

WINTER 2023 - 2024

SHADY SIDE ACADEMY



OUR NEXT BIG MOVE

Shady Side's unified Upper School campus will shape community for Middle and Senior School students.



ACTION SHOT

Senior Claudia Knopes holds Claire Watkins, a kindergarten student at Country Day School, atop her shoulders during Homecoming Weekend.





DEAR SHADY SIDE COMMUNITY,

On warm, sunny days, I like to conduct business on the beautiful arched porch just outside my office in Bayard House. More than providing a space to enjoy good weather, the porch allows me to overlook the geographic heart of the

Senior School campus, as well as observe the ways its design helps shape our community.

Looking out, I'll watch students pausing on a walkway for a chat, take in a game of wiffleball breaking out on the quad, or appreciate the ways the campus' Georgian symmetry creates such a distinct sense of place.

Our campus is a living resource, and every part of it—every stairwell, lobby, and garden—holds the potential to educate and instill a sense of belonging, deepening all of our experiences, memories, and emotional connections to Shady Side.

Building on the best architectural designs in our history, we are excited to share with you in this issue the vision for our next move: a 6–12 campus master plan, which is the result of more than three years of close study, research, and community engagement.

With student experience top of mind, we have sought to more fully realize Shady Side's mission through our physical spaces and designed each project prioritizing the following principles:

- Relational Teaching & Student Engagement
- Building Community
- Connected, Real-World Learning

In support of the above, the plan for a unified 6–12 Upper School campus emphasizes natural daylight and visibility, welcoming entry spaces, connective walkways and lawns, a mix of public and quiet areas, and the intentional integration of the indoors and outdoors. We have also considered the physical arrangement of facilities so that our campus density serves to facilitate both the cross-divisional and cross-departmental learning experiences essential to our graduates in the future.

As we have designed and built, we have been mindful of community health and safety and, as a 140-year-old school with an aging physical plant, those concepts that set us up for the most sustainable future possible. The plan includes both new buildings and smart, adaptive repurposing of underutilized campus spaces.

As a credit to the pioneers who so thoughtfully designed SSA's Senior School in the early 1920s, our campus has continued to adapt well to new circumstances, one of the primary markers of its greatness. Over the past century, Shady Side has continued to preserve the campuses' most cherished characteristics, while also responding to growth, change, and renewal.

We are fortunate to enjoy such a beautiful, inspiring campus, one that has been developed as a result of the talents and generosity of so many. When this plan is fully realized, no student, teacher, or alum will show up and not recognize their school. They might, however, notice an exciting shift in campus activities and the way students and teachers interact with one another. I trust the original architects and visionaries of SSA would be proud we remain a school on the move—and that we are building upon their innovative designs to help both the institution and our current students face the challenges of today.

Your support and enthusiasm are vital elements in this journey, ensuring our shared stewardship safeguards this campus for current and future Bulldogs, just as it has for past generations. This journey is a thrilling one, molding us in dynamic new ways.

I eagerly anticipate experiencing it all alongside you!

Sincerely,

Bart Griffith '93
President

SHADY SIDE ACADEMY MAGAZINE

OUR MISSION

Shady Side Academy challenges students to think expansively, act ethically, and lead responsibly.

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ON THE COVER

An illustrated view of the north-facing entrance
to the new Rockwell Middle School

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Making the World a Classroom

The Senior School's real-world
summer pilots encouraged
students to think expansively.



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SSA's willingness to make big moves at the right time has been the central through line in our legacy as Pittsburgh's leading school for over 140 years. When confronted with new circumstances, we have always made our move.



Our Next Big Move

Building on Shady Side's history of bold moves, the Academy announces a 6–12 campus master plan.

Building Empathy through Theater

How the performing arts program encourages students to embrace compassion.





Around the Academy



SENIOR SCHOOL

A Fresh Take on Pittsburgh

Freshmen participated in the Class of 2027's "Fresh Take on Pittsburgh," a day to allow students to thoughtfully engage in small groups with faculty members and each other outside of regular advisory cohorts in locales beyond SSA's campus. During this time together, students had the chance to get some exercise, interact with the greater Pittsburgh community, and meet new classmates.



JUNIOR SCHOOL

Thinking Globally from Pittsburgh's East End

Junior School students and their families celebrated cultural diversity and global awareness with the sixth annual International Fair. Students engaged in an immersive journey, exploring various cultures through music, dance, art, and cuisine. The event emphasized parental involvement, social and emotional learning, and interdisciplinary education, reinforcing the importance of global perspectives and community engagement.



MIDDLE SCHOOL

Robotics Victory Fuels Learning and Innovation

The Middle School Blue Robotics team demonstrated outstanding skill and innovation at the Southwest PA FIRST LEGO League 2023 Tournament Series and Championship, clinching first place in both the Robot Design and Robot Performance categories. Their remarkable achievement was highlighted by a score of 465 points.

JUNIOR SCHOOL

Early Learning Center Expansion Completed

The expansion project increased the footprint of the state-of-the-art facility to accommodate the increasing number of Junior School students in junior pre-k, senior pre-k, and kindergarten. The modern wing offers an enhanced learning environment, complete with spacious classrooms, outdoor space, and advanced technology—all of which are designed to improve the learning of our youngest students.





Around the Academy

COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

Cultivating Creativity and Confidence

First-grade students performed “The Garden and the Dewdrop” for their family and friends this fall. Students were engaged in the creation and direction of the play by first being asked about the role they wanted to play. Their one-of-a-kind play was then written for them by their teachers. Students worked hard on their lines, choreography, songs, and props to create something imaginative, witty, and a lot of fun for their audience.



SENIOR SCHOOL

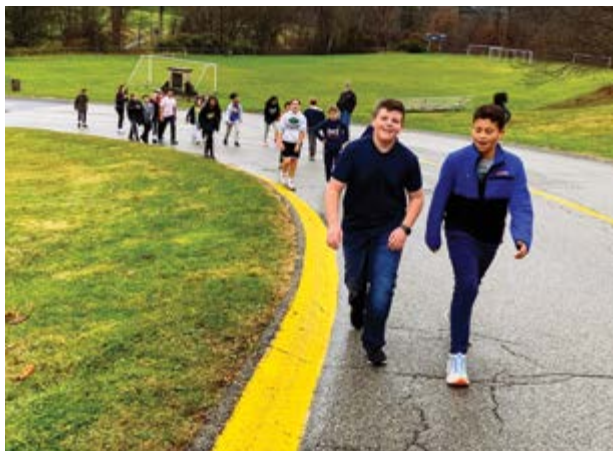
Class of 1966 Memorial Hall Library Renovation Completed

The new 5,500 square-foot library, which honors the building’s original architectural features, houses enhanced digital platforms, a host of collaborative learning spaces, a large, multi-use classroom and meeting space, and a small presentation stage in support of events and gatherings, as well as a spacious mezzanine. The project was completed in the fall of 2023, with a ribbon-cutting ceremony during Homecoming & Reunion Weekend.

COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

Digging into Decomposition

Excitement percolated in the pre-k classroom at Country Day School when students embarked on a hands-on STEM project focused on decomposition. The curriculum included understanding how leaves, dead trees, and other organic materials break down over time. Young learners rolled up their sleeves and got their hands dirty as they monitored the breakdown of a pumpkin and documented each stage of decomposition, noting the transition from freshness to soil enrichment. The project was designed to reveal the natural processes of decay and the vital role they play in the ecosystem.



MIDDLE SCHOOL

Examining Water Issues through a Walkathon

Sixth-grade students in the Middle School turned their study of Linda Sue Park’s novel “A Long Walk to Water” into actionable change with a meaningful walkathon. The initiative, rooted in their English curriculum, helped them understand the challenges of water scarcity in South Sudan, as experienced by the novel’s protagonist, Salva Dut. The walkathon, symbolizing the daily struggle for water in South Sudan, combined education with empathy, encouraging students to explore real-world issues like the importance of water wells and community development.



