

WINTER 2022-2023

shady side

academy



SSA CELEBRATES THE OPENING OF THE
GENE DEAL FIELDS

HOMEcoming 2022 • JOSH KALLA '09 • LIA WINTER '13

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Junior School and Country Day School
families came together at the Senior
School on Dec. 14 for Winterfest, a new
lower school holiday celebration that
included a "Glow Gallery" of blacklight
artwork created by PK-5 students.

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President's Message

DEAR SHADY SIDE ACADEMY COMMUNITY:



"Hang tough, Griff. You're gonna be a player. Tellin' you something right now, you're gonna be a good one."

Well, I never did become very good at basketball. But in retrospect Gene's belief in me was not really about my performance in the gym. His encouragement served more broadly to expand my own sense of who I was becoming as a young man and how I might grow to seize my opportunities at Shady Side, whether on the court or off.

With the opening of the Gene Deal Fields, one of the largest single expanses of field turf in America, we further

In this issue of *Shady Side Academy Magazine*, we celebrate both the completion of the Gene Deal Fields and the transformative generational impact its namesake continues to have at Shady Side.

Gene Deal has helped to inspire many championship seasons at SSA, but for him it never has been about winning alone. In fact, as the point guard on Gene's winless 1989-1990 freshman boys' basketball team, I benefited personally from both his positivity in the face of defeat and his centered emphasis on the whole child. Don't get me wrong – Gene simply hated to lose – but he remained ceaselessly encouraging through the losses, focused on learning and improvement.

extend so many of the growth opportunities that Shady Side can offer its students.

The space offers SSA athletics important utility as well as a compelling spectator venue and communal gathering area for teams, parents and alumni. But perhaps most remarkable to first-time visitors is the startling beauty of it all, thanks to the project's first-class finishes, the inspiring vistas and the gorgeous natural backdrop of Fox Chapel's leafy woodlands.

On behalf of the Shady Side community, I want to thank the 150 donors who understood the vision for this facility and made it all possible. Their generosity will serve students and the community for years to come.

As perhaps the most stunning outdoors sports complex in Western Pennsylvania, the Gene Deal Fields is a fitting testament to Gene's legacy as SSA's 'encourager-in-chief' for more than 40 years.

Glory to Shady Side and Go Bulldogs!

With Gratitude,

Bart Griffith '93
President

NEWS AND NOTES aroundtheacademy



WSSA-TV Moves to New Studio Space

The Emmy Award-winning WSSA-TV Film Club at the Senior School has a new home! The club moved from its small studio behind the stage of Memorial Hall to a larger, two-room studio and meeting space on the lower level of Bayard House. The studio is outfitted with new video equipment and a mural of the WSSA-TV logo on the wall, painted by senior **Chelsea Kaufmann**. The Bayard studio also serves as the home of the new WSSA Sports Broadcast Team (see page 30) and the office of Visual Media Manager **James Knox**, who advises both WSSA programs.

New Junior School Kitchen & Cafeteria Open

On Sept. 7, the Junior School celebrated the grand opening of its brand-new kitchen, serving area and cafeteria spaces. President **Bart Griffith '93**, Head of Lower Schools **Dr. Jennifer Asmonga**, Assistant Heads of Junior School **Melanie Smith** and **Dan Stern**, Director of Facilities **Paul Francioni** and Metz General Manager **Cindy Wise** took part in a ribbon-cutting ceremony in the morning, attended by fifth and third grade students. Then at lunch time, students utilized the new spaces while enjoying carnival foods such as corn dogs, walking tacos, waffle fries, churros and funnel cake.

The 2,000-square-foot kitchen and serving area was created by renovating the largely underutilized locker rooms adjacent to the gymnasium. The new spaces include two freezers, a refrigerator, convection oven, six-burner stove, steamer, hot and cold serving line, salad bar, dish return room, dry storage room, table storage room, and boys' and girls' restrooms. For two hours a day, a section of Withers Gymnasium now serves as a sizable lunchroom. The bright new spaces are painted white, blue and gold and decorated with SSA Bulldog logos. The former kitchen and cafeteria spaces were transformed into two new classrooms and an office.





Student Musicians Selected to PMEA District Festivals

Six Senior School musicians were selected to perform in Pennsylvania Music Educators Association District 1 festivals. In November, sophomore cellist **Chance Handel** performed in the Honors String Orchestra Festival, while senior **Grant Cummings** was the principal clarinetist and concertmaster and senior **Krishna Lakkimsetty** played flute in the Honors Band Festival. Handel, Cummings and senior violist **Hannah Song** were chosen for the District Orchestra Festival in January, while Cummings, Lakkimsetty, junior saxophonist **Otis Liu** and junior tuba player **Aaron Little** earned spots in the District Band Festival in February.



AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

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

Shady Side Academy maintained its No. 1 ranking as the Best Private K-12 School in the Pittsburgh area for 2023 by Niche, the leading platform connecting families with schools and colleges. Shady Side also ranked the No. 1 Best Private High School, Best College Prep Private High School, Best Boarding High School, and Best High School for STEM.



Three Faculty Members Named to Endowed Chairs

Three faculty members were named to endowed chair positions for a five-year term (2022-2027). Junior School fifth grade teacher **Christina Blazin** was named the Richard K. Mellon Chair in Mathematics, succeeding Junior School fourth grade teacher **Lisa Budd**. Senior School English teacher **Paul Ejzak '89** was named the Julia D. and James C. Rea Chair in the Humanities, succeeding Middle School social studies teacher **Molly Braver '94**. Senior School science teacher **Dr. Devon Renock** was named the George and Ann Magovern Chair in Science, succeeding Senior School science teacher **Dr. Scott Peterson**.



Junior Wins Hello Neighbor Inaugural Youth Champion Award

Junior **Deven Nahata** was the inaugural recipient of Hello Neighbor's Youth Champion Award, in recognition of the incredible volunteer work he has done for the nonprofit that supports refugee and immigrant families in Pittsburgh. Hello Neighbor founder and CEO **Sloane (Berrent) Davidson '97** presented Nahata with the award at the organization's gala on Sept. 18.

The grandchild of immigrants, Nahata has been volunteering with Hello Neighbor since seventh grade, when an SSA Middle School social studies project challenged him to find a way to help remedy a societal issue he cared about. Since then, Nahata has organized a variety of drives at Shady Side to collect books, school supplies, toiletries, household goods, gift cards and more for families served by Hello Neighbor.

"I think the future is bright with people like Deven in anyone's corner, and we are so incredibly honored to have him in ours," said Davidson.



SENIOR DEBATER NAMED ACADEMIC ALL-AMERICAN

Senior **Nichole Poltinnikov** was recognized by the National Speech and Debate Association with its Academic All-American award, which recognizes academic rigor, competitive speech and debate success and personal excellence. Fewer than 1 percent of NSDA student members earn Academic All-American awards. Poltinnikov ranks in the top five in the nation in Lincoln-Douglas Debate by the NSDA.

National Merit Semifinalists Named

Six members of the Class of 2023 were named semifinalists in the 68th Annual National Merit Scholarship Program.

Ella Gardner, Emma Gardner, Elaine Gombos, Michael McCoy, Savita Thompson and **Alexander Todd** will continue in the competition for 7,250 National Merit Scholarships worth \$28 million that will be offered in the spring. Four additional seniors were named National Merit Commended Students.



Pittsburgh Playwrights Theater Actors Perform Scenes From *Jitney*

On Sept. 16, actors from Pittsburgh Playwrights Theater Company visited the Senior School to perform scenes from their production of *Jitney*, followed by a Q&A. The August Wilson play depicts the lives of drivers at a jitney cab station in Pittsburgh's Hill District in 1977. The visit was arranged by **Adam Janosko**, who teaches an English elective on August Wilson, and parent **Mark Clayton Southers**, PPTCO founder and the play's director.

Senior Sworn in as Fox Chapel Borough Junior Council Person

Senior **Bree Murphy** was one of two teens sworn in as junior council persons for Fox Chapel Borough on Oct. 17. Junior council persons participate in council business such as budget meetings, public hearings and community events. The program is designed to develop leadership skills, give teens a voice in their municipality and raise political awareness.



Seniors Present Summer Science Research

In 2021-2022, nine juniors took the Senior School's Science Research Seminar, which advances scientific research skills and places students in university labs for summer internships. The students, now seniors, presented their research on Sept. 14 in the McIlroy Center for Science and Innovation.

- **Max Wickland** and **Carson Curley** worked in the University of Pittsburgh's Physical Metallurgy and Materials Design Laboratory, optimizing the strength and functionality of metal alloys used in aviation and naval applications.
- **Hannah Song** and **Emily Gutstein** worked in Pitt's Department of Biological Sciences, isolating DNA from microscopic parasites to study the co-evolution of parasites and their hosts in different ecosystems.
- **Cassidy Mineo**, **Zoey Miller** and **Savi Thompson** interned in Pitt's Sound Brain Lab. Mineo studied the relationship of pupil response to working memory; Miller studied the effect of depression on speech perception; and Thompson tested the identification of individual speakers across languages.
- **Smriti Shyam** and **Karina Saba** worked in Pitt's Department of Ophthalmology. Shyam investigated the effect of statins on the regeneration of optic nerves after injury. Saba worked on the targets of the Pax6 transcription factor in the mammalian retina.



COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL FIRST GRADERS VISIT LOCAL BUSINESSES

On Nov. 3, Country Day School first graders visited four small businesses in Aspinwall as part of their study of communities: Fox and the Fleur, owned by parent **Anne Dickson '99**; Feast on Brilliant, owned by parent **Patti McLaughlin Danforth**; Spark Books; and Rosebud's gift shop. Students interviewed the owners, toured the businesses, drew a map of Brilliant Avenue and completed a scavenger hunt.



UPA Hosts Three Academy-Wide Community Events

For the second consecutive year, the SSA Unified Parents' Association held a trio of successful community events during the first half of the school year.

On Sept. 30, families gathered for the Academy-Wide Family Tailgate Party in the Hillman Center parking lot, enjoying beautiful weather, food trucks, games, music and more before the SSA-Freeport football game.

On Oct. 30, more than 1,000 community members, many in costume, enjoyed a spooktacular good time at the Haunted Walk. The 2/3-mile walk through the woods of the Senior School campus included spooks and surprises by live haunters (students) and culminated at a bonfire.

On Dec. 10, the UPA hosted the SSA Ice Skating Party at the Hunt Armory Ice Rink in Pittsburgh, where hundreds of community members enjoyed an afternoon of skating, pizza, hot chocolate and fun.



Shady Side Gives Back Event

On Nov. 5, more than 75 Country Day and Junior School students and parents met along Nine Mile Trail in Frick Park for the Shady Side Gives Back service event. After Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy rangers gave an introduction and instructions, families picked up trash along the trail and in the stream, and planted willow stakes along the stream bank to prevent erosion.

SERVICE

Senior School Service Learning Speakers Series

The Senior School Service Learning Club launched a new speakers series at assembly to introduce students to local nonprofits and ways they can help. On Oct. 3, Hello Neighbor CEO **Sloane (Berrent) Davidson '97** spoke about her organization's work with refugee families, kicking off a drive for household supplies and handmade cards. On Nov. 28, Danielle Schnauzer and Stephanie Villella of Pittsburgh Mercy's Operation Safety Net spoke about their work with the homeless, kicking off a fundraiser and toiletry drive.



MIDDLE SCHOOL HURRICANE RELIEF & ANGEL TREE

The Middle School Community Service Committee organized three fundraisers in October to support the Brother's Brother Foundation's Hurricane Ian relief efforts, raising \$1,139 through a candy jar guessing raffle, bake sale and dress-down day. In December, the committee hosted a holiday Angel Tree to benefit Fox Families Care, a nonprofit supporting local youth and families in need. Middle School families fulfilled all 50 gift card requests on the tree, worth \$2,500.



Country Day School Beverly's Birthdays Drive

In October, Country Day School third grade and kindergarten students organized a school-wide party supply drive to benefit Beverly's Birthdays, which provides birthday celebrations for children experiencing homelessness. Families generously donated 75 bags filled with cake mix, icing, candles, tablecloths, cups, plates and napkins.



