

WINTER 2020-2021

# shady side

academy

## Adapt and Lead

Shady Side Poised to  
Show the Path Forward  
in a Changing World



ALUMNI PANDEMIC PERSPECTIVES • NEW MASCOT ANNOUNCED

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*Shady Side Academy Magazine* is published twice a year for Shady Side Academy alumni, parents and friends. Letters to the editor should be sent to Lindsay Kovach, Shady Side Academy, 423 Fox Chapel Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15238. Address corrections should be sent to the Alumni & Development Office, Shady Side Academy, 423 Fox Chapel Rd., Pittsburgh, PA 15238.

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WINTER 2020-2021

# contents

## FEATURES

- 9** We Are ... The Bulldogs! Shady Side Academy Announces New Mascot
- 10** Class of 2020 Commencement Exercises & Fireworks Show
- 12** Adapt and Lead: Shady Side Poised to Show the Path Forward in a Changing World
- 18** Alumni Pandemic Perspectives

## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- 2** President's Message
- 3** Around the Academy
- 28** Sports Briefs
- 32** Alumni Events
- 33** Hillman Performing Arts Series
- 34** Class Notes
- 42** In Memoriam
- 45** From the Archives

# President's Message

DEAR SHADY SIDE ACADEMY COMMUNITY:



Last summer, I had the opportunity to read Alfred Lansing's *Endurance: Shackleton's Incredible Voyage*. This classic work of nonfiction tells the incredible story of polar explorer Edward Shackleton and his crew, who in 1914 embarked together with one shared purpose: to discover the wonders of the Antarctic by being the first humans in history to cross the entire continent.

But they quickly found themselves facing a new and desperate set of circumstances, including their ship being locked in an island of ice and

eventually sinking. The expedition was a gradual crisis that would unfold over more than two years of astonishing peril. And yet the crew of the *Endurance* managed the impossible – all 27 men survived, withstanding some of the most physically and mentally grueling conditions imaginable.

How did they do it? First and perhaps most importantly, they realized their quest had changed entirely – from exploration to survival – and altered their behaviors and focus accordingly. They also took care of one another and attended daily to crew morale, keeping tabs on their collective sentiment and shifting direction appropriately in response. They recognized the most important survival mechanism at their disposal was being as psychologically fit as possible.

With the COVID-19 pandemic's continuing impact on Shady Side and schools everywhere, many of us who work at the Academy have these past few months on occasion felt something akin to the crew of the *Endurance*. Though we are teaching children amidst a once-in-a-century national health crisis rather than surviving a shipwreck, our vision, will and stamina are nonetheless being tested.

Much of the fall at SSA was rightly marked with excitement about the creative, innovative solutions we had developed to open school under challenging conditions. But with the winter months upon us and increasingly widespread concern about the surging virus, our focus has shifted from new discoveries to resilience.

Like Shackleton and his men, we have helped to inspire one another's resolve: students supporting teachers, teachers holding up students, and parents, families and alumni taking every opportunity to express gratitude for the extra lift this endeavor requires at the moment.

Our faculty members deserve special appreciation. They have masked up, hunkered down and learned new skills. They have taken on previously unfamiliar platforms, systems and schedules. They have worked weekends and late into the night to get it all done. They've sacrificed travel, kept a distance from family and friends, avoided large gatherings and stayed out of restaurants – all with students top of mind. They are endlessly rallying to adapt to a changing crisis with no end in sight.

We will undoubtedly emerge from this crisis stronger, and much of the credit will go to our remarkable faculty for the miracles they have been working with our children.

Thanks to everyone at Shady Side for keeping our proud community healthy and well, as we endure this extraordinary moment in history together.

Best,

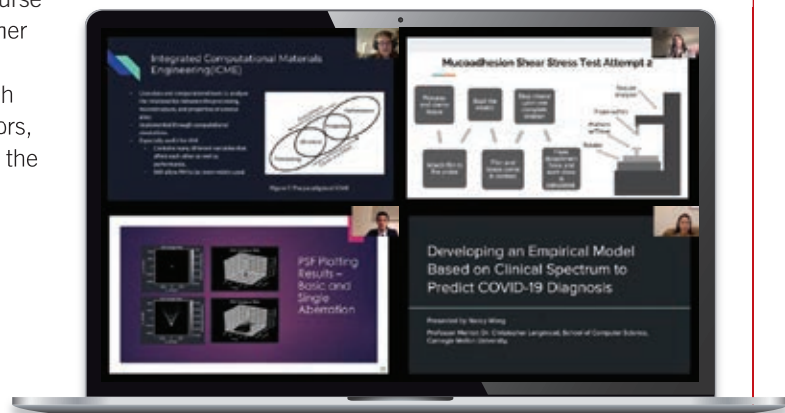
Bart Griffith '93  
President



## Seniors Present Summer Science Research Work

In 2019-2020, 14 juniors participated in the Senior School's Science Research Seminar course, taught by **Dr. Kelly VandenBosche**. The course focuses on advancing research skills and preparing students for summer research internships in university or medical labs. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the students' internship mentors created alternate research projects the students could complete virtually. The students, now seniors, presented their research and answered questions virtually via Zoom at the third annual Summer Research Seminar Presentations on Oct. 21.

- Seniors **Ishika Arora** and **Alexander Biglan** worked with Dr. Wei Xiong at the Physical Metallurgy & Materials Design Lab at the University of Pittsburgh, where she researched metal additive manufacturing.
- Senior **Sara Burr** worked with Dr. Keith Crandall at the Computational Biology Institute at George Washington University, where she analyzed the phylogeny of the aegla species.
- Senior **Stephanie Chen** worked with Dr. Qihan Liu at the University of Pittsburgh Swanson School of Engineering, where she analyzed double layer electroadhesion between charged gel particles.
- Senior **Tyler Hart** worked with Dr. Ethan Rossi in the Department of Ophthalmology Rossi Laboratory at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. He studied the development of optical pathways and mechanical mounts to implement fiber bundles in adaptive optics imaging.
- Senior **Andrew Liu** worked with Dr. Mayank Goal at the Human Computer Intersection Lab at Carnegie Mellon University. His research focused on expanding the user interface of smartwatches using mixed reality and hand tracking.
- Senior **Renee Long** worked with Dr. Raja Mazumder at the High-Performance Integrated Virtual Environment Lab at George Washington University, where she participated in the COVID-19 Biomarkers Knowledgebase Project.
- Senior **Eve Mango** worked with Dr. Andrew VanDemark at the University of Pittsburgh Department of Biological Sciences, where she worked to determine the methods by which Bacteriophage Adepagha-73 efficiently counteracts mycobacterium tuberculosis.
- Senior **Nora Navid** worked with Dr. Karen Arndt at the University of Pittsburgh Department of Biological Sciences Lab to examine various conditions in the yeast cell to determine which genes play a significant role in transcript buffering.



- Senior **Hannah Romoff** worked with Dr. Lisa Rosen at the Magee Women's Research Institute on the development of an ex vivo model for evaluating pharmaceutical film mucoadhesion.
- Senior **Jasminder Sarkaria** worked with Dr. Umamaheswar Duvvuri at the UPMC Department of Otolaryngology on the classification of biopsy samples based on clinical attributes for subsequent genomic profiling.
- Senior **Stefan Stratimirovic** worked with Dr. Jelena Janjic at the Duquesne University School of Pharmacy Chronic Pain Research Consortium and participated in PFC data mining.
- Senior **Jason Vasko** worked with Dr. Ethan Rossi in the Department of Ophthalmology Rossi Laboratory at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, where he developed a process to simulate optical aberration in images and a method to validate the accuracy of synthetic photoreceptor mosaic images.
- Senior **Nancy Wang** worked with Dr. Christopher Langmead at the Carnegie Mellon University Computational Biology Department to develop an empirical model based on the clinical spectrum to predict a COVID-19 diagnosis.



## Niche Ranks Shady Side the Best Private K-12 School in the Pittsburgh Area

Niche, the leading platform for K-12 and college school search, released its 2021 Best Schools rankings, and Shady Side Academy ranked No. 1 on its list of the Best Private K-12 Schools in the Pittsburgh Area.

Niche also ranked Shady Side No. 1 in the Pittsburgh Area in the Best Private High Schools, Best College Prep Private High Schools, Best Boarding High Schools, and Best High Schools for STEM categories, and No. 2 in the Most Diverse Private High Schools category. And, Shady Side is the top-rated independent school in the Best High Schools for Athletes in the Pittsburgh Area category, coming in at No. 4 overall behind North Allegheny, Central Catholic and Pine-Richland.

In the state of Pennsylvania, Shady Side ranked in the top four in the Best Private K-12 Schools, Best College Prep Private High Schools, Best Boarding High Schools and Best High Schools for STEM categories.

With updated data for 94,710 public schools, 24,099 private schools and 11,822 school districts nationwide, Niche's K-12 school rankings provide an in-depth analysis of a given school. Unlike traditional rankings, which rely on metrics like test scores and academic performance, Niche's rankings combine user input – comments from current students, alumni and parents – with quantitative data points. Learn more at [niche.com](https://niche.com).



## AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

## Junior Named to Beckwith Institute Board

Junior **Karen Linares Mendoza** was named to a two-year term as a student member of the board of the Beckwith Institute, a health care institute dedicated to improving patient care. She joins senior **Nora Navid** on the board. Each year, two Senior School students hold seats on the board alongside President **Bart Griffith '93**. SSA alumnus and trustee emeritus **G. Nicholas Beckwith III '63** and his wife, Dotty, are co-founders of the Institute.



## SENIOR SCHOOL TEACHER HONORED BY UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO AS OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR

Senior School theatre teacher **Dana Hardy-Bingham** received the Outstanding Educator Award from the University of Chicago after being nominated by alumna **Sanjna Narayan '20**. Every year, UChicago gives newly admitted students the opportunity to recognize the educators who have made a difference in their lives. Hardy-Bingham was honored by UChicago on Oct. 21 during a virtual reception.

## Sophomore Wins Pittsburgh International Airport Student Artwork Contest

Sophomore **Maria Schwendeman** was one of nine winners of Pittsburgh International Airport's first student artwork contest. Students ages 6-18 were asked to submit original artwork in response to the theme "Nobody Owns the Sky," the title of a children's book about Bessie Coleman, the first African-American licensed aviator. The winning works are displayed digitally throughout the airport's terminals and on [FlyPittsburgh.com](https://flypittsburgh.com). Schwendeman's winning piece is titled *The Sky Is Not the Limit* and features a trio of drawings of Bessie Coleman's face.



## National Merit Semifinalists

Fourteen members of the Class of 2021 were named semifinalists in the 66th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. These academically talented students will continue in the competition for 7,600 National Merit Scholarships worth more than \$30 million that will be offered in spring 2021. The SSA semifinalists are **Ishika Arora, Luke Brennan, Joshua Castro, Caroline Green, Tyler Hart, Gabriela Jegasothy, Will Karet, Andrew Liu, Zhuoxin Ma, Eve Mango, Jason Vasko, Zewei Wu, Nicholas Zana** and **Qingqing Zhao**.





## Richard F. Gregory Visiting Writers Series Brings Virtual Visit From Author John Fried

The Richard F. Gregory Visiting Writers Series brought local author and SSA parent John Fried to the Senior School for a series of virtual visits in November. English teacher **Jacki Weaver** and junior **Vanessa Han** recorded a Zoom video interview with Fried that was shown at an all-school virtual assembly on Nov. 13. Fried then virtually visited six different English classes live via Zoom during the week of Nov. 16-20. Fried's short fiction has appeared in *The Gettysburg Review*, *North American Review* and *Columbia: A Journal of Literature and Art*. He teaches creative writing at Duquesne University, and his debut novel, *The Martin Chronicles*, was published in 2019.

The series is named in memory of the late Richard F. "Dick" Gregory, who taught English at Shady Side Academy for 36 years (1953-1989) and passed away in 2014. The idea for the series came from an anonymous donor, who provided initial funding in the hope that others would contribute to keep Gregory's memory alive. For more information on funding the series, contact Director of Alumni & Development **Dr. Allison Saras** at [asaras@shadysideacademy.org](mailto:asaras@shadysideacademy.org).



## Author Virtually Visits Country Day School

On Dec. 15, author Lauren Tarshis virtually visited **Courtney Anderson's** fourth and fifth grade library classes at the Country Day School, and students had the opportunity to ask questions about her writing. Tarshis is the *New York Times* best-selling author of the *I Survived* series, telling stories of young people and their resilience and strength in the midst of unimaginable disasters and times of turmoil.



## New Members of the Board of Trustees

Shady Side Academy named five new members to the Board of Trustees for the 2020-2021 school year. Current parent **Kanika Blue Capel** has a background as an attorney and is active in several community service organizations. **Greg Lignelli** is a current parent and chief operating officer of System One Holdings, a privately held company headquartered in Pittsburgh. Current parent **Sloan Overstrom** is a designer and co-owner of Mecox Gardens Pittsburgh, a home, antiques and design store. Alumnus and current parent **C. Lance Ruttenberg '86** is the president and chief executive officer of American Textile Co. **Henry Stafford** is a current parent and CEO of Revtown LLC, a direct-to-consumer denim brand.



### SENIOR SCHOOL SERVICE LEARNING CLUB COLLECTS HOLIDAY GIFTS FOR LOCAL CHILDREN

Once again this year, the Senior School Service Learning Club collected gifts for the Holiday Project, sponsored by the Allegheny County Department of Health and Human Services (DHS). Senior School students, faculty and staff purchased holiday gifts for a total of 158 children who receive services from DHS related to maltreatment or homelessness, exceeding the club's goal of serving 140 children.



### Holiday Food Drives Support Local Families in Need

A trio of SSA holiday food drives helped to support local families experiencing food insecurity this holiday season.

In November, second graders at the Junior School collected two truckloads of non-perishable food items in the annual Second Grade Food Drive. Volunteers from the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood came to campus on Nov. 20 to pick up the donations, which were distributed to needy families for Thanksgiving. The Junior School has partnered with the church on the annual food drive for more than 20 years.

In a school-wide drive the week of Dec. 7-11, Country Day School students collected more than 400 non-perishable food items for the Pressley Ridge Backpack Giveback program, which supplies food to local families who may be struggling to find their next meal.

Sixth grader **Eva Friedlander** was the leading force behind the Middle School holiday food drive, held Dec. 7-18. Eva created a video and hung posters around the school to educate her peers about food insecurity. Families donated nearly 1,000 pounds of food, which Eva and teacher **Lauren Messner** delivered to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank on Dec. 24.



### Virtual Fundraisers Yield Nearly \$11,000 for Food Bank

SSA community members donated nearly \$11,000 to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank through three different virtual fundraisers in December.