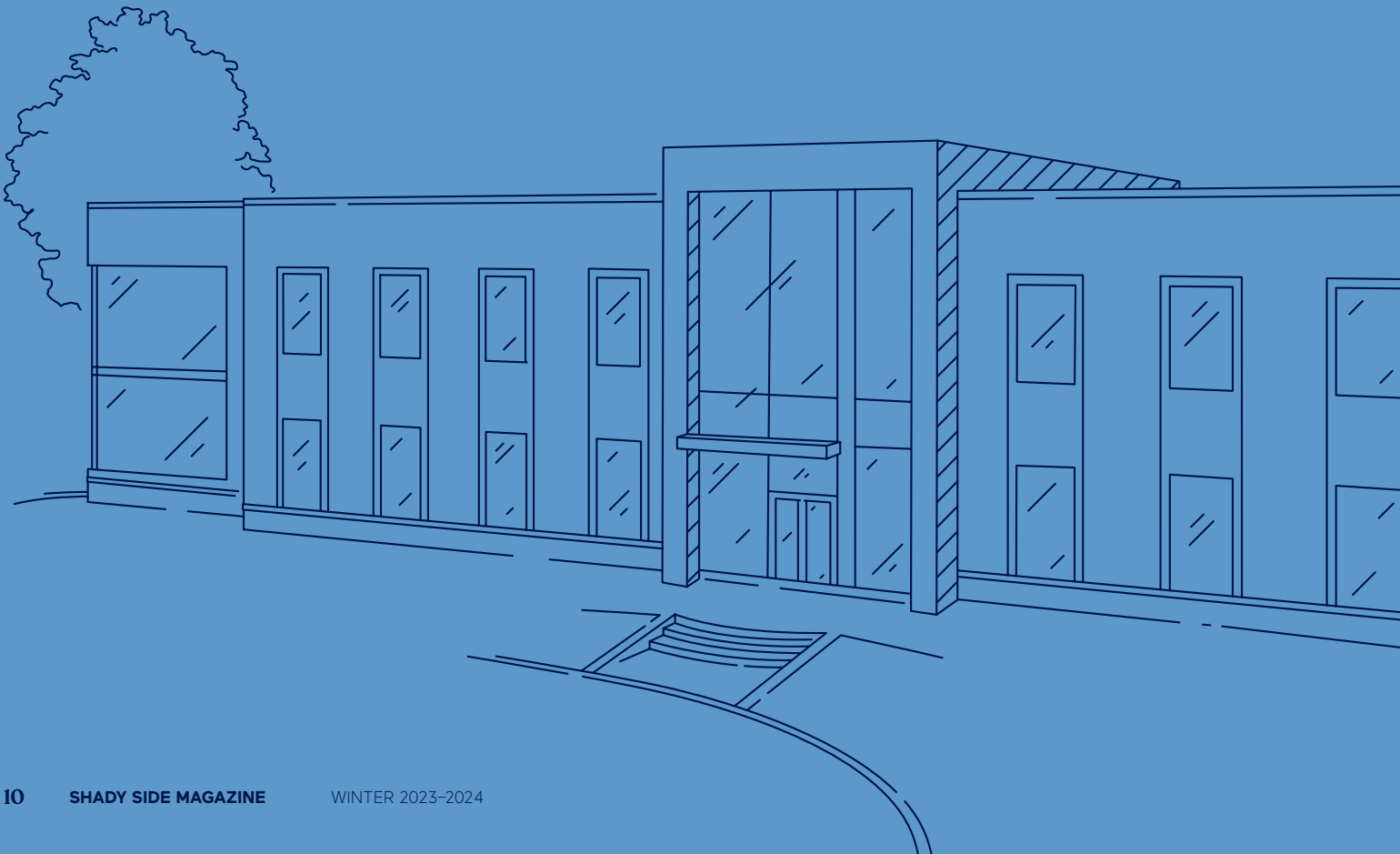
JUNIOR SCHOOL & COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

Lower Schools Shine Bright at Annual Winterfest

Students from the Junior School and Country Day School collaborated to transform Winterfest into a luminescent spectacle with their unique glow gallery. Utilizing neon paints and black lights, they masterfully illuminated bridge-themed artwork, drawing inspiration from Pittsburgh's iconic bridges and local artists. This year's fusion of creativity and city pride elevated the glow gallery display into a dazzling annual tradition for both Lower Schools.

OUR NEXT BIG MOVE

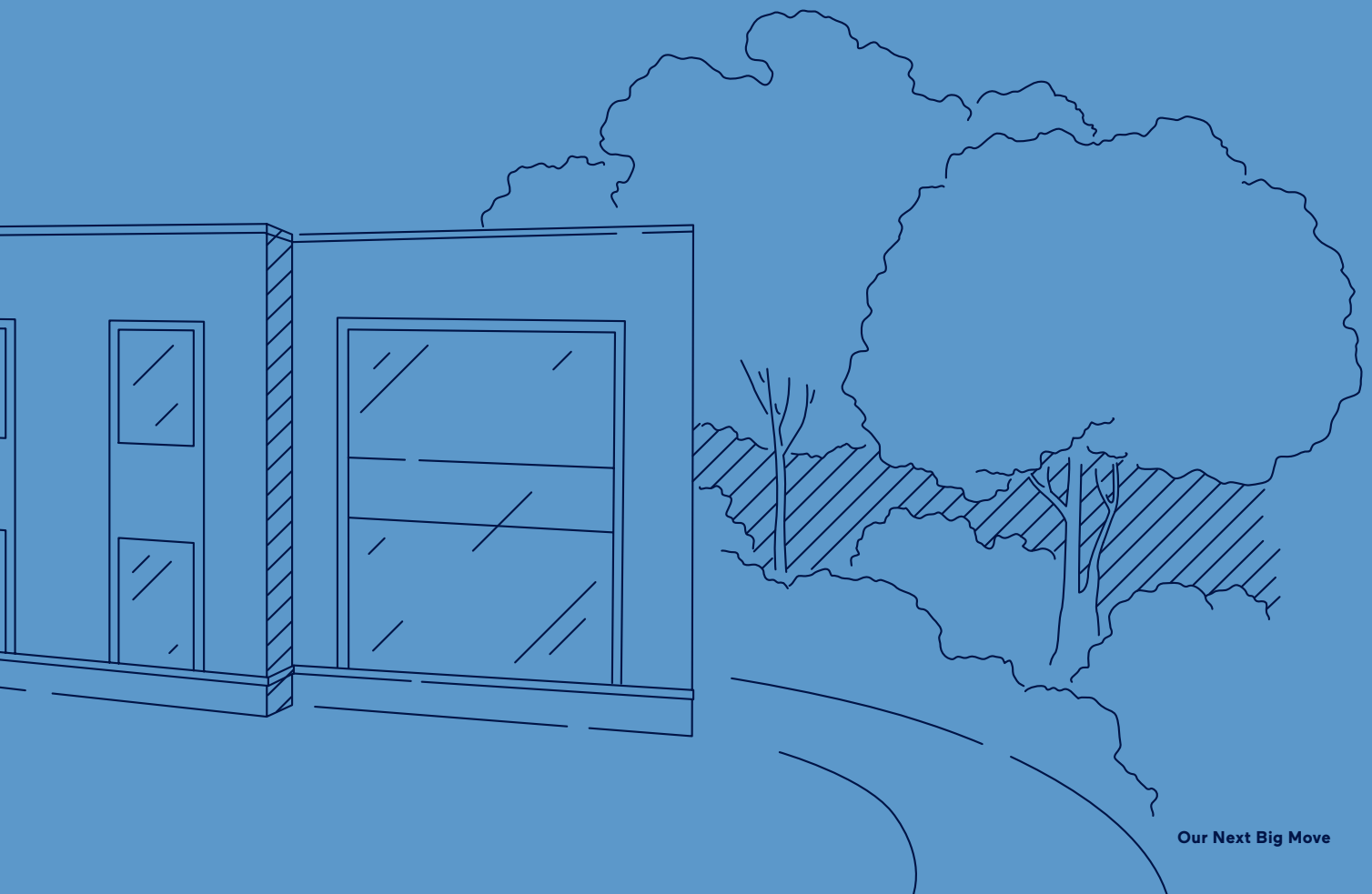
Shady Side's new Upper School campus will evolve learning for Middle and Senior School students.



DURING ITS LONG HISTORY, Shady Side Academy has witnessed many periods of change. From its humble beginnings in a one-room schoolhouse with just 16 students, to its current comprehensive spread as a preeminent pre-k through grade 12 institution, Shady Side has never wavered from its most important goal: challenging students to think expansively, act ethically, and lead responsibly.

Shady Side's current leaders are committed to honoring that promise by offering a valuable education for families and students moved to connect and be well, consider a different perspective, and learn beyond the classroom in every facet of school life. With an eye toward continued growth and development in these areas, Shady Side will embark on its next big move: a reimagined Upper School campus that will house grades 6 through 12 in a more unified and collaborative educational setting.

Faced with the opportunity that an aging infrastructure can present and an eye firmly pointed toward the educational evolution that will cement Shady Side's status as a top-tier school, a years-long, exhaustive research and planning process challenged the Academy's leaders to develop a forward-thinking blueprint that will serve incoming generations of Bulldogs and their families. "This plan was rooted in our need to be guardians of a sustainable future for SSA," says President Bart Griffith '93. "We saw an opportunity to step back and ask, 'What do we want our spaces to look like into the future? How can their design help our students think expansively and act ethically, and learn to lead responsibly in communities?'"



THE MIDDLE SCHOOL stood out as an immediate opportunity. Shady Side's current Middle School building was once known as the J. E. Lewis Estate. The stone mansion was constructed in the late 1920s as a lavish home for James Edward Lewis and his family. Since 1958, it has served as a home for SSA's Middle School students and educators. While steeped in history, the aging building was not designed with education in mind and lacks the spaces that encourage contemporary learning.

At the Upper School campus, Middle School students will find a home at the Rockwell Middle School, a 49,300-square-foot facility that will feature ample natural light, collaborative spaces, flexible classrooms, and its own library and dining hall.

"The intention of this space is so very different from the intention of the current Middle School space," says Michelle Merson, Head of Middle School. "The ability to move into a building that is designed for early adolescent learning and community connection is such an opportunity."

One planned feature that Merson expects to have a great effect on Middle School students is the intentional open design and extensive windows. Natural light, which is lacking in the current Middle School building, "has been linked to improved concentration and cognitive functioning, positively affects mood and reduces stress levels, and can increase motivation and enthusiasm among students," she says.

"The intention of this space is so very different from the intention of the other space. The ability to move into a building that is designed for early adolescence learning and living is such an opportunity."

With plenty of flexible spaces, teachers can more easily approach interdisciplinary work between grade levels and subjects, and the School's location on the Upper School campus will give Middle School students access to state-of-the-art STEAM facilities, including the McIlroy Center for Science and Innovation.



Moving the Middle School to the Upper School campus won't simply affect the way our students learn; it will give them more time to learn. Middle School students currently spend roughly 30 minutes per day dedicated to transportation to the Senior School for athletics. Eliminating that bussing time will give nearly two weeks of instructional time back to Middle School educators.