Senior School Holiday Project Gift Collection

The Senior School Service Learning Club partnered with the Allegheny County Holiday Project to collect holiday gifts for children receiving services through the Department of Human Services for maltreatment or homelessness. Families generously donated gifts for 160 local children.

Junior School Second Grade Food Drive

The Junior School's annual Second Grade Food Drive yielded donations of more than 1,200 non-perishable food items, which the class delivered to the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood's food pantry in time for Thanksgiving. The school has partnered with the church on the food drive for more than 20 years.

Junior School Third Grade Toy Drive

Junior School third graders collected new and gently used toys, books, movies, games and sports equipment for the Play it Forward Pittsburgh Toy Drive. On Dec. 13, the class delivered the items to the convention center and volunteered sorting and organizing donations.

Senior School Ukraine Crisis Relief

In September, sophomore **Ava Terezis** led two efforts to support the International Orthodox Christian Charities' Ukraine Crisis Relief, which provides humanitarian aid to those affected by the war in Ukraine. On Sept. 25, Terezis, along with students **Anna Apetrei-Pandrea, Ava Jankowksi, Gabby Jarvis, Dane Thomas, Tina Xia, Sara Laman** and **Ortiz Ortiz** and teacher **Kira Savage**, assisted with setup, food service and cleanup at the IOCC's Ukrainian Relief Dinner fundraiser at St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox Cathedral. The week before the dinner, a two-day bake



sale on campus raised \$438.50, which was matched by a donor to yield \$877.

Sixth Graders Walk for Water for South Sudan

After reading the book *A Long Walk to Water*, the Middle School sixth grade held its annual walk to benefit Water for South Sudan on Nov. 18, raising \$2,195 to help the organization drill wells to bring clean water to Sudanese villages. Students completed three laps from the school flagpole to the front gates, passing water containers between them.





STUDENT PERFORMANCES



Middle School Fall Play

The Middle School presented three performances of the fall play *Order Up!* on Nov. 16-17, two for students and one for families. The cast and crew of the fast-food restaurant comedy included 21 students and was directed by English teacher **Camille MacRae**.

Senior School Fall Play

The Senior School presented five performances of the fall student drama, *Puffs*, on Nov. 10-13, in the Peter J. Kountz Black Box Theater of the Hillman Center for Performing Arts. Set in a familiar wizard school, the play featured more than 30 students in the cast and crew and was directed by Performing Arts Chair **Dek Ingraham**.



Parkin Fellows 2022

Established in 2006 by **Fred Parkin '59**, the Parkin Fellowships for Global Service Endowment Fund awards grant money each summer to students completing service or environmental projects around the globe. These experiences make an impact not only through the students' work, but also through the inspiring stories they share with the SSA community upon their return. Due to COVID-19, the program was paused in 2020 and 2021 and resumed in 2022 with domestic travel only.



Maila Davis

350 SEATTLE, SEATTLE, WA

Senior Maila Davis volunteered with 350 Seattle, a nonprofit working toward climate justice by organizing people to make systemic change. For two weeks, she helped to plan and organize webinars and workshops to educate the community about climate change, advocate against fossil fuels in neighborhoods and manage the negative effects of oil trains.

"The Parkin Fellowship is such a unique program that has helped me to pursue something I am passionate about," she said. "I was able to fully immerse myself in a new setting and culture while also contributing to my passions in a different light, which couldn't have been done without this opportunity."

Sadie Navid

VOLCANOES NATIONAL PARK AND WAIMEA, HI

Junior Sadie Navid traveled to Hawaii to complete environmental and community service work. "I chose this location because both its unique volcanic ecosystem and its distinctive culture are threatened by outside pressures," she said. "Its environment is suffering from climate change and severe invasive plant growth. Much of its rural youth population suffers from obesity and inactive lifestyle choices."

Besides learning to wield a machete to reduce invasive ginger stocks, Navid learned about an entirely different ecosystem from her own. She also organized a three-day surfing event that raised over \$9,000 for an organization that supplies rural children with nutritional food and exercise opportunities.

Smrithi Shyam

SISTERFRIEND, PITTSBURGH, PA

Senior Smrithi Shyam worked in Pittsburgh with SisterFriend, a nonprofit that provides homeless and underprivileged populations with menstrual hygiene products. She spent two and a half weeks assembling hygiene kits and assisting in their delivery to schools and communities. She also started a social media campaign to raise awareness about period poverty and decrease the taboo of the topic.

"The lack of access to menstrual products for women all over the world is a pressing issue that is not commonly addressed due to the stigma surrounding the subject," Shyam said. "The Parkin Fellowship allowed me to further work towards a cause I am very passionate about."

A Historic Gift to Shady Side

KENT ROCKWELL '62 & PAT BABYAK
COMMIT \$15 MILLION TO CAPITAL PROJECTS

BY JEN ROUPE

On Oct. 13, 2022, Shady Side Academy announced the largest gift in the school's 139-year history, a \$15 million personal commitment from alumnus and past parent **S. Kent Rockwell '62** and his partner, **Pat Babyak**, in support of capital projects included in SSA's forthcoming campus master plan.

"We are extraordinarily grateful to Kent Rockwell and Pat Babyak for this transformative gift and so inspired by the many possibilities it presents for Shady Side," said President **Bart Griffith '93**. "Kent and Pat's support for our dynamic, ambitious campus master plan will serve to enrich student experience and ensure the Academy remains a vital and leading educational institution for generations."

Rockwell grew up in Pittsburgh's Edgewood neighborhood and enrolled at Shady Side Academy in ninth grade, boarding on the Senior School campus.

"My Shady Side experience was very rewarding and pleasant," he said. "There was a wonderful collegiality among my classmates, and I don't think I ever had a teacher I didn't like."

After graduating from SSA in 1962, Rockwell earned a B.A. in economics and business from Lafayette College, attended graduate school at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, and built a successful career rooted in innovation and technology. He is currently chairman

and CEO of Rockwell Venture Capital, a company he founded in 1983 that has invested in numerous technology companies since its inception. He is also chairman of the board of the S. Kent Rockwell Foundation, which focuses on philanthropic support of conservation, community, education and innovation. Rockwell's son, the late **Jonathan "Corey" Rockwell '92**, also attended Shady Side.

Today, Rockwell and Babyak live less than a mile from the Senior School and often take walks on the 130-acre campus. Sixty years after his graduation, Rockwell still sees the same sense of community and belonging that made his own student experience so rewarding, coupled with exciting growth and change.

"Recently Pat and I started talking about making some larger gifts close to home, while we still have the opportunity to see them bear fruit," said Rockwell. "After seeing all of the good things happening here and learning more about the vision for the campus master plan, we were enthusiastic about the opportunity to make a meaningful commitment. We encourage other members of the community to join us in supporting this exciting vision for Shady Side's future."

As it celebrates the centennial anniversary of the Senior School campus in 2022, Shady Side Academy is enjoying a period of great vitality, highlighted

by impressive enrollment growth over the past three years. Looking ahead to the next 100 years for the campus, the Academy has been engaged in a comprehensive master planning process to ensure its physical spaces support innovative teaching and learning, deepen community connections and make SSA a more sustainable institution.

The details of the campus master plan, including specific initiatives that will be funded by Rockwell's historic gift, will be announced in the coming year.

"The charitable support that Kent and Pat have provided Shady Side Academy places them among other prominent Pittsburgh philanthropists who have stepped up at opportune moments in the school's history," said SSA Chief Philanthropy Officer **Dr. Allison Saras**. "Their legacy will leave a lasting impact on the SSA student experience for generations, and our community could not be more grateful."

Previously, the largest gift in Shady Side's history was a posthumous \$9 million bequest from the estate of **Grant M. Shipley '42** upon his death in 2002.

To learn more about the campus master plan and how you can join Rockwell and Babyak in supporting it, contact Dr. Allison Saras at asaras@shadysideacademy.org or 412-968-3077.



SSA CELEBRATES THE OPENING OF THE GENE DEAL FIELDS

BY JEN ROUPE / PHOTOS BY JAMES KNOX

DURING HOMECOMING WEEKEND, SHADY SIDE ACADEMY CELEBRATED THE OPENING OF THE GENE DEAL FIELDS, A NEW STATE-OF-THE-ART OUTDOOR ATHLETIC FACILITY ON THE SENIOR SCHOOL CAMPUS THAT HONORS THE EXTRAORDINARY LEGACY OF FORMER COACH AND ATHLETIC DIRECTOR GENE DEAL.



On Friday, Oct. 14, donors and community members gathered for a luncheon and ribbon-cutting ceremony. President **Bart Griffith '93** welcomed guests to “the premier fields complex in Western Pennsylvania,” expressing gratitude to Deal and those who made the project a reality.

“Gene’s affable nature, love for students, and overall zeal for all things SSA are his enduring legacies, and he still exhibits these positive energizing traits each day,” said Griffith. “On the

field or off, for almost four decades, Gene has been *the* head coach for our community.”

David Deal '01 reflected on his father’s true legacy, “I think it comes down to one simple thing: He defines servant leadership. Everybody in this space would be able to tell a story about my dad in which he said yes, or he went out of his way to do a favor.”

Gene Deal spoke from the heart about his 40 years at Shady Side and the importance of kindness.

GENE DEAL FIELDS FACTS

- At **154,000 square feet**, it’s the ninth largest continuous piece of artificial sports turf in the country.
- The field is lined for **five sports** – baseball, softball, lacrosse, soccer and field hockey.
- **Seating capacity of 665** with ADA-accessible ramps and two scoreboards
- The Gailliot Family Grandstand and Howson Family Terrace provide an enhanced **spectator experience and gathering space**.
- The Killian Cavanaugh Memorial Baseball Field and the softball field have **four dugouts, two batting cages and two bullpens**.
- Funded by **\$2.2 million in donations from 150 donors**, including a generous lead gift from the DSF Charitable Foundation
- Facility design by Strada LLC; construction overseen by SSA Facilities Department, led by **Paul Francioni**

“When I became athletic director, I realized that the entire student body was now my team, and I needed to be a leader who leads with kindness. Also, the entire coaching staff had to carry the message of SSA athletics: Compete to win. When you do, be humble. Lose with grace. And above all, respect the game. I can honestly say there wasn’t a day that went by that I did not love watching our Shady Side students compete. It has been a great honor and a humbling experience to watch the Gene Deal Fields be built.”

