



ALUMNI NEWS

MARCH 2022

at the
Governor's School

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ABOUT THE COVER

Untitled, by Taylor Wirthlin (2009)

This piece is a part of the school's Alumni artwork collection displayed in the Admissions wing of the Visitor's Center.

GIVE



WHERE YOU LOVE

1

Your Art Area

Show your love for your department by giving directly to their discretionary fund. Your gift will support entry fees, field trips, and other opportunities vital to the Govie curriculum.



2

Scholarships

Give future Govies the opportunity to follow their art, pursue their dreams, and achieve their goals by donating to the Virginia Uldrick Scholarship Fund.




3

Guest Artists

The guest artist fund brings master artists to campus to work directly with our students.

This is one of the most unique opportunities given to Govies, and you can help make it happen!



TIME TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE! GIVE AT [SCGSAH.ORG/GIVING/WAYS-GIVE](https://scgsah.org/giving/ways-give)



FROM the PRESIDENT

Dear Alumni,

Greetings from the Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities. As the world slowly emerges from COVID-19 restrictions, I trust that your lives have returned to a level of normalcy that allows you to re-engage with all that you love and enjoy. On the campus, the work of the Governor's School has continued and you'll be pleased to know that the artistic and academic excellence that you have come to know is still very much alive. Throughout the challenges of the pandemic, our students accomplished many great things and we expect the remaining weeks of the spring semester to be filled with even more spectacular news of their accomplishments.

In typical Governor's School fashion, our students continued their intensive training with a level of engagement and focus that has kept them on the path for achieving their goals through this very unique experience. Not to be outdone by previous years, we were again well-represented at the annual National YoungArts Awards with nine Govie's being recognized among 720 winners. Of the nine students, four were selected as finalists in this year's competition. We are so proud that this tradition of excellence continues as our students remain competitive with other great young scholars throughout the nation.

In line with our role as the state's leader in arts education, the school completed the process for recertification as an Arts in Basic Curriculum (ABC) site with the final stage in the certification process

scheduled in the coming weeks. At the invitation of the SC Arts Commission, the Governor's School will join their newly formed Lab School initiative to serve as one of several models for incorporating the arts into the curriculum and assisting schools in becoming a more arts-rich learning environment.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to thank you for your efforts in reconnecting with the Alumni Office and for your generous contributions to the Governor's School Foundation. Your support and desire to keep the Govie community strong is greatly appreciated and has certainly made a difference in what we are able to accomplish for our current students. I look forward to seeing more of you in the future and hope you have the opportunity to join us on the campus or at an event throughout the state as you are able. As always, I thank you for your continued support and look forward to seeing you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cedric L. Adderley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the last letter of the last name.

Cedric L. Adderley, D.M.A.
President

CAMPUS NEWS



Writer, editor and cultural critic **Latria Graham** (Music, 2004) joined our creative writers to read from her work and share her writing process and experiences as a Black female freelance writer. Graham's work is often featured in multiple magazines—Garden & Gun Magazine, Southern Living, Outdoor Retailer—and by major news media—The New York Times, The Guardian, espnW, and

Atlanta-Journal Constitution. Her writing has recently been selected for inclusion in The Best American Travel Writing 2021, Best Sports Writing 2021, and The Best American Science-Nature Writing.



It was a pleasure to have 2011 Dance alum **Brandon Whitmore** back on campus in January leading a ballet class with our seniors! Brandon attended the University of the Arts in Philadelphia and has performed with national theaters including Royal Caribbean's Allure of the Seas, Fireside Dinner Theater,

Maltz Jupiter Theatre, North Carolina Theatre, The MUNY in St. Louis, and performed in the First National Tour of Hello, Dolly. [Learn more about Brandon at bwhitmore.com](http://bwhitmore.com).



The Alumni office began our **Govie to Govie Alumni Series** on January 7 with 2004 Drama alumnus **David Hawkins**. David spoke with the student body about being a successful Govie alumni working outside of the arts. While discussing his nontraditional career path he explained to students that

the skills they are learning here can be game changers in any career field. He also emphasized the importance of working hard and being open to opportunities that present themselves. David is the founder of MY PR Lab, a nontraditional public relations firm based in Greenville that

recently expanded to Nashville, TN and serves a variety of industries for small to medium-sized companies.