As Shady Side brings its Middle School and Senior School students onto one campus, school leaders are excited to step closer to the ideal of "One Shady Side," a unified campus with strong community connections. Merson says she and Trixie Sabundayo, Head of Senior School, are already sharing ideas for mentorship opportunities between their schools' grade levels, new cross-divisional rituals, and encouraging student connectivity.



Top: A view of the central staircase planned for the new Rockwell Middle School. The central staircase is inspired by the main staircase in the current Middle School

Right: An interior view of the new STEEM classroom that will be connected to the art studio via a central vestibule

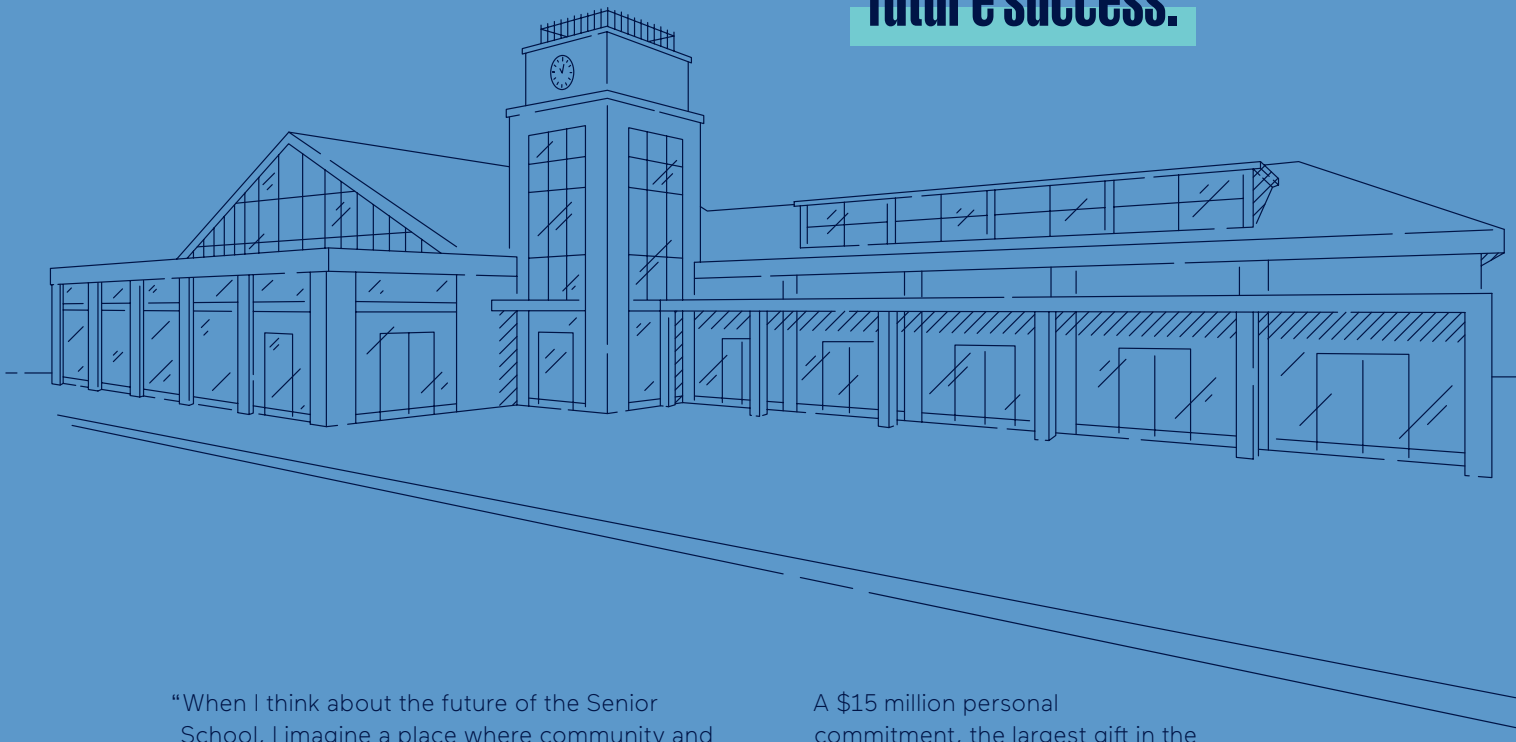
Left: A look at one of several teaming spaces located throughout the Rockwell Middle School designed to promote collaboration and connection



WHILE THE MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS SETTLE INTO THEIR NEW HOME,

Senior School students will benefit from other planned updates on campus. Across the quad from the Rockwell Middle School, the Rockwell Student Commons will provide a dining and event space, a student lounge, a spirit store, and other amenities that will cultivate community relationships. New indoor and outdoor collaborative spaces will allow for planned and impromptu student gatherings and meetings.

“Each moment outside the classroom is a stepping stone, equipping our graduates with not just academic prowess but real-world skills and experiences vital for their future success.”



“When I think about the future of the Senior School, I imagine a place where community and interconnectedness stand at the forefront,” says Sabundayo. “Imagine our students engaging in an impromptu game of spike ball on the quad, strategizing over board games in the lounge, or delving into a thought-provoking global politics discussion over dinner. These aren’t just leisure activities; they’re integral to crafting a dynamic learning environment. Each moment outside the classroom is a stepping stone, equipping our graduates with not just academic prowess but real-world skills and experiences vital for their future success.”

A \$15 million personal commitment, the largest gift in the Academy’s 140-year history, from alumnus and past parent S. Kent Rockwell ’62 and his partner, Pat Babyak, was made in October 2022 in support of capital projects included in the campus master plan. Rockwell says, “After seeing all of the good things happening at Shady Side and learning more about the vision for the campus master plan, we were enthusiastic about the opportunity to make a meaningful commitment.” The Rockwell Middle School and Rockwell Student Commons will anchor the campus plan.

SINCE THE ROCKWELL MIDDLE SCHOOL WILL TAKE THE SPACE THAT CURRENTLY HOUSES McCUNE LIBRARY AND HUNT HALL,

classroom additions and improvements will take place elsewhere on campus. A Croft House ground floor redesign will introduce four additional classrooms, a sizable faculty workspace, and a patio. After relocating the President's Office and the Admissions Office, the first floor of Bayard House will become a teaching and learning space that features five classrooms, workspace for up to 12 teachers, and a sizable new lobby.

"Each of these spaces is meant to elevate the faculty so they have the requisite stage to bring their crafts to light," says Robert Mullin '93, Chair of the Board of Trustees. "We are trying to ensure that teachers have the physical resources and the financial resources to do what they do—however that's defined currently, and however that could be defined in the future."

In addition to these new spaces, Shady Side's larger Upper School campus plan includes the previously completed \$2.2 million conversion of Memorial Hall into the Class of 1966 Memorial Hall Library, and the Gene Deal Fields, a state-of-the-art outdoor sports complex featuring a multi-use artificial turf field lined for lacrosse, soccer, baseball, softball, and field hockey, as well as a new grandstand, viewing pavilion and terrace, scoreboard, and upgraded landscaping and walkways.



Top: An interior rendering of the Class of 1966 Memorial Hall Library featuring the central circulation desk.

Middle: The exterior patio that will extend off the renovated lower level of Croft House will overlook the tennis courts below.

Bottom: One of the original renderings depicting the Gene Deal Fields.

THE REVAMPED CAMPUS PLAN will be completed with a new West Gate entrance off of Riding Meadow Road to improve traffic flow and campus access.

Shady Side's leaders recognize that pangs of nostalgia might hit alumni as they watch the campus evolve. Yet, Griffith reminds us, "Shady Side is not a museum preserved in amber. It is more like a garden that continues to grow."

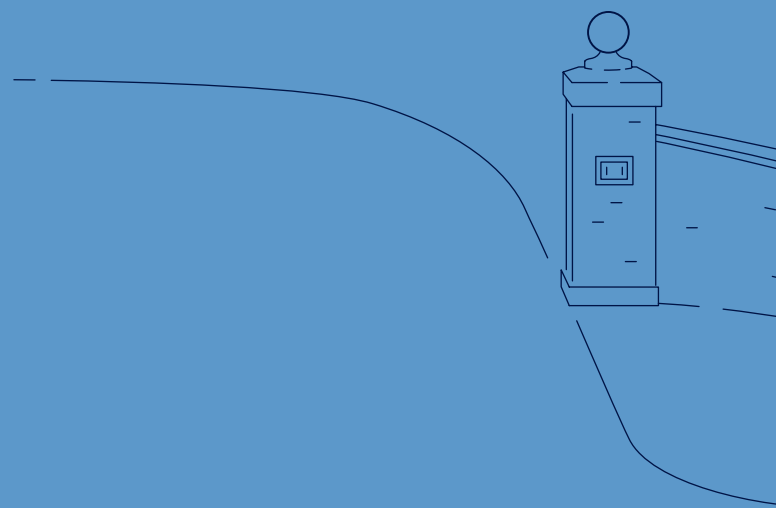
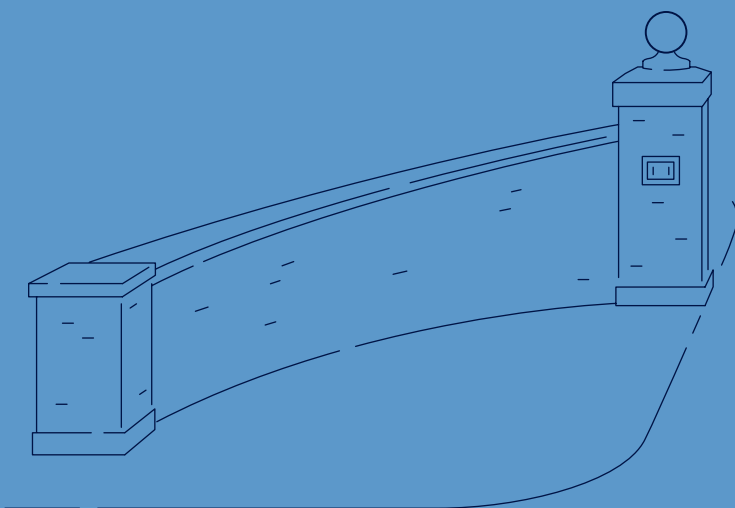
Mullin agrees. "We've never been a stagnant community," he says. "We have had many material changes to our plans. And it's always been done based on the needs of the times and the expectation of future needs as assessed at those times."

