be their most genuine selves. Over the past few years I have been inspired as I've watched you learn, be challenged, and excel at finding ways, through thick and thin, to love you, just as you are. What I love most is that in almost eighteen years together, I still haven't figured you out. Every day with you is an adventure and there are so many things you have left to teach me. I absolutely can't wait. So Toe man. Good luck, and don't f*ck it up.

With all my love, Ainsley

Eliot has so much color to his personality. He is intentional in his actions, and is very confident in who he is and what he wants.

Love you Eliot, Jack

I will never forget how proud I felt as I watched Eliot perform as the Nutcracker in December 2014 at Duke's Reynolds Auditorium. I was surrounded by hundreds of other theatergoers as we all watched, enthralled. Eliot, in a red and gold jacket as the Nutcracker: graceful, playful, and confident on stage. I overheard a small boy next to me pointing to Eliot's picture on the program, saying, "Look Dad, that's the Nutcracker." I whispered to them, "I KNOW him!" And I do know Eliot. He is an artist to his core. He cares about social justice. He is a loyal friend. On Advisee Outings in Middle School, he was often the first to don a costume, so there are numerous photos of him wearing rainbow feather boas, fake moustaches, or wigs. He is much taller now, but still the same clever, thoughtful friend. I salute Eliot as he enters this next chapter. Best of luck!

Love, Lisa Joyner

From early on Eliot, you took your place in our family believing, "I am the coolest person here." That, in fact, is true. You have also been the consummate liar of the family, easily caught yet not deterred in your attempts at deception. Thankfully, you emerged these past few years with a deep need to be honest in every way. That honesty, honestly, is what has seen us through some pretty tough high school years. Through dark moments you moved forward nonetheless, with determination and resiliency, trusting that you would find light. You've befriended anxiety and made restlessness your muse, and finally, dear Eliot, have come to own and honor your sharp intellect and highly creative self. Academics aside, your greatest achievement in the past few years has been your personal growth, your understanding of who you are, and most importantly, your learning to love yourself unconditionally and as much as we love you. 'You, yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection.' Goodness knows that you put in the work. We are so proud of you Eliot. And, we love you very, very much.

Mom and Dad

Paul Samuel Youngblood

Paul, you are one of the kindest and most approachable people I know. Ever since we met back in Early School, I've had the pleasure of calling you one of my best friends. You are incredibly mature, always making smart decisions and knowing how to help a friend in need. You are always ready to laugh and have fun, particularly when outdoors. I know you will be successful in your next phase of life, and I look forward to all of the good times ahead, in college and beyond!

Matthew

Paul is one of the nicest guys I have ever met, and he always greets me with a hello and that signature Paul smile. Paul is the kind of man that if he were to punch you in the face, you wouldn't even be mad. You would just thank him. His level of kindness is on par with his talent as a musician. He plays so many instruments super well, from guitar to piano to mandolin — he knows it all and can bust out a sick solo whenever you need. He also is very good at stating his mind and what he wants which is something I very much look up to. Paul is a wonderful friend and person. I hope you go far in life Paul. God bless you.

Ben Hodgins

Anna Olivia Zuiker

Eighteen years ago you graced this world. The best birthday present ever! Anna, you made me a mother and this journey that we began together has been filled with joy and wonder. I admire you so very much and am awed by your earnest soul, steadfast kindness, and strong work ethic. You lead in your gentle manner and with a thoughtful wisdom well beyond your years. From dance to shotput, you try new things and when you take it on, you commit. You are truly yourself and that is a rare gift. I adore you.
Mom

You mean so much to me and you are kind, sweet, and caring. Have fun in college! Oliver

Anna, one of my favorite memories of you is from a trip to St. Croix. We spent every day at the beach, and one day you and Malia found a palm stump buried in the sand. You climbed up, balanced for a moment, and then jumped. I snapped a photo of you high in the air, with the Caribbean Sea and a cruise ship in the background. Your face beamed with joy, and you radiated beauty. At home you are studious, responsible, quiet, centered. Out in the world you are adventurous, relaxed, steady, and protective. When we first moved to North Carolina, I walked all around Chapel Hill with you on my back. Now you are walking out into the world on your own. I am so very proud of you. You grace our lives. You make me want to jump with joy. Dad