The Senior School Service Learning Club sponsored a virtual fundraiser for the food bank from Dec. 7-18, raising a total of \$2,686.52 to provide up to 13,432 meals for local families experiencing food insecurity.

A group of Junior and Middle School families organized a "No Hungry Kids!" GoFundMe campaign with the goal of raising \$1,000 for the food bank by Christmas Eve. Students in the Delfyett, Iannetti, Khalil, Walsh and Zureikat families created a video about food insecurity and the importance of nutrition that was shown during Zoom assemblies and emailed to families. The team surpassed its goal, raising \$5,301.

The Senior School boys and girls basketball programs joined 45 other area schools in the WPIAL/City Basketball Virtual Food Drive, which sought to raise \$60,000 for the food bank by Jan. 15. The drive raised more than \$66,000, with SSA ranking fourth on the school leaderboard with \$3,261.50 in donations.

### Country Day School Students Treat Local Hospital Workers to Lunch

Through a dress-down day fundraiser on Dec. 11, Country Day School students raised \$250 to buy lunch for the doctors and nurses at UPMC St. Margaret's Hospital. School head **Dr. Jennifer Asmonga** and counselor **Claudine Runnette** delivered a Panera Bread lunch to the hospital on Dec. 14, along with handmade cards from students with messages of gratitude and hope.







## Senior School Fall Play: *Alice In Wonderland*

The Senior School presented the fall drama, *Alice In Wonderland – A Radio Play*, via video livestream on Nov. 6-8. Three performances were livestreamed free of charge, and online donations to the drama program were accepted in lieu of ticket fees. The play was performed on stage in the Richard E. Rauh Theater, but with social distancing between masked actors. The cast and crew included nearly 30 students ranging from seniors to freshmen, and was directed by **Dana Hardy-Bingham**.

## Middle School Fall Play: *Mirror, Mirror*

The Middle School Drama Dragons presented the 2020 fall play *Mirror, Mirror: A Virtual Fractured Fairy Tale* on Nov. 19. The safe, socially distanced performance was pre-recorded via Zoom, and the student body enjoyed watching the video in their advisory homerooms. The cast and crew included 20 students in grades 6-8 and was directed by English teacher **Camille MacRae**, with technical direction by music teacher **Randy Broker** and set and costume design by art teacher **Stefanie Vorrasi**.



## SSA and Urban Pathways Keep Tutoring Partnership Alive During COVID-19

Last spring, when COVID-19 forced schools to shift to distance learning, the successful tutoring partnership between Shady Side Academy and Urban Pathways K-5 College Charter School (UPK5CCS) in downtown Pittsburgh quickly transitioned online. The program continues this school year in a fully online format.

The shift to virtual tutoring was made possible by program co-coordinators **Lindsey Myers**, director of the Senior School Library and faculty advisor to the Service Learning Club at SSA, and Gina Marie Potter, third grade teacher and tutoring coordinator at UPK5CCS.

Prior to COVID-19, SSA student volunteers would travel to UPK5CCS two Saturday mornings per month to tutor Urban Pathways students in grades 2-5 in person. Now, those Saturday morning sessions are conducted on Zoom. Younger students are placed into breakout rooms with their tutors, where they work together on reading and math skills. Tutors use Zoom's white board and screen-sharing features to enhance the learning experience. The UPK5CCS students and their SSA tutors build rewarding relationships that benefit everyone involved.

"All of our SSA students are volunteers," Myers explained. "They do not receive academic credit for their work, nor do they have a community service requirement to complete. During the pandemic,

we wanted to make sure we were still providing support and fostering relationships among the students at both schools."

Junior **Alex Kramer**, who has been volunteering for two years, said "I have thought about being a teacher, and I thought that tutoring would help me prepare for this profession. I enjoy building relationships with the students and tutoring has become a highlight of my week."

Senior **Erin Canning**, who has been a tutor for two and a half years, said, "Urban Pathways is a welcoming atmosphere because it's not all about being a tutor, but being a mentor and role model for children who may need it."

A total of 42 Senior School students are actively engaged in the tutoring program this year, working with 18-20 students from UPK5CCS. The tutors include: seniors **Erin Canning, Alyssa Colen, Rory Engel, Gabi Jegasothy, Paige Shea, Makenna Wolfanger, Jason Wu** and **Qingqing Zhao**; juniors **Rohan Anand, Ariella Avigad, Autumn Casey, Aasia Gabbour, Vanessa Han, Gabby Hill-Junke, Georgia Horgan, Phillip Huang, Emmie Jordan, Alex Kramer, Emma Lammert, Karen Linares Mendoza, Jenny Mai, Kira Meyers, Wendy Ojogho, Jamila Snyder, Melody Yuan** and **Anker Zhao**; sophomores **Henry Fried, Elaine Gombos, Maeve Kelley, Maya Leyzarovich, Alex Lynn, Smrithi Shyam, Monica Singh, Hannah Song, Chloe Wells** and **Crystal Zheng**; and freshmen **Otis Liu, Caroline McLaughlin, Jonah Sackrowitz, Helena Salvitti, Ellery Shapiro** and **Lizzie Uhlman**.

## Academy Names New EQT Scholar

This fall, Shady Side named Junior School pre-kindergarten student **Abram Amos-Abanyie** as its newest EQT Scholar. As one of only two EQT Scholars at SSA, Abram is the recipient of a scholarship worth full tuition for his entire Shady Side education through grade 12.

Founded in 2016, Shady Side's EQT Scholars Program covers full tuition beginning in pre-K or kindergarten through grade 12 for two students with demonstrated financial need. The program is funded by an endowment from the EQT Foundation, the charitable arm of natural gas producer EQT Corporation. Over 13 or 14 years, the scholarship is worth more than \$300,000. Junior School fourth grader **Adrianna Ballard** is the other current EQT Scholar, named in 2016. Abram and Adrianna will remain EQT Scholars as long as they continue to qualify for financial assistance and remain in good academic standing.



Abram, who enrolled in senior pre-kindergarten at the Junior School this fall, is the fourth child in the Amos-Abanyie family to attend Shady Side, following siblings Emmanuel (grade 6), Levi (grade 4) and Elina (grade 1).

"We were speechless when we found out that Abram was being offered the EQT Scholarship," said Abram's mother, Kristin Amos-Abanyie. "We love being part of this community, and having the peace of mind to know that Abram's tuition is covered until he graduates is a huge relief. An SSA education provides a lifelong foundation, and we cannot wait to see all the amazing things our kids will do in the future. With three older children at SSA, we know that the teachers meet our children where they are and challenge them to improve. We are so excited for Abram to be a part of the school and watch him grow and challenge himself through all the opportunities SSA offers. He loves everything about school, especially his teachers and friends."

"Abram is a model student who sets an example of how to live The Shady Side Way every day," said Abram's senior pre-kindergarten teacher, **Melissa Petitto-Kenny**. "He is quick to help friends in the classroom, as well as teachers. He finds joy in learning and is always ready to try any activity we offer him, especially when it involves building structures or making art! He comes to school each day with a smile behind that mask. Abram's quiet kindness and big imagination are a gift to our class."

Since its inception in 2003, the EQT Foundation has awarded more than \$60 million to nonprofits throughout the operational footprint of the EQT Corporation. The EQT Foundation is committed to supporting the education and training of children and adults; the development of diverse, livable communities; and preserving our natural environments.



# WE ARE ... THE BULLDOGS!

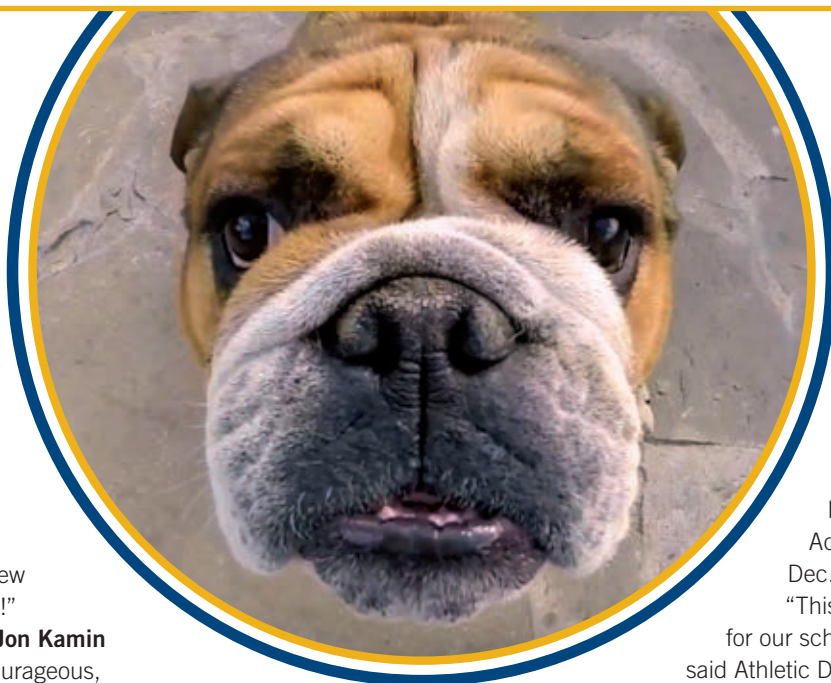
## Shady Side Academy Announces New Mascot

After a five-month search process that engaged the entire SSA community, Shady Side Academy announced its new mascot is – **THE BULLDOGS!** The official announcement was made at noon on Dec. 21, and included a short video shared via email and on the Academy's website and social media channels.

"I am thrilled to announce that Shady Side Academy's new mascot is ... **THE BULLDOGS!**" said Board of Trustees Chair **Jon Kamin '91** in the email. "Kind yet courageous, friendly yet dignified, strong and smart, the Bulldog embodies loyalty, courage and tenacity. These inherent traits also describe our Shady Side Academy community. The Bulldog is a mascot that everyone in our community – from pre-kindergarteners to alumni – will unite behind and cheer about for generations to come. Whether at an athletic contest, a robotics tournament or a class reunion, we look forward to hearing the Blue-and-Gold faithful rallying around the Bulldogs."

The search process was led by a 20-person Mascot Search Committee, composed of students, alumni, coaches, faculty, staff and parents, and co-chaired by **Bob Grandizio '91** and **Jamie (Brush) Scott '98**, both of whom are alumni, staff members and current parents.

Through a series of emails and fun videos, SSA community members were encouraged to submit their mascot suggestions via an online survey. The committee received more than 600 suggestions, which they narrowed down to 22 semifinalists. Another online survey asked community members to choose their



favorite semifinalists, and the committee used feedback from more than 1,500 respondents to elevate five finalists for consideration to the Board of Trustees: Bulldogs, Hawks, Lions, Owls and Wolfpack. After a lengthy and spirited discussion, the Board officially voted to adopt Bulldogs as Shady Side Academy's new mascot on Dec. 17, 2020.

"This is an exciting new chapter for our school and our athletic program," said Athletic Director **Gene Deal**, who served on the search committee. "The Bulldog is a mascot our kids, our coaches and our teams will rally behind and wear with pride. I have no doubt it will bring a whole new spirit to our games and to our entire community as we cheer on the Shady Side Academy Bulldogs."

"The Bulldog is both a strong, playful mascot that will be fun for our students, and a community builder for all who care about Shady Side," said President **Bart Griffith '93**.

Now that Shady Side has chosen the Bulldog as its mascot, the next phase of the process has begun: designing a new logo and branding. The school hopes to unveil the new Shady Side Academy Bulldog logo and branding by the end of the 2020-2021 school year.

Shady Side Academy's mascot search began on July 1, 2020, when the Board of Trustees announced it had voted unanimously to discontinue the Indian as the SSA mascot and team name, effective immediately.

Watch the announcement video and learn more about the mascot search process at [www.shadysideacademy.org/mascot-search](http://www.shadysideacademy.org/mascot-search).

# Class of 2020

## Commencement Exercises & Fireworks Show

The 94 members of the Shady Side Academy Class of 2020 went out with a bang – literally! – at the first-ever drive-in Commencement Exercises and Fireworks Show on Thursday, July 30. SSA had postponed the Senior Dinner and Commencement Exercises from May 28-29 to July 30-31 in hopes of safely hosting these traditional events in person; however, COVID-19 gathering limits in late July prohibited such events. So, the Academy got creative, designing a unique drive-in graduation ceremony and carhop-style dinner, followed by a fireworks show presented by Pyrotecnico. This memorable gathering enabled the entire class and their families to celebrate together, and the administration to sustain core elements of the traditional commencement program in compliance with county health and safety orders.

A bagpiper played as graduating families processed in cars to the middle athletic field to park and enjoy a boxed meal sitting on or in their vehicles. The program opened with video of the Chamber Choir singing *You Are the New Day*, an invocation and welcome remarks from President **Bart Griffith '93**. Graduates **Maya Groff** and **Sanjna Narayan** gave senior speeches, several awards and the class gift were presented, graduates' names were announced, and the Alma Mater was sung, led by the Graduation Band via video. The first-ever on-campus fireworks show lit up the skies in honor of the Class of 2020, and graduates picked up their diplomas on the drive out. Graduating families received a video recording of the event and were able to schedule appointments for formal graduation portraits on campus the next day.







Senior speaker Sanjna Narayan



Senior speaker Maya Groff







# Adapt and Lead

**Shady Side Poised to Show the  
Path Forward in a Changing World**

**By President Bartley Griffith '93**





Recently, a Shady Side colleague wryly suggested that in order to understand what change looks like at SSA, I ought to read Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species*. The implication? *Change at the Academy takes a long time, Bart.*

Darwin understood evolution as a slow, incremental process, with a species gaining small variations over millions of years, until that time when a new animal or organism ultimately emerges. Yet Darwin was never able to identify the incremental fossil record validating these claims, which he assumed simply meant the complete record just remained undiscovered.

But just over a century later, Stephen J. Gould offered an alternative explanation for this gap in the fossil record he called "punctuated equilibrium," the idea that evolution is not evenly distributed as Darwin theorized, but rather accelerated forcefully when life forms must adapt in



short bursts in response to extraordinary circumstances, resulting almost immediately (at least in evolutionary terms) in an entirely new species, leaving fossils behind.

For example, a particular type of bird goes unchanged for millennia. Without warning, a bacteria enters the ecosystem, resulting in the death of a favored tree species. The birds must then adapt to live in trees that are much taller, requiring them to fly higher and develop more wing strength. Many birds die in the process, but the bodies of survivors change immediately (at least in evolutionary time) and then return to another state of prolonged stasis.

