Real-World Learning

PREPARING TO LEAD A CONNECTED, DIGITAL FUTURE

COMMENCEMENT 2022 • CATHERINE HEALD ’80 • ZAC COUGHLIN ’17
Construction is underway on The Gene Deal Fields, located at the lower fields on the Senior School campus. A ribbon-cutting ceremony will take place during Homecoming weekend, Oct. 14-16, 2022, to celebrate the state-of-the-art athletic complex.

FEATURES

12 National Bulldog Day
14 Fuel to Thrive
16 Real-World Learning: Preparing to Lead a Connected, Digital Future
22 The Class of 1966 Memorial Hall Library Project
24 Commencement 2022
32 Alumni Profile: Catherine Heald ’80
36 Alumni Profile: Zac Coughlin ’17

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

2 President’s Message
3 Around the Academy
40 Sports Briefs
46 Alumni Events
48 Class Notes
54 In Memoriam
57 From the Archives

Correction: In the In Memoriam section of the Winter 2021-2022 issue, William F. Aiken should have been noted as the grandfather of Isabel ’13, Margaret ’16 and Jillian ’19 Aiken. Our sincere apologies to the Aiken Family for the error.
President’s Message

Dear Shady Side Academy Community:

During his sophomore year, Amir Awais ’24 sought an effective way to support students aspiring to pre-medical programs and careers in surgery. So he created a digital educational platform that curated a range of instructional technologies and videos. No teacher at Shady Side required him to do this – he was simply curious and internally motivated. With some help from his family and the partnership of two outside organizations, Amir was able to build a prototype within just a few months.

Amir’s story typifies much of the learning we celebrate at Shady Side. Yet as the educational landscape continues to transform, and students demand opportunities to connect and engage beyond the four walls of the classroom, we expect to see even more of our students learn as Amir did, by “doing real things in the real world.”

SSA students find meaning in the pursuit of two vital, purpose-driven questions: What do I care about beyond myself? And what do I plan to do about it? At a time when so much is changing all around us, our support of such curiosity and regard for others will never change.

But much is changing, and it presents an opportunity for those who seek to teach and inspire such purpose in our schools. Innovations in digital technology, advances in the field of cognitive science, and continued changes in our economy and the nature of work itself necessitate that we provide dynamic, real-world opportunities for students.

Imagine a Shady Side that inspires intensive learning about biodiversity by way of sustained research along Pittsburgh’s rivers, global finance through direct observation of leaders at PNC, the Hill District via a hands-on oral history project, philanthropy through visits with local foundations, and a deeper understanding of World War II via travel to Europe. Envision an Academy that helps students to gain practice launching their own start-ups or to complete externships at tech companies, design firms, museums, hospitals, and charities. At SSA, we aspire for education to be more than covering chapters in a textbook.

This past spring, I hosted a Senior School Parents Association Book Club discussion of The Code Breaker by Walter Issacson. His book tells the story of Nobel Prize-winner Jennifer Doudna and her discovery of CRISPR technology, a gene editing tool that opens up a brave new world of medical miracles and challenging ethical questions. Prior to reading, a number of parents considered such technology distant science fiction. They left our discussion not only impressed that CRISPR is a present reality, but also that Shady Side students are already using it — through Advanced Biology classes and real-world learning experiences like our Science Research Seminar, which prepares and places students in summer internships at university research laboratories.

Driven by purpose, our graduates can lead the changes that shift the trajectories of their communities and industries. They can achieve the breakthroughs and establish the trends. But they must first engage and connect with their world before envisioning how they might positively affect it. We are eager to provide them with more and better opportunities to do so.

Best,

Bart Griffith
President ’93

Middle & Senior School Rocketry Teams Qualify for National Finals

Both the Middle School and Senior School Rocketry Teams qualified for the national finals of The American Rocketry Challenge, held May 14 in The Plains, Va. Both SSA teams placed among the top 100 teams from across the country and competed for $100,000 in cash and prizes and the title of national champion. While the teams did not advance to the International Rocketry Competition, they had a solid showing at nationals. Congratulations to Senior School team members Isabel Brunner, Cassidy Mineo, Jillian Zana, Alex Chow and Leo Rickard, and Middle School team members Akshay Lath, Jackson Bitsoff, Simon Braver, Evey Fuhrman, Luke Golden and Kiran Thompson, and to faculty coaches Matt Brunner and Natalie Bobek.
Middle School Places First in National Science League Contest
For the second straight year, seventh grade students placed first in the nation in the National Science League (NSL) Life Science Contest. Kiran Thompson, Kristen Appleman, Paolo Scialieres, Hanna Singh, Chloe Wang, Ozge Uzman, Ethan Jiang, Alex Bi, Anna Grace Shultz and Andrew Xing contributed to the winning score in the contest. Individually, Bi placed first in the nation, Jiang placed 18th, and Wang and Uzman tied for fourth.

Students Win Seven National Medals in 2022 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards
Five Senior School students won seven national medals in the 2022 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards competition, including six gold medals and one American Visions Medal. The winners were sophomore Sophia Jho, gold medal in art (drawing/illustration) for Adrift (above), gold medal in art (painting) for Korean Fish Market; senior Crystal Ma, gold medal and American Visions Medal in art (fashion) for Plastic Biosphere; junior Maria Schwendeman, gold medal in art (painting) for Affection (right); junior Hannah Song, gold medal in writing (personal essay/weekness) for Prick Robins; senior Anker Zhao, gold medal in writing (journalism) for National Security Versus Individual. More than 100,000 students submitted more than 260,000 works to the 2022 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, and less than 2,000 received national medals, placing them within the top 1% of all submissions.

Sophomore Wins Congressional Art Competition
Sophomore Sophia Jho was the winner of the 2022 Congressional Art Competition for Pennsylvania’s 17th District for her pastel pencil artwork, Adrift. Her piece will be hung in the U.S. Capitol along with the winning entries from other congressional districts nationwide.

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Senior Named to Junior Achievement’s 18 Under Eighteen
Senior Jasmine DeBruce was named to the inaugural class of Junior Achievement of Western Pa.’s 18 Under Eighteen presented by NexTier Bank. The program celebrates 18 extraordinary students who are defining their generation through their entrepreneurial spirit, leadership and service to their communities. DeBruce served as president of the Senior School Black Student Union, and she previously introduced the first Black Student Union at SSA Middle School. DeBruce also created the Black Scholar Society, an organization dedicated to creating a network for future Black leaders in Pennsylvania and uplifting Black youths throughout the region by providing them with opportunities to grow their resumes, knowledge and experience.

Middle School Science Olympiad Team Places 11th at National Tournament
The Middle School Science Olympiad Team competed virtually in the Science Olympiad National Tournament, which was hosted in partnership with Caltech. Final results were announced on May 18, and SSA finished in 11th place out of 60 teams in Division B (grades 6-9). The following students placed in the top 20 of their events at nationals: Ethan Hou, Hanna Singh, Evan Xiang, Sophia Gombos, Vivan Poddar, Anna Litster, Neyla Hinedi, Ethan Chen, Shaurya Gulati, Ellie Laman, Claudia Iannetti, Chloe Wang, Jeffrey Brunner and Andrew Xing.

Speech and Debate Team Members Compete in State and National Tournaments
Three Senior School Speech and Debate Team members competed at the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA) National Tournament, held June 13-17 in Louisville, Ky. This year, 4,848 students from 1,081 schools and 51 states and territories competed at the national tournament. Junior Nicholas Poltmnikov competed in the Lincoln Douglas Debate, finishing sixth in the nation, and sophomores Hari Viswanathan and Matthew Long competed as Senators in the NSDA Congress, where they advanced to the semifinal round. Overall, SSA was recognized as a Debate School of Excellence. In addition, freshmen Sunny Zhao and Audrey Jiang qualified to compete in the National Catholic Forensics League (NCFL) Grand National Tournament, held May 27-29 in Washington, D.C. Zhao and Jiang competed in the preliminary round of Duo, a speech event.

Three Students Selected for PMEA All-State Music Festival
Three Senior School students reached the highest level a high school musician can achieve by earning places in the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) 2022 All-State Festival music ensembles. The all-state musicians were junior Grant Cummings, clarinet; junior Hannah Song, viola; and sophomore Sophia Jho, harp. The students performed with their ensembles at the annual PMEA All-State Festival at Kalahari Resort in April 2022.
Junior School Hosts Fourth Annual International Fair

On May 6, the Junior School hosted its fourth annual International Fair, where students learned about the diversity of cultures within our own school community. Numerous families volunteered to bring the country of their heritage to life, hosting 11 different “nationality rooms” around the school representing Austria, China, Colombia, France, India, Japan, Pakistan, Serbia, Sudan and Ukraine. Students spent the morning touring the rooms and learning about each country and its culture while enjoying food, stories, music and dance.

Community Connections

Award-Winning Author Malinda Lo Virtually Visits Senior School Students

On April 28, interested Senior School students, faculty and staff gathered in the library to join a virtual discussion and Q&A with Malinda Lo, author of the 2021 National Book Award for Young People’s Literature, Last Night at the Telegraph. Lo discussed the historical research she conducted for the book, which centers around a young Chinese-American woman struggling with her identity in 1950s San Francisco.

