

CLOSING LAWRENCEVILLE'S 211TH YEAR

May 26, 2021

Dear Lawrenceville Community,

With the school year coming to a close and plans to mark year-end milestones with in-person celebrations, the mood on campus is positive. I could cite joyful interactions during our Holi celebration or Second Form Shakespeare in the Bowl, chatter in the dugout at a softball game, or hoots at our socially distanced Spring Dance Concert, but I think the moment that best captured campus morale for me was watching four students playing spikeball in the pouring rain one warm Saturday afternoon recently. They were oblivious to the downpour and fully immersed in the moment, just happy to be together.

As students returned for the spring term back in March, I reminded them to make the most of the opportunity, that their time here was fleeting and precious. I also thanked them for their extraordinary resilience and courage when confronting the ongoing challenges we have faced, ranging from a global pandemic to a national reckoning on race and social justice. They hardly needed the reminder. I have marveled over the past year at their ability to take nothing for granted, to model a positive attitude, and to continue to work constructively on strengthening our school and reinforcing the sense of belonging that each and every individual deserves. As I noted in remarks to our students yesterday, which marked one year since the murder of George Floyd, we have experienced loss, tragedy, and pain. But I have been inspired by our ability to come together as a community through these times.

On so many fronts, in fact, as you will see from the information in this letter, we have managed to thrive. Despite uncertainties and challenges, we rallied and rose – Big Red spirit remained stronger than ever and we found opportunities to connect and contribute, while taking care of ourselves and one another. I encourage all Lawrentians to reflect on just how far we've come this year, and how far we can continue to propel our School – together.

CAMPUS HAPPENINGS

Crowds roared once again as we launched spring interscholastic competition and invited spectators to campus; the joy and pride of our teams and their fans has been palpable. Two Fifth Formers, Danica Bajaj and Zack Finacchio, were named Robertson Scholars; Danica also earned the Morehead-Cain Scholarship. Student Council and Community Service representatives developed innovative ways to honor the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. and to engage their peers during a virtual day of service, including sessions with Xiomara Hall '92 and Natalie Tung '14. Our orchestra has continued to perform, with musicians bringing their talents to the community in a concert in the Bowl earlier this month. Enriching classroom experiences continued, from molecular genetics research to Women in Business initiatives to Greek translations through a partnership with the Institute for Advanced Studies. We expanded student learning about land stewardship, water monitoring, and closed loop sustainable food systems; Sustainability Director Steve Laubach initiated a preliminary analysis of how the School could set carbon reduction goals. Our faculty inspired, our staff supported, and our students excelled. **You can read more news from the year here.**

We are thrilled that the class of 2021 will have in-person end-of-year events, including prom, baccalaureate, and commencement. We are graduating 236 Fifth Form students on June 6 and are delighted that they will be able to share this moment together, on campus, with up to four guests per student. Community members can take part in some of these milestone events by joining live streams of prom arrival and commencement or viewing recordings of these events, plus the pinning ceremony, on our website. Additional details are forthcoming.

CAMPUS ENHANCEMENTS

As I wrote to you in March, **Noyes Quad has been renovated** and reinforced as a community gathering space, and Tsai Field House is proceeding on time and on budget (click here for an updated **time lapse video**, and here for links to **construction photos** and **renderings**). Foundations are complete, structural steel is substantial, mechanical and electrical rough-in work has started in the dining and pool areas, and exterior walls and roofing are underway. Phase I, which includes dining and a new pool, hockey rink, and community fitness center, is scheduled for a summer 2022 completion. Phase II is a renovation of the basketball and squash courts, indoor track, indoor practice facilities, wrestling room, and performance fitness center with an expected opening of fall 2023.