## A Moment of Punctuated Equilibrium for Shady Side

In a way Gould and Darwin would likely appreciate, independent schools across the country are experiencing just such a moment of punctuated equilibrium, accelerated sharply and intensely over the past year by the pandemic. But COVID-19 is not the only force impacting independent schools at the moment – increased competition, technological innovations, a shrinking middle class, shifting family expectations, and urgent national calls for equity and inclusion are all driving important evolutions of their own.

But the conditions are currently changing more quickly than a lot of institutions can adapt, and lacking the traits necessary to survive, many independent schools may soon be reckoning with possible extinction. Recently, the National Association of Independent Schools reported that more than 50% of member schools are experiencing dips in enrollment. More than 60% of school business officers are currently projecting a loss for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

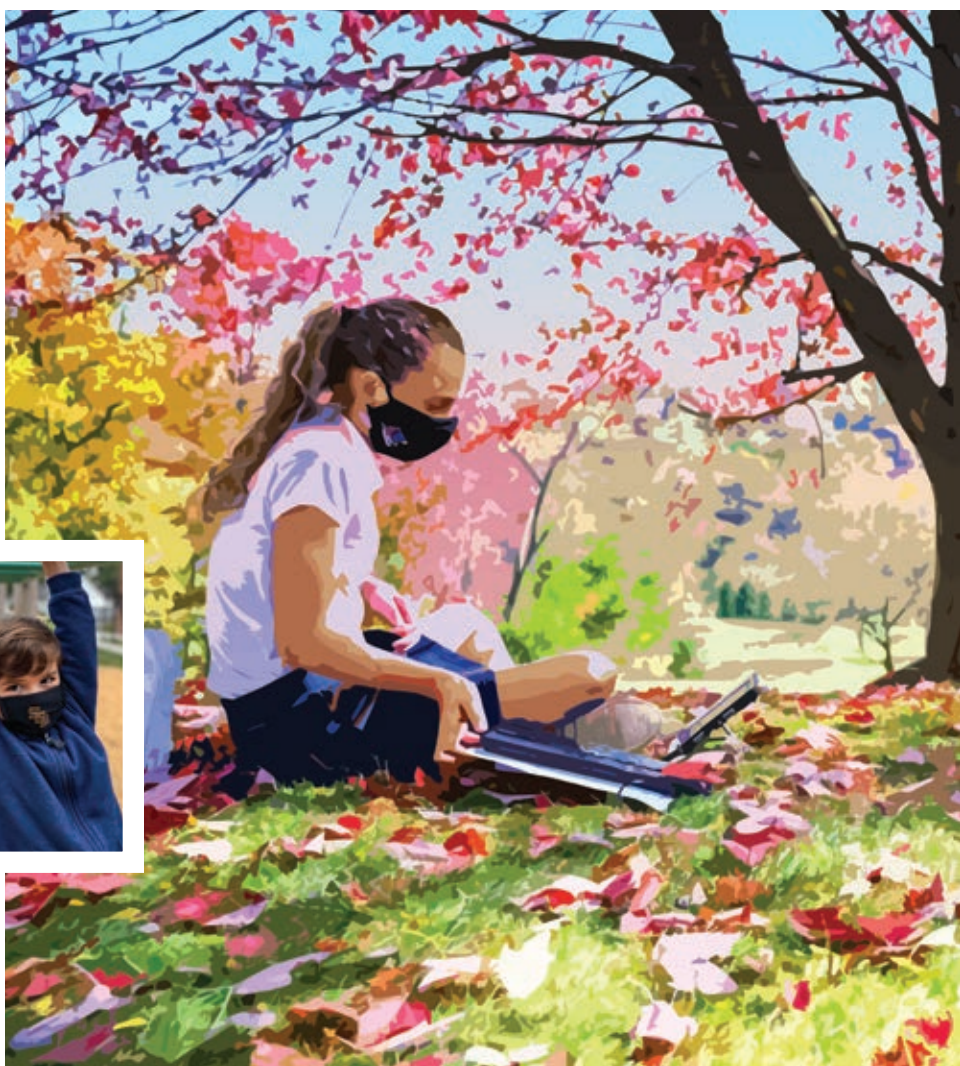
Thankfully, Shady Side has adapted speedily and dramatically at critical points of punctuated equilibrium, even while segments of our history include extended periods of relative stasis.

Just over a hundred years ago, with Pittsburgh facing the 1918 flu pandemic and suffering the worst mortality rate of any American city, Shady Side's trustees elected to relocate

the Academy far from its city location to pastoral Fox Chapel. Removed from the health concerns of the city, the theory went, students could learn while breathing fresh air, basking in pure sunlight and enjoying a green, idyllic campus. The move was in line with a far-reaching trend known as The Country Day School Movement, one that would come to define the early part of the century for preparatory schools across the country.

Decades later, set against the tumultuous and divisive backdrop of the Women's Liberation Movement, the Shady Side community began to challenge long-held gender norms that seemed stuffy and behind the times. Ultimately, this led to co-education at Shady Side when, after 90 years of educating boys, the Senior School began admitting girls in 1973. Arguably the most significant adaptation in our history, co-education at SSA has led to the doubling of the school's enrollment, dramatic expansion of our program, and the further embedding of diversity as a lasting community value.

Founded by the leadership at Shadyside Presbyterian Church, the Academy has evolved to become a nonsectarian, religiously diverse learning community. Originally located on Aiken Avenue, Shady Side has since called eight different campuses home. First a day school for boys who lived in the same six-block





East End neighborhood, SSA last year welcomed boys and girls from nine countries and 15 states to its campuses.

So while undoubtedly rooted in important tradition and steadiness over generations, Shady Side Academy has continued to thrive because, like the animals mentioned prior, we have recognized critical moments of change and evolved to meet the needs of emerging realities. As former Academy President and Senior School Head Samuel S. Greene wrote in the early 1970s, Shady Side has always found itself in “periods between a settled way of life we have understood and a new way of life we are trying to build.”



## Tomorrow Demands a New Kind of Leader

As we face the exceptional challenges of this moment, Shady Side’s own punctuated equilibrium is more critical than ever. Our city and the independent school world are challenging us to show the way forward: How might we humanize the digital future of school? How might we inspire greater equity and justice in our community? And how might we do it all in a way that builds on the relationships that make it all worthwhile, that restores a sense of unity and shared purpose?

It all presents a daunting task, but Shady Side will adapt effectively in this extraordinary moment if we understand that tomorrow demands that SSA develop a new kind of leader.

At its heart, Shady Side is an important leadership development organization for both the City of Pittsburgh and beyond. This value was embedded at our inception, as the pioneers of the American steel industry founded a boys’ preparatory school designed to ensure next-generation leadership for what they envisioned would become the great, enduring industrial city of the 20th century.

Generations later, Pittsburgh’s industrial past is fossilizing, and our city is evolving as a hub for research, innovation and design. In the wake of it, SSA has a unique opportunity to develop leaders at the global intersection of technology and the liberal arts. Artificial intelligence, smart robots, augmented reality and other advances suggest the future of our global economy is irrevocably digital. Shady Side must produce leaders who will humanize this digital future, lending it an ethical, spiritual dimension and ensuring its advances strengthen communities and inspire greater equity.

As Steve Jobs once said, “Technology alone is not enough – it’s technology married with liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields us the results that make our heart sing.”

We continue to develop new courses in the Senior School such as Entrepreneurship in Tech & Design and Community Connections in Tech & Design, as well as the Science Research Seminar that places our students alongside research teams at places like CMU, Pitt and UPMC to develop science-based solutions to a range of societal problems. Additionally, Shady Side has partnered recently with The Social Institute, a national leader in curriculum designed to help students navigate the nexus of social media, technology and social-emotional health.







## Leaders Learn in Public

As independent schools navigate a shifting landscape, they must embrace a state of constant *becoming*, what designers like to call “perpetual beta.” And the most successful schools will do this publicly, with administrators, faculty, staff and students regularly sharing their learning with the broader community.

Leaders at Shady Side must learn in public through systemic problem solving, growing from past experience and getting new ideas on the playing field quickly, so that we can begin gleaning insight right away. Successful adaptation in response to

a rapidly changing landscape means integrating public learning more visibly and deeply into the fabric of our daily practice.

## Pilots Point to Progress

Pilot programs help even the most established educational institutions to evolve, minimizing risk and maximizing potential benefits. Pilots foreshadow the progress we want to see, offer safe spaces for experimentation, and can concretely demonstrate the successes we ultimately hope to replicate at scale.

Low-stakes, trial-and-error pilots allow schools to leverage failure rather than be paralyzed by the prospect of highly visible, highly consequential fiascos. When we launch a pilot, we can fail at the *beginning* of an idea when the costs and profile are lower, rather than at the *end*, when the stakes are higher and failure is no longer an option. We learn to “fail fast,” keeping teams and projects small, staying focused on observation and learning, and putting the more involved, comprehensive versions of an idea on ice until we figure out what we have – or, often more importantly, what we don’t. A former colleague of mine likes to equate launching pilots with making “small bets out of sight.”

As an example, this spring we will run a 12-week pilot in the Senior School called The Social Innovators Program, in partnership with the University of Pennsylvania and Schoolyard Ventures. This low-stakes, low-cost initiative is designed to help students at independent schools like Shady Side learn how to launch social ventures of their own that create value and a positive impact on society.



## In Conclusion

Over the course of the pandemic, many leaders managing the crisis, including yours truly, have furthered a widespread public misperception: that the Chinese word for “crisis”

is composed of brush strokes signifying both “danger” and “opportunity.” Despite the dangers of the moment, leaders have leaned on this construction to help reassure their organizations that COVID-19 is a crisis that will also present real possibilities.

But, as I have subsequently learned from some of our Chinese boarding students, we have all been translating it incorrectly. The word’s characters instead more aptly signify the marriage of “danger” and something roughly akin to “crucial point.”

This discovery incites an even more instructive lesson: that the opportunities this dangerous, crucial point present to Shady Side are not guaranteed. They will only be seized if, as we have done throughout our history, we adapt to extraordinary circumstances to become the next great version of ourselves.



# A New Normal

## Shady Side Reopens With In-Person Instruction in Fall 2020

This year, in the face of a global pandemic, schools faced an unprecedented challenge – and a profound opportunity – to reimagine the way they deliver an education to students.

Shady Side Academy was one of a few area schools that opened this fall with in-person instruction five days a week, welcoming a record 1,108 PK-12 students across four campuses – a 10% enrollment increase over last year. The administration worked tirelessly over the summer to craft a comprehensive reopening plan grounded in safety, flexibility and academic excellence.

“When it is safe to do so, we believe children are at their best academically and socially when they attend school in person and form close relationships with their teachers and peers,” said President **Bart Griffith '93**. “However, we recognize that a successful return-to-school plan must be flexible enough to adapt. Our plan not only provides a safe, in-person learning environment, but also an effective distance learning environment.”

SSA's reopening plan fully aligns with federal, state and county public health guidelines, and was designed in consultation with infection prevention experts at UPMC. Extensive health and safety measures minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission. Each morning, parents and employees complete a COVID-19 screening via mobile app, which generates a “green pass.” Students and employees show their green pass and undergo a temperature check upon arrival, and must wear masks throughout the day. Classrooms were renovated over the summer to meet CDC social distancing guidelines, and new outdoor learning spaces were created, from large tents on the Senior School quad to hay-bale classrooms on the Junior School grounds. Hallways and stairwells are marked as

one-way, with hand sanitizer stations everywhere. Revamped academic schedules keep students in small, consistent cohorts, and lunches are delivered to classrooms or served grab-and-go.

A live remote attendance option is available to students who are unable to learn on campus. Classrooms are equipped with Meeting Owl Pro 360-degree smart cameras that integrate with Zoom, enabling remote learners to attend classes live alongside their peers on campus.

Throughout the fall, students and teachers found creative new ways to learn, play and engage on campus safely – from a socially distant, restaurant-themed second grade “book tasting”, to a herpetologist visiting a sixth grade outdoor science class, to seniors enjoying lunch in Adirondack chairs on the quad. Fall sports teams successfully competed within new safety protocols, and music and drama classes found safe ways to rehearse and perform – with family and friends watching via livestream.

When it is not deemed safe to learn on campus, Shady Side's plan provides for flexible toggling to distance learning. Every K-12 student has their own device, and an age-appropriate mix of synchronous

Zoom classes and asynchronous lessons are presented every day in every grade. Teachers and support staff host virtual office hours, and community time is preserved through virtual assemblies and gatherings.

Due to the rise in local COVID-19 cases in the winter months, and in anticipation of holiday gatherings and travel, SSA implemented “The Jan Plan,” a return-to-campus plan after Winter Break that included Academy-subsidized COVID-19 testing for all students, faculty and staff and a required 14-day quarantine for out-of-state travel, enabling a safe return to in-person instruction in January.

Learn more about SSA's reopening plan at [www.shadysideacademy.org/coronavirus](http://www.shadysideacademy.org/coronavirus).





# ALUMNI PANDEMIC







# PERSPECTIVES

BY CRISTINA ROUVALIS / PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY ALUMNI

Around the world, COVID-19 has impacted nearly every aspect of daily life, including how and where we work. Many SSA alumni work on the front lines in hospitals and research labs, while others have seen COVID-19 drastically transform their jobs and organizations. Read about eight SSA alumni and how they continue to make a difference during a global pandemic.



# Lisa Scales '78

## BATTLING FOOD INSECURITY DURING A PANDEMIC

People waited in their cars in a mile-long line outside Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank in Duquesne in March 2020. The photo of the traffic jam went viral as a symbol of food insecurity during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Lisa Scales '78**, president and CEO of the food bank, gave interviews to Anderson Cooper on CNN and other



national networks about a clientele that had exploded overnight. People called and showed up at our warehouse, many of whom never imagined that they would be desperate for their next meal.

"We got hundreds of phone calls," she said. "They were recently unemployed, and they were quite frightened. They needed food and they were not sure what the future held."

She has seen a lot of workers in the hospitality and retail industries who lost their jobs due to restaurants closing and small shops shuttering.

Working 16-hour days, seven days a week, Scales and her staff distributed 25 million pounds of food from March 16 to September 31, 2020 – a 30 percent increase over the previous year.

To adjust to a new contact-free world, food bank staff packed emergency food boxes for drive-up distribution. They also sent boxes to 500 affiliated food pantries throughout

11 southwestern Pennsylvania counties, most staffed by volunteers who are seniors who kept working despite the risks of getting sick. The food bank also started a concierge line to direct people to the right resources for food and other essential services and home delivery for those who couldn't get out.

Scales also tries to reduce the stigma of food insecurity. "It's not something they did to themselves. They are not alone. It's okay to ask for help. Everyone deserves to eat every day."

"What's inspired me has been the community support, corporate support, individual support, the number of people making meals, chefs making sure kids are fed," she said. "It's been heartwarming to see everyone rally."