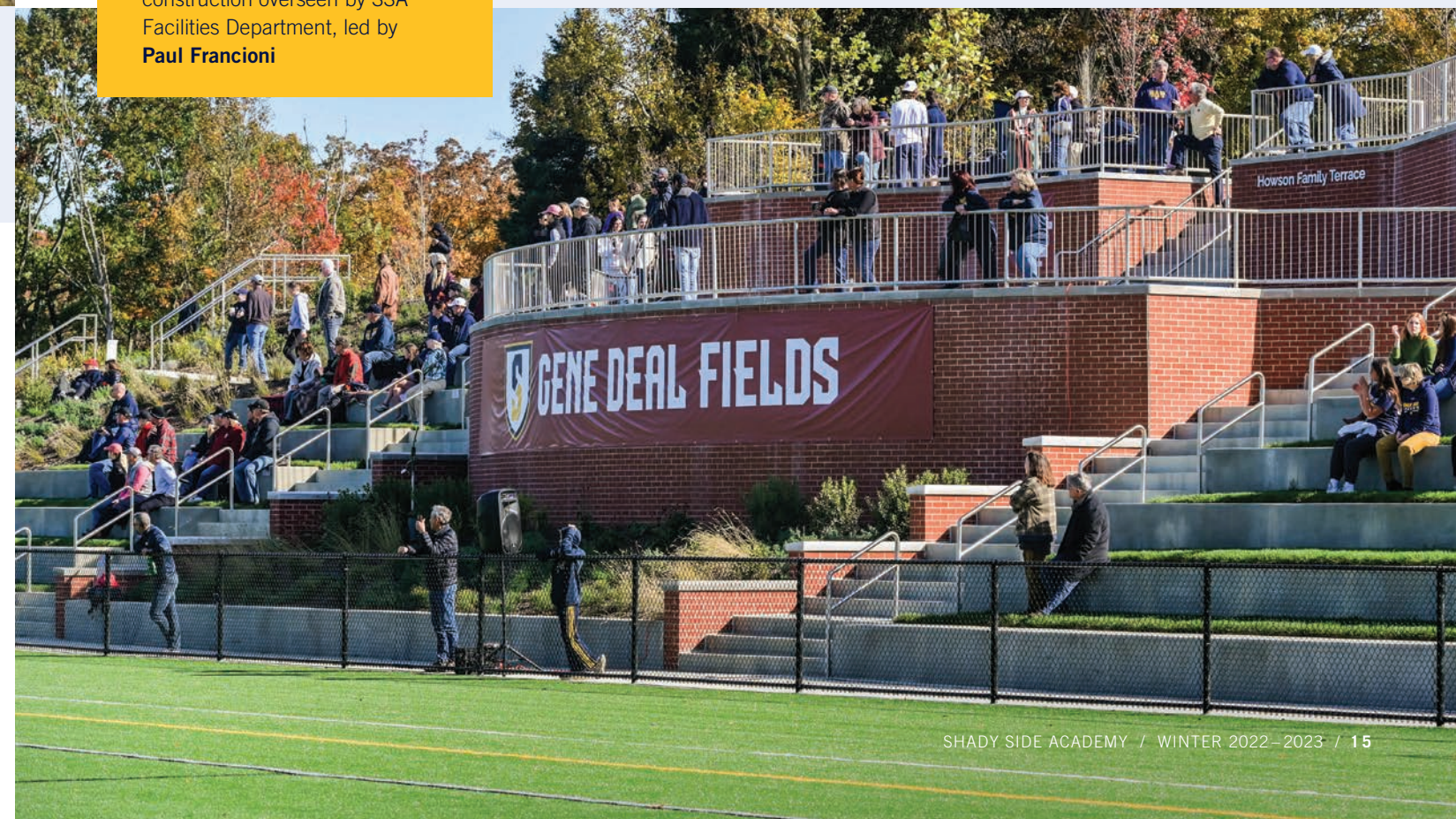
Athletic Director **Sean Simmons** spoke about the impact the facility will

have on Bulldogs athletics for years to come.

“There’s no facility that can rival us now. The bar has been raised.”

Finally, members of the Deal family – Gene, wife Cheryl, sons David '01 and **Brian '04**, and grandchildren Everett, Carver, Brooks, Charlie and SSA student **Cooper** (JPK) – cut the ribbon on the Gene Deal Fields.

On Saturday morning, Oct. 15, the SSA girls’ and boys’ varsity soccer teams played the inaugural games on the Gene Deal Fields, with Deal conducting the ceremonial coin toss before the girls’ game.



HOMECOMING 2022

BY DR. ALLISON SARAS / PHOTOS BY JAMES KNOX



Homecoming and Reunion Weekend is a longstanding Shady Side Academy tradition that welcomes alumni, families and friends back to campus for a wonderful fall weekend full of activities. This year, SSA hosted this special weekend on Oct. 14-16. Classes ending in 2s and 7s were honored and the Class of 1972 celebrated its 50th Reunion.

The weekend kicked off at the Senior School assembly on Friday, Oct. 14, with **Alex Howson '82** posthumously awarding the 2022 Robert E. Walker Award to the late **Dr. Leon Haley Jr. '82**. Wesley Haley accepted the award on his father's behalf, and Dr. Haley's parents, sister and nephew, SSA freshman **JT Huff** were also in attendance. For their work with the nonprofit Off Their Plate, sisters **Maddie '14** and **Claire '21 Taylor** were the winners of the 2022 Paul R. Pigman '52 Prize.

On Friday afternoon, donors, alumni and community members attended

a ribbon-cutting ceremony marking the official opening of the Gene Deal Fields, a state-of-the-art outdoor athletic facility on the Senior School campus honoring the extraordinary legacy of former coach and athletic director **Gene Deal**. Read more about the celebration on page 14.

Athletic contests on Friday included a cross country meet, a boys' ice hockey intrasquad scrimmage and a field hockey game. New SSA hockey coach (and former Pittsburgh Penguin) **Eric Tangradi** skated in the scrimmage and hosted a meet and greet for alumni afterward.

Friday evening, President **Bart Griffith '93** and his wife, Danica, hosted members of the Class of 1972 at their home for a special toast to celebrate their milestone 50th reunion. Classmates had the opportunity to share a few laughs, reminisce about their time on campus and share where life has taken them in 50 years. Later, the Class of 1972 joined reunion classes from 1942 to 1982 on the Mary Jennings Hillman Plaza, where alumni and faculty members past and present shared fond memories of SSA over drinks and hors d'oeuvres.



HOMECOMING 2022

On Saturday morning, the Bulldogs girls' and boys' soccer teams played the inaugural games on the Gene Deal Fields, and Deal made it official by conducting the ceremonial coin toss before the girls' game. The annual **Al Stewart '53** Memorial Shady Stride got underway, with participants including fierce competitors, energetic kids and those who simply wanted to enjoy a walk along the cross country course. Those who didn't lace up their running shoes got to enjoy a walking tour of the Senior School campus led by student admissions ambassadors.

Prior to the football team taking on Valley (and securing a win!), alumni, families and friends took pleasure in visiting several local food trucks and shopping for gear at the SSA Spirit Store at the Blue & Gold Community Tailgate. Kids of all ages enjoyed inflatables, a petting zoo, a balloon artist and face painting at the Kids Carnival. SSA's mascot, Blue the Bulldog, made a special appearance, posing for photos and getting the crowd pumped up by dancing to *Who Let the Dogs Out*.



At the football halftime, athletic team captains from reunion classes were recognized. On Saturday evening, reunion classes from 1987 to 2017 gathered for their reception celebration on the Hillman Plaza. The weekend concluded with a Sunday memorial service that paid tribute to 35 alumni and former faculty/

staff who passed away in the last year. **Rev. Tom Johnson '73** presided over the service as attendees expressed remembrance and gratitude for those who are no longer with us but made an impact on the SSA community. Thank you to all the alumni, faculty, staff, students and families who attended the 2022 Homecoming Reunion Weekend! It was a special time to reconnect with old friends, make new ones and come together as one vibrant SSA community. The Alumni & Development Office is already planning next year's celebration – look for more information this spring!



50th Reunion

Above, Class of 1972
Front Row: Dixon Rich, Chris Bender, Aims Coney, Jon Saxton
Back Row: Mark Smith, Will Rodman, Skip Hulme, Bill Drelles, Jon Miller



Athletic Team Captains



Josh Kalla '09

RESEARCHING POLITICS, PERSUASION AND PREJUDICE

BY CRISTINA ROVALIS / PHOTOS PROVIDED BY JOSH KALLA
AND YALE INSTITUTION FOR SOCIAL AND POLICY STUDIES

When Dr. Josh Kalla went knocking on doors to ask strangers about hot-button political issues, he wasn't looking for an argument. He just wanted to engage in a civil, face-to-face conversation – and in the process, gather data for his political science research.

Kalla would start by asking people how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a statement about civil rights protections for a particular marginalized group. If the person indicated discomfort with or a prejudiced opinion of the group, he would listen respectfully. Then, rather than shaming or shouting at them, he would share a story and photo of a friend who belongs to that group.

“You don't want people to dig in their heels and double down on whatever position they're originally holding,” said Kalla, an assistant professor of political science and data science at Yale University. Instead of slammed doors or expletives, this field experiment led to real data on what kinds of conversations are the most effective at reducing prejudice.

Kalla specializes in using data and randomized field experiments to research political persuasion, voter decision making and prejudice reduction. For the political science professor, it's an endlessly fascinating field of study because it touches on so many facets of daily life.

“It matters for the world of politics, but it also matters for people's social dynamics. Are people feeling safe and comfortable in school? In the workplace?”

His academic studies on political behavior rely on the same rigorous methods used in clinical drug trials.



He has worked with political campaigns and nonprofits to conduct field research to help them determine factors that make people change their minds – whether that is to vote for a particular candidate or view a marginalized group with less suspicion or hostility.

“They do the actual campaign work, but I do the data work and analysis,” he said.

For example, in the prejudice reduction research he devised for nonprofit groups, some canvassers are assigned to start conversations with homeowners about a

marginalized group such as transgender people or undocumented immigrants. Other homeowners receive the equivalent of a placebo – a reminder to recycle or a quick survey about news consumption.

Follow-up surveys showed that people who had the face-to-face prejudice reduction conversations had less negative impressions of the marginalized group. Over the course of several thousand door knocks, the research helped to pinpoint what types of conversations were more successful at reducing prejudice and why.

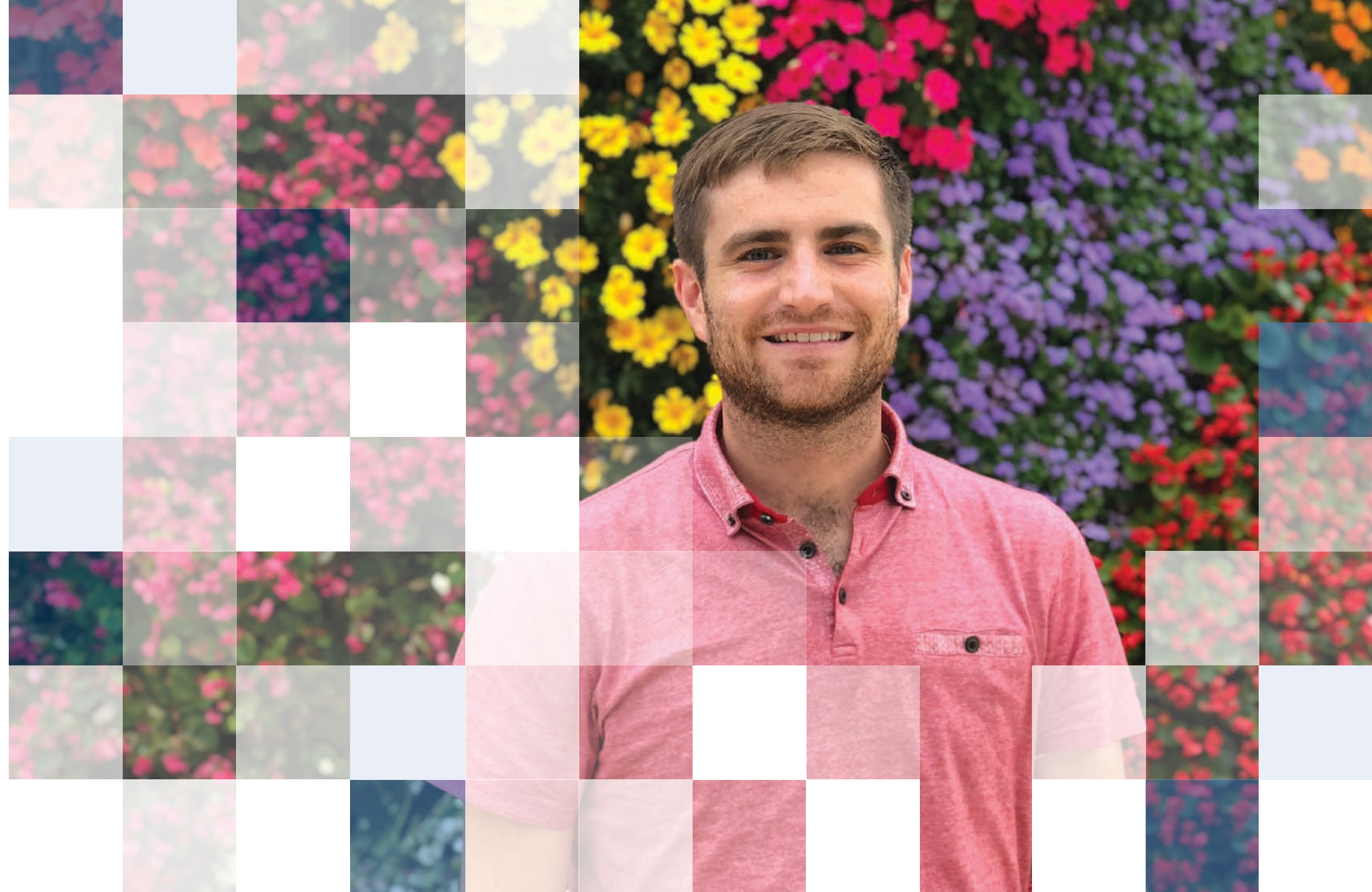
Kalla believes this type of nonjudgmental approach works because it is extremely difficult for a person to admit they are wrong and modify their opinion. “You can make it a little easier being nonjudgmental and being curious and creating a comfortable space.”