EMERGE TRANSFORMED: THE CAMPAIGN FOR LAWRENCEVILLE

The School launched **Emerge Transformed: The Campaign for Lawrenceville** during our virtual Alumni Weekend. This \$425 million campaign has the distinction of being the most ambitious fundraising effort ever undertaken by an independent school. We are incredibly grateful to those who have put us on a strong path toward achieving this goal, with \$360 million raised thus far. Our four fundamental pillars will leave an indelible mark on the School: Transform Lives supports scholarship aid, Transform Learning provides meaningful academic and experiential opportunities for faculty and students, Transform Community enhances our campus facilities, and Transform the Way Forward ensures Lawrenceville is positioned to meet current needs through The Lawrenceville Fund/Parents Fund, as well as our vision for the future by strengthening our endowment. With Big Red Giving Day approaching on June 4, The Lawrenceville Fund is expected to finish another successful year. We are honored that the School's approach to teaching and learning, and to supporting the wellbeing of our students, has resonated so strongly with so many. Thank you!

Alumni Weekend was marked by nearly 450 alumni from around the world, who gathered for remote House gatherings, Harkness classes, and class-specific cocktail hours. Ginnie Chambers H'54 '58 '59 '60 '61 '62 '66 '71 '73 '80 '89 P'77 hosted her traditional Cleve House gathering, and we honored a number of alumni and community members throughout the Weekend – including Sandra Rabin H'01 '08 P'00 and Sahoko Okabayashi H'95 P'92 '95, both of whom received the Harkness Award. The Class of 1971 celebrated its 50th Reunion and 40+ classmates enjoyed the company of Ginnie Chambers, who was made an honorary member, making this her 11th honorary class.

WELCOMING ANOTHER CLASS OF LAWRENTIANS

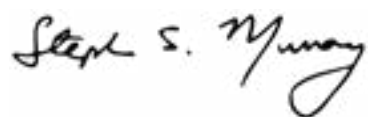
With more than 2,700 applications for 230 spots, Lawrenceville's enrollment will stand at 820 in the fall and represent the most racially, geographically, and socio-economically diverse in the School's history. This is the earliest completion of the admission cycle in recent memory, allowing the School to plan more intentionally for financial sustainability, the curriculum, teaching loads, and residential life. Thirty-six percent of the incoming class is receiving scholarship aid, and the School was able to meet 100 percent of each student's demonstrated need. Notably, this class will also be the first to enter Lawrenceville without having visited campus for the traditional interviews and visits. The Admission Office launched an impressive line-up of virtual events through an all-new Discovery Days program, featuring regional meet and greets, campus tours through Instagram takeovers, a Pancakes and Pets Zoom, and more. Discovery Days culminated with a **Big Red Drive Thru**, in which 117 families traveled from as far as North Carolina and California to get a glimpse of our campus and community – a testament to the eagerness and commitment of these incoming Lawrentians, and to the caliber and warmth of our faculty, staff, and students.

STUDENT SUPPORT – TODAY AND TOMORROW

Student support has remained a priority throughout this most extraordinary year. Our Health and Wellness staff has met each challenge with professionalism and empathy. Our counselors have worked to maintain the effectiveness of their care in a virtual setting, offering a space to emote, confide, and reflect. Our Buildings and Grounds team has worked tirelessly to enhance campus infrastructure and cleaning protocols to keep us all healthy. Our Dining staff has continued to provide healthy farm-to-table meals, serving up individually packaged portions and plenty of comfort for all community members. Our Heads of House have provided extraordinary and attentive care throughout the year, balancing distance and togetherness.

As we continue to enhance our student support programs, you will learn more about initiatives around the all-important pillars of wellbeing and belonging. After presenting a draft of our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan to the Board of Trustees, I will share this guiding document with the Lawrenceville community in June. The Vision Statement is built upon three core notions of "belonging, building, and becoming": we aspire to instill a deep sense of belonging in each student; we build programming and support services that strengthen the fabric of the community; and we thereby help our graduates become the young adults they are meant to be, focused on making a difference in the world.

To all Lawrentians, thank you for your unwavering commitment to this institution. This has been a year of learning and growth like no other, calling forth Lawrentian qualities of perseverance, courage, compassion, and discipline as we move forward as a community. I hope that you find moments of rest, recovery, and togetherness this summer, and that you take time to reflect not only on this extraordinary year, but on all the ways you have contributed to our mission of inspiring the best in each to seek the best for all.



Stephen S. Murray H'54 '55 '65 '16 P'16 '21
The Shelby Cullom Davis '26 Head of School