People lining up for food has only accentuated a problem that has always been here but was invisible to most people.

"One in nine of our neighbors had been struggling with hunger," Scales said. "Because of COVID, one in seven people are now food insecure."



## Scales Named Pittsburgher of the Year

For her outstanding leadership of the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank during the COVID-19 pandemic, and her ingenuity in feeding people under the most stressful of conditions, **Lisa Scales '78** was recently named *Pittsburgh Magazine's* Pittsburgher of the Year. Scales graces the cover of the magazine's January/February 2021 issue, and the magazine story spotlights not only her tireless work at the food bank but also her lifelong journey of helping others.

"Lisa represents the best of our region," said *Pittsburgh Magazine* Publisher Betsy Benson. "She is humble, hard-working and has an unrivaled empathy for people who are struggling. Lisa was the hands-down choice for Pittsburgher of the Year."

Pittsburgh Magazine has honored a Pittsburgher or Pittsburghers of the Year every year since 1986. Read the article online at [www.pittsburghmagazine.com/pittsburgher-of-the-year-lisa-scales/](http://www.pittsburghmagazine.com/pittsburgher-of-the-year-lisa-scales/).

Congratulations, Lisa!







## Dr. Nicole Basta '99

### TRACKING THE COVID-19 VACCINES

When **Dr. Nicole Basta's '99** friends and relatives call her, they inevitably ask, “When are we going to have a vaccine for COVID-19?”

These aren't random questions. Dr. Basta, after all, is an infectious disease epidemiologist, vaccinologist and associate professor in the Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health in the School of Population and Global Health at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. The sudden interest in her area of study has prompted her to develop an informational resource to explain vaccines to the public, journalists and anyone trying to track the complicated process of clinical trials.

She put the idea into action via a website called the COVID 19 Vaccine Tracker ([covid19.trackvaccines.org](https://covid19.trackvaccines.org)).

The website follows various vaccines under development (57 as of Dec. 1), the number of trials (136), and the number of countries involved (37). Dr. Basta is also now tracking which countries issue approvals for which vaccines based on their safety and efficiency data.

Users can click to see information about vaccines in various stages of clinical trials. For example, clicking on the BioNtech/Pfizer vaccine, which garnered

headlines for its early results of more than 90 percent effectiveness, provides information about its phase 1, 2 and 3 trials, including location, enrollment and registration information. The website also explains the vaccine testing and approval process, various types of vaccines, and how vaccinations lead to community (or herd) immunity.

“The idea was that I could use my expertise and training to help people sort through all the information out there,” Dr. Basta said. “There are so many headlines, so many press releases. It's hard to keep track of all the different vaccines in the pipeline and to know how much progress is being made. Many people from around the world have told us they find it very helpful.”

Dr. Basta received funding from McGill for the project. As the principal investigator, she has enlisted the help of another McGill professor, as well as students, postdocs, and trainees.

Though the wait for a COVID-19 vaccine seemed long as the pandemic dragged on through most of 2020, Dr. Basta said, “This is an unprecedented speed of development in the vaccine

world. It's been less than a year since the virus sequence was identified.”

Even as a young girl, she was interested in epidemiology. In her admissions interview at Shady Side Academy, the 13-year-old was asked her favorite kind of book. She said medical murder mysteries – specifically, *Outbreak* by Robin Cook. While

visiting the library to learn about the people who study diseases moving through populations, she discovered the word epidemiologist and knew that was what she wanted to do.

Dr. Basta, who received a B.A. in ecology and evolutionary biology at Princeton University, an M.Phil. in epidemiology at the University of Cambridge as a Gates-Cambridge Scholar, and a Ph.D. in epidemiology at the University of Washington, said Shady Side Academy laid a great foundation for her.

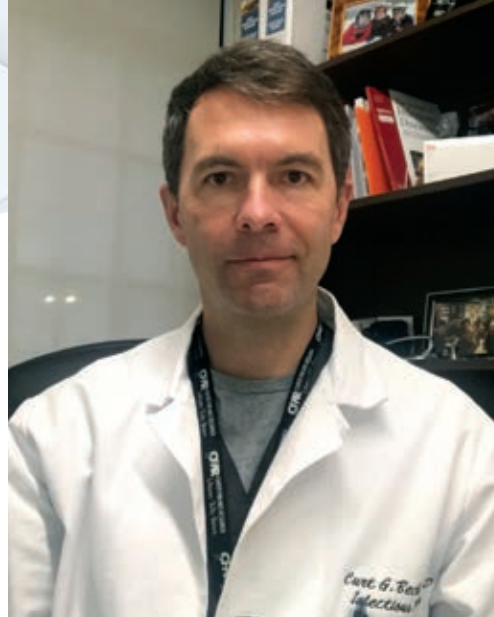
“The education I received at Shady Side was stellar. It set me up for a lifetime ability to generate a lot of enthusiasm for the type of work I am doing.”

These days, she is spreading that enthusiasm to others.



# Dr. Curt Beckwith '88

## FINDING TREATMENTS FOR COVID-19



As an infectious disease specialist, **Dr. Curt Beckwith '88** had worked on finding treatments for devastating viruses such as HIV and hepatitis C virus. But when COVID-19 patients started arriving at Miriam Hospital in Providence, R.I., in March, Dr. Beckwith had never seen anything like it.

“This blew everything else out of the water. The scale was so much larger, and we didn’t know how it spread through the community.”

Figuring out the best treatment was daunting, especially in the early weeks. “We really had no idea at the time what would work and what wouldn’t work,” said Dr. Beckwith, an associate professor of medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases at the Alpert Medical School of Brown University, which is affiliated with Miriam Hospital.

“We spent a lot of time looking at the data from China and Europe and trying to sort out what would be effective.”

Dr. Beckwith and his colleagues participated in a clinical trial for remdesivir at Miriam Hospital, one of many sites around the world sponsored by the manufacturer. The treatment now has FDA emergency use approval. “It’s not a cure or magic bullet, but it does show some potential benefit in terms of reducing the length of hospitalization for

patients. It’s a good option, but there is still much to learn about that medication and other treatments.”

Not only does he worry about COVID-19 patients, but he and other health care workers also have the extra stress of keeping themselves and their families safe. “There has been a lot of anxiety among health care workers. You have to keep your nose to the grindstone and get through it.”

He works on what is called a “warm unit,” an intensive care unit for COVID-19 patients. He and other health care workers on the floor wear N95 masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE). “Even putting on PPE is labor-intensive because if you don’t put it on right, the risk of getting the virus goes up.”



Dr. Beckwith also worries about infecting his wife and daughters. When he comes home from work, he showers immediately and washes his clothes.

But from a professional standpoint, it’s been rewarding as he worked to find treatments to minimize the risks of the virus. “As a disease, it’s fascinating. The pace of research has been unprecedented in terms of treatments, vaccine development, and looking at risk factors and disparities. Who’s getting it? Who’s most affected in different communities? How does the virus mutate and change when someone is being treated for COVID-19?”

“It’s been very stressful and scary, but it’s also been an incredible professional opportunity as far as tackling the unknowns. It’s been a career-defining event for me.”

**“As a disease, it’s fascinating. The pace of research has been unprecedented in terms of treatments, vaccine development, and looking at risk factors and disparities.”**





# Laura Shapira Karet '86

## MANAGING AN ESSENTIAL BUSINESS THROUGH A CRISIS

Overnight, sales at Giant Eagle stores doubled and **Laura Shapira Karet '86**, president and chief executive officer of Giant Eagle Inc., sprang into action.

As the pandemic hit in March, her top priority was safety, and she quickly instituted CDC guidelines for social distancing, mandatory mask-wearing and sanitation practices. As restaurants closed and more shoppers poured in, she pitched in at the stores. Some days, she was a cashier and other days she helped stock the shelves.

"It was all hands-on deck," she said. "I just jumped in where I was needed. In our business, it's the people that move products in the warehouses and ring the registers and stock the shelves. The opportunity to walk in those shoes was a blessing."

It's been a wild ride, but the pandemic has made Karet understand more than ever what it means to be an essential business. "Our business is taking care of people and feeding people. We've always had that as a top priority, but in the middle of a crisis, it really hit home."

One of the big challenges was keeping products on the shelves of the 214 stores – 481 if you count the GetGo gas station-convenience store chain. "The North American food chain was not designed to double overnight," Karet said.



In March, shoppers hoarding toilet paper, canned goods, yeast and other nonperishables also depleted the inventory early on. In the first four months of the pandemic, as people avoided restaurants, grocery sales doubled.

"If you had takeout breakfast every morning, and it suddenly closed, you are making breakfast and coffee at home," she said. "People are discovering cooking more."

Curbside pickup and home delivery services, a small but growing part of the business, took off as COVID-19 cases spread.

The supermarket chain has hired more than 20,000 new employees and continues to hire more people, as others have had to leave due to health risks and family situations.

"Everyone has to make their own choice," she said. To help retain employees, the chain has instituted strict safety protocols and offered incentives such as bonuses and providing meals.

The increased stress of being on the front line has been offset in part by the outpouring of support from the public. Customers regularly thank workers and even have handed them cards.



"I think the whole region came together so beautifully to support each other, and to the extent there was a silver lining to this crisis, that was it," said Karet. "We were proud to play a role in that."

# Maddie Taylor '14

## SUPPORTING LOCAL RESTAURANT AND HEALTH CARE WORKERS

Maddie Taylor '14 drove her white Suburu to restaurants all over the city, picking up stacks of takeout meals and promptly delivering them to weary frontline hospital staff.

The idea was simple: Pittsburgh restaurants were in need of hungry patrons, while health care workers were in need of a good meal. Why not raise money to help struggling restaurants while serving food to those taking care of COVID-19 patients?



In March, Maddie Taylor, her sister **Claire Taylor**, a current senior at Shady Side Academy, and Souki Eljamri, Maddie's friend, started

Feeding the Frontline PGH.

Maddie, a graduate of Penn State, and Eljamri, a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh, met during a Fulbright U.S. Student grant in Malaysia. Other Fulbright colleagues have started similar programs in other cities.

"Pittsburgh is such a foodie town," Maddie said. "I know everyone in my circle was sad they couldn't go to their favorite restaurant. This was a great way to put some cash flow into the restaurant economy and give delicious foods to health care workers."

Initially, they raised money through GoFundMe and Venmo, soliciting donations from the public. Maddie figured she would volunteer her time to the effort for a month or two. But as spring turned to summer and the pandemic dragged on, demand only grew. Feeding the Frontline PGH received funding from a national nonprofit called Off the Plate to provide meals to employees at hospitals as well as a methadone clinic and nonprofits serving black communities.

Restaurants took over the delivery process, coordinated by the young women. Participating restaurants included The Vandal in Lawrenceville, Bahn Mi & Ti in Lawrenceville, Cilantro & Ajo, a Venezuelan restaurant in the South Side, Square Cafe in East Liberty, and 9 Cafe in Wilkinsburg. By June, they were delivering about 1,500 meals a week to various organizations.

The Taylor sisters knew firsthand from their parents, both doctors, how important it was to help out during the pandemic. Their mother, **Dr. Sandy Sauereisen '84**, is the medical director of UPMC St. Margaret Lawrenceville Family Health Center; and their father, Dr. Mark Taylor, is an anesthesiologist. "Both my parents are front-line workers who worked full time through all of this. They've been very inspiring," said Maddie.

In August, Feed the Frontline PGH stopped operating as funding ran out and the three founders went back to school. Maddie, 24, has started a master's degree program in public health at John Hopkins University.

Looking back, she was happy to have done her part to help people during the pandemic. "I've had multiple restaurant owners tell us they would have gone under if it weren't for Feeding the Frontline."







“My teachers at Shady Side went above and beyond for me. I had so many teachers who wanted the best for me and were totally invested in me. I try to do the same for my students.”

## Rashaad Phillips '12

### TEACHING AND MENTORING STUDENTS VIRTUALLY

Every school day, **Rashaad Phillips '12** puts on his blue-light-blocking glasses to teach middle school students at The Lab School in Washington, D.C., from his living room in New York City.

It's not the way he envisioned starting his new job as dean of students and teacher at the private school for students with learning differences. But with teaching and learning primarily online, he has postponed his move to D.C.

Still, he works hard to connect to students he has never met in person. He plucks events from the headlines for an elective he teaches on current events and their relationship to identity. To maintain a balance, he alternates heavier issues such as the Black Lives Matter movement with lighter topics such as gender roles in the new *Mulan* movie and other Disney films.

Wednesdays are especially fulfilling as he forges social bonds among homebound students by running a community meeting. The 100 or so kids do group activities such as “guess the lyrics” or “guess the music video” or mindfulness exercises or dance steps. Students also break out into virtual hobby clubs such as cooking, foreign languages, and Dungeons and Dragons. In the afternoon, he leads the Students of Color affinity club, one of many clubs offered. Other students congregate virtually for the healthy masculinity group, anti-racist white group, adoption group and others.

As a Black educator, he believes it is important for students of color to see themselves reflected in their teachers and administrators at private schools. He hopes to develop the kind of bonds that he still has with his many teachers at Shady Side Academy, whom he still corresponds with regularly.



“My teachers at Shady Side went above and beyond for me,” he said. “I had so many teachers who wanted the best for me and were totally invested in me. I try to do the same for my students.”

Phillips knows virtual learning can be tough on some kids and that many have trouble concentrating without face-to-face interaction. He tries to balance the high expectations of the private school with empathy for all they are going through.

“The kids are dealing with a lot,” he said. “They can't see their friends anymore. They have to stay in the house with their parents.”

With the death of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and others, and the protests that followed, in addition to the ongoing pandemic, Phillips also feels the stress of 2020 acutely. “There's a lot I'm dealing with. But it's important that I am strong for my kids. We must give them comfort that we're there for them. We are their protectors.”

# Bahra McConnel Fisher '76

## TREATING COVID-19 PATIENTS IN THE ER

When COVID-19 patients started pouring into the emergency room of Kaiser Permanente Vallejo in Napa Solano, Calif., nurse **Bahra McConnel Fisher '76** was asked to meet with her supervisor, who gave her the option of transferring to another department to minimize her risk.

She was over 60 and a breast cancer survivor – two factors that increased her risk associated with the dreaded virus.

But Fisher loves being a frontline worker and has stayed on as the triage nurse for the overnight shift at the ER. After a patient is checked in, she takes their temperature, blood pressure and other vital signs.

Still, she feels the stress that has driven other health care professionals to take a leave of absence or early retirement. “It’s a scary disease and some people don’t take it seriously. At first, they were saying, ‘Oh, it’s only deadly for older people with preexisting conditions,’ but it’s not. We saw a 30-year-old who came in who just had a cough for two days, and then felt short of breath and passed away. There are a lot of people who come in bad shape that we can save, but it’s heartbreaking and it’s stressful.”