Though social media spats might give the impression that bigotry is on the rise, Kalla said broad national surveys show that overt prejudice has been decreasing. “Americans might hold racist, sexist and transphobic views, but prejudice and

prejudicial views evolve and become less socially comfortable over time.”

David Broockman, an associate professor of political science at the University of California-Berkeley, has collaborated with Kalla on the prejudice reduction research and numerous other studies that have been published in academic journals and featured in major national media outlets.

Broockman said Kalla excels at academic research because of his strong sense of integrity. He said researchers



in academia have to make a case for their study in a published paper, and sometimes without even realizing it, or without any bad intent, they might skew the data or look at it in a certain way to highlight the desired result.

“There are ways that academics cannot be fully transparent or honest about the data they have,” said Broockman. “But at every turn, Josh is thinking about how we can do this research in such a way that we are not going to fool ourselves and present it in the most transparent way possible. I have never met anyone that has the same kind of fierce dedication to research integrity as Josh.”

Kalla, who grew up in Squirrel Hill, was always fascinated by politics. He figured he would become a lawyer like his grandfather, sometimes accompanying him to the courtroom.

He transferred to Shady Side Academy in high school, and through his English and history classes, such as the one taught by **Matt Weiss**, learned the valuable skill of writing a research paper. “I still use those skills today when I am doing social science research.”

He also was a skilled debater. “He took me under his wing on the debate team,” said **Frankie Costa ’10**, who was a year behind Kalla at both Shady Side and Yale University.

Dr. Josh Kalla teaches a graduate-level course in Political Preferences and American Political Behavior to Ph.D. students at Yale.

“He was always very thoughtful, conscientious and compassionate. There were some folks who were more theatrical in debate, but he was always very level-headed. You couldn’t fluster him. He always instinctively seeks the truth,” whether in a debate tournament or his academic career.

Kalla entered Yale in 2009, and in the spring of his freshman year, he took a political science course that introduced him to field experiments and data analysis. Kalla, who went on to earn both a bachelor’s and master’s degree in political science at Yale, was hooked on this kind of social science research.

He continued his research at the University of California-Berkeley, where he received a second master’s degree and a Ph.D. in political science. Upon graduation, he worked at the Analyst Institute in Washington, D.C., designing and analyzing field studies on how voter contact strategies affected political behavior.

He joined the faculty of Yale in 2019, the same year he got married. He met his husband, Armon Dadgar, through Broockman.



The COVID-19 pandemic afforded many opportunities to observe politics during an era of expensive and protracted campaigns, both during the 2020 presidential election and the 2022 midterm elections.

Anyone who watched TV, opened their mail or answered their doors during those campaigns – particularly in a swing state like Pennsylvania – was bombarded with literature and ads. But does this barrage of political ads actually persuade people? Not really, Kalla’s research showed.

“What campaigns are doing is almost canceling each other out,” Kalla said. “The additional piece of mail or TV ad really isn’t doing much. American elections are fairly balanced. There’s some money disparity, but each side tends to spend a lot of money.”

What does appear to sway likely Republicans or likely Democrats, however, is a nudge to go to the polls and vote.

“Even people who don’t vote view it as important, but often they need a little bit of extra knowledge. So if you tell them where to vote, when to vote, that information can be very effective for getting them over the hump.”

Kalla also has conducted research on the media’s role in changing views in today’s polarized political landscape.

It’s often said that partisans are in their own bubbles or political silos – viewers of Fox News watch one version of reality while viewers of CNN or MSNBC see something entirely different. Kalla wanted to find out if it was possible to change those entrenched views by creating an artificial construct. Would attitudes change if you paid loyal viewers of one cable network to watch a different one?

He and Broockman conducted an experiment in September 2020, in the wake of George Floyd’s death and when the COVID-19 pandemic was raging. While Fox News was covering property damage during the protests following Floyd’s death, CNN was reporting on pandemic deaths and criticisms of President Donald Trump’s handling of the crisis.

Fox News viewers were paid \$15 an hour to watch CNN for six hours a week over four weeks. The conventional wisdom of the media and academics said it wouldn’t make any difference, because people in their partisan silos are set in their views. “By this point, Trump had been calling CNN ‘fake news’ for four-plus years,” Kalla said.

But the research showed the Fox viewers’ opinions were changed by watching some segments of CNN for one month. They started to take COVID-19 more seriously and were more critical of Trump’s handling of it, the research showed.

Though Kalla did not secure funding to do the reverse – pay CNN viewers to watch Fox News – he believes the same phenomenon would have occurred: CNN viewers would likely have been less critical of Trump, he predicted.

“The encouraging finding is that even though these people were really strong partisans, consistent ideologues, they were still open to learning new information,” he said.

Kalla, who was awarded Yale’s Arthur Greer Memorial Prize for Outstanding Scholarly Publication or Research in 2022, is also a resident faculty fellow at Yale’s Institution for Social and Policy Studies. In his classes, he teaches students to conduct field experiments and analyze research data.

In his Data Science for Political Campaigns class, students learn how data drives so many political decisions – where a campaign competes, the type of messaging, the voters targeted. In the course Measuring Impact and Opinion Change, his students learn how political campaigns, marketers, nonprofits and other organizations try to sway opinions through advertising and door-to-door canvassing. Kalla teaches them how to measure change and “how to be appropriately skeptical of findings that claim to measure impact.”

For a final project, students conduct their own randomized field experiment. Last year, a group of students partnered with a garden center to measure the impact of advertising a price ending in \$.99 versus a price rounded up to the largest whole dollar.

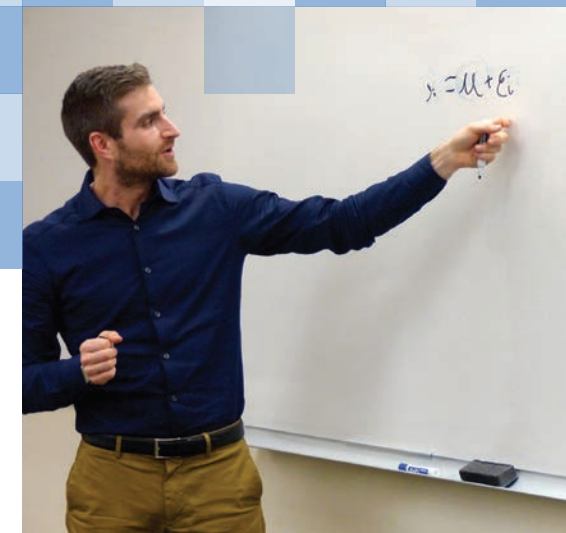
“They ended up finding that the pricing of \$.99 vs. the nearest whole number didn’t matter,” he said. “But this is a nice example of how students come up with their own research question, implement their own experiment, and then gather and analyze data.”

“I have never met anyone that has the same kind of fierce dedication to research integrity as Josh.”

– David Broockman, associate professor of political science, University of California-Berkeley

His former students have gone on to law school and Ph.D. programs in political science. They also have landed jobs in government, political campaigns and as journalists. One of his former students who worked on a labor union campaign came to his class recently to talk about his experiences.

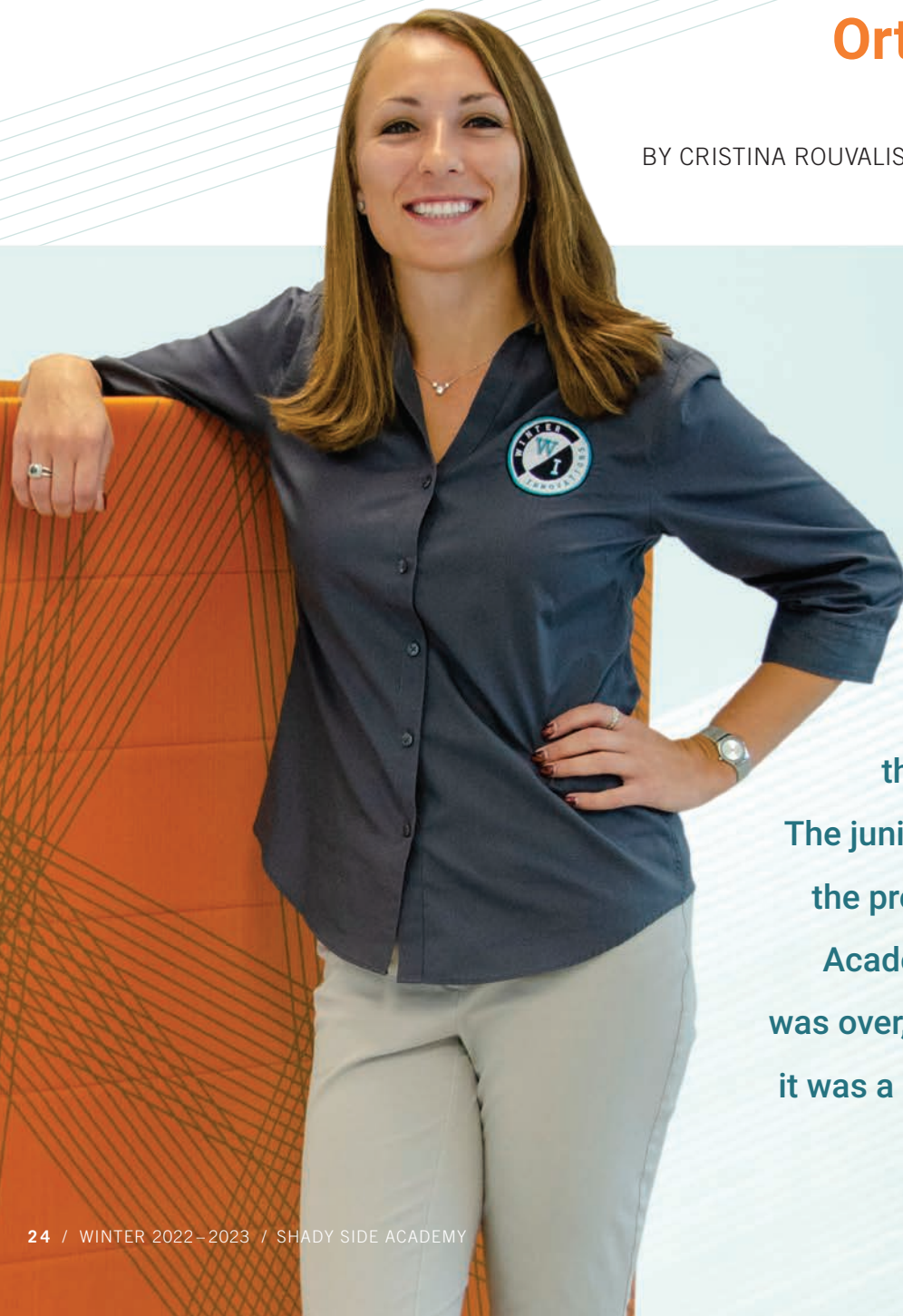
Kalla said he always gains new perspectives through teaching. “Every time I teach a course, students come with new ideas or new questions. It keeps things exciting.”