UPenn Partnership: Social Innovators Program

For the second year, the Social Innovators Program, presented in partnership with the University of Pennsylvania and Schoolyard Ventures, was offered to Senior School students at SSA. 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 UPenn. Shady Side remains the only school in Pittsburgh to offer the unique initiative. A total of 17 students participated during the 2021-2022 school year, with projects including a variety of topics, from community-wide recycling plans, to promotion planning for young entrepreneurs, to the creation of surgery videos for medical students.

Student Designers Showcase Their Work at Warhol Teen Fashion Show

Four Senior School students showcased 10 upcycled fashion designs at The Andy Warhol Museum’s Teen Fashion Show, held March 25 in Pittsburgh. The teen-curated fashion show placed a focus on sustainability, and runway looks included repurposed, reimagined and recycled garments and accessories designed by teens. SSA student designers included Crystal Ma (above), Sophia Sandholm, Cecelia Messner and Anna Brown and several other students served as runway models. Ma also worked with The Warhol Museum on planning and organizing the show itself.

Award-Winning Poets Visit Sixth Grade

On April 12, sixth graders had the unique opportunity to meet and learn from two award-winning poets who visited the school in person: Robert Hass and his wife, Brenda Hillman, whose grandson, Leon, is a sixth grader at SSA. Hass is one of the most celebrated and widely read contemporary American poets and a leading translator of others’ poetry, while Hillman is one of contemporary American poetry’s most eclectic and innovative writers. The visit came about when the couple’s grandson spotted his grandfather on a poster in Mrs. Pam Onest’s English classroom and began working with this grandmother to coordinate a visit.
Students Help Ukraine

A student-led drive at the Senior School collected non-perishable food items and medical supplies for those impacted by the war in Ukraine. Held March 7-17, and spearheaded by junior Maya Leyzarovich, the drive was part of a multi-pronged effort by student leaders in the Service Learning and International Clubs, including Veronica Koval, Avery Libin and Sophia Sandholm, to educate the Senior School community about the war and humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, which also included a teach-in and a bake sale. Two carloads of donations were delivered to St. Peter & Paul Ukrainian Orthodox Church over spring break.

In March, the Middle School Community Service Committee organized two very successful fundraisers benefiting Brother’s Brother Ukrainian humanitarian relief efforts. Through a basket raffle and dress-down day, the committee donated $3,116.

First Graders Participate in Jared Box Project

As a culminating project for their humanities unit on communities, Country Day School first grade students participated in the Jared Box Project. This community service project provides elementary-aged children in the hospital with fun and engaging activities in decorated boxes, sent with a personal note. The first grade class asked families in each grade at Country Day to bring in different items to fill the Jared Boxes, from coloring supplies, stickers, toy cars, Play-Doh, crafts, Legos and puzzles. First graders then assembled and decorated the boxes and wrote notes to go inside, and will send them off to brighten a child’s day. Together, the first grade classes assembled 46 Jared Boxes.

SSA Children of Steel Tutoring Program Wraps Up Successful Year

Children of Steel, a student-led club that pairs Senior School students with Country Day and Junior School students for weekly Zoom tutoring and enrichment sessions, successfully wrapped up its first full school year after starting midway through the 2020-2021 year. Student tutors included Wesley Dillon, Logan Starta, Dani Strauss, Rohan Anand, Tommy Cerro, Alessandra Demchak, Ericson Kimbel, Tiffany Wu, Madison Zunder, Joey Bellinotti, Maia Davis, Delaney Mulderig, Bree Murphy, Ben Myerburg and Jinny Guo. The tutors met with CDS and JS students on a weekly basis, working with children on whatever the parent requested – helping with homework, practicing spelling words, reading together, or doing enrichment work in an area where the child excels. Several other area high schools have started Children of Steel chapters as well.

Middle School Community Service Committee Collects Hygiene Items

The Middle School Community Service Committee held a drive from April 11-27 to collect personal hygiene items for the Light of Life Rescue Mission in Pittsburgh, which serves individuals and families experiencing homelessness, poverty or addiction. Each grade was asked to donate different items to the drive, including travel-sized deodorant, shampoo, conditioner, hand sanitizer, soap, body wash, toothbrushes and toothpaste, as well as masks and granola bars. The MS Parents’ Association assembled and delivered more than 60 personal hygiene kits.

SSA Striders Raise Nearly $7,000 for Walk for Children’s Hospital

Several Shady Side Academy students formed the “SSA Striders” team that raised nearly $7,000 for the 2022 Walk for Children’s, an annual fundraising walk benefitting the UPMC Children’s Hospital Foundation. The walk was held Saturday, June 4, in Schenley Park. The SSA Striders included Senior School students Smrithi Shyam, Elle Ruttenberg, Chloe Wells, Kathryn Wolfe and Reese Ruttenberg and Middle School student Brooklyn Ruttenberg. The fundraising efforts, which included a highly successful bake sale hosted by the Ruttenberg sisters at their home, raised a total of $6,916, exceeding the team’s $5,000 goal and earning a “Top Team” achievement recognition by The Walk.
1. Country Day School First Grade Around the World Project
2. Country Day School Second Grade Wax Museum
3. Country Day School Fourth Grade Inventor’s Box Showcase
4. Country Day School Fifth Grade Show
5. Junior School Pre-Kindergarten Alphabet Parade
6. Junior School Third Grade State Fair
7. Junior School Fourth Grade Greek Museum
9. Senior School Winter Musical, *Pippin*
ON THURSDAY, APRIL 21, Shady Side Academy students, faculty and staff celebrated National Bulldog Day with a special All-Academy celebration featuring treats, games, music, blue and gold spirit and of course — dogs!

Junior School students were greeted in morning carpool by SSA’s mascot, Blue, waving to families and getting students excited for the day ahead. Junior and Country Day School students then joined together for a virtual assembly to watch the video premiere of CDS music and theater arts teacher Tami Fire’s original song, Blue the Bulldog. The song was a hit, and the music video features students from both schools (and Blue!) singing and dancing. Afterward, both lower schools enjoyed visits from service dogs and cotton candy treats, courtesy of the Parents’ Association. Blue waved farewell to CDS students and families at afternoon carpool.

At the Senior School, a community gathering was held in McKnight Hockey Center during lunch periods. The rainy weather did not dampen the fun as students and faculty lined up to grab lunch from one of four food trucks: Las Chicas, Burgh Bites, Millie’s Ice Cream and Pittsburgh Smokehouse. Inside the rink, students ate while enjoying a DJ, games, a Spirit Store pop-up shop, and cotton candy from the PA. But nothing could top the visitors from FurKid Rescue — six adorable rescue puppies that students could hold and play with — talk about stress relief!

Middle School students enjoyed a visit from three service dogs, a scavenger hunt with prizes of SSA swag, and a lively dance contest with Blue the mascot. In an overwhelming vote, the sixth grade claimed top dancing honors over Blue. Students danced their way out the door to music from DJ BMW, grabbing a bag of cotton candy from the PA on the way.

All four campuses came together to collect donations for FurKid Rescue the week of April 18-23. The nonprofit animal rescue organization was incredibly grateful to receive 10 crates, 80 bags of food, more than 250 toys and so much more.

The SSA Spirit Store released limited-edition SSA pet bandanas, and families submitted photos of their pets wearing them to be featured on SSA social media. A limited number of bandanas are still available for $4.95 at the SSA Spirit Store.

Finally, SSA launched Build the Bulldog, an initiative to create a collaborative, crowdsourced, 3D-printed status of the Shady Side Bulldog, which will stand guard on the porch of the Glimcher Tech & Design Hub. Plans to unveil the 3D-printed Bulldog will be forthcoming.

With all four campuses swelling with Bulldog pride, the energy was simply barktastic! We look forward to an even bigger and better Bulldog Day celebration next year.
Steven D. Liu ’22 Earns National Recognition for Biodiesel Research

BY JEN ROUPE

Class of 2022 graduate Steven D. Liu earned national recognition and more than $30,000 in awards for his original research on algal biodiesel production in two prestigious STEM competitions last spring.

In his research, *Techno-Economic Assessment of a Cost and Quality-Based Algal Biodiesel Production Process*, Liu used computer modeling to design a process for producing biodiesel fuel from algae that minimizes cost and environmental impact while maximizing quality and efficiency. His modeling suggests algal biodiesel could be produced for 10% less than conventional diesel fuel.

In January, Liu was named one of 40 finalists in the 2022 Regeneron Science Talent Search (STS), the nation’s oldest and most prestigious STEM competition for high school seniors. Finalists were chosen based on their projects’ scientific rigor and their potential to become world-changing scientists and leaders. They were selected from 300 Top Scholars named earlier in the year, who were chosen from a pool of 1,804 entrants. Liu won $2,000 as a Top Scholar and $25,000 as a national finalist, and SSA was also awarded $2,000 to contribute toward excellence in science, math or engineering education. In May, Liu’s research won a Grand Award and two Special Awards worth $3,150 at the 2022 Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) in Atlanta, which featured 1,750 student finalists from around the world.