On a recent night, a sick COVID-19 patient was admitted, and Fisher stabilized her. Later in the night, a 69-year-old man who complained of shortness of breath died in his sleep. “I worked through my lunch break that night,” she said.

Part of what makes treating COVID-19 so frustrating is that it’s hard to detect initially because of the

wide range of symptoms. “If somebody’s coming in with a heart attack, they’re clutching their chest, they’ve got chest pain, and if somebody is coming with strep throat or a broken leg, you can see it. That’s what makes COVID so stressful. Some people come in with shortness of breath, others come in with a sore

throat, some people will just come in with a fever or abdominal pain.” So, at Kaiser Vallejo, everyone who is admitted to the emergency room gets tested for COVID-19.

Fortunately, she said, Kaiser Permanente has provided the staff with an adequate supply of N95 masks and other personal protection equipment, and only a handful of her coworkers have contracted COVID-19 and have recovered. But the dual stress of keeping her patients alive while keeping herself safe is always there.

She credits Shady Side Academy with giving her the drive to rise to a challenge and the ability to get along with all types of people. She said her tennis coach, English teacher Dick Gregory, pushed her to do more, urging her to run that extra lap when she was tired during practices. “He gave me the gumption to keep going. I have always had that drive.”

“We developed good interpersonal relationships, being on a team. That is why I have succeeded as a nurse. I am able to work with people during a pandemic. I can listen. I have the drive to keep going. I feel like I can make a difference.”



“We developed good interpersonal relationships, being on a team. That is why I have succeeded as a nurse. I am able to work with people during a pandemic.”



# Emily Modoono Sadler '97

## CARING FOR COVID-19 PATIENTS IN THE ICU

**Emily Modoono Sadler '97** spent the spring working in the COVID-19 intensive care unit (ICU) at Ahuja Medical Center a community hospital in Cleveland. In addition to medications and oxygen, the nurse would bring an iPad into the room. As she held the screen up, relatives could speak to the sickest COVID-19 patients, many of them unconscious, some on the verge of death.

She witnessed too many heartbreaking goodbyes.

Sadler worked in the ICU during the first wave of COVID-19 when there was little information on how to treat the virus. "We thought putting them on a ventilator would be the best thing so they could rest their lungs. But as we got more information on how the disease progressed, we found out that was not the best route. So, we tried our hardest not to put them on ventilators if we didn't have to."

Adding to the stress was the changing information on what personal protective equipment would keep health care workers safest. "It was very stressful. We didn't even know how to protect ourselves."



Sadler and others who worked on what was called the "COVID Corner" had to isolate themselves from the rest of the hospital and staff. They had access to a break room with donated food, and the hospital offered chair massages, meditation sessions, counseling and other services to help health care workers deal with relentless stress. Still, it could be hard to keep morale up within the confines of the high-risk bubble.

Visitors were banned from the hospital initially. The unit had two iPads, and relatives were given a time to call in via video chat.

With many patients sedated and ventilated, most couldn't talk. But sometimes, Sadler would see a tiny hint of recognition, like a spiked heart rate, after hearing the voice on the other line.

After her shift, she would go home to her husband and teenage son, stopping in the garage to take her scrubs off before going inside. "It was hard. We didn't know what we were bringing home to our family. We weren't hugging or coming in close contact. That was hard because we are a very affectionate family."

In June, as the first wave of COVID-19 subsided, Sadler heard about an opening on the labor and delivery floor at University Hospitals in Cleveland. It was a specialty she had hoped to work in since nursing school, and the new position would keep her in the same hospital system.



Pregnant women still must worry about contracting the virus – in fact, she said, they are slightly more susceptible – but she has not seen any cases on her new unit. "I went from an area of sadness to an area of joy."



# fall sportsbriefs





## FIELD HOCKEY – WPIAL CHAMPIONS

**Varsity record:** 12-2 | **Captains:** Annabel Kuhn, Cealy Fryncko

**Highlight:** The SSA field hockey team defeated Ellis, 2-1, to win its third consecutive WPIAL Championship. Shady Side made history by becoming the only WPIAL Class 1A field hockey team ever to advance to the PIAA semifinals, where it fell to Greenwood, 3-1. Senior **Annabel Kuhn**, juniors **Marnie McCormick** and **Cecelia Messner** and sophomore **Thea Conomikes** were named to the 2020 WPIAL All-Star First Team, while senior **Cealy Fryncko** and junior **Jenny Woodings** received Honorable Mention.

## BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

**Varsity record:** 7-4

**Captain:** Thompson Lau

**Highlight:** The boys cross country team finished sixth out of 25 teams at the WPIAL Class 1A Championships. Senior **Adam Lauer** was SSA's top finisher, placing 10th overall out of 184 runners with a time of 17:00 to qualify for the PIAA Championships, where he placed 21st. Lauer was named to the Alle-Kiski All-Star first team, while junior **Thompson Lau** was named to the second team.

## GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

**Varsity record:** 7-3

**Captain:** Katie Sparvero

**Highlight:** The girls cross country team finished sixth out of 22 teams at the WPIAL Championships. Freshman **Chelsea Hartman** was SSA's top finisher, placing fourth overall out of 170 runners with a time of 20:07 to qualify for the PIAA Championships, where she finished 14th. Hartman was named to the Alle-Kiski All-Star first team.

## FOOTBALL

**Varsity record:** 2-4

**Captains:** Josh Castro, Watts Coulter, Jack Keating, Joe Mele

**Highlight:** After a challenging start, the football team refocused to win two of its last three games, including the season finale against Valley, 28-21. Ten players were named to the all-conference teams, some at two positions: seniors **Joe Mele** (G/ILB), **Josh Castro** (QB/P) and **Joe Bellinotti** earned first-team honors; Bellinotti (WR), sophomore **Isaiah Grier** (WR), senior **Watts Coulter** (G), senior **Jack Keating** (C), sophomore **Nate Ewell** (DE), junior **Andy**

**Marous** (DT), senior **Ari Gutstein** (OLB) and senior **Liam Mendham** (K) earned second-team honors; and Ewell (OT), Marous (OT) and Grier (DB) received honorable mention.

## BOYS GOLF

**Varsity record:** 14-3

**Captains:** Adam Lauer, Charlie Troutman, Garrett Fuhrer, Ryan McLaughlin

**Highlight:** The boys golf team won its team semifinal to advance to the WPIAL Class 3A Team Championship, where it finished fourth. Seniors **Charlie Troutman**, **Garrett Fuhrer** and **Adam Lauer** and junior **Wes Warden** qualified for the WPIAL Individual Championship. Lauer finished second at WPIALs to advance to the PIAA Championship, where he tied for sixth.

## GIRLS GOLF

**Varsity record:** 5-6

**Captains:** Ishika Arora, Stephanie Chen, Qingqing Zhao

**Highlight:** Sophomores **Neely Nicholson** and **Delaney Mulderig** were among 35 golfers who qualified to advance out of sectional qualifiers to compete in the WPIAL 3A Individual Championship.

## BOYS SOCCER

**Varsity record:** 14-3

**Captain:** Caleb Massie

**Highlight:** The boys soccer team won the section title and earned the No. 1 seed in the WPIAL Class 2A Championship. SSA defeated Hopewell, Ambridge and Elizabeth Forward en route to the finals, where they fell to Deer Lakes, 2-1, in a thrilling overtime shootout to finishing the season as the WPIAL runner-up. Seniors **Zach Conti** and **Caleb Massie** and juniors **Joe Anania** and **Sam Farner** were named All-WPIAL, and Farner was also named All-State.

## GIRLS SOCCER

**Varsity record:** 12-1

**Captains:** Emory Anderson, Eve Mango, Melissa Riggins

**Highlight:** The girls soccer team was undefeated in the regular season, winning the section title and earning the No. 2 seed in the WPIAL Class 2A Championship. SSA defeated Keystone Oaks and Brownsville before falling to No. 3 North Catholic, 2-1, in overtime in the WPIAL semifinals. Seniors **Emory Anderson** and **Melissa Riggins** and junior **Gabby Hill-Junke** were named All-WPIAL.

## GIRLS TENNIS

**Varsity record:** 9-2

**Captains:** Avery Benko, Renee Long, Jasmine Sarkaria

**Highlight:** The girls tennis team advanced to the quarterfinals of the WPIAL Class 3A Team Championship before falling to Latrobe, 4-1. Freshman **Elana Sobol** and sophomore **Nichole Poltinnikov** competed in the first round of the WPIAL Singles Championship, while the duos of Sobol and freshman **Rachel Nath**, and Long and junior **Maya Leyzarovich**, competed in the first round of the WPIAL Doubles Championship.







## Four Seniors Sign With NCAA College Athletics Programs

Four SSA seniors signed letters committing to college athletics programs on Nov. 11, the first day of the NCAA signing period. The signing ceremony and celebration was held outdoors at Michael J. Farrell Stadium entrance plaza. The signees, who were joined by their coaches, college counselors, families and friends, included:

1. **Adam Lauer** – Golf, Davidson College (NCAA Division I)
2. **Madison Recker** – Lacrosse, Rhodes College (NCAA Division III)
3. **Melissa Riggins** – Track and Soccer, Georgetown University (NCAA Division I)
4. **Nyla Rozier** – Basketball, St. Francis University (NCAA Division I)





# fall alumni events

## ALUMNI EVENTS GO VIRTUAL

While in-person events had to be postponed due to COVID-19, the Shady Side Academy Alumni & Development Office has maintained a virtual event schedule, allowing alumni to be “together apart.” Virtual events have enabled alumni across the globe to join remotely and stay connected to their alma mater and each other.

On Aug. 19, SSA Director of College Counseling **Lauren (Droz) Lieberman '98** led the discussion, “College Admission 2020: A Changing Landscape.” Alumni tuned in to learn about college admissions during these unique times. On Sept. 9, a panel of Academy leaders reflected on Shady Side’s decision to return to bricks and mortar instruction for the fall, shared observations about the start of school, and gave updates on the status of the Academy. Panelists included President **Bart Griffith '93**, Chief Financial and Operations Officer **Katharine Fredriksen**, Director of Equity, Inclusion & Community Relations **Lillian Grate**, Middle School Head **Amy Nixon** and Country Day School Nurse **Lisa Tweardy**.

“Lunch Bytes,” a lunchtime webinar series highlighting SSA’s newest academic facility, the Glimcher Tech & Design Hub, were held Oct. 8 and Nov. 19. Director of the Glimcher Tech & Design Hub **Jesse Robinson** virtually toured alumni around the innovative space and demonstrated how it is used daily by Shady Side students. The transformative space dedicated to creativity, innovation, technology and design takes STEAM education to a whole new level.

Finally, to celebrate the news of his retirement, a virtual interview with beloved Athletic Director **Gene Deal**, moderated by Academy President **Bart Griffith '93**, was held Dec. 16. A large group of alumni student-athletes tuned in to wish Deal the best for the future.

Stay tuned as the Alumni & Development Office continues virtual events in the spring. If you have any questions or ideas for an event, please contact Manager of Alumni Programming and Special Events **Lisa Page** at [lp@shadysideacademy.org](mailto:lp@shadysideacademy.org).



WHAT ARE OUR DEFINING MOMENTS?

equitable  
strong  
honest  
healthy  
respectful  
ethical  
engaging  
kind  
thoughtful  
mindful  
loyal  
inclusive  
safe  
diverse  
generous  
responsible  
thankful  
inspiring  
resilient

## Did you know that February is Matching Gifts Month?

This means that you can double or even triple the impact of your support by participating in the Corporate Matching Gifts Program.

*For more information, or to find out if your business participates, visit [shadysideacademy.org/support/ways-to-give](https://shadysideacademy.org/support/ways-to-give)*





# Hillman Series 2021 Update

BY CHRISTA BURNEFF, HILLMAN CENTER ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



The dedicated team at the Hillman Center for Performing Arts remains committed to bringing arts and music back to the Shady Side Academy and Pittsburgh communities safely. In fall 2020, the Hillman Center announced the 15th season of its Hillman Performing Arts Series, featuring an incredible lineup of four family-friendly musical artists, with all shows scheduled from March through May 2021 in the hopes of being able to gather safely by that time. The lineup includes: "The American Songster," folk artist Dom Flemons; Americana duo The Honey Dewdrops; Latin-American family musician Sonia de los Santos; and Steinway pianist and composer Robin Spielberg.

By magazine press time in February, the possibility of holding indoor concerts in March and April seemed increasingly unlikely

given the state's COVID-19 public health metrics and gathering limits. And, given Pittsburgh's wildly variable spring weather, simply moving the concerts outdoors did not make sense. And so, the team at the Hillman is pivoting its plans yet again. Discussions are ongoing with the four booked artists on a variety of alternate possibilities, including moving the shows to the warmer months of May and June so that some or all of the concerts can be held outdoors with safe, socially distant seating for families.

Stay tuned for updates on the 2021 Hillman Series via email and on the Hillman Center website at [www.thehillman.org](http://www.thehillman.org). For questions, contact Hillman Center Artistic Director **Christa Burneff** at [cburneff@shadysideacademy.org](mailto:cburneff@shadysideacademy.org).

## SHADY SIDE PARTNERS WITH UPenn on The Social Innovators Program

Shady Side Academy is partnering with the University of Pennsylvania and Schoolyard Ventures, an organization that develops university-level, real-world learning opportunities for ambitious high school students, to offer The Social Innovators Program for Senior School students. The 12-week virtual program allows students to learn about social entrepreneurship and experience it first-hand, while earning a Certificate in Social Entrepreneurship from Penn. Shady Side is the only school in Pittsburgh invited to participate in this unique initiative.

During the program, students learn how to launch ventures of their own that create value and a positive impact on society. Students learn in small online classes and through engaging interviews and case studies with young entrepreneurs, with personalized guidance and support along the way. Because students choose their own projects, each student's experience in the program is unique.

The program runs from February 22 to May 23, 2021, with classes meeting virtually one evening per week. At the end of the program, students will present their work and participate in a virtual graduation.

"Across the Academy, we are living into our mission, challenging students to think expansively, act ethically, and lead responsibly – and increasingly, as evidenced by our participation in this exciting partnership with UPenn, we are doing so at the intersection of technology, entrepreneurship, and societal need," said President **Bart Griffith '93**.

Learn more about the program at [www.schoolyardventures.com/ssa](http://www.schoolyardventures.com/ssa).