Two of our YoungArts finalists—Creative Writing senior **Youjaye Daniels** and Drama senior **Christian Moody**—have been selected by the National YoungArts Foundation as nominees for the prestigious U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts award! This is the highest national honor for high school artists, with only 60 YoungArts winners from all over the country nominated this year. The final 20 selected seniors will be announced in May. CONGRATULATIONS, to Youjaye and Christian for being nominated! [Read more about this honor here.](#)



Meet the newest members of our Outreach Spark team—**Thurayya UmBayemake**, **Rhianna Smith**, and **Trinessa Dubas**—who will serve as actor-teachers in communities across SC, and Yinka Ladapo, our Spark program assistant. We welcomed them to campus recently for action-based training with Lead Curriculum Coordinator/Lead Trainer Anne Tromsness and Project Director Melanie Trimble. They led them through methods for engaging with elementary students, bringing stories to life in the classroom, and leading student-driven exploration. Read more about the Spark program at SCGSAH.org/spark.



In December, our Creative Writing students blew us away with readings of their work. Take some time to sit back, relax and watch or listen to the Senior Class Reading on our [Youtube channel here](#).

In December, the Governor's School Foundation teamed up with Ceramics Instructor and Governor's School alum **Elaine Quave** ('01) for this year's Arts Escape! Ms. Quave guided attendees in the construction of their own Lukasa, a memory recording device originated by the Luba people in 16th century Congo.



On November 17 educators joined us on campus for a free teacher retreat, "Exploring World Cultures Through Music and More," with Kennedy Center Teaching Artist **Imani Gonzalez!** Attendees explored ways to help students learn about the rich diversity of cultures through activities based on the music, stories and artifacts of Cuba and the African continent. They also learned how to immerse their students in Jazz by tracing its musical and cultural roots. Keep an eye out for other opportunities and resources for South Carolina teachers from our Office of Outreach at scgsah.org/outreach



Govie dancers gave two **OUTSTANDING** performances at the Gunter Theatre in December! This was the Dance Department's first live performance with an audience since February 2020. View the performances at [YouTube.com/SCGSAH](https://www.youtube.com/SCGSAH)



In February, our **Black History Community Meeting** conducted by the Multi-Cultural Club and Student Services was a powerful experience featuring monologues, songs, and speeches from the student body and employees.

Ms. Mangle (Social Studies) and Govie Voices gave an unforgettable performance of the Black National Anthem "Lift Every Voice and Sing." This same piece was sung a capella by Ms. Luster, our Music Department Program assistant. Marrisa Derrick (Drama Senior) hosted the program, and here is an excerpt from her opening speech, "The importance of Black History is not something we can read in a book or learn in a class, it is something you have to experience. Black History is music, soul train lines, Afros, Ruby Bridges, Stonewall, The National Black Political Convention, The Central Park 5, George Floyd, Gianna Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Stephon Clark. Black History is not just a month's worth of a celebration, but generations worth of beauty, grace, strength and power. Black History is not just the history of my ancestors on ships, in fields, at protest, or in CEO offices, but it is the present moment of the successes and learning opportunities I and the rest of the African American Govie community have now.



In November over 200 families from around the state joined us for Go Govie! Day to learn more about the opportunities we provide young artists. This day of

tours, arts demonstrations, workshops and information sessions was a wonderful way to experience what it means to be a Governor's School student.



In November, the SCGSAH Music Department held the **8th Annual Junior Artist Piano Competition**, sponsored by the Bichel Foundation, with 23 students from

around the state competing for cash prizes totaling \$3,250. They were adjudicated by Dr. Rosalyn Floyd (Augusta University), Dr. Liza Stepanova (University of Georgia), and Dr. Gregory Thompson (Winston-Salem University).



Music Outreach Teaching Artist and Service Learning Coordinator Jeff Robinson has been selected for the inaugural cohort of the Riley Institute's SC Afterschool Leaders Empowered Fellowship (SCALE). Through this fellowship, the Riley Institute hopes to empower educators with the tools

to build and maintain quality afterschool and summer learning programs.

SARATOGA WARHORSE FOUNDATION

– Abby Gantt
(Flute, 2001)

It's been a long, strange trip since graduating from Governor's School in 2001. (Come to think of it - being part of the inaugural class was also a strange trip, but that's not why I'm here.) I got a music degree from the University of South Carolina, but I still wasn't sure what I wanted to do with my life. So, I joined the United States Coast Guard. My time in the Coast Guard brought many highs and lows - I saw a lot of cool places, I did some really cool things, and I met a lot of people I will never forget. It also brought loss in a form which changed the trajectory of my career. At 10 years in, I hung up my uniform for a fresh start. I enrolled into the University of South Carolina Aiken to pursue a degree of Marketing, and not long after, landed my perfect job.