As a national finalist, Liu had the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to participate in STS Finals Week in Washington, D.C. in March, where his research underwent rigorous judging by experts and was displayed in a public exhibition. He also met leading scientists, attended panel discussions and keynotes, and forged friendships with the other finalists while enjoying social events and sightseeing tours. The week culminated with a black-tie awards gala live streamed on YouTube.

Liu said the best part of STS finals week was the people. “The smaller participation makes the finalists that much closer. The friendships I made will last forever – we’re sort of a family now. The coolest thing was that we could discuss our projects and our inspiration and the difficulties we went through. It felt like a moment of celebration of all of the work that we’ve done.”

The STS experience also meaningfully impacted Liu’s future plans. He will attend Stanford University this fall, attracted by the launch of its new Doerr School of Sustainability alongside the Stanford Earth and Stanford Engineering schools. “I want to make a huge impact on society, specifically in the energy sector,” he said. “Initially I was more interested in energy creation, but now I feel like I’m shifting away from pure science research, and I want to focus more on entrepreneurship and the technical side. The STS Entrepreneurship Panel I attended was really impactful, because they were alums of STS who created startups.”

Liu has been passionate about science and the environment since childhood. Around age 12, he nearly set his family’s kitchen on fire trying to turn vegetable oil into biodiesel. As a sophomore and junior at SSA, he built a Tesla coil and a Wimshurst machine in his Advanced Physics classes under the guidance of Dr. Scott Peterson. During his junior year, he conducted an Independent Study under faculty advisor Dr. Devon Renock, exploring how to grow algae and turn it into biodiesel in the labs of the McIlroy Center for Science & Innovation. That research won him a first-place award at the 2021 PRSEF, a trip to ISEF, and a second-place award at the 2021 National Junior Science and Humanities Symposium. It also helped him gain admission to MIT’s 2021 Research Science Institute (RSI), a prestigious six-week summer program, where he expanded his research into algal biodiesel production.

“Without guidance from Dr. Renock with my first project, this biodiesel simulation project would never have happened,” said Liu. “That independent study changed my life in a lot of aspects.”
PREPARING TO LEAD A CONNECTED, DIGITAL FUTURE

By Lindsay Kovach

In today’s rapidly changing world, schools and colleges are challenged with preparing students for jobs and careers that may not yet exist. Doing so requires more than imparting content knowledge in core academic subjects; students also must be taught skills and literacies, such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, flexibility and technology literacy, which will equip them to solve complex real-world problems. Ultimately, students must be agile learners, able to adapt and lead in an increasingly digital world.
“Providing our students with the tools to explore programming languages when they are young creates a solid foundation for success in learning to code in later years,” said Sandora.

In order to build capacity and support all learners, Junior School Educational Technology Collaborator Brittany Andy works alongside classroom teachers and specialists to meaningfully integrate technology into their classes. For example, this past year Andy helped third graders produce green screen videos for the annual State Fair project in addition to the standard state boxes and presentations. The videos highlighted fun facts about each state, utilizing visually appealing graphics, photos and text. One student reported “live” from the Grand Canyon, while another was white water rafting and skiing.

“Developmentally, the type of thinking that goes into coding, programming and design is very sophisticated,” said Andy. “The thought is intentional, complex, multifaceted and requires children to think deeply, as opposed to simply memorizing and reciting.”

At Country Day School, Educational Technology Collaborator Kate Weber taught junior pre-kindergarten students how to use Sphero robots to simulate the curling event at the Winter Olympics. Students controlled the robots using iPads and attempted to steer them into the center of a bullseye to get the most points. Weber also worked with CDS fourth graders to create 3D-printed products for Design to Make a Difference, a Pittsburgh-based STEAM showcase that combines maker education with altruism. Students were challenged to design and build a product that would assist others in the real world. Prototype products included a cup with a built-in coaster, a headphone holder for student desks that prevents cords from tangling, and “The Renaissance” snack bowl, which includes a tray, cup holder and utensil storage all in one.

“The work that my team does is about empowering student learning pathways through design, computational thinking, maker-centered learning and personalization,” said Kokladas. “A variety of projects take place across the lower schools, including coding camps, passion projects and interdisciplinary and intradisciplinary learning.”
by broadcasting them “live” from the Mesozoic Era, a mere 200 million years ago. Utilizing a green screen and the Do Ink app, students acted as newscasters, reporting on the lives of dinosaurs utilizing modern graphics, eye-catching visuals and detailed images of various predators.

Kokladas also helped eighth graders in Katharine Pynew’s social studies classes transform the standard family tree project into an interactive, shareable website. Through the use of family photos, immigration records, personal memories, family crests, traditions and even recipes, the project evolved into a personalized digital family history book that could be shared with relatives and updated in years to come.

At the Senior School, students in Josh Baringer’s German class created original musical compositions based on the lyrics of a German song, then shared their works with a faculty member at Humboldt-Gymnasium high school in Gifhorn, Lower Saxony, Germany.

At the Middle and Senior Schools, active learning skills serve as the basis for projects across a variety of subjects, which places students at the center of assignments and allows them to guide their own learning path through collaboration and questioning. Active learning methods ask students to engage by thinking, discussing, investigating, collaborating and creating. Ideas are shared and examined, and feedback and concerns are communicated among various student and faculty groups.

“My work at the Middle and Senior Schools focuses on collaborating with faculty to support creativity, critical thinking and design as we embrace technology to foster authentic learning experiences across disciplines.”

This past year, Kokladas assisted Matt Brunner’s sixth grade science students in putting their own creative touch on projects...
Dr. Bartley Griffith ’66 generously contributed the lead gift to kick off the project, and he challenged his 1966 classmates to raise additional funds to secure the naming opportunity for the new space in honor of their class. Thanks to incredible support, the library will be known as The Class of 1966 Memorial Hall Library. With gifts and commitments from additional alumni, parents and friends, more than $1.75 million has been raised in support of the project. Currently, the initial phase of construction is underway, with the expectation that the project will be complete in advance of the 2023-2024 school year.

As the world becomes increasingly digital and classroom learning more collaborative, a library is no longer merely a storage space for books and a place for quiet study. Instead it demands a design that supports connections between people, technologies and ideas, as well as shared spaces for digital learning and research, team projects, socialization and study.

The new 5,500 square-foot Class of 1966 Memorial Hall Library will feature enhanced digital platforms, a host of collaborative learning spaces, a large, multi-use classroom and meeting space, and a small presentation stage in support of events and gatherings. A spacious mezzanine will provide further opportunity for students to come together and effectively engage with both course content and one another.

Aesthetically, the renovation of Memorial Hall will accentuate the building’s original architectural features, including the memorial vestibule, the large radius windows, and the proscenium arch that once framed the stage used for plays and performances. The space will be more open and flexible than ever before and replete with natural light.

For more information on the project or to make a gift of support, contact Jamie Scott ’98 in the Alumni & Development Office at jscott@shadysideacademy.org or 412-968-3032. Read more about the history of Memorial Hall on page 57.
Shady Side Academy celebrated the 127 members of the Class of 2022 during Commencement Exercises on Friday, June 3, 2022, at Michael J. Farrell Stadium. Academy President Bart Griffith ’93 welcomed families and guests, and Alumni Council President Jim Ambrose ’05 welcomed the class to the ranks of SSA alumni. Senior Sydney Demchak presented the class gift, while seniors Georgia Horgan and Steven Liu presented senior speeches. The graduation address was given by Bentley Weiner ’92, vice president of HBO Sports, who encouraged students to strive for success through a series of tips from her own SSA classmates. For additional photos, videos and a list of award winners, visit shadysideacademy.org/commencement.
THE CLASS OF 2022
by the Numbers

College Matriculation
127 graduates will attend 84 colleges in 27 states plus D.C. and Canada
56% will attend a Barron’s “Most Competitive” college
52% will attend a US News & World Report Top 50 National University or Liberal Arts College; 31% will attend a Top 25 school
14% will play college athletics in 7 different sports

Admitted to 223 colleges and universities
77% will attend college out of state

Admitted to “Very Selective” schools at 2x the national rate (23% vs. 11%)

SSA Experience
are “lifers” who attended SSA from grades K–12
attended SSA Middle School
50% completed an independent study or senior project
24% participated in the boarding program
50% Hail from 9 states and 6 countries
46% participated in the performing arts (theatre production or musical ensemble)