# classnotes

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

## 1953

**Ned Boshell** writes: "The COVID-19 crisis caused us to yet again postpone our semi-annual visit to the Rolling Rock Club and the Pittsburgh area. We are hoping to return and visit next spring. In the meantime, reading a book a week, many of them historical. Mr. Abercrombie would love it! My 'post-polio' problems have greatly reduced my mobility, but I am still at least (mostly) mentally active."

## 1961

**Ole Messelt Drangsholt** writes: "Hopefully the coronavirus situation will improve to make it possible for my wife and myself to attend my 60th class reunion at SSA. I try to keep in good shape with bird hunting in the mountains, trout fishing and cross-country skiing. I also follow the Steelers on ESPN. I am grateful for all the news that I receive from *Shady Side Academy Magazine*."

## 1966

**John Harrison** writes: "Leslie and I have just returned from Atlanta where I've been directing episodes for the second season of *Creepshow*, the series on Shudder TV and AMC. It has lots of ghoulish fun. I am somewhat going back to my roots, as I was George Romero's assistant director on the Warner Bros movie back in the 80s. I also wrote and directed episodes of his *Tales From The Darkside* television series, and directed the *Tales From the Darkside* movie for Paramount Films. I'm also writing a horror podcast for the Universal Music Group which stars talent from their many record labels. So, this senior citizen is writing horror stories starring 20-something rappers and rockers. LOL! The podcast will drop sometime in

2021. Social distancing is not too difficult here in New Hampshire, although we've made a few road trips to visit friends nearby. Fortunately, we have beautiful surroundings to alleviate the isolation."

## 1968

**Joe Tritschler** writes: "I enjoyed catching up with the class at the reunion. Now, with too much time on our hands, we're revisiting our past and wondering if we've accomplished anything, and what SSA might have had to do with it. There are obvious changes, some which are positive and some which are negative. Coming as a shy kid from a steel mill town, my early memories of Shady Side were somewhat overwhelming. My parents sent me because opportunity lacked for quality education in Beaver Falls. Then a few months into the school year, while we were in the woods during eighth grade science class, JFK was assassinated. When I was 10, I met and shook hands with him in Beaver Falls. Probably nothing to him, but very impressionable to me. That's when the world started changing, so SSA was where I started to grow old. Our protected childhoods, where things could be classified as black or white, was ending. At SSA, we were still pretty isolated, and I am sure that I lived in my own little world. I had sports in which I could remove myself from the world, much like I do in poetry and walks in the woods now. The education was great, except I really lacked the preparedness to fully benefit. The world still grew grayer and grayer, and in college all hell broke loose. Have we made things better? We certainly have been awakened. I hope that the overall change has been positive. I do see hope in my children but maybe that's optimism. My life has been great but honestly with my

attitude, it would have to be terrible for me to think otherwise. Our class is full of great people but I am not sure that I really met the hearts of most of you. Yet, indirectly, you have all helped me grow. We were all kids, and sure we had our moments, but all of you cared and we lived in a positive, supportive world. Thanks."

**Jim Piper** writes: "I trust that everyone is taking care in these interesting times that were supposed to be our golden years. I am still trying to figure out where things went wrong. Not exactly as we were promised if we worked hard and stayed out of trouble. Too many school pranks, I guess. I want to thank Gregory and Britain for what they taught me about writing. Did anybody else take Britain's theme a night class? If I remember correctly, it was a challenge as we had to write a two-page theme every night on a topic that he set. He cut us no slack in reviewing our master pieces. But it did teach me how to approach a topic and organize my thoughts in a way that made sense, well, at least to me. Stay safe."

## 1969

**Eric R. Allon** was selected to the 2020 Edition of Massachusetts Super Lawyers, his 15th consecutive year of recognition. Each year, no more than 5% of the lawyers in Massachusetts receive this honor. Allon is a commercial real estate partner at Bernkopf Goodman LLP in Boston.

**George (Jeff) Steigerwalt**, who resides outside of Pittsburgh, was elected as Pennsylvania's 17th Congressional District delegate to the 2020 Republican National Convention in Jacksonville, Fla., which he attended in August. Previously, he was elected to the 2016 convention in Cleveland representing what was then





## 1969

**Bill Oehlschlager** shares: "My wife, Joanne, and I have been living in Butler, Pa., for the past 11 years, where I have been serving as the executive director of Lutheran Lay Renewal of America. Our ministry has now gone international, with many events in Uganda and Rwanda. The global pandemic has caused recent trips to be postponed, but I'm looking forward to traveling back to Africa as soon as Americans are allowed back in these countries." Above: Bill and Pastor Peter Maganda with the congregation of Buzibirira Lutheran Church, Uganda.

PA's 12th Congressional District, and he was a guest at the 2012 convention in Tampa. Jeff and his wife, Gwen, have been involved in Republican politics for many years. In 2020, they received the B. Kenneth Simon Award for significant contribution and service to the Republican Committee of Allegheny County and they also were recipients of the 2015 and 2019 Eagle Forum Freedom Award. In 2019, Jeff and Gwen sold Skyline Exhibits, their business of 34 years, to a private firm in Chicago. The couple recently celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary, and have two married sons and two grandchildren.

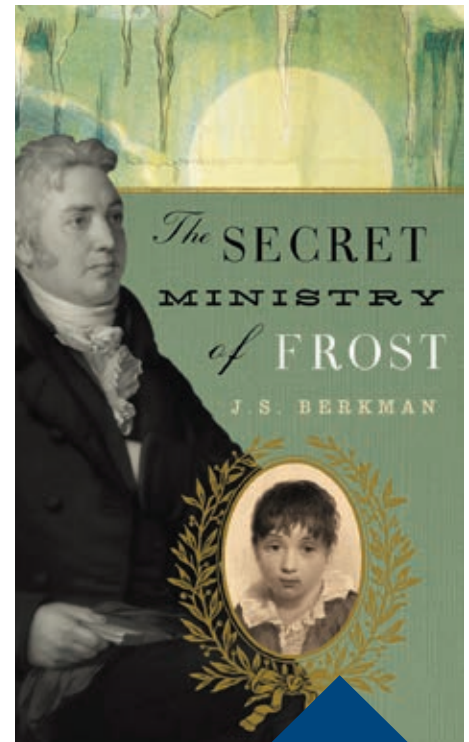
## 1970

**Chris Frantz**, drummer of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame band Talking Heads and Tom Tom Club, recently published *Remain in Love*, a memoir about the beginnings of Talking Heads and life on tour. A July 15 article in the *Pittsburgh CityPaper* describes the book as "a love letter: To his parents, for allowing him to pursue his dreams, first of becoming an artist and then a musician. To his teachers, especially David Miller at Shady Side

Academy, who 'opened my eyes to the idea that anyone can be an artist.'" In an interview with the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, Frantz said, "You know, when I was thinking of doing this, I think a lot of people assumed I would use a ghost writer, but my choice was to do it myself because I had a very good Shady Side Academy education!"

## 1976

**Romy Albin** shared: "I left the Department of Justice in early 2017, after more than 10 years as an assistant U.S. attorney, handling federal criminal trial and appellate litigation. I became a law professor and teach evidence, criminal law, trial advocacy and criminal procedure. My research focuses on victim access to the criminal justice system. I recently had an article published in the *University of Kansas Law Review* titled "Appropriating Women's Thoughts: The Admissibility of Sexual Fantasies and Dreams Under the Consent Exception to Rape Shield Laws." My husband and I still live in Birmingham, where he is a professor of child neurology at the University of Alabama



## 1973

**James Berkman** writes: "Since March, I've been sheltering at our place in Vermont, surrounded by 9,500 acres of state forest, with various family members joining us for weeks at a time (including our grandkids!). All of this would be idyllic, if not for so much suffering outside of our bubble (pandemic, economic, racial). I've used the time to read up on racial injustice, to row in my scull with the loons, and to publish my second novel, an historical family drama about the romantic poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Stay safe and healthy!"

at Birmingham School of Medicine. Our children are grown. Our daughter lives and works in Singapore and our son is in graduate school."

**Bahra (McConnell) Fisher** writes: "I am still an ER trauma nurse. Living in Northern California, we dodged a bullet with the fires. My oldest son, Phillip, is about to be a father any day. She will be my first grandchild! My middle son, Max, moved home, and my daughter, Emily, is in medical school. I hope everyone is doing well!" (*Read more about Bahra on page 26.*)

**Bob Risoleo** writes: “On Jan. 1, 2021, I will become of counsel with Sullivan & Cromwell LLP after a wonderful 35-year career, including 29 years as a partner, and two years as managing partner of the Washington, D.C., office. Although I will no longer be an active partner, I do not plan to ‘retire’ anytime soon. I am excited as I begin to seek new challenges and explore new opportunities in this new phase of my career. Lucretia and I expect to remain in northwest Washington, D.C. (at least for now!). Our four children are spread out from Massachusetts to California. We are fortunate that everyone is healthy and thriving despite the pandemic.”

**Andrew Rosencrans** reports: “I am now a grandfather. My granddaughter, Ainsley, was born on Sept. 29, 2019, and is now one year old. My oldest daughter, Anne, and her husband, Jared, are the proud parents. The only downside is that they reside in Little Rock, Ark., while I remain a resident of northern Illinois. Thanks to the pandemic, my opportunities to see them in person have been very limited, but I was able to sneak in a visit in mid-July. I am also very happy to report that I recently became engaged to a woman named Julie. The executive summary is that she makes me believe in the concept of a soul mate. We have not yet set a wedding date. Our children (my three; her two) are a bit scattered geographically, and we would like to wait until COVID travel restrictions have been lifted. Professionally, I remain the chaplain of the Lake Forest Place retirement community in Lake Forest, Ill. COVID has necessitated some interesting modifications to my job description.”

**Mark Baughman** shares: “Looking at my SSA classmates, I can’t help but think of that George Gobel line, ‘Do you ever get the feeling all the world’s a tuxedo and you’re a pair of brown shoes?’ Well, here’s the best polish I can put on those shoes. Laura and I recently celebrated our 37th anniversary locked down in a house we just built on the Chesapeake Bay. If you’re going to be in quarantine, this is the place to do it. My architecture firm is still standing despite my leadership and the virus, though I’m glad I don’t have to commute back and forth between Washington, D.C., and San



## 1978

**Marc Lhormer** writes: “I was thrilled to be back in Pittsburgh in fall 2019 filming the adaptation of the beautiful coming-of-age story, *Dear Zoe*. One scene was actually filmed at the Junior School which really took me back. My wife, Brenda, and I, along with our creative partners, have spent all of 2020 on post-production, as the schedule extended out greatly due to the pandemic. Fingers crossed we’ll be able to share the film with the world in 2021 and beyond.” Above: Lhormer and actor Theo Rossi, who plays Nick DeNunzio, on the set of *Dear Zoe*.

Francisco every week – at least for now. (www.skbarb.com) I’ve had a second and third wind as a musician and composer, and people who should know better keep egging me on. Presently I’m working on the stage play for my fourth musical/rock opera which I expect will be on a stage somewhere in summer 2021 (www.workingtheoryband.com). I’m still not sure what I want to do when I grow up. But I’m starting to think that day may never come so maybe there’s no pressure to decide right this minute. Peace and love, everybody. Really. The world needs a lot more of both.”

**Patty (Van Horn) Florin** writes: “Hello, everybody. I have been living in Paris, France, since 1988. I am in early retirement from my corporate finance/IT activities, and am working on energy transition projects with my husband, and studying musical harmony and composition. We had a great summer on a yacht on the Cote d’Azur and had been planning some new adventures in the wine country and Brittany, but I’m afraid we are about to be ‘locked down’ again. Our daughter is a lawyer in Canada, specializing in intellectual property. No grandchildren yet, but a horse and a new puppy in Canada.”

**Kathy (Walker) Laramie** shares: “I am still residing in St. Louis, Mo., on a horse farm with my husband, Russ. We built a second house on the property for our daughter, Amy, and her husband and two children. In exchange, they help out with a lot of the farm work! Our other daughter, Julie, lives with her husband, Kevin, and four children in Wisconsin, with our latest grandchild born in August. I am still an avid horseback rider and belong to a local fox hunting club. My husband is a car fanatic and is currently building a DF Goblin, which is a fun kit autocross race car. I was recently promoted to senior manager of Boeing Structures Technology, a branch of Boeing Research and Technology. I hope to continue working there for several more years before retiring.”

**Mike Vogan** writes: “I resigned from Easterseals and landed a position as a teacher at a small school for children with special needs. Lisa and I also bought a house in the mountains of New Hampshire. We are loving New England and getting ready for the first snow this weekend. Lisa is still working for Easterseals as a nurse case manager. Hopefully we will be able to see our children this holiday season.”



**Bill Knepper** writes: "I am still working outside of the socially respectful box of my much more esteemed and responsible fellow classmates. Still no wife, no kids, no grandkids, no awards, no educational accomplishments and, more importantly, no assorted baggage to brag or commiserate about. LOL! But I would like to share with you Knepper's 2020 Corona Tour, as I like to call it. In November 2019, I sailed around Florida, from Annapolis to Key West, and around Cape Hatteras. I also attended the NASCAR championship. In December 2019, I was back in Key West after an overnight detour in Charlotte, N.C., to visit with **Stacy Anderson**. I celebrated New Year's in Key West, and sailed to Marquesas and Dry Tortuga's. In February 2020, I sailed to Cape Sable/Everglades, 10,000 Islands, Anclote and Cedar Keys on Florida's west coast, then through Pascagoula, Biloxi and

to Gulfport, Miss. I drove to New Orleans to celebrate Mardi Gras. In March 2020, the lockdown hit and I drove from Key West to Pittsburgh, 18.5 hours straight. In May, I was able to catch a flight to Key West to retrieve my girl. In June, I drove 4,500 miles in 10 days for my aunt's funeral. I visited Big Sky, Yellowstone and Mount Rushmore. This has been a crazy year with COVID-19. Thankfully, I am still COVID-free. Unfortunately, no Bahamas this winter due to this mess. Cheers!"

## 1980

Attorney **Jeffrey L. Pollock**, a solo legal practitioner in Squirrel Hill since 1987, was appointed to serve as a member of the board of directors for Neighborhood Legal Services (NLS), which sets the policy under which NLS operates. Its members include representatives of client and community organizations who help

identify the legal needs of low-income individuals and families; attorneys who understand how those needs can be met under the law; and representatives of county bar associations who foster the important role of pro bono attorneys. Jeff also practices mediation and was one of three co-creators of the Collaborative Law Association of Southwestern Pennsylvania (CLASP). He previously served as chair of the Allegheny County Bar Association's Center for Volunteer Legal Resources and, during parts of five decades, has been regularly contributing pro bono legal services primarily in the area of family law.

**Andrew D. Shenkan** was recently promoted to vice president and general manager of WLEX-TV, the NBC affiliate in Lexington, Ky. WLEX-TV is owned and operated by the EW Scripps Company.