Indeed, Shady Side has a rich history of change. "The founding purpose of the school was extraordinarily bold in 1883," says Griffith. "The move from the East End to Fox Chapel in the 1920s was quite ambitious and progressive. The shift to co-education in the 1970s has positively altered the shape of the past 50 years at SSA. And we are currently enjoying the inspiring impact of seven-day boarding and an international student body on Shady Side. SSA's willingness to make big moves at the right time has been the

**"These are investments
that are coming from a
position of strength, and
they're here to give us our
next 100 years."**

central through line in our legacy as Pittsburgh's leading school in three separate centuries."

Mullin believes that the planned campus changes will serve to give future alumni the same feelings of connection to their alma mater that many SSA alumni feel today. "These buildings will enhance experiences so that the sense of nostalgia will grow for future generations when they're alumni looking back," Mullin says. "These are investments that are coming from a position of strength, and they're here to give us our next 100 years." 🌀





Opened a new two-story building on a block bound by Ellsworth and Morewood Avenues and Bayard Street.



On November 21, 1954, Memorial Hall was dedicated.

A HISTORY OF

1883

1885

1922

1955

1996



Shady Side Academy was first housed in a single-room schoolhouse on Aiken Avenue.



In May, the Rowe Hall cornerstone was laid in the new Fox Chapel location. The Senior School campus opened in the fall.



The Roy McKnight Hockey Center opened.



Groundbreaking of the Hillman Center for Performing Arts, which opened in 2004.



The Glimcher Tech & Design Hub opened.



Memorial Hall converted into the Class of 1966 Memorial Hall Library.

BOLD SPACES

2003

2018

2019

2022

2023



The McIlroy Center for Science and Innovation opened.



Completion of the Gene Deal Fields.



Going All In by Coming Home

How this Educator
is Maximizing
Relational Teaching

WHEN ELIZABETH PATTERSON '93 walks across the quad to her classroom in Croft House, faculty and students encounter a friendly face with a vibrant energy and the determination to make a difference. Finding herself drawn to SSA's focus on relational teaching, she knew it was time to make a transition. So this alumna returned home to Shady Side Academy as a Wellness Teacher and Varsity Field Hockey Coach 30 years after graduating.

Patterson's return to SSA is not just a new chapter in her professional journey but a story of blending a rich personal history with a progressive and empathetic approach to teaching and coaching. It's a familial legacy, echoing through the halls with the memories of her father (Bill Patterson '47), uncle (Dave Patterson '52), and brother (Bill Patterson III '77), all proud alumni. Now, as she watches her sons—Morrow, grade 5, and Brawley, grade 9—immerse themselves in the Junior and Senior Schools, she actively contributes to the Academy's legacy through her unique educational philosophy.

Her approach is anchored in emotional intelligence and a keen sensitivity to her students' needs. In the first week of her class, she took her students on a walk down the trails at the Senior School to talk about stress reduction. This simple yet powerful activity had a lasting impact, as evidenced by a student who later emailed her to find out where to pick up the trail, eager to study by the stream for some fresh air and space.

"Three powerful antidotes for a student who might be suffering are to teach them about personal wellness, to empower them to connect with others organically, and to help them recognize that they have a charismatic adult in their lives who they can trust," she says. These small but significant gestures demonstrate Patterson's acute understanding of how the need for wellness education has grown in recent years.

As a competitive individual—playing field hockey and lacrosse at SSA and Muhlenberg College, and achieving All-Star and All-American recognition in lacrosse—Patterson understands the drive and focus required in sports and academics. However, she places equal emphasis on understanding her students' emotional and psychological needs, whether in the classroom or on the playing field. "Coaching has always been a professional passion of mine, and I couldn't think of a better way to fully get to know our students, especially at the start of a new position."



Coaching has always been a professional passion of mine, and I couldn't think of a better way to fully get to know our students, especially at the start of a new position."



As the Varsity Girls Field Hockey Coach, she brings a philosophy of relational coaching, focusing on personal wellness, connection, and trust. "In a world full of digital distractions, I cherish the two hours a day my athletes spend away from their phones, engaged in physical activity and strategy," Patterson remarks. "This time is crucial for teens, providing not only a break from the constant bombardment of information but also an opportunity to build camaraderie and teamwork."

In her first season, Patterson introduced "Fun Fridays," a concept designed to maintain momentum and keep her athletes engaged. These days, filled with enjoyable activities, were about having fun, reinforcing team spirit, and the joy of playing sports. "I don't think many of our opponents were playing pickleball and eating pizza the day before a big game," she says. Her methods have already led to a WPIAL championship, proving that competitiveness and joy are both vital.

Patterson's return to Shady Side represents more than a homecoming; for her, it's a reinvigoration of the Academy's values through her thoughtful blend of community building, relational teaching, and a deep understanding of the needs of today's students. By going all in, her impact extends beyond the classroom and the playing field, shaping a new generation of SSA students who are not only academically and athletically proficient but also emotionally intelligent, socially aware, and equipped to handle the challenges of the modern world.

Patterson adds, "We are excited to bring the trophy home again next year, too...keeping it where it belongs."

Enriched by Community Connection

The Parents' Association Champions Broad Engagement and Participation

FOR JONATHAN BROWN, engaging in Shady Side's parent community has spurred personal growth, learning, and transformation. While he leads the Unified Parents' Association (UPA), the group's focus on collaboration means that their success is a group achievement. "Community changes the world," Brown says. "The Parents' Association is the means to foster that community at SSA."

Brown's journey to Shady Side, like many auspicious life events, was unforeseen. Before his eldest son entered the Junior School's kindergarten class, Brown had never considered an independent school education for his family. But a casual suggestion from his son Julian's mother led to a transformative experience, and Julian is now a thriving ninth grader at the Senior School. Following Julian's path, Brown's daughter, Allyn, began her education in senior pre-kindergarten at the Junior School and is currently in fifth grade.

Over the past decade, Shady Side's nurturing environment has cultivated the Brown children's academic prowess and shaped them into exemplary role models and leaders. Encouraged by his children's school experiences, Brown has developed new leadership skills himself. He fondly reminisces about how his children's educators promoted public speaking from an early age, while he only learned that skill as an adult. This proactive commitment to comprehensive education has led to touching moments

when Brown finds himself gleaning insights from his children, a testament, he believes, to SSA's vast community influence beyond the academic sphere.

While his children effortlessly integrated into their new school environment, Brown initially struggled to find his place within what he viewed as the "SSA mold." With time, he embraced authenticity, casting aside hesitations and boldly expressing facets of his identity, from his tattoos to his choice of attire.

Reflecting on his experience, he notes, "When I first became part of the Junior School Parents' Association (PA), the team welcomed me with open arms, fostering a sense of belonging." He adds, "It all boils down to leadership. While we hail from varied walks of life, our unifying thread is the mutual aspiration to support our children."

After serving in the Junior School PA, Brown made the deeply personal decision to become president of the UPA. "As an African American father, I recognize the significance of representation. Through my leadership this year, I aim to champion diversity within the Parents' Association, emphasizing that every child—and by extension their family—should see themselves mirrored in the broader SSA community."

Acknowledging the important groundwork laid by UPA presidents before him, Brown considers what is next for the UPA and how he can pass the baton to the next president. "Under the leadership of Bart, Shady Side Academy has seen some traditions evolve,



**Come as you are.
We are all here,
focused on the kids.**



and has embraced innovation and change. It is important for the Unified Parents' Association to be in alignment with this direction." He adds, "Our focus for the UPA right now is to blend the richness of our traditions with a new forward-thinking approach that responds to what our community's needs are today and in the future."

Community is at the heart of the UPA's initiatives. Brown emphasizes the importance of valuing every parent volunteer, whether they can contribute 15 minutes or an entire day. By creating diverse opportunities for involvement, the UPA seeks to ensure that every SSA community member feels heard, seen, and supported.

Brown encourages all SSA parents, especially fathers and guardians, to get involved with the UPA—and bring others along. "Playfully nudge or encourage that person who wants to get involved but perhaps doesn't see themselves as part of the UPA," he says.

If there is one thing Brown wants every parent and guardian to know, it's that there is a place for them here at SSA and within the UPA. "Come as you are," he says, "We are all here, focused on the kids."