Helped 8 SSA athletic teams win 13 league championships

CLASS OF 2022 COLLEGE CHOICES
Amherst College
Bates College (2)
Boston College
Boston University
Brown University (2)
Bucknell University (3)
Carnegie Mellon University (2)
Case Western Reserve University
Chatham University
Claremont McKenna College
Clarkson University
Colby College
Columbia University
Cornell University (4)
Dartmouth College (3)
Davidson College
Denison University
Dickinson College
Duquesne University
Eton University (3)
Fashion Institute of Technology
Furman University
George Washington University (2)
Grove City College
Hamilton College
Hampton University
Johns Hopkins University (2)
Kenyon College
Lawrence University
Lehigh University
Liberty University (2)
Maine Maritime Academy
Marietta College
Marquette University (2)
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
New York University (2)
Northeastern University
Oberlin College
Ohio State University (2)
Pennsylvania State University (3)
Pennsylvania State University–New Kensington
Princeton University
Providence College
Purdue University
Queen’s University (2)
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Ringling College of Art and Design
Rutgers University (2)
Southern Methodist University
Spelman College
Stanford University (2)
Syracuse University (2)
Temple University
Texas Christian University
Tufts University
Tulane University
United States Merchant Marine Academy
University of Akron
University of California, Los Angeles
University of Chicago
University of Colorado Boulder
University of Florida
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign
University of Kentucky
University of Maryland (2)
University of Massachusetts Amherst
University of Miami (2)
University of Michigan
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
University of New Hampshire
University of Notre Dame (3)
University of Pittsburgh (8)
University of Pittsburgh Johnstown
University of Pittsburgh Greensburg
University of Southern California
University of Toronto
University of Virginia (2)
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Vanderbilt University
Wake Forest University (4)
Washington University in St. Louis (2)
Wesleyan University
Westminster College

14% earned a Certificate in Social Entrepreneurship from UPenn via the Social Innovators Program
56% Helped 8 SSA athletic teams win 13 league championships
The 67 members of the Middle School’s Form II class were officially promoted to the Senior School on Wednesday, June 8, 2022, at Middle School Closing Exercises. The graduation ceremony was held in the Richard E. Rauh Theater of the Hillman Center for Performing Arts on the Senior School campus. President Bart Griffith ’93 welcomed students and families, and Head of Middle School Amy Nixon presented several student awards. Form II speaker Ethan Chen addressed his classmates prior to Nixon and Assistant Head of School Brian Johnston presenting the graduation certificates. A reception on the Mary Hillman Jennings Plaza for the Class of 2026 and their families concluded the event.

The 39 members of the Junior School’s fifth grade class were officially promoted to the Middle School at the Closing Exercises ceremony on Monday, June 6, 2022. The ceremony was held in Withers Gymnasium for fifth graders and their families. President Bart Griffith ’93 welcomed families and a fifth grade slideshow was shown with highlights of the past year. Head of Lower Schools Dr. Jennifer Asmonga introduced 2022 graduate and SSA lifer Jasmine DeBruce, who gave the graduation address. After being presented with graduation certificates by Assistant Heads of School Melanie Smith and Dr. Peter Mathis, the Class of 2029 was welcomed to the Middle School by Amy Nixon. Following the ceremony, graduates and their families enjoyed an outdoor reception.
The 19 members of Country Day School’s fifth grade class were officially promoted to the Middle School at the Closing Exercises ceremony on Tuesday, June 7, 2022, in the Great Hall. The ceremony began with the fifth grade processional, a welcome by President Bart Griffith ’93, and each fifth grader providing a three-word reflection. Head of Lower Schools Dr. Jennifer Asmonga introduced 2022 SSA graduate and CDS lifer Charlie Karet, who gave the graduation address. Fifth graders sang The Garden Song before Griffith, Asmonga, Assistant Heads of School Josh Frechette and Katie Nestor, and the fifth grade teachers presented the graduates with their certificates. The ceremony concluded with an outdoor reception for friends and family.

Posner Award Winners
The Posner Award for Meritorious Faculty Performance is presented annually to up to two faculty members at Shady Side who, through their special gift of teaching and mentoring, have affected, in a highly special way, the learning, development and lives of one or more individual students. The 2022 recipients were Senior School Computer Science Teacher David Szlachetka and Senior School Music Teacher Dr. Daniel Brill.

David Szlachetka
At SSA since 1994, David Szlachetka has served as computer science teacher and department chair, director of academic technology, dean of students and dean of academic affairs. “Mr. S” has also been a member of the Residential Life program, served on the Admissions Committee and coached several varsity sports. He was a systems engineer at Westinghouse Electric Co. before joining SSA.
A parent wrote, “All three of our children are better students and citizens due to Dave’s guidance as their freshman advisor as well as ongoing support and encouragement throughout their high school years. One of our children was quiet and thoughtful throughout his time at Shady Side but Dave didn’t let him hide, and instead drew out his strengths as a quiet leader academically, athletically and socially. Dave took the time to understand the gifts he had and helped him share those gifts with others on the field and in the classroom. He encouraged him to bring out the best in fellow students with his positive attitude and leading by example.”

Dr. Daniel Brill
Dan Brill has taught music at the Senior School since 1986, directing the choral and strings groups and previously serving as chair of the Arts Department. He also taught secondary music in Kansas, Nebraska and Pennsylvania and has taken advantage of numerous professional development opportunities to study, sing and perform under master conductors. He retired at the end of the 2021–2022 school year.
A parent wrote, “We have been amazed by the energy of Dr. Brill and the countless hours he spends with his students outside of the classroom to prepare them in the best way possible. He gives his best and expects the best effort from his students, which they give him day in and day out. Dr. Brill is a tremendous role model for his students, with his hard work and dedication, and wise and calm demeanor. Dr. Brill embodies the school’s mission to build complete individuals and prepare them to live meaningful, vibrant and gratifying lives.”

Additional Awards
Michael J. Farrell Award for Exceptional Interactions with Students
Paul Waked, Middle School Science Teacher
Nick Hamman, Junior School Kindergarten Teacher

Michael J. Farrell Award for Going Above and Beyond
Margie Heinzelman, Country Day School Science Teacher
Carol Schneider, Senior School World Languages Teacher

Michael J. Farrell Award for Innovative Educators
Natalie Petts, Middle School Art Teacher
Jillian Velotta, Junior School First Grade Teacher

Class of ’61 Faculty Award for Excellence
Alicia Segura-Pinto, Senior School World Languages Teacher

Ruth and F. Walter Jones Service Prize
Maria Triman, Senior School Nurse

President’s Award for Distinguished Staff Service
Jeremy Schreckengost, Academy Grounds Superintendent

Kenneth M. Raymond Vasko Memorial Award
Lauren Cannon, Middle School English Teacher
Catherine Heald was working on Wall Street at LF Rothschild when she completely upended her life to move to Hong Kong, sight unseen. With her life savings of $1,000 in hand and the phone numbers of two contacts in her pocket, she boarded a plane, having absolutely no idea what she would do when she landed.

Today Heald helps other adventurous spirits through her company, Remote Lands, which sets up customized luxury journeys throughout Asia. The self-described “adventurer, Asiaphile and serial entrepreneur” uses her extensive knowledge and experience to take people anywhere from five-star hotels in Tokyo to a yurt in a remote corner of Mongolia and everywhere in between.

To her family, the decision to abandon her career in the financial/technology industry was impulsive and totally impractical. Why would a 25-year-old woman leave midway through an MBA program to go to a country where she didn’t know a soul?

But Heald only listened to her inner wanderlust. She had developed an obsession with Hong Kong while reading James Clavell’s novel *Tai Pan*. She just had to get there, and she would find a way to make it work.

As soon as she stepped off the plane and onto the teeming city streets, she was mesmerized. “This is the coolest place ever,” she thought. “It was East meets West. It was a British colony, but it was still 98 percent Chinese. Just walking down the street I was blown away. I reveled in getting out of my comfort zone.”

She stayed for seven years, traveling all over Asia, making many friends, meeting her first husband and starting a tech company in Hong Kong.

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In March of 2020, Remote Lands was forced to cancel or postpone 450 trips and furlough many staff. “It was horrible,” Heald said. By the summer of 2020, they were able to book trips to the Maldives, United Arab Emirates, Oman and Sri Lanka, some of the first Asian countries to reopen. But still the entire travel industry was down.

Now that many Asian countries are reopening and there is pent-up demand for adventure, business is ramping back up and she is hiring employees, often young people who in previous lives were lawyers, doctors, dentists or Wall Street traders. “They say, ‘Life is too short and I want to travel and do something I love.’” she said.

Even when many trips to Asia were on hold, Heald was immersing herself in the culture by studying Japanese on language apps for an hour a day. “It’s hard, but when I finally get to Japan, I will test it out and it will be fun.”

“I just always want to always keep learning and traveling, reading books about all these places. I’m fascinated by geopolitics, which is obviously hugely important in the world, especially during a time like this.”

Heald inherited her love of travel from her great-grandparents, who lived in Pittsburgh and traveled the world to buy 19th-century Asian artwork and antiques. A native of Greensburg, she transferred to Shady Side in ninth grade, becoming a five-day boarder. “Boarding was so much fun. It was like a pajama party every night, and we would all eat together in the dining hall.” Those bonds are still strong, thanks to Facebook. “Our class is very close-knit.”

Upon graduation, she went to New York City in 1980 to attend Barnard College, Columbia University. “I sort of fell into an MBA program at New York University’s Stern School of Business.” She learned about all the different cultures. “I spent a semester abroad in France and fell in love with travel as she made her way around Europe. Upon graduation, she worked as systems analyst on Wall Street. At night, she attended an MBA program at New York University’s Stern School of Business. During that time, she began reading books by Clavell, the initial spark of her interest in Asia and the driving force behind her abrupt life change. She says she regrets not finishing her MBA but never regretted a minute of her time exploring the diverse and fascinating continent. “European culture is so similar to ours, but in Asia, it has totally different religions, languages, the alphabets are so different. Comparing Chinese to Korean to Japanese to Vietnamese to Indonesian cultures, they’re all completely different from one another,” she said.