## 1982

**Mark Wilkins** writes: "I entered the Middle School as an eighth grader in the fall of 1977, and was a sophomore in 1979 when Leslie Bodnarchuk (pictured above) started her teaching career. I was interested in pottery, but had no experience. She taught me from scratch and, largely because of her, I kept at it throughout the high school (and received an art award at graduation in 1982). When my daughter entered the Middle School in 2015, I was thrilled to learn that Leslie was not only still teaching at SSA, but had moved to the Middle School. My daughter very much enjoyed her studio art activity period during her three years at the Middle School."



## 1983

**William Vodrey** was elected a judge of the Cuyahoga County Court of Common Pleas in November. It is the greater Cleveland countywide trial court, handling felonies up to and including death penalty cases, and civil cases over \$15,000. William's friends and classmates **George Childs** (Pittsburgh, Pa.), **Steve Lasday** (Sarasota, Fla.), **Neil Sandson** (Timonium, Md.), **Dan Schachter** (Brooklyn, N.Y.) and **Rev. Gary Taylor** (New Orleans, La.) showed their true colors during the campaign!"



1983

**Ann Kim** (writing as A. H. Kim) published her debut novel, *A Good Family*, in July 2020. It's about a glamorous big pharma exec who pleads guilty in a white-collar case and gets sent to Alderson Women's Prison. *Publishers Weekly* raved: "This addictive, over-the-top dramedy would make for a great television series." Ann credits her Senior School English teacher Angela (Rumble) Irvine for sparking her interest in creative writing – an interest that lay dormant for 30 years, but better late than never. Learn more about Ann and her book at [www.ahkim.net](http://www.ahkim.net)

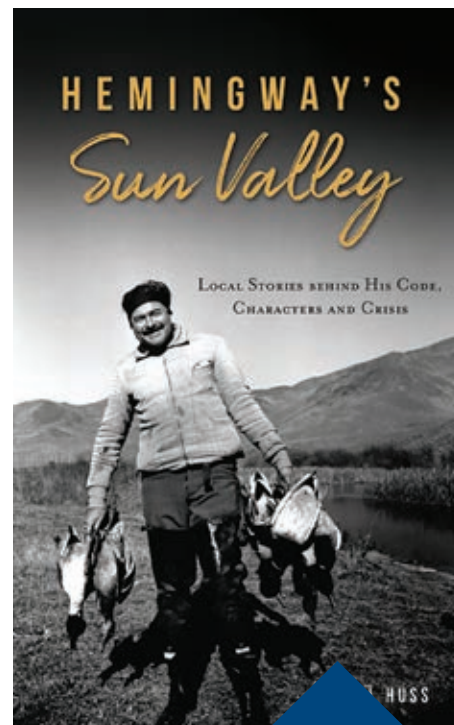
1986

**Laura (Shapira) Karet**, CEO of Giant Eagle Inc., was featured in a Nov. 5 *Pittsburgh Business Times* article, sharing how the family-owned company navigated major disruptions in the supply chain and customer needs that changed overnight when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. (Read more about Karet on page 23.)



1988

**Timothy Isaly** writes: "I have a celebration to share – Early College High School (ECHS, est. 2005) in the Carrollton Farmers Branch Independent School District received the National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence award for exemplary high academic performance (twice in six years). Every year the school graduates more than 80% of its seniors with both the high school and the associate's degree diploma. Dallas College - Brookhaven campus is the higher education institution partner. [earlycollege.cfbisd.edu](http://earlycollege.cfbisd.edu) @ECHSinCFBISD #ECHSworkethic." Timothy is the principal of ECHS in Farmers Branch, Texas.



1989

**Phil Huss** writes: "I am excited to announce that my book, *Hemingway's Sun Valley: Local Stories Behind His Code, Characters and Crisis*, was released on July 20, 2020. After I graduated from SSA, I went on to Amherst College (B.A., English, 1993) and Boston College (M.A., English, 1997). I have taught English in independent schools for 25 years – 20 of those years at Sun Valley Community School." In the book, Huss delves into previously unpublished stories about Hemingway's adventures in Idaho, with each chapter focusing on one principle of the author's Heroic Code, interweaving how both local stories and passages in the luminary's works embody each principle.





1991

**David Mallin** attained tenure as an associate professor at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Va., where he designed and leads a program in cinema and television production.

1989

**Joel Rubin**, who served as the director of Jewish outreach for Sen. Bernie Sanders' 2020 presidential campaign, was appointed executive director of the American Jewish Congress in October 2020. Rubin, who is also the vice mayor of Chevy Chase, Md., previously served as the U.S. State Department's chief liaison to the House of Representatives and as a career officer in the State Department Bureau of Political-Military affairs and Near-Eastern Affairs during the George W. Bush administration.

1993

The U.S. Senate voted in September to confirm **Christy Wiegand**, an assistant U.S. attorney based in Pittsburgh, as a judge on the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania.

**Alison Fragale**, an associate professor at the UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School, was featured in *Authority Magazine* in September 2020. She shared the biggest family-related challenges she faces as a woman business leader during this pandemic, and what she's done to address those challenges.

1996

In November 2020, *U.S. News & World Report* Editor and Chief Content Officer **Kim Castro** interviewed vaccine expert and researcher Dr. Peter Hotez as part of



1998

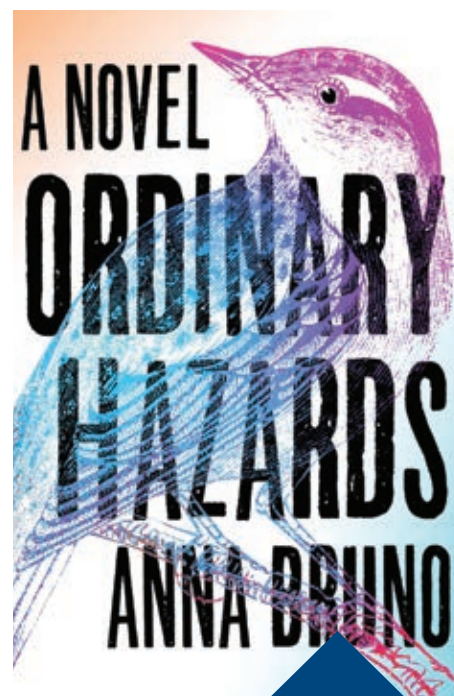
On June 19 (Juneteenth), **Darian Iverson** married Kimberly Holmes-Iverson and "jumped the broom" on their porch, which was a personalized detail of their virtual civil marriage ceremony.

the company's webinar series, *Healthcare of Tomorrow*. Hotez shared the latest vaccine news from Moderna, and what we must do to keep our loved ones safe during the holidays.

1997

**Toby Lynch** was featured as part of the US Squash website's *Squash Players Serve* series, which spotlights squash players doing their part to help during the COVID-19 pandemic. Toby, who played squash at SSA and in college at Hobart, is an emergency medicine critical physician who has been working with COVID-19 patients in emergency rooms and intensive care units in the Washington University of St. Louis medical system in Missouri.

**Shivdev Rao**, UPMC cardiologist and co-founder and CEO of Abridge, launched the mobile app Abridge – Record Your Health in October 2020. The free app allows patients to record conversations with their doctors and uses machine learning to create a transcript of the appointment,



2000

**Anna Bruno** published her debut novel, *Ordinary Hazards*, and was featured in a Pittsburgh Arts & Lectures virtual interview in August 2020. Named a Best Debut Novel of 2020 by *Library Journal*, *Ordinary Hazards* is one woman's epic journey back to a life worth living. Anna is a writer and teacher at the University of Iowa's Tippie College of Business.

pulling out key parts such as tests the patient should have done and medications prescribed. The app was featured in an Oct. 7 *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* article.

2001

**Johanna Schwartz Miralles** was recently sworn into the Bordeaux Bar and practices as an attorney in France. She would love to hear from SSA alumni in connection with their business or travels abroad.

2004

**Benjamin Williams** completed his orthopaedic residency at the University of Minnesota in June 2020 and began a one-year fellowship in foot and ankle orthopaedics at the Hospital for Special Surgery in New York City this past fall. Following the fellowship, he will start his

first “real job” at an academic medical center. He completed medical school at the University of Michigan in 2015.

## 2009

**Evan James Frye** writes: “In addition to celebrating our fifth year of operations at Silver Horse Coffee in Donegal, Pa., we recently founded Standing Wave Coffee Roaster, a sustainably minded coffee roastery in Pittsburgh, Pa., that is dedicated to watershed conservation in the Laurel Highlands region.”



## 2008

**Emily (Harmon) Weimer** and her husband, Daniel, welcomed Christian Campbell Weimer in September. Christian joins his older brother, Andrew, who recently turned 2. The family’s home faces the Junior School, and Andrew likes to watch the children play from his front steps. He has been intrigued by the hay bales which have appeared at various spots on campus and often points them out on walks around the neighborhood.



## 2007

**Sarah (Schiavoni) Catmur** and her husband, John, welcomed Amelia Rose Catmur on Aug. 20, 2020.



## 2009

**Brooke (Gladstone) Curaudeau** and husband, Alex, welcomed a daughter, Sophie, on Sept. 21, 2020.



## 2011

**Ann (Tumolo) Bedford** married Hunter Bedford on Aug. 22, 2020, at St. Paul Cathedral in Pittsburgh.



**Elizabeth Giel**, a pharmacy manager at CVS Health in New York City, was recently awarded the CVS Health Paragon Award for her hard work and leadership. The CVS Health Paragon Award recognizes the best-of-the-best among CVS Health colleagues who embody the core values of the company and who deliver direct care to patients and customers. It is the highest employee recognition given by CVS Health.

## 2014

**Jane Sheerer** ran six marathons in six days in August 2020, raising \$13,875 for multiple sclerosis (MS) research. She was inspired to run in honor of her sister, **Madi Sheerer '11**, who was diagnosed with MS at the age of 24. Originally, Jane was supposed to be part of the annual "MS Run the US" relay, a 19-person relay, where she would run 162 miles across Nebraska in six days. The COVID-19 pandemic canceled that run, so instead she ran as part of the MS Run the US virtual 3,260-mile relay team. Jane is a communications coordinator for P3R in Pittsburgh.

## 2016

**Phoebe Thompson** graduated from Ponom College in 2020 and was awarded the Downing Scholarship to study at the University of Cambridge, where she plans to get a master's degree in archaeological science and expand on her thesis. Thompson hopes to eventually earn a Ph.D. in archaeology.

**Doc Szlachetka** was named to the Academic All-Southern Conference Team while playing lacrosse for the U.S. Air Force Academy. Doc was also awarded the team's Pace Weber Memorial Award by vote of his teammates.

## 2017

**Clayton Krol**, who plays lacrosse at High Point University, earned Academic All-Southern Conference honors in 2020.

**Zac Coughlin** showcased products from his business, Zac's Sweet Shop, (zacssweetshop.com) and spoke about his experiences as an entrepreneur on

#BlackBlackFriday on Facebook Live in September 2020.

**Katie James** won her second consecutive Isaly's Western Pennsylvania Golf Association Women's Amateur in July 2020 at Green Oaks Country Club in Verona, Pa. She is currently a junior at Southern Methodist University.

**Chris Woodings** graduated from the U.S. Marine Corps Officer Candidate School in Quantico, Va.

## 2018

**Rebecca Huss** writes: "I'm now in my junior year of college at Hobart and William Smith Colleges. I was published recently as co-author in an academic journal for chemistry research that I was doing with one of the professors, Elana Stennett. The research was published in the online copy of the journal and will be in the printed edition this January. The academic journal, *Separation and Purification Technology*, will feature our article *The Influence of Ion Identity and Ionic Strength on Membrane Biofouling of a Binary Protein Solution*."



## 2014

**Amanda (Murphy) Hartsock** married John Hartsock in September 2019 at The Hyatt Regency in Lake Tahoe. The bridal party included **Jenna Wallace**, **Cassie Dickson**, **Madison Mordoh** and the groom's sister, Lily Hartsock.

**Shady Side Academy  
and your classmates  
want to hear from you!  
Tell us what's happening  
in your life!**

Submit your Class Note via email to  
[classnotes@shadysideacademy.org](mailto:classnotes@shadysideacademy.org).

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

## MORRIS LEVY '38

### DONALD H. SCHARFE '57

Donald Howard Scharfe passed away April 30, 2020. He was a graduate of Harvard University and earned master's degrees from the University of California at Berkley and the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. He also served in the Peace Corps in Zaria, Nigeria. He taught at Columbia University and worked as a consultant to various corporations in setting up continuing education seminars. He is survived by a sister and nephew.

### JAMES CURRY SHELBY '64

James Curry Shelby passed away June 24, 2020. He was a graduate of Pennsylvania State University and worked as an investment banker in Pittsburgh and Exton, Pa. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Kerry Brand Shelby; daughters, Melissa Shelby and Jessica (Kyle) Durkee; and five grandchildren.

### RICHARD A. GRAY '45

Richard A. "Dick" Gray passed away Feb. 3, 2020. He attended the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and University College Southampton England, and graduated with a B.A. in economics from Princeton University and an L.L.B. from Harvard Law School. A Korean War veteran, he served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy. Gray was employed by Air Products and Chemicals Inc. for 28 years, serving as associate general counsel and vice president and corporate secretary. He was formerly associated with Reed, Smith, Shaw & McClay. He was a member of the American and Federal Bar Associations and admitted to practice before the Pennsylvania Bar and federal courts,

including the U.S. Supreme Court. He is survived by his wife, Lucia Long Gray; two sons, Richard (Judith) Gray III and James (Farah Englert) Gray; three grandchildren; and one great grandson.

### JOHN M. KINTNER '47

John M. "Jack" Kintner passed away April 30, 2020. He was the owner of JB Kintner and Sons, and veteran of the U.S. Army. He is survived by his wife, Joyce; children, Jacqueline Kintner, John (Aimee) Kintner '87 and Adam Kintner; four grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

### WAYLAND W. BOWSER '49

Wayland "Wake" Bowser passed away Sept. 5, 2020. He was a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University and Columbia University. In addition to a private design practice, he taught architecture and interior design at Ohio State University and the University of Oklahoma. Among his many designs were St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Worthington, Ohio. He was predeceased by his wife of more than 60 years, Jill Bowser. He is survived by three daughters and four grandchildren.