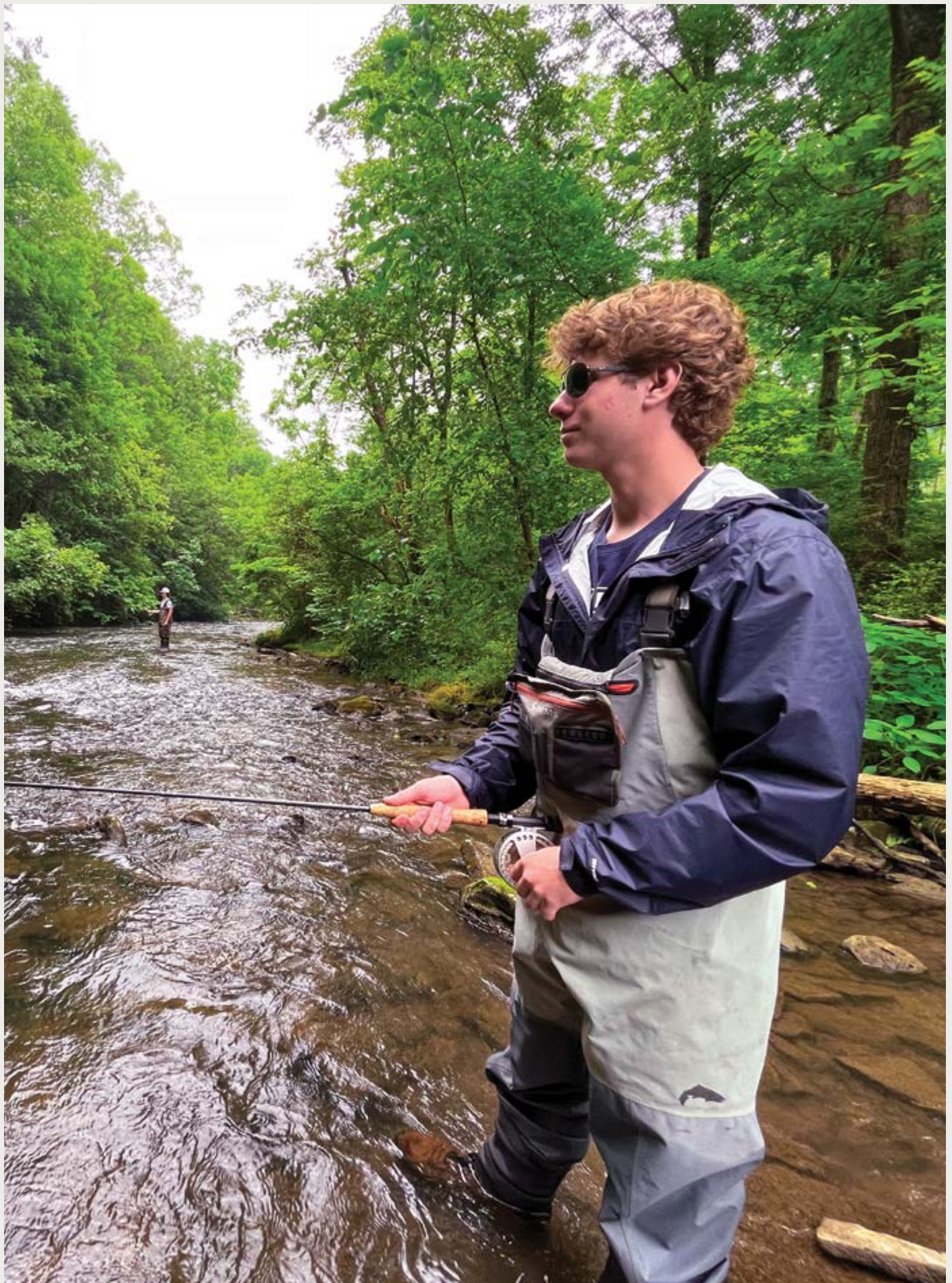




Making the World a Classroom

The Senior School's real-world summer pilots
challenged students to think expansively.

FLY FISHING IS A CHERISHED ACTIVITY for Dr. Devon Renock, the George and Ann Magovern Chair in Science at Shady Side Academy. "It's a reflective, meditative, quiet endeavor," he says. During informal conversations with fellow faculty member Adam Janosko, who teaches English at the Senior School, Renock discovered that Janosko is also a fly fisherman. While that recreational connection could have amounted to nothing more than faculty room chatter, it ultimately became the stepping stone for an interdisciplinary course that married scientific and literary instruction through hands-on study of local waterways.







IN THE SUMMER OF 2023, Renock and Janosko partnered to pilot a three-week, immersive and applied-learning course called “A River Runs Through Pitt,” which explored the science, literature, and practice of fly fishing. Seven students joined Renock and Janosko to study local waterways, examine important literary works that feature rivers and fishing, and try their hands at fly fishing.

“We have a responsibility to address community needs and engage with communities around us,” says Trixie Sabundayo, Head of Senior School, who explains that this pilot course was developed as part of a longer-term effort to research and design immersive, interdisciplinary, real-world learning experiences at the Senior School.

Armed with a \$200,000 matching grant from the E.E. Ford Foundation, Shady Side’s leaders and educators began a thorough investigation of ways to expand real-world learning opportunities for students. Sabundayo says interdisciplinary, hands-on classes stood out as a way to “give students the opportunity to think across disciplines, collaborate, and make sense of the world in a way that felt like they were making an impact.”

Students in Renock and Janosko’s summer pilot received the immersive training and hands-on experiences that Sabundayo supports. During a hike along Glade Run stream on campus, students recorded observations and discussed how biologists assess the health of streams and watersheds. Following a trip to the Babcock

Nature Center in Sarver to collect macroinvertebrates, students analyzed the tiny organisms in the McIlroy Center for Science and Innovation labs to assess the health of Buffalo Creek, and their results were later presented to the Buffalo Creek Watershed Group.

Recalling the group’s visit to the Lowber Abandoned Mine Water Treatment Site in Greensburg, where mining activities impacted a creek’s pollution levels, Renock explains how that trip provided the string that connected various lessons that he and Janosko hoped to impress upon students through this intensive course. “We wanted them to understand the connection between environmental impact and the health of the stream, relating that to the tiny organisms that call that stream home and form the base of the food chain in that ecosystem, and how that affects families and people who like to fish, and the traditions involved with the people who live on the river.”

Janosko introduced the stories that rivers can tell through various literary works and assignments. The group read and discussed excerpts from “A River Runs Through It,” by Norman Maclean, “The Big Two-Hearted River,” by Ernest Hemingway, “In a Small Pond,” by Franklin Burroughs, and “The Silent Spring,” by local environmental pioneer Rachel Carson. Students also journaled throughout the class and ended the term with a reflection essay. “We did these journal entries to think about our place in the natural world and how everything is so intricately connected,” Janosko says.

Students visit Spring Creek in Milesburg, PA for an off-campus fly fishing lesson.

“ULTIMATELY, THE GOAL IS TO REALLY LOOK AT THE WORLD AROUND US AND TO GET THE STUDENTS OUT THERE.”

Janosko believes “A River Runs Through Pitt” delivered an opportunity for students that they don’t typically have during a traditional school day. “They can explore something that they may have no idea existed, and it’s a perfect opportunity to dive into a topic that’s beyond the core classes you get,” Janosko says.

Renock reveals that he felt inspired by the learning as well. “What I enjoyed was that I could be a student in this class,” he says. “Students could see me modeling our values, like curiosity and respect.” Janosko also reflects on what he learned during the class. “From a teacher’s perspective, we are often in our silos. Renock is a master educator; one of the greatest things for me was witnessing another teacher teach outside of my silo,” he says.

“As we think about making more of these opportunities available during our academic year, kids will still be assessed on their skill and competency development,” Sabundayo explains. “They will be asked to engage transdisciplinary skills in real-time collaboration with their classmates and group members. They will have to engage in a way that is all about application and not just about theory.”

Sabundayo stresses that the intention behind the courses advances the work SSA’s faculty and students are already



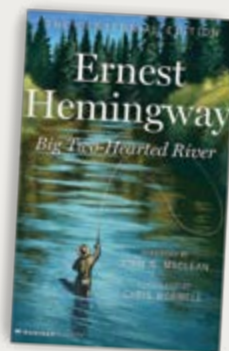
Ninth grade student David Dillon identifies macroinvertebrates in the lab while Janosko and Renock look on.

doing. “Valuing these skills isn’t new,” she says. “We are creating an intentional space for our students to practice something that we know they will need once they leave us—that is, the ability to be intelligent in the way that they move, engage, and problem-solve in communities, and to appreciate the depth and nuance of looking at real-world situations while having conversations across differences.”

Sabundayo expects teachers to take students into Pittsburgh and its surrounding areas for explorations and hands-on work as part of these course curriculums. But that’s just the beginning. “Pittsburgh is the baby step to really engaging with the world at large,” Sabundayo says.



Ninth grader Avery Trueba shows off her catch along with the group's fishing guide on a stream near Ligonier, PA.



"Ultimately, the goal is to really look at the world around us and to get the students out there."

Renock and Janosko aren't sure they converted all of their students into fly fishermen and fisherwomen, but they know the students enjoyed learning about the craft and the significant role waterways play in our lives, both scientifically and within literature. "Our course was based on the idea that streams and rivers tell a story," Renock says. "They tell the story of the people who live there. They tell the story of the historical misuse of rivers, pollution, and environmental impact."

Ninth-grade student David Dillon, who participated in the pilot, says that Renock and Janosko succeeded in their goal. "The course had amazing teachers and we learned more about the environment than I thought I would while fishing," he says.

Marrying their disciplines provided a unique way for Renock and Janosko to teach their students and perhaps learn something new themselves.

But Janosko is clear on one of the most important things he learned during "A River Runs Through Pitt": "I'm a better fisherman than Devon Renock," he says with a grin. 🐟

Building Empathy Through Theater

How our four campuses are helping students embrace compassion.

Shady Side Academy is steadfastly committed to educating the world's next generation of responsible leaders. In addition to providing modern learning spaces and outstanding academic instruction, SSA understands its role in developing the social discourse skills that will help future graduates become caring, solutions-focused citizens in a fast-paced world. At all four campuses, theater instruction has emerged as a critical component in harnessing students' civil discourse skills.