LIA WINTER '13

Entrepreneur Develops Innovative Tool for Orthopedic Surgery

BY CRISTINA ROUVALIS / PHOTOS PROVIDED BY LIA WINTER



Lia Winter sprinted down the soccer field on a breakaway, heading for the goal. Then she felt a pop in the back of her leg and a stabbing pain that stopped her in her tracks. The junior limped off the field during the preseason game at Shady Side Academy. She worried her season was over, especially once she learned it was a hamstring tear, an injury that typically requires surgery.

She went to see Dr. James Bradley, a family friend and the orthopedic surgeon for the Pittsburgh Steelers. Instead of surgery, he treated her with an innovative approach that involves taking a patient's own blood, spinning it and injecting platelet-rich plasma into the injured tissue. Winter recovered so well that she was able to play the last few games of the regular soccer season and go to the playoffs.

"I knew then I wanted to be a biomedical engineer. I wanted to be able to develop tools and products and

technologies to help athletes recover from sports injuries," she said.

Another family sports injury deepened that conviction. Her mother, Shelley, tore her anterior cruciate ligament or ACL while playing volleyball. She underwent knee surgery, but because of problems with the graft and stitching, she had to have a second surgery 10 days later. Instead of a six-month recovery, hers dragged on for almost three years.

Combining her love of sports and science with her own experiences, Winter went on to become a biomedical engineer and entrepreneur. Through her company, Winter Innovations, she invented the EasyWhip, a patented new surgical needle designed to make stitching easier for orthopedic surgeons. In 2021, the company crossed a major hurdle when it received FDA clearance for the product. In January of 2022, surgeons began using EasyWhip in the operating room.

The two-part needle system gives surgeons both accuracy and efficiency. When the parts are separate, the device functions as a straight suture. When the two ends are connected, they form a suture loop. Allowing surgeons to alternate between the two means they can make more secure stitches and work faster.

"This enables some new stitching patterns," Winter said. "We have shown that it reduces time in the operating room and can improve the security of the stitch to maximize the chances for a successful repair."

So far this year, 10 surgeons in eight states, including Pittsburgh orthopedic

surgeon Dr. Michael Rytel, have started using EasyWhip.

"I mostly use it for preparing ACL grafts," Dr. Rytel said. "So it just simplifies a step – the needle can be separated into two needles and that makes it easier to reset your position for the next passage of a needle. It's a simple idea that works."

Of all the innovations in surgery, the surgical needle has not undergone much change in recent years. "A lot of the technology is focused on suture design and the type of anchors that we use to hold tissue to bone," said Dr. Rytel, whose children went to Shady Side. "But nobody has really tried to innovate the needle. It sort of was a given that the needle had reached its apex of design, but Lia found a way to modify it that just made something a little bit easier to use."

Surgeons become attached to a specific needle the way baseball players favor a particular bat. "We tend to find something that works and then stick with it," Dr. Rytel said. "Something new requires a learning curve, so it is challenging to break in with a new product."

"I knew then I wanted to be a biomedical engineer. I wanted to be able to develop tools and products and technologies to help athletes recover from sports injuries."



Winter with Dr. Michael Rytel (top) and Dr. Nathan Graves (bottom), two of the first surgeons to use the EasyWhip in the operating room.

WHETHER IT WAS in a science lab or on the sports field, Winter was never afraid of a challenge.

At Shady Side, she was a standout math and science student. She credits **Stephanie Montemurro**, her biology teacher, with opening her mind to the possibilities of engineering. Montemurro nominated Winter for the University of Pittsburgh Summer Academy, where she spent the summer doing research at the UPMC Hillman Cancer Institute. Her math teachers – **Frank McCarthy** and **Sue Whitney** – instilled in her a love of that subject, providing a solid foundation for engineering school.

Winter played three sports, and her senior year, she was captain of the soccer, ice hockey and lacrosse teams. She was also a student ambassador to the athletic department, working with then-Athletic Director **Gene Deal**.

“The rigor of SSA academics combined with highly competitive sports programs taught me important skills like time management, a strong work ethic and the ability to inspire team members,” she said.

Her mother, Shelley, said her daughter was always a go getter. “She was never happy with the status quo. She was always, always looking for the next thing, the next accomplishment.”

After SSA, Winter attended the University of Pittsburgh, where she majored in bioengineering and biomedical engineering. Pitt did not have a women’s lacrosse team at that time, but they had a highly competitive club team, and she became the captain. Her younger sister, **Tori Winter ’15**, studied engineering at Pitt too and joined Lia on the lacrosse team.

Winter invented the EasyWhip as part of her senior design project, a yearlong course that challenged students to fulfill an unmet medical need. She had just come off a summer internship where she did research on orthopedic

products, including stitching needles. One day in the lab, she spent five hours using various needles to stitch tendons and found the process tedious and frustrating. “I started watching surgeons and they were struggling with the needles too.” She knew then that the stitching needle was a product ripe for innovation and developed a handmade prototype of the EasyWhip.

In 2017, Winter began the dual MBA and M.S. biomedical engineering degree program at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, where she received a full ride through an Ergen Fellowship donated by Charles Ergen, the founder of Dish Network.

During the second year of her graduate program, she co-founded Winter Innovations with her boyfriend, Preston Dishner, who was also getting his MBA and M.S. in business analytics at UT. The two complemented each other – she had the engineering expertise, and he had the supply chain and business analytics expertise.

In addition to heavy course loads, the two would travel around the country and to Canada, entering Shark Tank-style pitch competitions at universities. As Winter became more confident about pitching, often drawing on her own personal experiences, the wins stacked up. By the end of the year, they had won nearly \$100,000.

Dishner watched Winter pitch in front of audiences as small as four people to auditoriums full of 7,000 people. “She does a great job of storytelling. She’s able to tell a story and connect with people in a meaningful way and not come across as pushy. She comes across as very authentic,” he said.

No longer competing on the lacrosse field, Winter said, pitching “became my new way to compete.”

The pitch competition prize money enabled them to start manufacturing the EasyWhip and apply for patents.

“I would say Lia’s one of the strongest people I know....She helps me want to be better because she’s always pushing to be better all the time.”

– Preston Dishner

Top: Winter was a finalist in the 2019 Collegiate Inventors Competition after pitching the EasyWhip.

Bottom: Dishner and Winter with Pittsburgh Steelers physician Dr. James Bradley at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine 2022 Annual Meeting.



As her grad school career drew to an end, Winter was at a career crossroads. Following her summer internship at Dish Network, the company had offered her a full-time job after graduation. It promised job security, a good paycheck and an interesting career. On the other hand, she could take the much riskier, less lucrative but more fulfilling path of starting her own company and rolling out her invention.

Winter and Dishner knew it would be a big leap to go from student entrepreneurs to full-time managers of their company. In search of mentoring and support, they applied to the ZeroTo510 medical device accelerator program. They decided that if they were accepted, they would give the company their best shot. A denial would be their signal to pursue corporate careers post-graduation.

The accelerator program only had funding for two startups, and they didn’t make the cut. That should have settled the matter – she would take the corporate route. But Winter was devastated not to get into the accelerator. It was the same sting of disappointment she felt after she injured her hamstring during that soccer game at Shady Side.

“It made me realize how truly passionate I had become about my company and how much I really wanted to see EasyWhip through to success,” she said.

The next day, Winter called the head of the accelerator and asked him if they could participate in the program without the funding. They had raised enough through pitch competitions. He agreed. Elated, Winter and Dishner took their finals early, packed up a U-Haul and traveled to Memphis. A few days later, they started in the accelerator program.

Through participating with several accelerators, they attracted investors. Winter Innovations received a quarter million dollar grant from the National Science Foundation in May of 2021.



Winter and her boyfriend, Preston Dishner, co-founded Winter Innovations in graduate school at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

“I would say Lia’s one of the strongest people I know,” Dishner said. “She never gives up. She always strives for excellence. It’s kind of intoxicating. She helps me want to be better because she’s always pushing to be better all the time. The people who work with us strive to be better.”

“It’s been a really great experience, building a company with my significant other,” Winter said.

Besides the normal trials of a startup, they also launched their company during the COVID-19 pandemic, when there were supply chain issues.

As the pandemic slowed down production, Dishner had a good marketing idea – add a little flair to the packaging with needle-based puns on each unit. “A blunt needle is pointless” reads one word play on the package.

“We say it’s like the Dove Chocolate of medical device packaging,” Winter said.

Eventually they plan to develop additional products, but only after

they have successfully launched EasyWhip.

Winter Innovations currently works with 15 part-time contractors and plans to hire full-time sales employees in 2023 to scale commercialization of the EasyWhip. For now, Winter and Dishner are a two-person sales force, traveling around the country, pitching their idea to surgeons, hospital administrators and investors.

Whenever Winter gives a pitch, a person often will come up to her afterwards and tell her how they had a revision surgery because of stitching that didn’t hold. That brings her back to her own hamstring tear on the soccer field at Shady Side and her mother’s surgeries. She remembers how devastated she was not being able to play soccer. “I have a lot of empathy for people needing surgery,” she said.

It’s that empathy – and incredible drive – that motivates Winter to get her invention into the hands of more orthopedic surgeons.



GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

Captains: Ella Gardner, Emma Gardner, Emily Michaelsen

Record: 4-5

Girls' cross country had a historic season, with junior **Chelsea Hartman** winning the WPIAL 1A individual title and placing second in the PIAA Championship, and the team earning a PIAA berth for the first time since 2009. The team placed fourth at WPIALs, powered by Hartman's gold-medal finish and freshman **Rhyley Bendel**'s seventh-place finish. At the PIAAs, Hartman won silver as the Bulldogs finished 14th.

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

Captains: Liam Atkinson, Gabe Feinstein, Jamie Rhoades

Record: 8-4

The boys' cross country team raced to a winning season in 2022, earning an 8-4 overall record and a 7-3 section record. The Bulldogs finished 16th out of 32 teams at the WPIAL 2A Championships, and the top finishers were freshman **Will Nury** in 61st place and junior **Jamie Rhoades** in 68th place.

FIELD HOCKEY

Captains: Thea Conomikes, Kate Nury

Record: 4-12

It was a tale of two seasons as a young field hockey team persisted through illness, injury and an 0-8 start to finish 4-4 down the stretch, falling to Aquinas, 1-0, in the WPIAL 1A semifinals. Seniors **Thea Conomikes** and **Kate Nury**, junior **Alexa Karet**, sophomore **Mary Boyd Barker** and freshman **Clarke Wickland** were named WPIAL All-Stars, and Conomikes was also named All-WPIAL.

FOOTBALL

Captains: Joey Bellinotti, Nate Ewell, Max Wickland, Noah Yeh

Record: 7-5

The football team capped the season with a great run in the WPIAL 3A playoffs, pulling a 31-17 upset of No. 3 Elizabeth Forward to make the semifinals for the first time since 2008. SSA seniors **Joey Bellinotti**, **James Bernier**, **Patrick Bryan**, **Nate Ewell** and **Noah Yeh**, SSA junior **Nate Mallory** and TNA senior **Naziim Daniels** earned all-conference honors, with Bellinotti named Defensive Co-MVP and Offensive All-Purpose Player, and Ewell named Most Valuable Offensive Lineman.

BOYS GOLF

Captains: Tom Certo, Ryan Frohlich

Record: 3-10

The boys' golf team played a challenging schedule in 2022, voluntarily playing up in WPIAL Class 3A. Sophomores **Ryan Frohlich** and **Landon Mauser** and senior **Anthony Manges** qualified for the WPIAL Individual Championship, with Frohlich and Mauser advancing to the final round and finishing 20th and 28th, respectively.

GIRLS GOLF

Captains: Neely Nicholson, Delaney Mulderig

Record: 9-1

The girls' golf team had an outstanding 2022 season, going undefeated in the section and placing fourth at the WPIAL 2A Team Championship. Seniors **Neely Nicholson** and **Delaney Mulderig** qualified for the WPIAL Individual Championship, placing sixth and eighth, respectively, to qualify for PIAAs, where Mulderig placed 26th.