Heald worked first for the Apple distributor in Hong Kong, and then started her first company, an e-book publisher that focused exclusively on travel. Apple was the distributor, and they bundled the CD-ROMs with their computers. When Bill Gates launched the multimedia PC in 1992, she was on stage with him to demonstrate her travel CD-ROM.

Though the company was a success, she had to overcome many obstacles to learn how to do business in China, which was far less modern in the early 1990s. “Everybody was still riding bicycles, the roads were bad, and the GDP was much, much lower,” she said. “So doing business over there was extremely difficult, but it was also fascinating.”

She met her first husband there, a famous British author named Simon Winchester. “I was in an Apple showroom and I heard this plumy accent of a gentleman asking which Mac he should buy, and that was it,” she remembered. “We were engaged in Tonga six weeks later and married on a Russian ship by the captain as we cleared international waters in 1989. We honeymooned in Singapore, Madras and Cochin. My family back in Greensburg was furious that I had eloped and left them out, but living on the other side of the globe was much harder back then.”

She was catapulted into a whirlwind social life. Thanks to her husband’s connections and his close friendship with Sir David Tang, the couple enjoyed visits from John Cleese, Jeremy Irons, Princess Diana, Lauren Hutton and members of the British aristocracy. Though they divorced after 11 years and she has since remarried, they remain good friends.

After selling the company and moving back to New York, Heald started a second tech company called Wanderlust, which created educational software for children ages 8-14. “I managed to convince MGM to license me the Pink Panther character, who starred in our animated video games where he traveled around the world and learned about all the different cultures.” She said Wanderlust was Silicon Alley’s first IPO in 1995. Despite her success, she wasn’t in love with the tech world. “It changes so fast. You need a new business plan every six months.”

Heald’s business was booming until March of 2020, when COVID-19 utterly devastated the travel and tourism industry, especially to Asia, where many countries immediately closed their borders.

Heald inherits her love of travel from her great-grandparents, who lived in Pittsburgh and traveled the world to buy 19th-century Asian artwork and antiques. A native of Greensburg, she transferred to Shady Side in ninth grade, becoming a five-day boarder. “Boarding was so much fun. It was like a pajama party every night, and we would all eat together in the dining hall.” Those bonds are still strong, thanks to Facebook. “Our class is very close-knit.”

Upon graduation, she went to New York City in 1980 to attend Barnard College, Columbia University. “I sort of fell into a computer science major, which was brand new at the time. I figured computers might become important in the future.” She was one of the only girls in her classes.

She spent a semester abroad in France and fell in love with travel as she made her way around Europe. Upon graduation, she worked as systems analyst on Wall Street. At night, she attended an MBA program at New York University’s Stern School of Business. During that time, she began reading books by Clavell, the initial spark of her interest in Asia and the driving force behind her abrupt life change. She says she regrets not finishing her MBA but never regretted a minute of her time exploring the diverse and fascinating continent. “European culture is so similar to ours, but in Asia, it has totally different religions, languages, the alphabets are so different. Comparing Chinese to Korean to Japanese to Vietnamese to Indonesian cultures, they’re all completely different from one another,” she said.

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So, she asked herself: What do I love doing every morning? Her answer? Thinking about Asia, talking about Asia, traveling to Asia. In 2006, at age 42, she started Remote Lands. She found her true calling as she sends new adventurers into the parts of the world she loves.

Every day is an adventure, for both Heald and her clients.

“Luxury is being able to go to a small town in Japan or India, or Nepal or Bhutan, where you can meet local people and have an authentic experience.” — Catherine Heald
Today the 24-year-old is going full tilt on Zac’s Sweet Shop, his online dessert company, which received a boost when Beyoncé added it to her website’s directory of Black-owned businesses in June 2020, in the aftermath of the killing of George Floyd.

He didn’t meet Beyoncé personally, but somehow she found out about his Los Angeles-based online company that sells salted caramel pretzels and Oreo truffles and other bite-sized treats to customers around the country.

On June 19, 2020, Coughlin woke up to find that his website received 300 hits overnight. “This is really weird,” he thought as orders from all over the country poured in. “Then I looked at my analytics and saw Beyonce.com and I almost lost it.”

“I went from eight orders the previous week to over 100, and I got a bunch of press, including the Los Angeles Times, Huffington Post, Buzzfeed and more. It was an insane effect.”

But as happy as he was about the bump in sales, “it was a sad and heavy time, and made me sit back and think about what I could do as a Black business owner. Zac’s Sweet Shop saw sales like nothing I’ve seen before (from people investing in Black-owned businesses) so I immediately felt the need to donate a portion of proceeds to organizations doing important work. Seeing so many people come together made me feel proud to be part of the communities I am a part of, and I also wanted to lead by example and build a meaningful business with passion and purpose.”

Coughlin, who is biracial, wants to be an inspiration to other Black bakers and confection makers. He grew up eating dessert first and watching TV shows such as Cupcake Wars. But he never saw anyone who looked like him on those shows. He wanted to prove that he could excel in the predominantly white and female world of baking. Instead of mowing lawns, he would sell dessert trays for parties, earning about $400 to $500 at a time, and spreading the word with his first batch of business cards. Even back then, he watched his bottom line, earning profit margins of 60 to 70 percent.

Like many kids, Zac Coughlin loved sweets, the gooier the better. He would go to Dairy Queen and load up his Blizzard with cookie and candy bits and then scarf down Hostess snack cakes at home. At the mall, he would walk past the clothing stores to stare at the expensive chocolates in the windows of the Godiva shop, the way an adult might ogle a diamond ring in the jewelry shop.

“I was a candy-crazy child,” he said. Unlike other kids, Coughlin created his own chocolate company at age 13. When his family held a holiday party, Coughlin dipped strawberries, pretzels and Oreos into melted chocolate and decorated them with a multi-colored chocolate drizzle.

“Where did you get these?” the guests asked him after eating his treats. “These are so good.”

Zac’s Sweet Shop was born – and he soon brought it with him to Shady Side Academy Middle School, selling to students. He had the keen attention to ingredients and presentation of a pastry chef, an entrepreneur’s eye for profit margins, and his own drive to become the next big chocolate brand.
McDonald, a Senior School English teacher, worked with him on his writing, and Coughlin interned in the Academy's Communications Office, and he valued the mentorship of Lindsay Kovach, assistant director of communications. "Lindsay Kovach was an integral role in my growth at SSA – she not only allowed me to explore my business and creative pursuits but also was a huge guide for me," he said. "From interning in her office, working with her on expanding the Fox Chapel Farmers Market, to her listening and giving me so many fun and slightly crazy ideas for Zac's Sweet Shop. I value her friendship to this day."

For any insecurity he may have felt at first, he overcame it with his ebullience and as community-building as any student I have ever met," McDonald said. "He was always looking for the next laugh. What you didn’t see was the deep ambition underneath and the commitment to his dreams. It was an unusual combination."

There is no better place to sell candy than a school full of hungry teenagers. He set up shop in the hallway of the Middle School – until an administrator took him aside and politely said, "Zac, I love what you're doing, but we just aren’t sure if it’s legal to do it in school.

Coughlin said he understood and would take his business off-campus, but he remembers thinking to himself – “I’m going to have to figure this out.”

The orders still came in, and Coughlin and his father started delivering the sweets to his classmates after school. "I was always hustling, and I was never going to take ‘no’ for an answer.

When there were school dances and then prom, the student committee often bought desserts from Coughlin. "It was like, Zac makes these amazing sweets. Everyone loves them. We should get them," said Ananya Satyawardi ’17, his classmate and friend.

"Zac had a magnetism about him," she said. "He was, and still is, one of the nicest people you will ever meet. He would talk to everyone, regardless of what clique they were in."

He also dreamed big for college, setting his sights on the University of Southern California, a highly competitive school. He realized they were right and what it meant for his identity. "Are those your real parents?" people would ask. "Have you ever met your birth parents? What country did you come from?"

He said being adopted, growing up in McKeesport and attending Shady Side Academy has allowed him to identify and relate with a variety of people from diverse backgrounds, an asset as an entrepreneur.

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BOYS BASKETBALL – WPIAL CHAMPIONS

Varsity Record: 20-7
Captains: Thompson Lau, Josh Chu, Rian Fitzgerald, Ethan Salvia
Highlight: The boys basketball team had a historic season, finishing as WPIAL champions for the second time in school history and the first time in 22 years. Led by Head Coach David Vadnais, the Bulldogs utilized a strong group of senior leaders and underclassman talent to win the WPIAL title, defeating Avonworth, 66-54, at the Petersen Events Center. The team advanced to the second round of PIAA playoffs, where they fell to South Allegheny in double overtime, 69-58.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Varsity Record: 9-12
Captains: Zion Jackson, Natalie Stevens, Cece Messner
Highlight: The girls basketball team finished the season with a 9-12 record, finishing fifth in the first round of play. Senior Natalie Stevens was selected to play in the prestigious 2022 Roundball Classic All-Star Games, which feature the top senior basketball players in Western Pennsylvania.