Senior School students participate in various exercises on stage as part of an acting class led by RealTime Interventions in spring 2023.



“You can’t do theater without empathy. It’s core to the job,”

explains Dek Ingraham, Executive Director of the Hillman Center & Performing Arts Department Chair. Armed with that knowledge, every Shady Side campus embraces theater’s role in the pivotal work of developing students’ communication skills as they progress through age-related developmental stages.

Nancy McGeever and Chloe Torrence teach SSA’s youngest Bulldogs how to recognize and express their emotions, as well as read emotional cues from their peers. As the Junior School Theater Arts Teacher, McGeever is clear about the vision for the school’s program. “I had less of an interest in creating a production machine and more of an interest in shaping decent, caring human beings through the work,” McGeever explains.

Torrence, the Music and Theater Teacher at Country Day School, also recognizes how theater skill-building can impact students long after they matriculate beyond higher levels of learning. “There’s a very clear and visible need in our world for deeper empathy and deeper understanding,” Torrence says. “Shady Side leaders saw this need and immediately thought, ‘How can we help our community and the world?’ Theater is such a clear way to do that because theater is the study of empathy.”





Above: The 2023 fifth grade class performs "¡Saludos, Amigos!"

Far left: The Country Day School second grade class performs "Snow Show."

Left: The Junior School fifth grade class performs "Dolly, the Polka Dotted Llama and the Mackindoo Zoo."

AT THE JUNIOR SCHOOL AND COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL,

McGeever and Torrence emphasize classwork that teaches their young students how to recognize emotions, communicate kindly with their classmates, and support one another. "The games we play and the improvisations we do build the skills of listening, eye contact, compassion, and empathy," McGeever says.

In Torrence's class, she recalls challenging students to use creative thinking to describe their emotions in unexpected ways. She might ask them, for example, to choose which shape best reflects their current emotion and why. Engaging in that thought process and listening to other students opens the pathway for developing effective listening and communication skills. "We need to understand ourselves so we have the ability to understand others and what they're going through, and to really think about how they're experiencing the world," Torrence says.

Middle School students perform "A Wrinkle in Time" for family and friends.



MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS can continue their theater arts education by participating in the School's fall play or the winter musical. Students who opt to participate conduct their work during the Middle School athletic period. "Theater is a team sport, which is why it's in the athletic block," says Camille MacRae, an English teacher who directs the fall play. This year, Middle School students performed "A Wrinkle In Time," which

MacRae describes as unmistakably aligned with Shady Side's focus on deeper understanding because it deals with love, empathy, intense relationships, and even strong feelings of isolation and selfishness.

Kristan Fisher, Administrative Assistant to the Head of the Middle School, taps into her undergraduate and Masters degrees in theater



arts while directing the Middle School's winter musical. This year, students performed "The Wizard of Oz." "The beauty of theater is that these kids can be placed into situations where they can safely practice listening to other people and showing compassion for a situation that they may not experience in their real life," Fisher says.

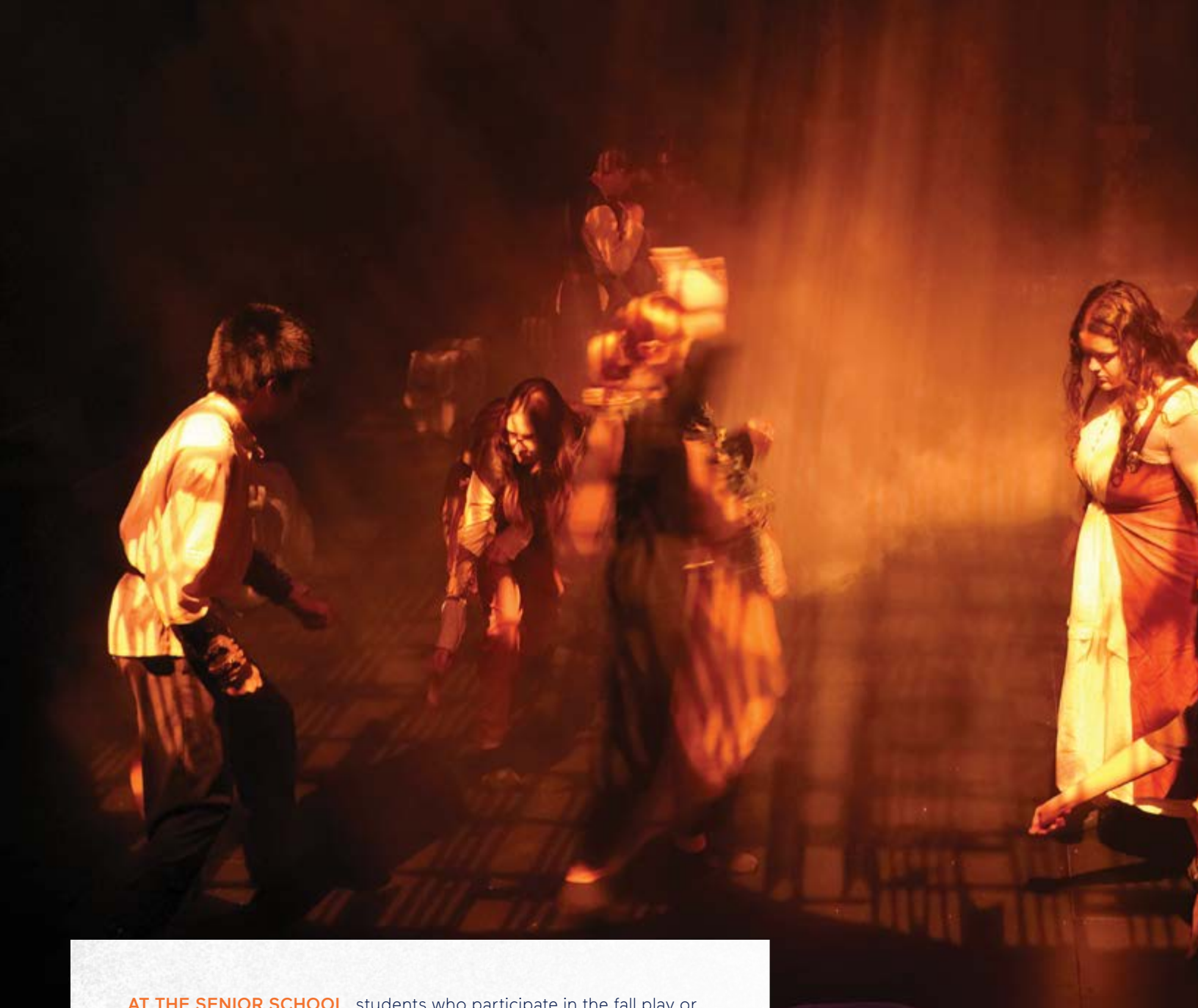
The benefits extend to audiences as well, Fisher says. "The audience engages in these stories. They feel for the characters and compare what's happening on stage with their own life stories."

“They’re not just gaining the skills to understand empathetically what’s going on...they’re learning to solve problems, to make sure their friends are taken care of, and to offer solutions when problems arise.”

— Chloe Torrence, Music and Theatre Teacher

The Senior School 2022 fall play, "Puffs," received eight nominations in the Prime Stage High School Drama Awards.





AT THE SENIOR SCHOOL, students who participate in the fall play or the winter musical synthesize their full educational experience to depict stories that may or may not mirror their own lives. “Theater provides a unique place where you get to experiment with all of the things you’ve learned in your classes and apply it in a human way to understand humanity,” Ingraham says. He stresses how theater education provides a channel for Shady Side’s mission to create a supportive community of students who can confidently share, listen, and learn. “Theater forces us to live through other people’s experiences that are very different from ours, and find those connections that you can relate to from your own experience,” he says.

While performing “Macbeth” during the fall play, actors were tasked with humanizing some arguably evil characters by finding the redeemable qualities about them that make viewers care to watch their stories unfold. The winter musical, “Zombie Prom,” will offer more opportunity for students to collaborate and emote through intense experiences on stage.

Above: Senior School students perform the prologue of “Macbeth.” SSA’s production of “Macbeth” was nominated in eight categories in the Prime Stage Drama Awards and took home the trophy in three—including Best Run Crew, Best Actress, and Best Overall Production.

Right: Kevin Polke as Macduff, Alex Chow as Malcolm, and Jay Zhu as Macbeth.

Far right: Jay Zhu performs the famous monologue, “Is this a dagger I see before me?”



The impacts that Shady Side's theater programs have on students are clear. McGeever says her students have learned not only to express their own emotions, but to speak up on behalf of those who aren't in the room and are impacted by students' words and actions.

MacRae, who has directed plays and musicals at the Middle School for many years, recalls watching some of her former students perform in "Macbeth" at the Senior School earlier this year. "Seeing how some of them have grown as artists in just a few years was really moving for me," she says.

Ingraham has also witnessed the transformative power of theater. Speaking about one of his current advisees, he says theater has helped her mature into a leader. "She's one of the people who I will regularly ask to play multiple roles because she's so good at differentiating and understanding what makes this person different from that person, and makes it clear for the audience," he says. That skill—tapping into the emotional foundation behind a person's words and actions—allows that student to deftly navigate conflicts backstage by listening intently and offering thoughtful suggestions. "As a theater artist, I think it all comes down to listening and trying to hear what the person is actually trying to say to you, not just their words, but what is underneath, fueling that," Ingraham says.

Listening, learning, and collaborating are fundamental skills in theater that extend beyond the stage and will serve students beyond Shady Side. "They're not just gaining the skills to understand empathetically what's going on," Torrence explains. "They're learning to solve problems, to make sure their friends are taken care of, and to offer solutions when problems arise." 🌀





The Confidence to Pursue a True Passion

This producer took a winding journey
from Shady Side to the film world.