I am the Veteran Intake Coordinator for the Saratoga WarHorse Foundation, a veteran-run 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to the mission of improving the physical, mental, and emotional health of our Veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress (PTS) by providing a healing, equine-assisted experience. We are a national organization and are proud to have served more than 1,000 Veterans and Service Members struggling with PTS and other trauma. Our program takes place over three days and classes are offered several times each month. There are three program locations; New York, Maryland, and South Carolina.

Veterans and Service Members from all branches of the military, regardless of when or how long they served, or their discharge status are welcomed into the program. The best part, though, is there are absolutely NO costs to participate in the program. Through the generosity of our community partners, private donors, and past participants, Saratoga WarHorse covers the entire cost of transporting participants from anywhere in the United States and U.S. territories, as well as their lodging, and meals.

Saratoga WarHorse helps our Veterans and Service Members move past their trauma by partnering them with rescued and retired off-the-track Thoroughbred racehorses. This innovative approach to addressing PTS is what we call the "The Connection Process" and is truly an eye opening experience having been described by veterans as "life changing beyond words". This connection process facilitates a profound personal connection between Veteran and horse, seemingly "unlocking" a part of the Veteran that has been closed down for years. The personalized approach provides each individual with a unique experience that helps to release stress. You can learn more about the

experience we offer by visiting our website at www.saratogawarhorse.org.

Working for this organization gives me the opportunity to give back to veterans when they need it most. Though challenging at times, I love knowing I am helping veterans find a way to reset and unload some of their pain, if only for a weekend.



Abby is a United States Coast Guard Veteran, enlisting in 2008 and becoming a Boatswain's Mate. Her duty assignments included: USCG Training Center - Cape May, NJ (2008-2009), Patrol Forces Southwest Asia - Manama, Bahrain (2009-2010), USCGC JOSHUA APPLEBY - St. Petersburg, FL (2010-2012), USCGC PAUL CLARK - Miami, FL (2012-2015), and CG Station Islamorada, FL (2015-2017). She is also a 2001 graduate of the inaugural class of the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities where she majored in music (flute). She attended the University of South Carolina, where she earned a Bachelor's of Arts (music) with a cognate in education in 2007. She currently resides in Wagener, SC on a small farm and is pursuing a second Bachelor's degree in Marketing.

ALUMNI ARE JUMPING IN!

There are lots of ways to give back to future Govies.
We love for alumni to share their stories,
their art and their time.



Hassiem Muhammed
(Drama 2014) is not
only appearing on CBS
in Blue Bloods he is
also serving on the
foundation board.

CONTACT
AMANDA.HERLIHY@
GSAFOUNDATION.NET
TO FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN HELP
FUTURE GOVIES FOLLOW THEIR ART.



Alex Gentemann
(VA 2021) has this
piece hanging in the
Visitor's Center lobby
and has created new
pieces for our event in
Hilton Head
April 29th.

HELLO from the OFFICE of OUTREACH!



C.A.T.S. students partnered with the Environmental Club during their Reedy River Sweep and helped beautify the park that's in our own backyard.

Here at the Governor's School, we are excited to have the service learning program Connecting Arts Through Service (C.A.T.S.) acting as the student arm of our Outreach Programs. C.A.T.S. is designed to help students explore their service interests and teaches them to investigate, plan, and carry out projects in their local communities. C.A.T.S. also helps match students with opportunities to volunteer with partner organizations encouraging them to reflect on and learn from their service experiences.

Despite the lingering challenges we've faced with the COVID-19 pandemic, C.A.T.S. students have been eager to get involved and given a lot of time to the Greenville Community. Take a look at some of their work!



Students who volunteered at Fall for Greenville got a taste of the awesome local music scene.





Lainey Keefauver and Brooke Turner took the lead in getting Govie students involved in The Salvation Army's annual Kettle Bells project. Their station raised over \$900!

In December, Senior Music student Kimmie Rauscher organized this blanket making project for the second year in a row, teaching Govie students how to hand-make blankets, and donating them to the local service organization Sunday Dinner With a Twist. In addition to this project, Kimmie organized a toiletry collection drive to benefit Mental Health America of Greenville.