BOYS SOCCER

Captain: Charlie Stafford

Record: 14-5

The boys' soccer team went 13-1 in the section to earn a No. 3 seed in the WPIAL 2A Championship. The Bulldogs defeated Keystone Oaks in the first round before falling in the quarterfinals to Beaver in a 2-1 penalty shootout. Juniors **Amir Awais**, **Drew McKim** and **Jackson Suski** earned all-section honors, and Awais and McKim were named All-WPIAL.

GIRLS SOCCER

Captains: Maila Davis, Morgan Golden, Natalia McMahon, Bree Murphy

Record: 10-6

The girls' soccer team finished second in the section and earned a No. 6 seed in the WPIAL 2A Championship. The Bulldogs defeated Yough in the first round before falling to South Park, 3-0, in the quarterfinals. Junior **Sadie Navid**, sophomores **Ainsley Chu**, **Cooper Danforth** and **Lucille McCargo**, and freshman **Ella Van Norman** were named all-section, and Chu and Navid were named All-WPIAL.

GIRLS TENNIS

Captains: Maya Leyzarovich, Elle Rutenberg, Karina Saba, Meredith Kelly, Nichole Poltinnikov

Record: 11-4

The girls' tennis team was undefeated in the section and finished fourth in the WPIAL 3A Team Championship. Senior **Nichole Poltinnikov** placed fourth in the WPIAL Singles Championship, while Poltinnikov and senior **Rachel Nath**, along with senior **Maya Leyzarovich** and junior **Lizzie Uhlman**, made it to the quarterfinals of the WPIAL Doubles Championship.

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

Captains: Madison Council, Savita Thompson

Record: 1-18

In the first year of a cooperative sponsorship with The Neighborhood Academy (see page 30), nine SSA girls joined the TNA volleyball team as it rejoined the WPIAL in Class 2A. Despite some first-year growing pains, the season highlight was the Bulldogs' 3-1 victory over Nazareth Prep on senior night, showing how much the team had improved throughout the year.



SSA and The Neighborhood Academy Launch Cooperative Sponsorship in Girls Volleyball

For the first time in Shady Side Academy history, girls' volleyball is an interscholastic varsity sport! Following the success of the cooperative sponsorship (co-op) in football between SSA and The Neighborhood Academy that began in 2021, the two schools launched a second co-op in girls' volleyball in 2022. TNA is the host school, meaning SSA students practice and compete as members of the TNA Bulldogs team.

"Football was a great success, and we wanted to reciprocate Shady Side Academy's hospitality by extending the invitation for their young women to play volleyball with us," said TNA Director of Athletics Gary Shawley. "We are looking forward not only to building a successful program between the two schools, but also to allowing our student-athletes to build lifetime friendships as well."

The co-op increases the number of girls' sports SSA offers to 15. Although Shady Side has never fielded an interscholastic volleyball team before,

there had been periodic interest in starting a team since the early 2000s, and in recent years a coed club volleyball program fueled interest in the sport.

"This gives Shady Side the opportunity to expand its interscholastic sports offerings for girls," said SSA Director of Athletics **Sean Simmons**. "All of us are thrilled about this partnership and eager to meet the increased interest of our student body in WPIAL volleyball by partnering with TNA."

With the addition of players from SSA, the TNA team rejoined the WPIAL in fall 2022, and the Bulldogs competed in Class 2A under the direction of Head Coach **Sophia Duck**.

The volleyball and football co-ops are the result of a longstanding relationship between Shady Side and TNA, which was founded by SSA alumnus **Rev. Tom Johnson Jr. '73**. The schools have committed to the volleyball co-op for at least two seasons (2022 and 2023).



WSSA-TV Sports Broadcast Team Debuts

The 2022-2023 school year brought the debut of another new team at the Senior School – the WSSA Sports Broadcast Team. Building on the success of the WSSA-TV Film Club, which has been producing "news" episodes and funny videos since 2018, this new program gives students the chance to produce live sports broadcasts for athletic credit. Students learn all aspects of sports broadcasting, including video equipment operation, commentary, sideline interviews and graphics. Both WSSA programs are advised by Visual Media Manager **James Knox**.

The WSSA Sports Broadcast Team made its debut on Friday, Sept. 30, with a live broadcast of the SSA-Freeport football game under the lights at Farrell Stadium. Senior **Ben Rohr** was the play-by-play announcer, senior **Chelsea Kaufmann** was color analyst, seniors **Liz Kamin** and **Delaney Mulderig** were sideline reporters, senior **Emily Gutstein** and freshman **Kyle Delisma** were camera operators, senior **Aidan Adams**, freshman **Ethan Chen** and senior **Omar Hamda** were analysts, and sophomore **Dylan Sun** and junior **Haihan Wang** were drone operators. The team also broadcast the Oct. 28 football game vs. East Allegheny. This winter, the team plans to broadcast a couple of basketball and ice hockey games. Broadcasts can be viewed live on the SSA Sports YouTube Channel at <http://shadysi.de/ssasports>.



Fall College Athletic Signings

Four seniors signed letters committing to NCAA college athletics programs in three different sports on Nov. 9, the first day of the signing period. The fall signees included:

- Thea Conomikes** – Field Hockey, University of Richmond (NCAA Division I)
- JP Henry** – Lacrosse, Marquette University (NCAA Division I)
- Neely Nicholson** – Ice Hockey, Boston University (NCAA Division I)
- Ethan Salvia** – Lacrosse, Marquette University (NCAA Division I)

HOLIDAY ALUMNI GATHERINGS

Each year, while faculty and students enjoy their holiday breaks, alumni return home to visit family and friends in Pittsburgh. It's a great time to gather with fellow classmates to celebrate and reconnect.

Boys' lacrosse coach **Cam Thompson** welcomed a lively bunch of lacrosse alumni for a friendly game on the newly opened Gene Deal Fields on Nov. 26. It was an intense battle that ended with no penalties, no injuries and a big win for the Bulldogs.

Also on Nov. 26, former AD and current Alumni Engagement Officer **Gene Deal** and former girls' tennis coach **Jeff Miller** invited girls' tennis alumnae from the Classes of 1973-2022 to join them for brunch at the Church Brew Works in Lawrenceville.

On Dec. 27, former SSA wrestling coach **Tim Giel** joined Deal and wrestling alumni at Luke Wholey's Wild Alaskan Grille in the Strip District for a happy hour.

Finally, on Dec. 28, Deal hosted boys' soccer alumni at the Church Brew Works along with former head coach **Harry Fleishman** and current head coach **Ed Ellsworth**.

Thanks to Church Brew Works owner **Sean Casey '84** and Wild Alaskan Grille owner **Luke Wholey '02** for providing great locations for these Pittsburgh alumni gatherings!



ALUMNI + SERVICE LEARNING HAPPY HOUR

Alumni Council member **Whitney Menarcheck '06** and Senior School Librarian and Service Learning Club advisor **Lindsey Myers** hosted a happy hour on Dec. 2 at Trace Brewery in the Bloomfield neighborhood of Pittsburgh. The event brought together alumni, faculty and staff while raising more than \$300 for Pittsburgh Mercy's Operation Safety Net, a medical and social service outreach program for people experiencing homelessness.

Included in this section are news items received through Dec. 1, 2022.

1953

Tony Wolk writes: "I've written three quasi-fantasy novels about Abraham Lincoln, who not only survived the assassination 'attempt' but who also time-traveled forward for a bit less than a day in 1955, meeting a woman – and more than that I won't say. The three titles are *Abraham Lincoln, A Novel Life*; *Good Friday*; and *Lincoln's Daughter*. They're available as e-books. I am presently at work on a fourth novel, set in 1886 at the time of the Haymarket riot, two years after the death of Mary Todd Lincoln. There's also a short story collection, *The Parable of You*, published a few years ago. I'm still teaching, but half-time, thanks to the COVID epidemic. I am also at work on a book about James Baldwin, thanks to my 1972 interview in London with him. Baldwin is the most amazing man I've ever met. I'm still riding my bike back and forth to Portland State and playing tennis."



1967

Al Stuckeman married Jannice Snipe, Oct. 21, 2021.

1967

A new collection is on display at the Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh highlighting the career of former astronaut **Jay Apt**. Apt worked for NASA and as a flight controller at Johnson Space Center before his selection as an astronaut. He's currently a professor at Carnegie Mellon University's Tepper School of Business and Department of Engineering and Public Policy.

1968

Paul Krause writes: "Not much to report from my home in Victoria, BC, other than further evidence of cataclysmic climate changes: floods, heat waves, forest fires and lots of smoke in BC and in Washington State. I am continuing my long-overdue second book – writing it, not reading it – and playing lots of sports. The bad news for our class is the passing of yet another dear one, **Eric Geer**, whose wit and humanity shone for all of us. He was a very, very wise person. My partner, Kathryn Mackay, and I will be away in February and March, finally summoning the courage to pandemic-travel now that we have received the latest boosters from down South. Come visit next summer. We live across the road, in a place I do not deserve, from a great golf course, and I belong to a terrific clay-court tennis club. Lots of hiking and cycling and kayaking, too. Kindest regards to all. Stay well, please. I don't want to cross out any more entries in my address book."

Bill Miller's first novel, *Steel City: A Story of Pittsburgh*, is a tale of the 1890s golden age of Pittsburgh, when its technological innovations and wealth creation made it the Silicon Valley of its day. Jamie Dalton must decide whether to accede to his father's wishes and pursue a career in

law or the steel business, or follow his instincts and become a newspaperman. He chooses journalism and goes on to cover Pittsburgh's business titans, labor strikes and assassination attempts. While reporting on the unions, he is exposed to a very different world, symbolized by his infatuation with a mysterious woman under the sway of an Eastern European anarchist. Jamie struggles with balancing his access to Pittsburgh's business elite while maintaining the objectivity to tell the hard truths about those same people. Ultimately, he must thwart a terrorist plot that could disrupt the massive corporate merger that would restructure the steel industry.



1973

Ben Mendelson, an avid Steelers fan, had a chance meeting with Steelers Depot contributor David Orochena in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, where Mendelson lives. Orochena shared the anecdote and some thoughts from Mendelson in an article posted on the site on Sept. 19, 2022.

1976

Mike Vogan's fifth grandchild, Atticus Wild, was born Oct. 31, 2022. His son, Andrew and wife, Kayla, became parents for the second time. Their first son, Crosby Phoenix, was born July 16, 2021. Mike and his wife, Lisa, visited Crosby in Louisville, Ky., on his first birthday and met Atticus at Christmas 2022 when the whole family was together in Alexandria, Va. Mike's other son, Matthew, and his wife, Natalie, who reside in Alexandria, have three children, Zachary, Emma and Declan.



1978

Woody Rosenbach visited the Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, where **Lisa Scales** and he discussed best practices as CEOs of nonprofit agencies. Lisa leads the Food Bank while Woody leads the Philadelphia-Based COMHAR Agency, which provides health and human services for those with mental health and intellectual disability challenges.



1978

Carl Kurlander, Marc Lhormer, Kirby Krieger and **Woody Rosenbach** gathered at the premiere of the film *Dear Zoe* in Pittsburgh in November 2022. Lhormer wrote the screenplay and produced the film, which was adapted from a novel by local author Philip Beard and starred Sadie Sink. Filming took place in 2019 in Pittsburgh, including scenes at the Junior School, which Marc, an SSA lifer, attended as a child.



1981

Lisa (Hench) Rist writes: "Carl and I recently enjoyed an incredible week in Rome with eight friends. It was my first time, and Rome did not disappoint! An aptitude for cat herding was definitely called for... this crew likes to fly fast and loose with when or where they are likely to show up! We found a fantastic apartment nestled right between Campo d'Fiori and Piazza Navonne. We had a separate person take the lead for each of our ticketed events so that everything didn't fall on the shoulders of one person (for argument's sake, let's call her Lisa). Our ticketed events included: tour of the Vatican and St. Peter's Basilica, a walking food tour, a daylong bike tour on the Appian Way (aqueducts and catacombs), La Traviata opera in a stunning church, Villa Borghese and a soccer game. Toss in loads of amazing pasta, gelato, wine, walking more than 20,000 steps/day, ruins and history everywhere you turned, shopping when the dollar is strong... leaves nothing not to love! If you haven't been, do it!"