MORE THAN 2,500 MILES sit between Marc Lhormer '78's current home in Sonoma, California, and Shady Side Academy, but his connections to his alma mater still run deep. "Some of my closest friends are my Junior School friends," Lhormer says.

Lhormer, an SSA lifer, grew up on Morewood Avenue in Shadyside, near the land that housed the original 1880's SSA schoolhouse. At Shady Side, Lhormer recalls excelling in his math and science classes. He took that prowess to Yale, where he earned a degree in Economics, and later to Stanford Graduate School of Business.

Lhormer leaned into his skills with facts and numbers as he pursued business-related work after graduation. Still, his fondest classroom memories took on a more creative bent. "I loved the English and literature classes that I took at Shady Side," Lhormer says. He fondly recalls a creative writing class led by the legendary Richard F. Gregory, who taught in the English department from 1953 to 1989. "I couldn't wait for each next assignment," Lhormer says.

After many years in business-related jobs that felt "uninspired" to Lhormer, the creative seeds planted at Shady Side were finally nurtured when Lhormer and his wife Brenda entered the film industry. "When we first moved to Sonoma over

20 years ago, we took the reins of a struggling Sonoma Valley film festival and turned it into a successful regional showcase of independent films paired with wonderful local food and wine," Lhormer says.

As the festival runners, Lhormer and his wife got the itch to get more involved in the industry. "One day, a producer friend in L.A. sent me an email with an attachment and a note that said, 'Stop talking about it. Make the movie.' The attachment was the screenplay for 'Bottle Shock.'"

In 2008, "Bottle Shock" was released, telling the story of California wineries beating the French at the infamous 1976 Paris wine tasting competition. "It was a fantastic first experience in producing a film," Lhormer says.

While Lhormer and his wife went on to co-found and direct the Napa Valley Film Festival from 2010 to 2018, they continued to pursue their dream of working in film. In 2008, Lhormer's classmate, Carl Kurlander '78 (who famously wrote "St. Elmo's Fire"), a teaching professor at the University of Pittsburgh in the Film & Media Studies department, encouraged Lhormer to consider turning the book "Dear Zoe" into a film.

After stepping up as screenwriter and producer, Lhormer found himself back in Pittsburgh in 2019 to shoot "Dear Zoe," which

“

**It's a beautiful story,
and it meant a lot
to me.**

”

tells the story of Pittsburgh-based Tess, played by Sadie Sink, as she tries to cope with the loss of her younger sister. “It’s a beautiful story, and it meant a lot to me,” Lhormer says, recalling his own experience with family tragedy and healing following the death of his mother in a plane crash.

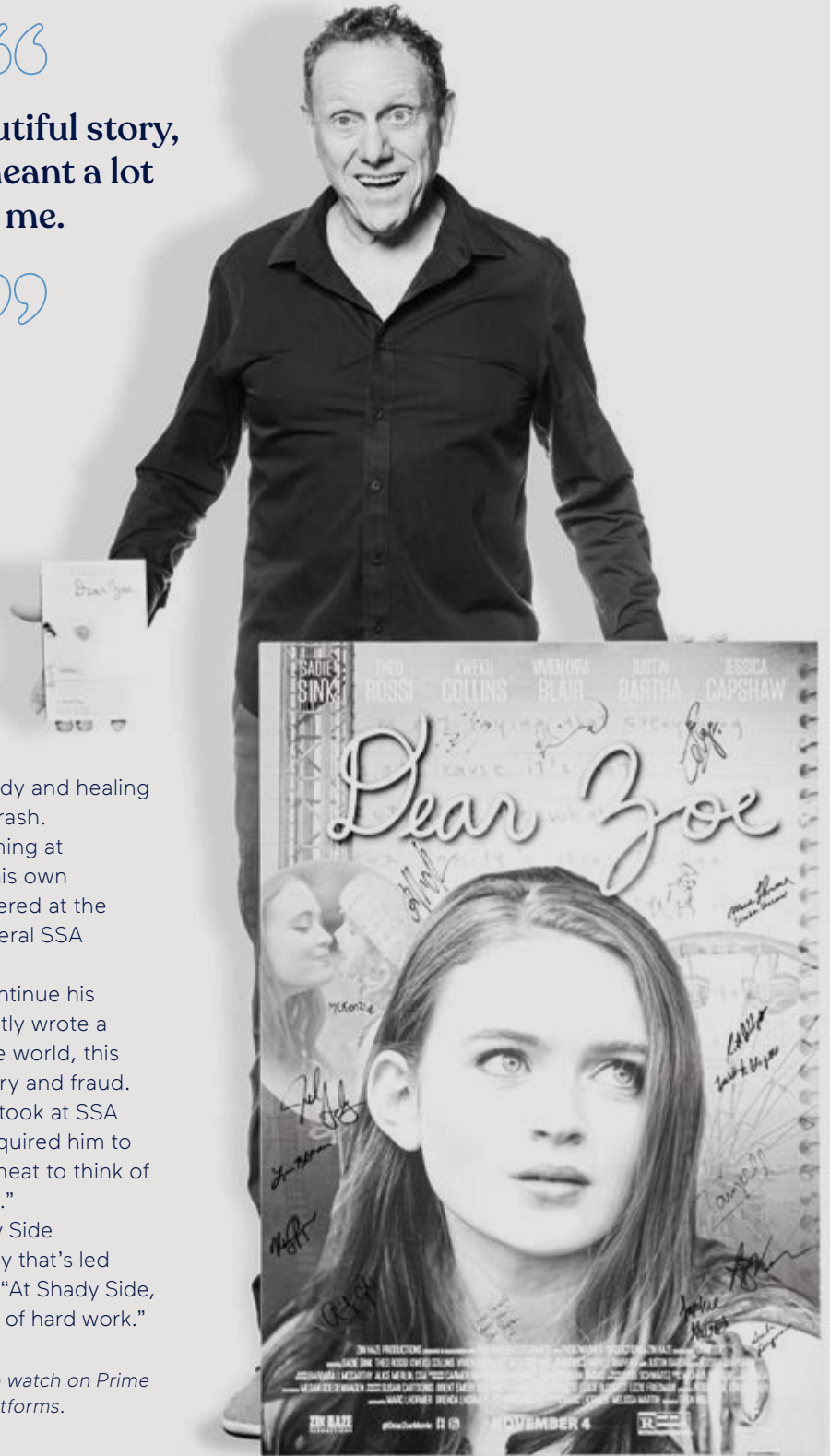
Lhormer came full circle during a day of filming at the Junior School, including a brief scene in his own kindergarten classroom. When the film premiered at the August Wilson Center in November 2022, several SSA alumni attended to support Lhormer.

As Lhormer looks ahead, he’s excited to continue his creative pursuits in the film industry. He recently wrote a screenplay that will bring him back to the wine world, this time through a fictional thriller involving forgery and fraud.

Recalling the cherished creative classes he took at SSA that focused on writing, and even one that required him to film short movies, Lhormer says, “It’s kind of neat to think of those little seeds that were planted back then.”

Ultimately, Lhormer believes his entire Shady Side education prepared him for the winding journey that’s led him to his passionate new career. He explains, “At Shady Side, you learn to be very committed, and not afraid of hard work.”

“Bottle Shock” and “Dear Zoe” are both available to watch on Prime Video and Apple TV, as well as other streaming platforms.





Beyond the Quad

HOMECOMING WEEKEND





THE INTERTWINING OF SHADY SIDE ACADEMY'S past, present, and future took shape over two days. Traditions, both new and old, were shared among the community: Lower School students from the Junior School and Country Day School sang the alma mater, the 50th Reunion Class gathered in a display of school spirit, faculty members had the opportunity to meet the children of their former students, Senior School athletes showcased their skills on the field, and Middle School students and alumni ran together in the Al Stewart Memorial Shady Stride. This event was a celebration of traditions, embracing both the new and the cherished old. Homecoming & Reunion Weekend 2023 was an undeniable success.

1 Alumni who were Athletic Team Captains from reunion classes ending in 3s and 8s gathered at center field during halftime of the Football game.

2 The Bulldogs played South Allegheny High School and won 57-14.

3 While alumni of all ages looked on, President Bart Griffith '93 celebrated the Ribbon Cutting of the new William "Mac" McConnell Cross Country Course.

4 Susan Stewart and Holly (Stewart) Johnson '13 with the winners of the Al Stewart '53 Memorial Shady Stride, Will Nury (tenth grade - Left) and David Lembersky '12 (Right).





5



6

5 Alumni from the Class of 2003 gathered on Saturday night (from L to R) Sarah Casey, Carli Siger, and Lauren Strelec.

6 Charlotte Barker (ninth grade) during the Varsity Girls Soccer game vs. Sewickley Academy. The Bulldogs won 9-2.

7 Members of the Class of 1978 gathered at the Class of 1966 Memorial Hall Library Ribbon Cutting Ceremony to reminisce about their time as students in Memorial Hall.

8 Board of Trustees Chair Rob Mullin '91, President Bart Griffith '93, and Director of the Library Lindsey Myers, officially cut the ribbon for the new Class of 1966 Memorial Hall Library, while members of the Class of 1966 looked on.

9 Chet '03 and Molly (Szramowski) '03 Vincent with daughter Wren (SPK) and former World Languages teacher Carol-Jean McGreevy-Morales.

10 Members of the Class of 1973 celebrated their 50th Reunion. Prior to the Reunion gathering on Saturday evening, they were invited to Eastover for a cocktail reception.