In the coming months, students will continue to be involved in our Outreach Programs including assisting with our Field Trip to Campus program for students around the state and designing arts activities in our partnership with the South Carolina Afterschool Alliance. Govies will also be mentoring young artists in May during Artisphere, leading arts and crafts at the Kidsphere stations.

It's worth noting that a lot of the work described is led from start to finish by students, from the planning stages through execution. I can't wait to see what other exciting ways our C.A.T.S. students will find to get involved in their communities for the remainder of the year.

Finally, I'm sure many of you who participated in C.A.T.S. know the tremendous value that community service provides to the Govie experience. If you know of any organizations or partnership opportunities that may be of interest to our students, please don't hesitate to contact me. It really hits home when our students see Alumni continuing to engage with their communities after graduation and living out the mission of Connecting Arts Through Service.



Gray Crews organized TWO collection drives in October. Socktober collected socks for Miracle Hill Ministries, and Spooky to Be Hungry collected nonperishable food for Golden Harvest food bank. We donated 50 pairs of socks and over 250 food items!



Sincerely,
Jeff Robinson
Music Outreach and Service
Learning Coordinator

GET TO KNOW STEPHANIE

1. **Where were you born?** Right here in Greenville, SC
2. **What one thing really makes your day?** I can't help that I have 3: My coffee in the morning, watching my children play with pure joy, and the moment when everything clicks for any of my dance students.
3. **What is your most marked characteristic?** Loyalty almost to a fault
4. **What is your favorite movie?** White Christmas; Gotta love a good old musical!
5. **What was your first job?** Line server at Moe's Southwest Grill on Wade Hampton Blvd



6. **What is your pet peeve?** Loud chewing and smacking
7. **What is your favorite thing about Greenville?** I love watching how Greenville is growing and becoming more eclectic in the art community.
8. **What was your major in college?** Dance and Psychology
9. **What book is on your nightstand?** I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings, Maya Angelou
10. **What is your idea of a dream vacation?** Any beach setting where I can spend time with my family while also resetting and refocusing.
11. **In what store would you choose to max out your credit card?** Target, you can find everything you need in one stop.
12. **What is the "coolest" Govie experience you ever had?** Senior year, last school dance the day before graduation. Our whole class decided that justice wasn't being served for a fellow Govie and we sat down in the courtyard and refused to move. I loved being apart of a group that didn't want to leave anyone behind. Also during graduation, we wore that Govie's initial on our gown.

13. **What was your favorite subject in school?** History even though this wasn't my strongest subject. Fascinates me what we are capable of as humans.
14. **What advice would you give to a current Govie?** Be present in every moment because they are fleeting.
15. **What was the first concert you ever went to?** Usher, Beyonce, and Missy Elliot. Literally the BEST concert brought to GVL.
16. **Are you a good dancer?** I would need to question my career choice if not!
17. **What are your hobbies?** What are those? I feel that my career is my hobby which in turn is my life.
18. **What was your last vacation?** Beach vacation to Hilton Head with my family.
19. **What do you miss most about SCGSAH?** I miss being immersed in a creative environment every single moment of the day.
20. **What's your proudest accomplishment?** My two smart, passionate, loving daughters; Shayne and Sophia.
21. **How did your Governor's School experience and education impact you?** My experience and education fully defined my career aspirations and life skills. I do what I love every day in every form possible in my career. I watched my instructors pour into us with pure passion be it dance or math. The quality of training with the love and support of faculty and staff made me feel unstoppable. There have been many obstacles along my path, but the preparation and confidence that I had to find through my experience help my fix, adapt, or get up from those challenges.



ALUMNI in the SPOTLIGHT

Stephanie Cureton

Stephanie Cureton's passion for dance was sparked at the age of 3 in Fort Knox, KY. After moving back to Greenville, SC she started her training with Barbara English at English Theatre Arts. She graduated from the South Carolina Governor's School for Arts and Humanities in the dance pre-professional program. While there she studied ballet, pointe, and modern under the direction of Llyod Whitmore, Irina Ushakova, and Stanislav Issaev. She then went on to receive her BA in Dance/Psychology from Agnes Scott College. At Agnes School she studied Ballet, Martha Graham Modern Technique, Jazz, and Labanotation under Bridget Roosa. Not only did she perform in Studio Dance Theatre, the school's dance company, but she also choreographed several pieces for the company. Stephanie has choreographed and performed for local projects both in Atlanta and Greenville. Dance is her full-time career. Right after college, SCGSAH offered her a position in the Office of Admissions, Outreach, and Enrollment as Administrative Assistant. She loved her time helping with recruiting, outreach, and summer programs. Her favorite memory was working the Student Ambassadors and giving school tours.