GIRLS SWIMMING

Varsity Record: 7-3
Captains: Kira Meyers, Chloe Wells
Highlight: The girls swimming team qualified for the WPIAL Championships in eight events, earning medals in three and qualifying for PIAAs in four. Freshman Soren Cooper earned a fifth-place finish in the 200 Freestyle and a third-place finish in the 500 Freestyle. Cooper, Kevin Johnson, Dev Weiss and Will Badeer finished seventh in the 200 Freestyle relay and 10th in the 400 Freestyle relay. At the PIAA Championships, Cooper gained All-State honors by placing 10th in the 200 Freestyle and ninth in the 500 Freestyle.

BOYS SWIMMING

Varsity Record: 5-5
Captains: Dev Weiss, Kevin Johnson
Highlights: The boys swimming team qualified for the WPIAL Championships in eight events, earning medals in three and qualifying for PIAAs in four. Freshman Soren Cooper earned a fifth-place finish in the 200 Freestyle and a third-place finish in the 500 Freestyle. Cooper, Kevin Johnson, Dev Weiss and Will Badeer finished seventh in the 200 Freestyle relay and 10th in the 400 Freestyle relay. At the PIAA Championships, Cooper gained All-State honors by placing 10th in the 200 Freestyle and ninth in the 500 Freestyle.

BOYS PREP ICE HOCKEY

Record: 20-20-1
Captain: Cole Douglas
Highlight: The Bulldogs hosted and won their Thanksgiving tournament, going 4-0 with wins over Hoosac School, the Hun School, Blythe Academy and defeating Wyoming Seminary School in the championship game. SSA also hosted the Midwest Prep Hockey League (MPHL) playoffs in February, falling in the first round to Lake Forest.

GIRLS PREP ICE HOCKEY

Record: 10-7
Captains: Izee Powell, Jaidan Fahmy
Highlight: This was the first season the Bulldogs competed in the North American Prep Hockey Association (NAPHA). The team was consistent and competitive, finishing 10-7. SSA hosted a weekend of NAPHA action on Feb. 18-20, going 2-1 in three games.

GIRLS SQUASH

Varsity Record: 4-3
Captains: Lars Barkman, Bobby O’Brien
Highlight: After no matches in 2020-2021 due to COVID-19, the girls squash team had one of the best seasons in recent history. SSA was seeded No. 12 and finished nationals in the same spot. The past season was one of the most successful in recent years, and the team is looking forward to next season.

BOYS SQUASH

Record: 5-3
Captains: Megan Dollard, Morgan Golden
Highlight: After no matches in 2020-2021 due to COVID-19, the girls squash team had one of the best seasons in recent history. The Bulldogs were ranked No. 12 heading into the US Squash High School Nationals in Philadelphia, Pa. SSA was seeded No. 12 and finished nationals in the same spot. Although Molly Walsh beat Hill’s top-ranked player, SSA finished third in the division at nationals.
BOYS LACROSSE – WPIAL CHAMPIONS

Varsity Record: 17-6
Captains: Thompson Lau, Andy Marcus, Jacob Hintermaier, Will Badeer, Ethan Salvia

Highlight: The Bulldogs won their first WPIAL Championship since 2014, defeating Mt. Lebanon, 12-11, on an exciting overtime goal from junior JP Henry.

The season ended in the PIAA quarterfinals with a loss to eventual state champion Radnor, 10-7. The team also finished second in the Midwest Scholastic Lacrosse Association Tournament, and Ethan Salvia was named WPIAL Player of the Year for the second straight season.

BASEBALL

Record: 9-5
Captains: Sam Luketich, Josh Chu, Bobby O’Brien

Highlight: The SSA baseball team finished second in sectional play with a 9-5 overall record. The Bulldogs advanced to the WPIAL playoffs, but fell to Laurel by a score 3-1 in the WPIAL Championship since 2014, defeating Mt. Lebanon, 12-11, on an exciting overtime goal from junior JP Henry.

The season ended in the PIAA quarterfinals with a loss to eventual state champion Radnor, 10-7. The team also finished second in the Midwest Scholastic Lacrosse Association Tournament, and Ethan Salvia was named WPIAL Player of the Year for the second straight season.

SOFTBALL

Record: 3-11
Captains: Aniya Tayal, Sophia White, Marnie McCormick

Highlight: The Bulldog softball team completed its 2022 season with a rousing 20-18 senior night win against Northgate. The season featured leadership from many long-term stalwarts, effective pitching from all four pitchers and a multitude of players braving new position assignments. With a large team returning, the Bulldogs expect good things next season.

METHODS

Highlight: The SSA girls lacrosse team won its third straight WPIAL Championship, defeating Mt. Lebanon, 15-7, in the title game. The team advanced to the quarterfinals of the PIAA tournament before falling to Wilson, 11-7. The Bulldogs wrapped up the 2022 season with an 18-4 overall record.

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Captains: Thompson Lau, Andy Marcus, Jacob Hintermaier, Will Badeer, Ethan Salvia

Highlight: The Bulldogs won their first WPIAL Championship since 2014, defeating Mt. Lebanon, 12-11, on an exciting overtime goal from junior JP Henry. The season ended in the PIAA quarterfinals with a loss to eventual state champion Radnor, 10-7. The team also finished second in the Midwest Scholastic Lacrosse Association Tournament, and Ethan Salvia was named WPIAL Player of the Year for the second straight season.

BASEBALL

Record: 9-5
Captains: Sam Luketich, Josh Chu, Bobby O’Brien

Highlight: The SSA baseball team finished second in sectional play with a 9-5 overall record. The Bulldogs advanced to the WPIAL playoffs, but fell to Laurel by a score 3-1 in the WPIAL Championship since 2014, defeating Mt. Lebanon, 12-11, on an exciting overtime goal from junior JP Henry.

The season ended in the PIAA quarterfinals with a loss to eventual state champion Radnor, 10-7. The team also finished second in the Midwest Scholastic Lacrosse Association Tournament, and Ethan Salvia was named WPIAL Player of the Year for the second straight season.

SOFTBALL

Record: 3-11
Captains: Aniya Tayal, Sophia White, Marnie McCormick

Highlight: The Bulldog softball team completed its 2022 season with a rousing 20-18 senior night win against Northgate. The season featured leadership from many long-term stalwarts, effective pitching from all four pitchers and a multitude of players braving new position assignments. With a large team returning, the Bulldogs expect good things next season.

METHODS

Highlight: The SSA girls lacrosse team won its third straight WPIAL Championship, defeating Mt. Lebanon, 15-7, in the title game. The team advanced to the quarterfinals of the PIAA tournament before falling to Wilson, 11-7. The Bulldogs wrapped up the 2022 season with an 18-4 overall record.

BOYS LACROSSE – WPIAL CHAMPIONS

Varsity Record: 17-6
Captains: Thompson Lau, Andy Marcus, Jacob Hintermaier, Will Badeer, Ethan Salvia

Highlight: The Bulldogs won their first WPIAL Championship since 2014, defeating Mt. Lebanon, 12-11, on an exciting overtime goal from junior JP Henry. The season ended in the PIAA quarterfinals with a loss to eventual state champion Radnor, 10-7. The team also finished second in the Midwest Scholastic Lacrosse Association Tournament, and Ethan Salvia was named WPIAL Player of the Year for the second straight season.

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SPRING

GIRLS LACROSSE – WPIAL CHAMPIONS

Varsity Record: 18-4
Captains: Dylan Green, Cece Messner, Molly Walsh, Jenny Woodings

Highlight: The SSA girls lacrosse team won its third straight WPIAL Championship, defeating Mt. Lebanon, 15-7, in the title game. The team advanced to the quarterfinals of the PIAA tournament before falling to Wilson, 11-7. The Bulldogs wrapped up the 2022 season with an 18-4 overall record.

BOYS TRACK & FIELD

Record: 10-2
Captains: Phil Police, Logan Starta, Charlie Stafford, Hunter Graham

Highlight: The Bulldogs had 10 athletes qualify to compete in the WPIAL Individual Championships in six events. Isaiah Grier finished 10th in the 200 meters; Phil Police finished 12th in the 400; Eddie DeBruce finished 13th in the 100; Police, Charlie Stafford, Chris Sullivan and Grier finished 16th in the 4x400 relay; Stafford, Ethan Kolek, Liam Atkinson and Dane Thomas placed 14th in the 4x800 relay; and DeBruce, Isaiah Beckham, Deacon Durham and Grier competed in the 4x100 relay.