Anna, I can honestly say that you are one of the kindest people I have ever met. No matter the situation you are always compassionate and honest. Your caring personality has inspired me over the past four years, and I know that I am not the only one your classmates that looks up to you. But, it's not just your general positivity that makes you an amazing person and friend; you have a great sense of humor, are so talented in dance, and are dedicated to everything that you do. I am so glad that I got to be in your dance for the concert. I'll miss hanging out with you in Abby's room next year, but I know that with your choreography skills, kindness, and intelligence you'll do great in college. Ahrianna

From the moment you appeared with roses on your very plump cheeks, ebony hair, and eyes like black jewels, we fell in love. Anna, for eighteen years your beautiful eyes have quietly taken in the world. You have always shown a great love for your siblings and your many younger cousins, especially the babies! As your grandparents we have so enjoyed watching you grow into the young woman you are today — confident, bright, and a joy to be around. We wish you many blessings, days of joy, and the peace that defines you. Be good to her, world, our Anna is very precious. Grandma & Grandpa

Anna, you have such a kind soul and you are a wonderful sister and friend. Your laugh lights up a room. It's amazing to see you follow your dreams and do what you love. I can't wait to see your continued successes in life — you deserve the world. Don't settle for anything less. Have fun in college (but not too much fun because I'm still here). Love you, my awesome sister! Malia

Anna, I always attend the Winter Dance Concert and in the last few years I have been drawn to your calm, joyful presence as you dance with grace and confidence. What a beautiful dancer you are! Choreographing this year was most successful, your dance a testament to all your effort to bring it alive. It has been such a pleasure to know you as an advisee and as a diligent and successful biology student. I wish you the very best as you transition to college. Do keep in touch. Frances

Post-Secondary Destinations for the Class of 2019

American University
Appalachian State University (2)
Berry College
Brevard College
Carleton College
Davidson College
Earlham College
Grinnell College
Louisburg College
New York University
North Carolina State University (8)
Pace University
Pacific Northwest College of Art
Santa Monica College
Stanford University
Swarthmore College
University of Colorado at Boulder (2)
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (5)
University of North Carolina at Greensboro
University of North Carolina at Wilmington (3)
University of Pennsylvania
University of Rochester
University of Toronto
University of Virginia
Virginia Commonwealth University
Wake Forest University
Washington University in St. Louis

One student will be performing with a professional dance company;
at least two students are planning gap years before attending college.

Other Colleges Offering Admission to the Class of 2019

Agnes Scott College
Boston University
Brandeis University
University of British Columbia
Brown University
Bucknell University
California State University, Monterey Bay
California University of Pennsylvania
University of California, San Diego
University of California, Santa Cruz
Campbell University
Case Western Reserve University
College of Charleston
Clemson University
Coastal Carolina University
College for Creative Studies
Colorado State University
DePaul University
Duke University
East Carolina University
Eckerd College
Elon University
Fordham University
Franklin & Marshall College
Goucher College
Grinnell College
Guilford College
University of Hartford
University of Hawaii at Manoa
Humboldt State University
Indiana University at Bloomington
Ithaca College
John Carroll University
Juniata College
Kenyon College
Lenoir-Rhyne University
Lewis & Clark College
Loyola University Maryland
Lynn University
Macalester College
Manhattanville College
University of Maryland, College Park
McDaniel College
Meredith College
Miami University, Oxford
University of Miami
Montana State University, Bozeman
New College of Florida
University of New Hampshire at Durham
University of North Carolina at Asheville
University of North Carolina at Charlotte
University of North Carolina at Pembroke
Northeastern University
Notre Dame College of Ohio
Oberlin College
Occidental College
Ohio State University
Oregon State University
University of Oregon
University of Portland
Presbyterian College
University of Puget Sound
Queens University of Charlotte
Radford University
Randolph-Macon College
Reed College
Rochester Institute of Technology
Rowan University
University of San Francisco
Simmons University

Other Colleges Offering Admission to the Class of 2019

Skidmore College
St. John's University
Stony Brook University
University of Lynchburg
University of Utah
University of Vermont
Virginia Tech
University of Washington
Whittier College
College of William & Mary
William Peace University
Winthrop University
University of Wisconsin, Madison
York University

Notes