1981

Nancy-Rose Netchi, Hilary Harley '82, Catherine Vodrey and **Gary Middleton** gathered in June at the memorial service for Vodrey's mother, Jane. Other alums at the service included **Sarah Vodrey '78, William Vodrey '83, Henry Klein '11, Lillian Klein '14, Julia Vodrey Hendrickson '04** and **Valerie Vodrey Hendrickson '07**.

1987

Brett Randall is the CEO and owner of Aliner, which manufactures A-frame campers. The company was recently ranked 11th in the Pittsburgh Fast 50, which ranks the region's fastest growing companies. Aliner took the top spot in growth for the manufacturing sector.



1988

The Falbo Trio, led by **Ralph Falbo**, performed a free jazz concert for the community in the Peter J. Kountz Theater of SSA's Hillman Center for Performing Arts on Dec. 1.



1991

Friends from the Class of 1991 gathered to celebrate their 50th birthdays. Front: **Nate Nassif, Beej Gefsky, Doug Spear, Matt Brady**. Back: **Jonathan Green, Mike Brillman, Jeff Toig** and **Jed Lippard**



1993

U.S. Army Lt. Col. **Mike Starz** spoke at all-school assemblies at SSA Junior School and Country Day School in recognition of Veterans Day, speaking to students about his military career and what it means to serve our country.

1996

Geoffrey Melada was named vice president of national policy and strategy for the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute.

1999

Joyce Fu was the guest speaker at SSA Middle School assembly on Nov. 2. Fu, who is part of the International Business Development Team at Major League Baseball, talked about her education and the path that led to her current position with the MLB promoting baseball around the world.



2000

Ben Antin and his wife, Rachel, have two children attending the Junior School. Adam is in kindergarten and Savannah is in junior pre-K, and they both love to show off their Bulldog pride!



2003

Jen Spyra was the featured guest at the Pittsburgh Arts & Lectures event on July 21, 2022. Spyra was interviewed by SSA faculty member Matt Weiss.

Melissa (Nevola) VerCammen, a music teacher at Washington Latin Public Charter School, returned to SSA to join her father, music teacher Stan Nevola, in directing a joint performance by the WLPCS Jazz Band and the SSA Jazz Ensemble at Senior School assembly on Nov. 4.

2012

Here There Be Dragons, an original musical featuring music composed by **Theo Teris**, premiered at the Players Theatre in New York City on June 16, and ran through July 17. Learn more at <https://terisandoneill.com/heretherebedragons>



2015

Andrea (Rockey) Wagner and **Ryan Wagner** were married on July 16, 2022, at Bramblewood in McDonald, Pa. The couple began dating as students at Shady Side.



2019

Gwyn Philips is leading the Northeastern Huskies women's ice hockey team as its starting goalie this season.

2019

Sky Moore of the Kansas City Chiefs caught his first NFL reception from Patrick Mahomes for a 30-yard pickup on Sept. 11, 2022 against the Arizona Cardinals.



2022

Izee Powell (Dartmouth) and **Jaidan Fahrny** (Clarkson) faced off in NCAA Division I women's ice hockey on Dec. 3 when the Golden Knights hosted the Big Green. Clarkson won, 5-0.

2022

Lars Barkman competed for Team USA in squash last summer at the 2022 World Maccabiah Games in Israel. This year, Barkman is on the men's squash team at MIT.

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you! Tell us what's
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classnotes@shadysideacademy.org.



The Academy expresses its deepest sympathy to the families of the following Shady Side Academy alumni and friends. Although we are unable to include remembrances of all, we sincerely value the special involvement in and contributions to the Shady Side Academy community during their lives. These listings include all information received by Nov. 15, 2022.

JOHN P. DAVIS JR. '42

John P. Davis Jr. passed away Nov. 7, 2022. He attended Williams College and Harvard College and earned a J.D. from Harvard Law School. During World War II he served in the U.S. Army, receiving a Bronze Star and Purple Heart. He practiced law for 37 years at Reed Smith LLP in Pittsburgh, retiring as senior partner. A trustee emeritus of Shady Side Academy, he served on the board since 1959 and was chair from 1971-1974. He also was president of the SSA Alumni Association. He was predeceased by his wife, Mary Oates Davis, and daughter, Ann Miller Davis. He is survived by four children, George B. Davis, John P. Davis III '73, Elizabeth Maxwell Davis and Mary Oates Davis; and six grandchildren.

CARTER SMITH '44

Carter Smith passed away July 17, 2022. He graduated from Yale University and served in the American Field Service during World War II as a medical ambulance driver in India. He began his financial career with Colin Norton, which became Clark Dodge, then Kidder Peabody, Paine Webber, and eventually UBS, working until his 89th birthday. He was predeceased by his wife, Elizabeth Morris. He is survived by three children, Jeffrey C. Smith, Scott R. Smith and Cynthia S. Evanisko; nine grandchildren; and nine great grandchildren.

ROGER WIEWEL '45

Roger Wiewel passed away Dec. 28, 2021. He earned a mechanical engineering degree from Carnegie Institute of Technology, served in the U.S. Navy, then earned an MBA from Harvard University. He began his forest industry career with Weyerhaeuser and later worked for Stora Kopparberg, Southwest Forest Industries and MacMillan Bloedel, where he was

senior VP of sales and marketing. He was predeceased by his son, Roger, Jr. He is survived by his wife, Kay; daughter, Evelyn; stepsons, Andrew and Erik Lockhart; and six grandchildren.

FREDERICK W. FRALEY III '50

Frederick W. Fraley III passed away Nov. 2, 2022. He graduated from Princeton University and earned a J.D. from the University of Michigan. He worked as an attorney adviser in the U.S. State Department in Washington, D.C., and in the legal department of Lonestar Gas Co. in Dallas. Starting in the 1970s, he practiced international law, later retiring as general attorney and secretary of Enserch Corp. He was predeceased by his two wives, Elizabeth Anne Fraley and Jean Jones Fraley; and a daughter, Katherine Louise Fraley. He is survived by a daughter, Mary Frances Fraley Herff, and two grandchildren.

DR. JOHN F. STEEL III '50

John Fremont Steel III, M.D., passed away Aug. 29, 2022. He graduated from Dartmouth College and was an aviator in the U.S. Navy before attending Tulane Medical School. He had an esteemed career as a urologic surgeon, serving as chief of staff at Scripps Memorial Hospital and a clinical instructor at UC San Diego Medical School until his retirement. He is the brother of the late William Steel '52, Christopher Steel '59 and Kathleen Sontum. He is survived by his first wife, Sue Maynard Steel; their children, John IV, Kevin, Michael, Kimberly and Bruce Steel; his second wife, Suella Harris Steel; her children, Chas and Gil Bolton; 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

GEORGE F. KESEL '51

George Friesell Kesel passed away July 11, 2022. He attended Williams College and Navy Officer Candidate School, finishing with the rank of Lieutenant Junior Grade, and was posted to the National Security Agency in Washington D.C. After earning an MBA from Wharton Business School, he worked at Union National Bank in Pittsburgh for 27 years, retiring as president and CEO. He was predeceased by his wife, Laura. He is survived by three sons, George, David and Peter, and two grandchildren.

DAVID G. MCCULLOUGH '51

David Gaub McCullough passed away Aug. 8, 2022. An award-winning author and historian, he graduated from Yale University and wrote for *Sports Illustrated*, the U.S. Information Agency and *American Heritage* magazine before publishing his first book, *The Johnstown Flood*, in 1968. He went on to win Pulitzer Prizes for the presidential biographies *Truman* and *John Adams* and National Book Awards for *The Path Between the Seas* and *Mornings on Horseback*. His other acclaimed books include *The Great Bridge*, *Brave Companions*, *1776*, *The Greater Journey*, *The American Spirit*, *The Wright Brothers* and *The Pioneers*. He narrated the award-winning series *The Civil War* and the film *Seabiscuit*, and hosted the television shows *The American Experience* and *Smithsonian World*. He was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2006 and membership in France's Legion of Honor in 2014. In 2013, Pittsburgh renamed the 16th Street Bridge in his honor. He was predeceased by his wife, Rosalee, and two brothers, Hax McCullough and James McCullough '53. He is survived by a brother, George McCullough '47; five children, David Jr., William, Geoffrey, Dorie Lawson and Melissa McDonald; 19 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.



inmemoriam

CHARLES W. RUNNETTE '52

Charles Wilson Runnette III passed away Aug. 13, 2022. He attended Yale University and served as a Navy pilot in the Pacific Northwest, Alaska and Japan. He went to law school at UC Berkeley and was a lawyer for the FAA before joining Pan American World Airways, where he was staff VP in New York, GM of Internal German Service in West Berlin, and VP of the Atlantic Division in London. He later ran the International Division for Continental Airlines. He was predeceased by his brother, William Runnette '55. He is survived by his sister, Ann Runnette Piper; wife, Alice Catherine Land; two children, Brooke and Charles; and one granddaughter.

STIRLING MURRAY RUST III '57

Stirling Murray Rust III passed away Aug. 4, 2022. After earning an engineering degree at Lehigh University, he worked for his family's Rust Engineering Co. In 1972, he started his own company, Montgomery & Rust, building homes and communities in the Pittsburgh area, including Hartswood Farms, The Village of Shadyside, Washington's Landing and Summerset at Frick Park. He was predeceased by stepsiblings Tim Hill and E. Bruce Hill '59. He is survived by siblings Jim Rust '63, Molly Montgomery and John Rust '68; stepsister Margot Ball; wife, Shirley Rust; sons, Robert "Bruce" Rust '83 and Richard "Mark" Rust '85; and four grandchildren.

SPENCER D. HIRSHBERG '59

Spencer Dell Hirshberg passed away May 25, 2022. He graduated from Dartmouth College and served in the U.S. Navy in the Vietnam War. He sold advertising at WEDO Radio before earning a law degree from Duquesne University and joining the Pittsburgh firm of Meyer, Darragh, Buckler, Bebenek and Eck. He was a founding partner at Pietragallo, Bosick and Gordon, then formed his own firm, Hirshberg, Gustine, Straka and Orie. He also founded several other businesses. He was predeceased by a brother, Kent Hirshberg

'65. He is survived by siblings, Cindy Hirshberg and Rev. Craig Hirshberg; his wife, Christy; four children, Lindsay Hirshberg, David Hirshberg, Amy Kegg and Edward Hirshberg; and seven grandchildren.

RAYMOND J. CONWAY '60

Raymond J. Conway passed away July 24, 2022. He grew up playing football for the original Morningside Bulldogs, and after graduating from Shady Side, attended the University of Pittsburgh. He sold furniture as a manufacturer's rep for 20 years, and he and his wife ran Conway's Restaurant in Aspinwall for 10 years. He was the husband of Darlene Kramer Conway; father of Timothy, Charles, and Raymond; brother of Judy Lafferty and Kathy Lee; and grandfather of seven.

THOMAS LYNCH IV '61

Thomas Lynch IV passed away Nov. 5, 2022. After attending Wesleyan University, he served in the U.S. Navy in the Vietnam War, earning the Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal and National Defense Service Medal. He began his 43-year career as a stockbroker at Moore, Leonard and Lynch. When he joined Janney Montgomery Scott, he was president and co-founder of Richards, Lynch and Pegher. He was predeceased by his wife, Susan Martino Lynch, and brother, Clay Frick Lynch II '65. He is survived by his sister, Elisa Simmons; sons, Thomas "Toby" Lynch V '97 and Daniel "Mac" Lynch '01; granddaughters, Catherine '35, Fiona '35 and Samantha; and longtime partner, Rose Gentile.

THOMAS C. CELLI '62

Thomas Cherubini Celli passed away Aug. 18, 2022. A graduate of Cornell University, he was an internationally recognized architect and master planner. He took over the firm co-founded by his father and worked alongside a partner at Celli-Flynn Brennan for two decades, specializing in planning and design for

educational, religious and governmental institutions. Historic cathedrals such as St. Paul's Cathedral in Pittsburgh exemplify his restoration skills. He was predeceased by his wife, Jeanne Gardner Celli. He is survived by his sisters, Marga Nascimento and Ellen Eichleay; and his children, Delta-Marie Cherubini Celli and Michelangelo Cherubini Celli '91.