GIRLS TRACK & FIELD

Record: 6-4
Captains: Phil Pollice, Logan Starta, Drew Hines, Emma Lammert, Karen Linares Mendoza, Kira Meyers

Highlight: The Bulldogs had 10 athletes qualify to compete in the WPIAL Championships in six events, with two winning medals and one advancing to PIAAs. Chelsea Hartman took second place in the 3000 meters and Gabby Hill-Junke took eighth place in the 200. Maila Davis, Reese Rutenberg, Dre’Onna Lewis and Hill-Junke placed ninth in the 4x100 relay. Rutenberg placed 10th in the 100; Ortiz Ortz placed 11th in the shot put, and Maggie Marquette. Kate Nury, Avery Litwin and Karen Linares Mendoza placed 13th in the 4x800 relay. At the PIAA Championships, Hartman set a personal record and finished No. 11 in the 3000.

BOYS ULTIMATE FRISBEE

Record: 6-3
Captains: Wilson Todd, Dev Weiss, Ben Runnette

Highlight: The boys ultimate frisbee team finished as the Pittsburgh High School Ultimate League (PHUL) Division II runners-up. Senior Dev Weiss was named to the PHUL All-City Team and Head Coach Matt Weiss was named the PHUL Boys Division II Coach of the Year.

GIRLS ULTIMATE FRISBEE

Record: 5-2
Captains: Tiffany Wu, Erin Vanetta

Highlight: The girls ultimate frisbee team finished as the Pittsburgh High School Ultimate League (PHUL) Division II runners-up. Senior Erin Vanetta was named MVP of the finals. Senior Vanetta was named the PHUL Girls Division I Player of the Year and to the PHUL All-City Team.
College Athletes

Thirteen more seniors signed letters committing to college athletics programs in March and May, bringing the total number of college athletes in the Class of 2022 to 18. The spring signees included:

- Will Badeer – Lacrosse, U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (NCAA Division III)
- Lars Barkman – Squash, MIT (NCAA Division III)
- Dylan Green – Lacrosse & Ice Hockey, Wesleyan University (NCAA Division III, NESCAC)
- Gabby Hill-Junke – Soccer, Bates College (NCAA Division III)
- Drew Hilmes – Track & Field, University of Maryland (NCAA Division I)
- Jacob Hintermaier – Lacrosse, Maine Maritime Academy (NCAA Division III)
- Ericson Kimbel – Soccer, Pennsylvania State University, New Kensington (USCAA)
- Thompson Lau – Lacrosse, Amherst College (NCAA Division III)
- Cecelia Messner – Lacrosse, Columbia University (NCAA Division I)
- Izee Powell – Ice Hockey, Dartmouth College (NCAA Division I)
- Lacika Tompa – Rowing, Marietta College (NCAA Division III)
- Wes Warden – Golf, Cornell University (NCAA Division I)
- Erin Vanetta – Soccer, Westminster College (NCAA Division III)
Alumni Gatherings

**NAPLES**
In January, alumni, parents, grandparents and friends gathered at The Old Collier Club to welcome Bart Griffith ’93 back to Naples, Fla., for the first time since 2020. SSA grandparents Helen Hanna Casey and Stephen Casey, and Mary Anne and Hody Hanna hosted the event, along with current parents Gus Engel and trustee emerita Annie Hanna Engel. Griffith spoke to the guests about current successes and future plans for Shady Side.

**BEVERLY HILLS**
Alumni Engagement Officer and former Athletic Director Gene Deal, along with Chief Philanthropy Officer Dr. Ali Saras, hosted an alumni reception in Beverly Hills, Calif., in March. Alumni from six different decades were in attendance to reconnect and reminisce about their time at SSA.

**NEW YORK**
Jim Finkel ’78 hosted an alumni reception and wine tasting for more than 50 guests at The University Club in Manhattan on May 12. Finkel shared a variety of Burgundy wines from his personal collection, and President Bart Griffith ’93 thanked those in attendance for the continued support.

**NATIONAL BULLDOG DAY HAPPY HOUR AND DONATION COLLECTION**
Shady Side’s Alumni Council organized a donation drive drop-off and happy hour at Hitchhiker Brewing in Sharpsburg to celebrate National Bulldog Day on April 21. To help support the student-organized donation drive, alums were asked to donate items to FurKid Rescue, a foster-based animal rescue in Pittsburgh. Thank you to Whitney Menarcheck ’06 for organizing the event, and to all who participated.

51 DAYS TO GRADUATION
In anticipation of commencement, the Alumni & Development Office treated the senior class to a food truck lunch to celebrate their resilience and hard work during the past several years. A big welcome to the alumni community to the Class of 2022!

**THANK YOU**
To the Shady Side Academy community for coming together to make the 2021-2022 Blue & Gold Fund campaign a success!

Because of your generosity, Shady Side surpassed the $2.2 million goal and received $2,259,090 from 1,377 donors.

For more information, visit www.supportssa.org

**Our future is BRIGHT**

46 / SUMMER 2022 / SHADY SIDE ACADEMY

SHADY SIDE ACADEMY / SUMMER 2022 / 47
Included in this section are news items received through May 1, 2022.

1966

John Harrison writes: "Life continues to be good here in New Hampshire despite the COVID-19 chaos of the past couple years. Les and I are still loving our bit of paradise on the Great Bay outside Portsmouth. We are still doing a lot of traveling; some business, mostly pleasure, as our kids are now getting on with their lives in Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles. Believe it or not, there are still some colleagues who are crazy or desperate enough to still want to work with me. I’ve been in Vancouver recently shooting new episodes of the Creepshow television series for Shudder/AMC. I am also still writing/directing the podcast series, Sounds Scary for Shudder/AMC. I am also still writing for Universal Music Group, which I hope directing the podcast series, "The Leon Hale Jr., Trauma Center at University of Florida (UF) Health, Jacksonville. The trauma center, named after the late UF Health CEO who passed away last year, will be a state-of-the-art level one trauma center to serve the needs of Jacksonville residents and the surrounding communities.

1967

Former astronaut Jay Apt virtually visited the SSA Middle School on May 10, sharing how his experiences building model rockets and reading science fiction as a student at SSA evolved into a career in aerospace engineering that included four NASA space shuttle missions. He shared many stunning photos of the view of Earth from the space shuttle and said that was the best part of being in space.

1968

Erik Buell is currently recording an album. He writes: "The album is guitar-centric stuff. Stories in a range of emotions with rock, country and Americana music influences. I am fortunate to be recording in the Los Angeles area with some really good players, so I’ll see how it comes out."

1973

Henry Posner III’s railroad company, ROC Deutschland, was contracted in March by the German government to run a daily Ukrainian refugee train. Posner speaks four languages including Russian and German but was aboard the first train transporting refugees and served as a translator. ROC, which stands for Railroad Development Corporation, was founded in 1987.

1977

The Second Act Show, hosted by Kerry Hannon and John Tarroff, featured guest Carl Kurlander on April 21. Kurlander shared lessons he’s learned from his career and establishing a non-profit. You can view the YouTube video at secondact.show.

Kerry Hannon joined Yahoo Finance as a senior columnnist covering work and jobs, retirement and entrepreneurship with some travel reporting.

Dr. Marc Harrison, who is president and CEO of Intermountain Healthcare and a pediatric critical care physician, spoke at an SSA Senior School community assembly about his lifetime pursuit of making health care more equitable and affordable for all, and the work he has done transforming Intermountain’s strategy from a “sick model” to a “well model.” His advice to students was to seek to make the world a better place by starting small, learning from failure, acting with integrity and courage, and being “absolutely intolerant of other people’s intolerances.”

In April, Florida Governor Ron Desantis announced a commitment to funding the Dr. Leon Hale Jr., Trauma Center at University of Florida (UF) Health, Jacksonville. The trauma center, named after the late UF Health CEO who passed away last year, will be a state-of-the-art level one trauma center to serve the needs of Jacksonville residents and the surrounding communities.

1984

Margaret Hazlett was named Greenwich Academy’s next head of school beginning July 1, 2023. Greenwich Academy, located in Greenwich, Conn., is a college preparatory day school for girls. Hazlett currently serves as dean of students at Franklin & Marshall College.

1990

Professional jazz musician Craig Davis hosted a workshop for the SSA Senior School Jazz Combo in the Hillman Center for Performing Arts on Feb. 27. During the workshop, the combo was able to polish its repertoire for the Winter Concert. The two pieces they worked on were Desafinado and Joy Spring.

1993

Artie Giles was an award recipient of the Brooks Running: Inspiring Coaches Program, which recognizes high school track and cross country coaches who have gone above and beyond for their athletes.

1994

Richard Hughes, chair of the United Kingdom’s Office for Budget Responsibility, was profiled in The Guardian in December.

2001

Brendan Griffin is pictured here on the set of Unsinkable in Pittsburgh. He plays Charles Lightoller in the big-screen adaptation of the play Titanic at All Ships, which is about U.S. Senate inquiries into who was at fault for lives lost in the 1912 disaster.
2022
Nicole (Baraff) Sherman is the founder and CEO of HighView, a program which connects high-potential students from underserved communities with industry leading companies, mentors and resources, setting them up for success in college and beyond.

2003
Jen Syra authored her debut book Big Time: Stories by Jen Syra and was a featured speaker at a Pittsburgh Arts and Lectures Series event on July 21, where she was interviewed on stage by SSA history teacher Matt Weiss.