11 Drew McKim (grade 12) during the Varsity Boys Soccer game vs. The Kiski School. The Bulldogs won 2-1.

12 Alumni gathered on Saturday evening under the tent, (from L to R) Liz (Smith) Bornstein '93, Vincent Kondaveeti '93, Tom Henry '93, and Tina Chinakarn '92.



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45



13 14



14

13 Meriwether McCargo (grade 9) serves during the Varsity Girls Tennis Match vs. Woodland Hills High School. The Bulldogs won 5-0.

14 Alexa Karet (twelfth grade) during the Varsity Field Hockey game vs. Winchester Thurston School. The Bulldogs won 4-0.

15 As a way to interact with current students, several alumni served on a panel at the Senior School assembly to discuss their careers and life after graduation. The panel included: Lonnie Parker '00, Nalyn Siripong '98, Monica (Grinage) Harrison '03, and John Edwards '03.

16 Alumni from the Class of 1983 celebrating their 40th Reunion.



15



16



FOREVER

Class Notes // Milestones // In Memoriam

SHADY SIDE

CLASS NOTES



SUBMISSIONS

Class notes can be submitted online at shadysideacademy.org/alumni/class-notes.

Moving forward, photos and captions will be printed once per year in the Shady Side Magazine. Full class note content is published online and distributed monthly in the Beyond the Quad newsletter. You can update your contact information and subscribe to the Beyond the Quad newsletter at shadysideacademy.org/alumni/update-your-contact-information.

1. Kara (Tippins) Dor '15 married Alex Dor on July 10, 2021, in Pittsburgh. SSA community members in attendance included **Kate Mnuskin '15** who served as a bridesmaid, father of the bride **Bill Tippins '81**, and **John Tippins '78**.

2. Brooke (Gladstone) Curaudeau '09 and husband, Alex, welcomed their second child, Spencer Leo Curaudeau, on May 26, 2023. He joins big sister Sophie.

3. Wayne Coleman Jr. '05 and Kortney Holloway were married in Pittsburgh on September 23, 2023. SSA Friends in attendance included Ms. Sue Whitney, **Annie Cunningham '05**, **Amber Shergill '14**, and **Jay Palamides '14**.

4. David Scott '05 and Emily Scott welcomed a baby girl, Lucy Carroll Scott, on August 8, 2023, at 6:25 p.m. She joins big brothers Petie and Ollie.

5. Jay Palamides '14 and **Amber Shergill '14** happily announce their engagement! Their story began in 2009 when they were both students at Shady Side Academy Middle School. They want to thank the Academy for bringing them together! Photography by: **Jenna Wallace '14**

6. Alexandra Bodnarchuk '08 currently resides in Minneapolis, where she is a choreographer who creates original works for the stage and screen. Her second evening-length work, duet Rock, Paper, Scissors, premiered in

March 2023 at the Southern Theater for a 3-night run. In May, Alexandra spent six weeks in New York City with mentor Andrea Miller as she prepared Gallim Dance, a contemporary dance company, for their spring season at the Joyce Theater. She also served as a production assistant. In June, Alexandra attended the Studium Carpato-Ruthenorum at the University of Prešov.

7. Larisa Katherine Bodnarchuk '10 and Thomas Curtis Pfeuffer were married on November 19, 2022 in a traditional Byzantine Catholic ceremony at St. John Chrysostom Church, Pittsburgh. The wedding party included maid of honor **Alexandra Bodnarchuk '08** and classmates **Cassie Guerin '10** and **Meg Donnelly '10**. Other members of the Class of 2010 in attendance were **Hannah Brown Borchik** and **Maria Costa**. The bride is the daughter of Leslie and Paul Bodnarchuk, retired SSA Middle School faculty.

8. Alumni Anand Sekaran '86, Amol Doshi '86, Marcelo N. Corpuz III '86, and Marcellito Corpuz '87 enjoyed spending time together.

9. In June, Doug Campbell '68 joined **Tom Vilsack '68** in Groton, Connecticut for the christening of the submarine USS Iowa by Tom's wife, Christie.

10. Jim Ambrose '05 and Maura Ambrose welcomed a baby

girl, Ann Frances Ambrose, on June 21, 2023 at 6:56 p.m.

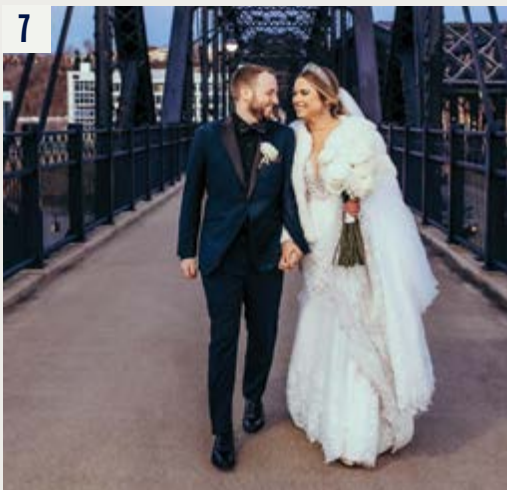
11. Members of the Class of 1986 at the Steelers-Ravens game in October. Pictured left to right: **Paul Henderson, Jay Alexander, Eric Letsinger, Jeff Gerlach**, and **Brendan McLaughlin**.

12. Shady Side friends and fellow Bayard House prefects Frank Morgan '71 and Dan Appleyard '72 hadn't seen each other in 52 years. They finally had an opportunity to catch up in Liverpool, England, near where Dan now lives.

13. Jeffrey Reese '75 and **Maggie Leech '13** met at 2:00 a.m. while working in Lubbock, Texas. Reese is a transplant/procurement surgeon, and Leech is a surgery resident at Harvard.

14. Jenn Steinfeld '96 writes: "**Michael Siegel '96** and I both live in Providence, Rhode Island now and have been active with our local Jewish Voice for Peace chapter. Today we met with our Senior Senator, Jack Reed, the chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee, in our advocacy for a ceasefire in Gaza, including a release of all hostages and access to meaningful humanitarian aid. If you think your voice doesn't matter, it does! Democracy is only as strong as our engagement with it is."

15. Emory Anderson '21 volunteered at the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 in Dunedin, New Zealand.



MILESTONES

Marriages

Wayne Coleman Jr. '05
married Kortney Holloway on
September 23, 2023.

Larisa Katherine Bodnarchuk '10
married Thomas Curtis Pfeuffer
on November 19, 2022.

Kara (Tippins) Dor '15 married
Alex Dor on July 10, 2021.

Births

Jim '05 and Maura **Ambrose**
welcomed Ann Frances Ambrose on
June 21, 2023.

David '05 and Emily **Scott**
welcomed Lucy Carroll Scott on
August 8, 2023.

Brooke (Gladstone) '09 and
husband, Alex **Curaudeau**,
welcomed Spencer Leo Curaudeau
on May 26, 2023.

In Memoriam

ALUMNI

David A. Hiles, M.D. '51 passed
away September 14, 2023. Father
of **Susie Hiles Giallonardo '78** and
Jim Hiles '79. Father-inlaw of **Mark**
Giallonardo '79. Grandfather of
Andrew Giallonardo '08 and **Dana**
(Giallonardo) Keene '06.

Shady Side Academy was informed of the following community milestones and passings by December 1, 2023. You can read full obituaries and submit milestones and memorials online at shadysideacademy.org/alumni/class-notes.

Bruce B. Wilson '54 passed away
April 13, 2022.

Donald A. Stone '55 passed away
July 23, 2023.

Gerald B. Brandt '56 passed away
September 30, 2023.

William McIlwain Robinson III '59
passed away September 11, 2023.

William "Bill" Gray Jr. '64 passed
away August 1, 2023. Brother of
Thomas Gray '66.

John J. Donovan III '65 passed
away July 3, 2023.

Jon T. Shehab '67 passed away
August 20, 2023.

John Lee O'Nan III '76 passed away
December 16, 2022. Son of **John**
Lee O'Nan II '49.

Marcia A. Holquist '78 passed away
September 3, 2023.

Annicka Campbell-Dollaghan '03
passed away June 11, 2023. Sister
of **Kelsey Campbell-Dollaghan '03**.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

James Edward Allen, father of
Innovative Teaching & Learning
Facilitator Jody Kokladas.

Karl F. Bruch III, father of **Karl F.**
Bruch IV '10, **Tory Bruch '10**, and
Judd Bruch '10.

Linda Colvin, wife of former
bus driver Terry Colvin.

Barbara Forrester Egan, wife of
the late **Robert Egan '48**.

Alex Gress, husband of
Jen (Daily) Gress '93.

Stephen W. Huba, husband of
Catherine S. Vodrey '81.

Linda F. Johnston, mother of
Assistant Head of Middle School
Brian Johnston.

Thomas McCool, father of History
Teacher Rachel McCool.

Moving forward, milestones and memorials will be printed once per year in the Shady Side Magazine. Full content is published online and distributed monthly in the Beyond the Quad newsletter. You can update your contact information and subscribe to the Beyond the Quad newsletter at shadysideacademy.org/alumni/update-your-contact-information.



Cheerleaders in the 1970s. Shady Side Academy celebrates the 50th anniversary of coeducation in 2024.



SHADY SIDE ACADEMY

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Historic Gift Funds Campus Plan Projects

A \$15 million gift from alumnus and past parent S. Kent Rockwell '62 and his partner, Pat Babyak, will fund the Rockwell Middle School and Rockwell Student Commons. Both projects will be built on the new, unified 6-12 Upper School campus. Rockwell's gift is the largest in the Academy's 140-year history.