MICHAEL L. CHERNOFF '63

Michael Light Chernoff passed away June 14, 2022. He attended Northwestern University, then earned a master's degree at the University of Chicago and a Ph.D. at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He began his career as an assistant professor of sociology at Georgia State University, then joined the marketing team at National Evaluation Systems, and retired as a development officer for UMass Engineering College. He is survived by his brother, John Chernoff '64; his wife, Jaymie Chernoff; daughters, Nina Chernoff and Bryn Chernoff; and two grandchildren.

THOMAS A. MENNELL '63

Thomas Andrew Mennell passed away Sept. 18, 2022. He attended Brown University, where he was named to the 60s All-Decade Football Team. He served in the U.S. Army in Vietnam, earning a Bronze Star and Army Commendation Medal. In his 40-year banking and financial management career, he brought treasury and cash management solutions to companies like Guaranty Bank, JP Morgan Chase and HJ Heinz. He is survived by his wife, Glenda; sister, Caroline Weaver; children, Mathes Mennell, Mollie Mennell, Leigh Hensley Rumpf and Lydia Bulloch; and six grandchildren.

RICHARD R. HEASLEY '64

Richard R. "Rick" Heasley passed away July 5, 2021. He attended Penn State University and was a longtime employee of Equitable Gas Co. and a founding member of City Reformed Presbyterian Church in Greenfield. He is survived by his wife,

Virginia (Wolfe) Heasley; brother, Barry Heasley; children, Lori Mitchell, Todd Heasley, Emily Sawyer and Katie Crockett; and 10 grandchildren.

JOHN W. SHEARER '67

John W. Shearer passed away Nov. 4, 2022. He is the husband of Patty Shearer, father of Allison Shearer and brother of Ruthie Shearer.

CRAIG SHULER '67

Dr. Craig Shuler passed away Nov. 1, 2022. A musician, he earned a bachelor's degree from North Texas State University, master's and doctoral degrees from The Julliard School and an ABD degree from New York University. He studied in Florence, Italy, at Northwestern University, and with artists of the Chicago Symphony, New York Pro Arte Chorale and Pittsburgh Symphony. He won a Fulbright Fellowship and three MacDowell Fellowships, composed original scores for two ballets and taught at Julliard, Moravian College, Hartwick College and SUNY Oneonta. He married Becky Pierpont, Sandra Campbell and Katrina Kiklowicz. He is survived by his children, Genevieve, Ryan, Kayleigh and Mira; and brothers, Bryan and James Shuler.

ERIC J. GEER '68

Eric Joseph Geer passed away July 14, 2022. He attended St. John's College and Emory University and lived in Atlanta for the rest of his life. He was predeceased by his brother, Thomas Lee Geer. He is survived by his sisters, Louise Albert Geer Herman and Audrey Jane Geer Masalehdan; his wife, Carolyn Ann Fuhrer Geer; her children, Kristopher Hickman and Katherine Cruz; and her three grandchildren.

WILLIAM S. YARD JR. '68

William Simeon Yard Jr. passed away June 30, 2022. He attended George Washington University, San Francisco State and St. Mary's College and spent most of his career as a scientific writer and editor. At Genentech he contributed to the FDA approval of Rituxan, a medication that

later extended his life. He was the father of Samantha Yard, whom he raised with his second and third wives, Karena Goldfinger and Lisa Camozzi. He spent the last decade in Ecuador, with his wife, Victoria Condór, and her daughters, Melissa, Emily, Estefanía and Salomé. He was predeceased by his sister, Jane Ann Dostalik.

MICHAEL A. LAWSON '72

Michael Alan Lawson passed away Aug. 5, 2022. He was a graduate of the University of Virginia. He was a consultant to businesses to improve productivity through time and methods engineering, and later, in sales performance, and his career took him all over the world. He is survived by his wife, Jean; their son Henry; and his sister, Cathleen Lawson Maloney.

BRUCE A. JOHNSTON '74

Bruce Arthur Johnston passed away June 23, 2022. He earned B.A. and M.L.S. degrees from the University of Pittsburgh. During his career as a medical librarian, academic librarian and library administrator, he was employed by Eye and Ear Hospital & Institute, Pitt's Department of Otolaryngology, Robert Morris University, Duquesne University and Carnegie Public Library. In the 1990s he volunteered as the supervisor for the Library/Information Center at the Pittsburgh AIDS Task Force, receiving a grant from the National Library of Medicine to enhance access to HIV/AIDS information in southwest Pennsylvania. He is survived by his husband, Charles Blair Wessel, sister Deborah Johnston, and many nieces and nephews.

DR. JAMES H. SILVERBLATT '76

James H. Silverblatt, M.D., passed away Oct. 27, 2022. He attended Yale University and earned his medical degree at Chicago Medical School, then made serving the Cleveland area as an internal medicine physician his life's work. He is survived by his wife, Lee Ann; children, Leigh, Emma, Trevor and Max Silverblatt; stepsons, John and Jake Distler; four grandchildren; and sisters Sue Ellen Silverblatt Alderman and Cindy Silverblatt Cherry '80.

DANIEL M. FAWCETT '80

Daniel McKain Fawcett passed away July 16, 2022. He attended Tufts University and earned a J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh and an MBA from Carnegie Mellon University. He was a corporate attorney with Reed Smith, then launched a career in the entertainment industry with KBL Sports. He was VP and general counsel of Fox Sports and DirectTV, head of digital media at News Corp, and founding director of Hulu before retiring and embracing a career as a mental health and addiction counselor. He is survived by his siblings, Betsy Basinski, Emily Fawcett, and Dave Fawcett '76.

ROBERT D. SCHULTZ '00

Robert Downs Schultz of Mt. Lebanon, Pa., passed away June 23, 2022. He is survived by his partner, Kara Dempsey '01; their daughter, Elle Valerie Schultz; and his parents, Robert F. and Valerie Downs Schultz.

JUSTIN D. SHAREK '27

Justin Daniel Sharek passed away Oct. 15, 2022. He is survived by his parents, Daniel Sharek and Senior School faculty member Amy Yam; and his brother, Tyler Yam Sharek '24.

FAMILY & FRIENDS

Frank Calandra Jr., father of Tony Calandra '95 and Kara Calandra Charbonneau '96, and grandfather of Ava Calandra '26

Martin Crimmins, father of Meredith Crimmins '09, Margaret Crimmins '11 and Marjorie Crimmins '15

Jacqueline Ejzak, mother of Senior School faculty member Paul 'Ejzak '89; grandmother of Michael Maloney '07

(continued on next page)

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



David R. Buran

FORMER ATHLETIC DIRECTOR & JUNIOR SCHOOL HEAD

Delores B. “Jill” Buran

FORMER SENIOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Former SSA Athletic Director and Junior School Head David R. Buran passed away May 24, 2022, and his wife, former Senior School administrative assistant, Delores B. “Jill” Buran, passed away Oct. 12, 2022. Dave and Jill were high school sweethearts in Endicott, N.Y., and married after Dave earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees at Colgate University. They began their careers at Shady Side Academy, where Dave served as athletic director and coached multiple sports from 1972-1982, then served as head of the Junior School from 1982-1986, while Jill worked as an administrative assistant to the Senior School head. They left SSA when Dave became headmaster of Hebron Academy in Maine, then transitioned to Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, where Dave worked in fundraising and Jill was an administrative assistant. Dave later became senior VP and director of development at Albany Medical Center, where Jill also worked. They retired to Hamilton, N.Y., where they were active members of the community and enjoyed attending Colgate games. They are survived by their children, David “Bo” Buran ’82 (Bramble), Natalie Buran Granger ’83 (Randy) and Sally Buran Dickinson ’87 (Bob); 11 grandchildren, including SSA Associate Director of Grades 6-12 Admission Kasey Buran Fron; and four great-grandchildren, including SSA students Joseph Fron (Grade 1) and Anthony Fron (SPK).



FAMILY & FRIENDS CONTINUED

Rachel Sapone Ferguson, wife of William N. Ferguson ’96

Martha H. Garvey, mother of Senior School faculty member Liz Garvey; grandmother of Katie Sparvero ’21

Dr. Anthony Gialamas, father of Senior School visual arts teacher Roy Parlour

Charles “Carl” Grefenstette, father of Ed Grefenstette ’85

John “Jack” Henne, grandfather of Mark Henne ’25 and Clark Henne ’27

Sarah Heppenstall, wife of Tal Heppenstall ’78 and grandmother of Colton Heppenstall ’34 and Emma Heppenstall ’35.

C. Talbott Hiteshew Jr., father of Chip Hiteshew ’80

Lynn A. Labun, daughter of late Middle School secretary Betty Labun; sister of Lance Labun ’66

Marion “Tutty” Lessig, former head cook at the Senior School

Beverly A. Little, mother of Junior School Admissions Assistant Joyce Greece

Alice “Candy” Loughney, wife of Pat Loughney ’67; mother of Kathleen Loughney ’93 and Molly Loughney Melius ’01

Rosalee Barnes McCullough, wife of the late David McCullough ’51

Janet M. Miller, mother of Senior School faculty member Jeff Miller; grandmother of Katie (Miller) Foley ’08, Sam Miller ’11 and Eli Miller ’18.

William “Spike” Pendleton, former trustee and father of Claudia (Pendleton) Penwell ’91

Ferd J. Sauereisen, father of Eric Sauereisen ’81 and Sandy Sauereisen ’84; grandfather of Christian Taylor ’18, Maddie Taylor ’14 and Claire Taylor ’21

Rose Semplice, mother of former boys’ hockey coach and Director of McKnight Hockey Center Len Semplice

Kim Smith, wife of Shawn Smith ’70

Rosemary Sparvero, mother-in-law of Senior School faculty member Liz Garvey; grandmother of Katie Sparvero ’21

John Spear, father of Jeff Spear ’82, David Spear ’84 and Doug Spear ’91; grandfather of Rebecca Spear ’11, Abigail Spear ’14 and Archie Spear ’32

Sheila Weirth, mother of Max Schneider ’04

David McCullough ’51

Forever Part of Pittsburgh and Shady Side History

When David McCullough ’51 passed away in August 2022, the world lost an internationally acclaimed author and historian – but Pittsburgh and Shady Side Academy lost a native son who will forever be intertwined in their history.

Throughout his award-winning career, McCullough never forgot the city and the school that shaped him. He returned to Shady Side multiple times, most notably in 2009 as the keynote speaker at the Academy’s 125th Anniversary celebration (when the David McCullough ’51 Archival Gallery was dedicated), and in 2016 as Commencement speaker. In 2013, when Pittsburgh renamed the 16th Street Bridge in his honor on his 80th birthday, the Senior School Jazz Combo performed at the Heinz History Center celebration, and McCullough made a point to visit SSA’s campus with his family the day prior. At these and other events, he often spoke of the SSA teachers who inspired his life and career.

“Teachers like Lowell Inness, Carl Cochran, Robert Abercrombie and Walter Jones were plain marvelous, as good as they get,” he said in 2016. “When our track coach, the legendary Cap Palmer, told me to ‘take the hurdles as they come,’ I’m sure it never occurred to him or me then that these were words to the wise that I would carry with me long into the future.”

“I’ve come to the conclusion that there are no more important members of our society, that no one’s work counts for more in the long run than that of teachers,” he said in 2009. “It was at Shady Side that the love of learning took hold, and may it ever be so for all who are lucky enough to be part of this school, now and for a very long time to come.”

We are all, each and every one of us, more lastingly influenced by the setting where we grew up than we know or sufficiently appreciate.

- David McCullough ’51, 2016



From left: A sketch by McCullough in the 1951 yearbook; McCullough’s senior photo; McCullough and wife Rosalee at the SSA David McCullough ’51 Archival Gallery dedication in May 2009.



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