2010
Olivia Seecof completed her fellowship in hospice and palliative medicine at Mount Sinai, New York, N.Y., in July and started as an attending physician at NYU Langone Health. She will be doing outpatient supportive oncology and inpatient palliative care consults.

2000
Left to right: Zachary Weidner, James Antoniono, Ashley Bower and Henry Martone met up for an annual ski trip in Utah.

2002
Brian Gumberg and Jackie Atlass were married in March 2022 in Pittsburgh. Shady Side alumni in attendance included Sumit Gupta, Adam Bell, Beth (Maher) Grover, Amit Grover, Todd Smith, Meredith (Armstrong) Repeatto, Mark Lovett, Mac Lynch, Brett Gerson and Josh Marks.

2001
Jen Syra attended the SSA History Lectures Series event on July 21, where she was interviewed on stage by SSA history teacher Matt Weiss.

2009

2012
Dr. Joshua Pettengill married Dr. Michelle Stefanelli on May 15, 2021, in Scranton, Pa. The two met while attending Gettysburg College and graduated medical school together in May 2021. They reside in Philadelphia, Pa., where both are completing their residencies.

2017
Luke Tomasovic began a combined M.D./Ph.D. degree at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in June 2022. He intends to complete his Ph.D. in biomedical engineering, and for his graduate work, hopes to develop antibody-based therapeutics that target cancer cell proliferation and migration. Luke graduated in 2021 from the Georgia Institute of Technology with a B.S. in chemical & biomolecular engineering, and he previously conducted research at the University of Pittsburgh, Georgia Tech, Emory University and the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. He recently co-founded educational nonprofit A Great Work Foundation, and plans to leverage his career in medicine to address disparities in educational access.

2021
At the Big East Outdoor Track Championships, Georgetown University freshman Melissa Riggins won the 800-meter run with a time of 2:04.78, setting a new facility record and earning All-Big East honors. Riggins also qualified to compete in the NCAA East Preliminaries in May.

2015
Jackson Fitzgerald was named one of Pittsburgh’s 30 Under 30 by the Pittsburgh Business Times. Fitzgerald co-founded Hedge Pay in 2019, which aims to bring a popular banking trend among the young, known as round-up savings, and wed it to other businesses that could bank on those round-ups.

2005
Kyle Woffley received the 2021 Andrew Krepinevich Writing Award for his book, Military Statecraft and the Rise of Shaping in World Politics at the Army Strategist Association’s Awards Breakfast in October 2021.
Shady Side Academy alumnus and Western Michigan wide receiver Skyy Moore '19 was selected by the Kansas City Chiefs in the second round of the 2022 NFL Draft on April 29, 2022, making him the 54th pick overall in the draft.

Moore is the third SSA player ever drafted by the NFL. Paul Martha '60 was drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers in the first round in 1964, and Eugene Baker '94 was drafted by the Atlanta Falcons in the fifth round in 1999.

A native of New Kensington, Pa., Moore played quarterback and defensive back at SSA. As a senior in 2018, he led Shady Side to a 9-0 regular-season record, an Allegheny Conference title and a No. 1 ranking in WPIAL Class 2A, while earning all-state, all-conference and Allegheny Conference Offensive Player of the Year honors. He is the first player in WPIAL history to run and pass for more than 1,000 yards in two seasons. Moore went on to play for NCAA Division I Western Michigan University, where he switched to wide receiver and was a two-time first-team All-MAC selection during his three years with the Broncos. As a junior in 2021, he tied for ninth in the FBS with 95 receptions for a team-high 1,292 yards and 10 scores in 12 starts.

Moore declared for the 2022 NFL Draft in January and had a strong showing at the NFL Combine in early March, impressing scouts with his speed (4.41 in the 40-yard dash), work ethic and large, sure hands. ESPN football analyst Mel Kiper called him “the most underrated player in this draft at any position.”

In joining the Chiefs, Moore will catch passes from one of the NFL’s top quarterbacks, All-Pro and Super Bowl MVP Patrick Mahomes.
KARL J. KAUFMANN JR. ’39
Karl Jacob Kaufmann Jr. passed away May 10, 2022. During World War II, he led the University of Michigan to join the U.S. Army, training as a radio technician. He began his career in retail at Gimbel’s in Pittsburgh, becoming well-known in the retail industry. He worked for a variety of chain stores, ultimately serving as vice president and women’s merchandise manager at Hamburger’s (Phillips-Van Heusen) in Baltimore. He was preceded in death by his wife, Elaine Kaufmann. He is survived by his children, Ailyn Kaufmann (Bruce Ocksey), Karl (Martha) Kaufmann Jr., and Katherine Kaufmann.

DR. GEORGE H. GILMORE ’42
Dr. George Higg Gilmour passed away Feb. 4, 2022. After serving two years in the U.S. Navy during World War II, he graduated from Bowdoin College and went on to the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. Professionally, he was a passionate physician, successful businessman and innovative software founder. He was preceded in death by his wife, Janet Elizabeth Donaldson, son, George H. Gilmour Jr., and brothers, Dr. James Gilmore ’41 and Samuel Taylor Gilmour ’44. He is survived by his children, Anne Gilmour (Richard Holland) Nicolle ’76 and James (Gina) Gilmore ’79, nine grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

MICHAEL G. TURNER ’43
J. MURRAY EGAN ’44
James Murray Egan passed away Nov. 29, 2021. He graduated from Yale University and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law, where he was note and case editor of the Harvard Law Review. He actively practiced law for more than 65 years, first as a partner in the firm of Weller, Wicks and Wallace, and, after the practices combined, with Metz Lewis.
William L. Piper ’65

William Lloyd Piper passed away Jan. 19, 2022. He was a graduate of Drexel University, where he earned a degree in electrical engineering. He worked at Detrol Delphi Electronics, where he earned three patents for his work developing technology to control airbag systems, antilock brakes, blind spot detection and navigation hardware. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Mary Lynn Clover, and one grandson. He is survived by his former spouse, Carolyn Addenbrook.

William G. Van Der Veer III ’71

Hugh Van Der Veer III passed away Jan. 4, 2022. He was survived by his wife, Lucie, his children, Hugh Van Der Veer and Barbara (Luis) Lengs, and two granddaughters.

Hugh G. Van Der Veer III ’71

HUGH G. VAN DER VEER III ’71

Robert Blair, husband of former Senior School faculty member Charlene Blair and father of Ryan Blair ’95

Dr. Marcello Corpuz Jr., father of Marcello Corpuz ’86, Marcello Corpuz ’87, Veronica Corpuz ’92 and grandfather of Nico Gromkowsi ’26 and AJ Thomson ’32

Cindy Davis, mother of Scott Lerch ’86, Matthew Lerch ’86, Tiffany Lewis ’90 and Brandon Lerch ’94

Margaret DiPasquale, mother of Tony DiPasquale ’93

Spero Drelles, father of William Drelles ’72, Robert Drelles ’74, Thomas Drelles ’76 and Todd Drelles ’81 (deceased)

Elizabeth (McCoy) Fisher, wife of Patrick Fisher ’03

Cora Mae Francioni, mother of Director of Facilities Paul Francioni

Dr. Abraham Friedman, father of Eli Friedman ’01

Frank Fuhrer, grandfather of Casey Wagner ’05, Francis Fuhrer ’18, James Fuhrer ’19 and Garrett Fuhrer ’21

Arthur Gilkes, father of Artie Gilkes ’93 and John Gilkes ’03

Marcia Gumberg, grandmother of Jill Gumbert ’97, Amanda Gumbert ’98, Brian Gumbert ’01, Zachary Gumbert ’03, Ali Gumbert ’10 and Stanley Gumbert ’30

Susan Hassensplug, wife of John Hassensplug ’55

Yongboon Kim, mother of Ann Kim ’83 and Alice Kim Blake ’88

Kenneth Maurer, husband of Debi Maurer, Academy director of administration & planning

Betty Jane Miller, mother of Glenn T. Miller Jr. ’74 and Anne E. Miller ’77

Stephen Olyphant, stepfather of David Rossow ’86 and Jonathan Rossow ’97

Dr. Pravathi Rao, mother of Dr. Bindu Gu’ti ’91 and grandmother of Krishna Lakkomsetty ’23

Richard Schafer, father of Country Day School faculty member Katie Schafer

Jon Carl Slesinger Sr., father of Lisa Slesinger ’80 and Jon Slesinger ’82

Michael Szlachetka, father of Senior School Computer Science Teacher Dave Szlachetka, father-in-law to Academy Comptroller Amy Szlachetka, and grandfather of Donald (Doc) Szlachetka ’16 and Jose Szlachetka ’19

Diana Terezis, mother of Dr. Cynthia Terezis ’81, Dr. Teresa Terezis-Klemes ’84 and Nick Terezis ’87, and grandmother of Ava Terezis ’25

Jane Vodrey, mother of Sarah Vodrey ’78, Catherine Vodrey ’81 and William Vodrey ’83, and grandmother of Julia Hendrickson ’04, Valerie Hendrickson ’07, Henry Klein ’11 and Lilian Klein ’14

Wayne Yoest, father of Eric Yoest ’16
Register online at shadysideacademy.org/homecoming by Sept. 30!