### JOHN H. DEMMLER '50

John H. "Jack" Demmler passed away Nov. 29, 2020. He was a graduate of Princeton University, and following two years of service in the U.S. Army field artillery, he graduated from Harvard Law School. Demmler was admitted to the Pennsylvania Bar in 1960 and practiced corporate law as an associate attorney and then as a partner at Reed Smith in Pittsburgh until he retired in 1995. Demmler was former chair of SSA Board of Trustees, as well as a member of the Alumni Council and trustee emeritus. He was preceded in death by his wife of 55 years, Janet Demmler. He is survived by children,

Richard (Nan) Demmler, Ralph (Karen) Demmler and Carol (Michael) Carty, as well as six grandsons.

### REGINALD S. KOEHLER III '50

Reginald Stafford Koehler III passed away July 10, 2020. He graduated from Yale University and Harvard Law School, and served in the U.S. Army in the front lines during the Korean War. He practiced law for 58 years, including as a partner of Donovan Leisure Newton and Irvine, then as partner and of-counsel to Perkins Coie. During his career, he was admitted to practice in numerous states and the U.S. Supreme Court. He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Ann Koehler; children, Victoria Lamarre, Cynthia Koehler and Robert S. Koehler; and eight grandchildren.

### EDWARD M. HEPPENSTALL '51

Edward M. "Ned" Heppenstall passed away on April 21, 2020. He received a B.A. from Williams College and a J.D. from the University of Michigan. He practiced law for more than 60 years at several law firms, including Holme Roberts & Owen, Conover McClearn and Heppenstall, and Heppenstall & Savage. He also worked as an adjunct professor of law at the University of Denver Law School, teaching commercial law. He was preceded in death by his son, David Heppenstall. He is survived by his son, Carl (Brenda) Heppenstall, and two grandchildren.

### WILLIAM N. STEEL '52

William N. Steel passed away Nov. 13, 2019. He was a graduate of Villanova University and served as an officer in the U.S. Navy. He worked for the San Francisco Newspaper Agency for several decades until his retirement. He is survived by two brothers, Dr. John (Suella) Steel III '50



and Christopher Steel '59, and a sister, Kathleen (Lee) Sontum (deceased).

## **RALPH Z. HALLOW '56**

Ralph Zachary Hallow passed away October 24, 2020. He earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Pittsburgh and completed graduate work at the University of Missouri School of Journalism. He had a six-decade journalism career, including posts on the editorial board of the *Washington Times*, *Chicago Tribune* and *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. At the time of his passing, he was the chief political correspondent for opinion and columnist for the *Washington Times*. He served as a Ford Foundation Fellow in Urban Journalism at Northwestern University and resident at the Columbia University Editorial-Page Editors Seminar. His datelines included Berlin, London, Paris, Jerusalem and many others. He is survived by his wife of 33 years, Millie; son, Ian (Carin) Walters; and two granddaughters.

## **E. BRUCE HILL III '59**

Edwin Bruce Hill III passed away Sept. 14, 2020. He was a graduate of Trinity College and enlisted in the U.S. Navy, serving as an officer during the Vietnam War. When his service ended, he began working in the political field, serving as a speech writer during the Nixon administration. He switched career fields to follow his passion for acting, founding Patina Productions, Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theater, and Kinetic Theatre. He is survived by his two children, Ryder Cummings Hill and Nicola Coudray Solomon.

## **PETER J. STEPHENS '66**

Peter Johnston "PJ" Stephens passed away July 29, 2020.

## **DOUGLAS A. THOMPSON '73**

Douglas Alan Thompson passed away May 22, 2020. He received his undergraduate degree from the University of Virginia and a doctorate in law from the University of Pittsburgh. His career included clerking for Superior Court of Pennsylvania Appellate Judge Hon. John P. Hester;

he was also admitted to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court. He qualified as a surface warfare officer in the U.S. Navy and was deployed to the Mediterranean on the USS Conyngham, followed by Naval Reserve assignments that included the Military Sealift Command headquarters unit at Washington Navy Yard. He is survived by his brother, Eric Thompson, and two sisters, Jean Thompson and Gale Thompson (Seth Frazier).

## **RICHARD G. VILLANI '12**

Richard G. "Rick" Villani passed away Nov. 1, 2020. After Shady Side, he went on to play junior hockey in Canada. He is survived by his parents, Richard and Kimberly Villani; and siblings, Olivia, Brooke and Chase Villani.

## **FAMILY AND FRIENDS**

**Marjorie Shack Armstrong**, mother of Meredith (Armstrong) Repetto '01 and Andrew Armstrong '04, mother-in-law of Elsa (Hellberg) Armstrong '10

**Jane Benford**, wife of Jim Benford '54, mother of Gretchen (Benford) Harrison '99 and Hans Benford '02, and mother-in-law of Brad Harrison '98

**Mary Brown**, mother of Facilities Rental Coordinator Blair Trunzo

**Nancie Burgess**, mother of Facilities staff member Mike Burgess

**Joseph Calihan Jr.**, father of Martin Calihan '82, Anne (Calihan) Kelley '84, Katherine (Calihan) Kennedy '89 and Mary (Calihan) Lokteff '97, and grandfather of Maclean Calihan '13, Trip Calihan '16, Izzy Calihan '18 and Jack Calihan '20

**Sherley Fekety Craig**, mother of Karen (Craig) Brubaker '86 and Cynthia (Craig) Johnson '84, and former member of the SSA Board of Trustees

**William Croman Jr.**, uncle of former Facilities staff member Bill Gallicchio

**Leslie Fisher**, sister of Gordon Fisher IV '79, sister-in-law of Lisa (Smith) Fisher '84, and aunt of Abigail '13 and Eliza '18 Fisher

**Suzanne Allen Frantz**, mother of Chris Frantz '70 and Rodgers Frantz '72

**Kathy Gonzales**, mother of Country Day School fifth grade teacher Raquel (Gonzales) Kramer '92, and grandmother of Alex Kramer '22 and Peter Kramer '24

**Jasmine Harris**, daughter of Rebecca Carter, Middle School administrative and admissions assistant

**Kathleen Edwards Lee**, mother of former Board of Trustees chair J. Stephen Lee '77, grandmother of Katherine Lee '07, James Lee '06 and Jennifer Lee '04

**Jesse McCallum**, stepfather of Vanessa Cannon, Senior School admissions assistant

**Paul Moses**, father of Paul L. Moses '84

**Florence Pace**, mother-in-law of Board of Trustees Chair Jon Kamin '91, grandmother of Selma Kamin '21, Elizabeth Kamin '23 and Sam Kamin '26

**Rosa Maria Petrozzi**, mother of Dr. Claudia Henry, Middle School counselor and Academy director of personal counseling, and grandmother of Oliver Henry '19 and John Paul Henry '23

**Elizabeth Shurina**, mother of Maintenance Superintendent Dave Shurina and Campus Safety Guard Mark Shurina, and aunt of Facilities staff member Greg Shurina

**Oliver Shoemaker Jr.**, father of Jessica Shoemaker '01

**Dr. E. Kenneth Vey**, father of Paul Vey '70, Scott Vey '74, Mark Vey '76 and Eric Vey '78

**Joan Whitehill**, wife of Charles Whitehill '66

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

## William Barclay Livingstone Palmer ENGLISH TEACHER, 1962-1967

William Barclay Livingstone Palmer, known as Barclay, passed away Sept. 27, 2020. Working with the National Association of Independent Schools, Palmer helped propel a nationwide shift from memorization and testing toward critical and creative thinking, and moral, racial and social awareness. With specialties in Shakespeare, poetry and myth, he taught English at Shady Side Academy from 1962-1967. He also served as the head coach of the varsity soccer team, and advised the honors reading club. In 2017, Barclay Palmer and his wife, Esther were invited to campus by the class of 1967 to join in the 50th reunion celebration and Homecoming. The Palmer's spent the weekend attending Homecoming festivities and catching up with former students.

Palmer was a great-grandson of William Booth, founder of The Salvation Army, and grandson of Catherine "Kate" Booth-Clibborn, known as La Maréchale, and her husband Arthur Booth-Clibborn, who brought the Salvation Army to France and Switzerland and were repeatedly jailed for their evangelical work.



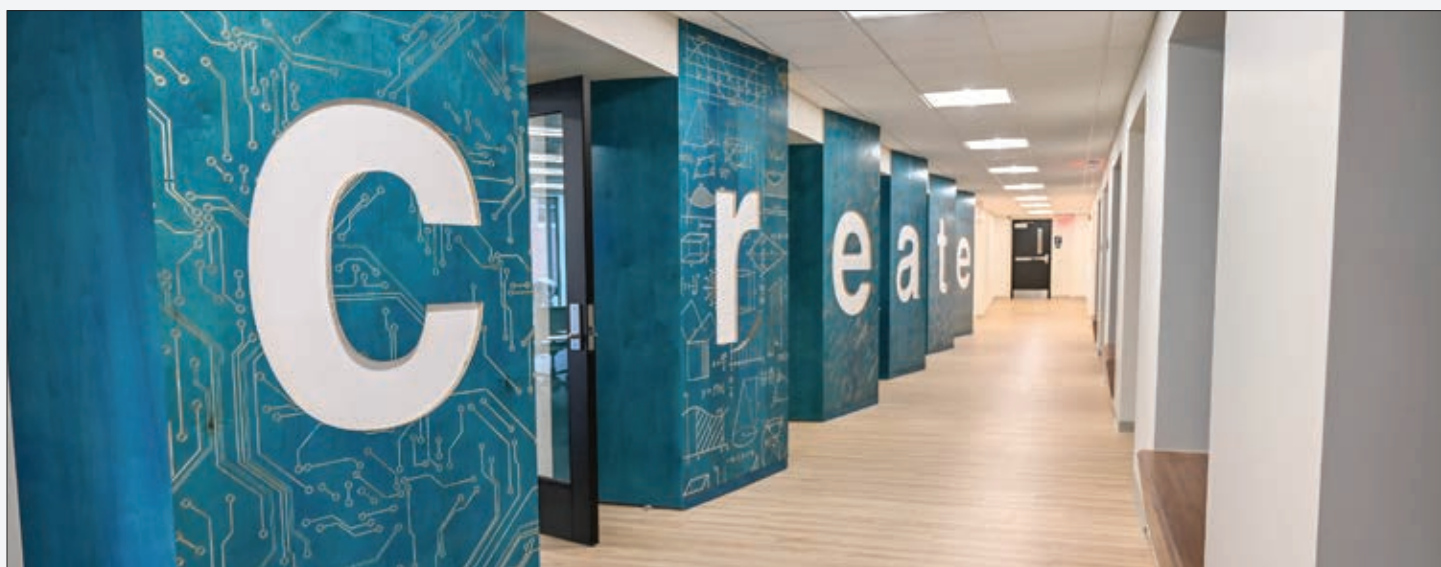
Born in 1932 in Toronto, Palmer was the fourth child of Josephine Booth-Clibborn and the Rev. Francis Noel Palmer. At the age of 11, he spent a year in hospitals with degenerative disease in his leg and ankle, and was cured after becoming the first British civilian to receive penicillin.

Palmer went on to serve as a lieutenant and platoon commander in the British Army, 1950 to 1952. Educated at Monkton Combe School, he earned a B.A. and M.A. in theology at St. Peter's College, Oxford, where he gained an Athletics Blue in 1953 for weights, discus and javelin. He won the British AAA shot

put championships in 1955 and 1956, held the British shot put record, received a trophy from Queen Elizabeth, and competed for England around Europe and at the 1956 Olympics in Melbourne.

All his life, Palmer lived by the Salvation Army's commitment to underprivileged people, and launched diversity and racial awareness programs, and expanded scholarship programs to bring under-served into private schools and universities.

Barclay was predeceased by his wife, Esther Lacognata Palmer, in February 2020. He is survived by his three children, Barclay (Dana Cowin) Palmer, Catherine Von Burg, and Deborah Palmer Keiser; and five grandchildren.



The 2019-2020 Report of Philanthropy is available exclusively online at:  
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# Polio Pioneers, PART 2

In the summer issue of *Shady Side Academy Magazine*, our From the Archives feature, *Shady Side's Polio Pioneers*, discussed how some SSA students were volunteer test subjects for Dr. Jonas Salk's polio vaccine trials. We asked any alumni who participated in the trials to share their stories with us and received some amazingly detailed responses.

**Vincent "Court" Dwyer '65** was in second grade when he received the polio vaccine at the Junior School. He recalled: "I remember being pulled out of class and marched over to the gym from the classroom building in single file. We had been told that we were going to be given a shot and not to be afraid. We were told we might feel woozy after the shot but that we would be asked to lay down on mattresses placed all across the gym floor to rest for a while. A large honeysuckle bush grew on the grassy circle next to the driveway in front of the classroom building between the classroom building and the gym. It was great fun to grab a few flowers from the bush to suck the sweet nectar out. I recall we were more interested in getting the opportunity to have at the honeysuckle bush on our way past going to the gym than we were in whatever this shot was that we were to get ... We, or at least I, didn't have a clue what it was all about."

**David Hauk '61** and his brother, **Bill Hauk '60**, were among a group of children of Pittsburgh medical professionals who participated in Dr. Salk's vaccine trials at the D.T. Watson Home for Crippled Children (now the Watson Institute) in Leetsdale. David recalled: "Dr. Salk was performing some of the injections himself. I remember

that he wore leather soled shoes that allowed him to run from patient to patient, sliding to a stop across the large room's linoleum floor, fortunately not carrying a syringe. I received my first inoculation from Dr. Salk himself, and probably from his staff in subsequent injections. The shots were spaced apart by at least a month. After each shot, my arm would hurt for several days beyond the injection site, as we were told to expect. But I thought that I felt it building muscle, and it seemed to be making my arms stronger. I even noticed that now, with my super arms, I could hit the baseball beyond the infield. Wow, wait until I tell Dr. Salk about this! At our next trip out to Leetsdale, an assistant gave me my next injection and he asked me if I had noticed any positive or negative effects over the time of my participation in the study. When I told him about my new super arms, he summoned Dr. Salk over to listen to my story. Now I was sure that we were on the verge of an unexpected breakthrough, a discovery that would be hailed by the bodybuilding community, as well as the world at large. But after patiently listening to me, Dr. Salk just smiled and tousled my hair and said that, well, my newfound strength was probably just because I was getting older."



**Alan Stuckeman '62** shared that while he did not recall much of the process itself, he can clearly remember the huge line of students wrapped around the Junior School gymnasium, waiting to be vaccinated.

Finally, **Ned Boshell '53** shared his own story of contracting polio while in college, around the time Dr. Salk announced the success of his vaccine. He described the long and difficult recovery process that followed his diagnosis, but concluded "The best result of the illness was falling in love with one of the nurses and getting married right after graduation."

If there is a story that you would like to see in the From the Archives section, please email editor Lindsay Kovach at [lkovach@shadysideacademy.org](mailto:lkovach@shadysideacademy.org). Thank you for continuing to share your memories with us!



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