Currently she's the Greenville Site Leader with Carolina Dance Collaborative where she teaches and coordinates CDC's YMCA, Adaptive, and Summer Camp programming. She's also Company Director with English Theatre Arts where she manages and teaches. Lastly, she teaches at 3D Centre of the Arts as well as freelances performing and choreographing. Before the pandemic, Stephanie was one of the company members of Vaughn Newman Dance, a local contemporary and modern company. In the future she plans to pursue Graduate school with a Master's in Dance Education and Physical Therapy.

KEEP YOUR EYE on THESE GOVIES!



2005 Music alumnus **Marquis Bias** has put in the hours to get to the top of his profession working as a set costumer during the week and a principal dresser for The Emmy Award-winning late-night show, Saturday

Night Live... read more about his career and how he stays centered in [this article](#) from the Carolina News and Reporter.



2008 Music alumna **Kristine Kruta** will be returning to Greenville this April to co-lead the orchestra for rock legends, The Eagles, on their Hotel California 2022 tour. The band will stop for a show at Greenville's Bon Secours Wellness Arena on April 25.



2007 Drama alumna **Danielle Brooks** is starring in HBO Max's new series, "Peacemaker." Brooks stars as Leota Adebayo alongside John



Cena in this series spin-off of James Gunn's "The Suicide Squad." New episodes release every Thursday. [Watch a preview here.](#)

Danielle Brooks was also recently surprised by Oprah

Winfrey with her casting as Sofia in the film rendition of The Color Purple musical. The film, featuring Oprah as a producer, comes to theaters Dec. 20, 2023. [Watch the surprise moment here.](#)



2019 Creative Writing alum **Maggie Olszewski's** chapbook, "Laika!" was released this month with Black Sunflowers Poetry Press. The collection of 20 poems addresses Laika, a Soviet dog who became the first animal to orbit the Earth before dying in space. The book can

be purchased at M. Judson Booksellers in Greenville or ordered online from the Black Sunflowers Poetry Press website and Amazon.



2012 Music alum **Kedrick Armstrong** was listed in the Washington Post's list of composers and performers to watch in 2022! He's been very busy, serving as a guest conductor with the Chicago Opera Theatre, the Knox-Galesburg Symphony, the Chicago Sinfonietta,

and more! Read about Kedrick and the amazing work he's doing [here.](#)



2004 Drama alum **David Hawkins** is opening up shop in the Parker Woodside community of Greenville. Daisy's Bodega will be providing a neighborhood need that has been overlooked by other grocers, for so many decades. Hawkins is excited about bringing an end to this neighborhood's food desert classification while at the

same time highlighting small businesses, entrepreneurs and farmers from in and around Greenville. [Read more in this Post and Courier article.](#)



2011 Drama alum **Brandon Micheal Hall** is making his Broadway debut with the Roundabout Theatre Company's

production of "Trouble in Mind," written by Alice Childress and directed by Charles Randolph-Wright. Hall portrays the character of John Nevins and performs alongside Tony and Emmy Award-winner LaChanze.



2005 Music alumnus **Andre North** was named as 2022 Hanahan Middle School Teacher of the Year! Andre teaches band at Hanahan Middle School and also serves as the Director of Bands at Hanahan High School.

CLASS NOTES: Life Events Congratulations to

Cassie Falk Casteel (CW, 2008) on the birth of a son, Asa Matthew

Emily Rzepka Vara (Music, 2014) on the birth of a son, Joseph Lane

Chad Bagwell (Drama, 2002) on the birth of a son, Luke Joseph

SCHOOL STORE MERCHANDISE

Interested in some SCGSAH merch? Find the latest SCGSAH apparel and merchandise in the school store.

- T-shirts and Sweatshirts
- Ball Caps
- Tervis Tumblers
- Blankets
- Onesies
- Watercolor campus prints
- Window decals

For more information email us at alumni@scgsah.org for pricing and availability



Interested in Getting Involved?

Alumni are our legacy, and our reputation is strengthened through your successes. We are excited about the opportunities to continue our relationship with our alumni community and to explore ways we can further support and engage you as we advance the school's mission.

Become a Class Agent, Share your expertise, or join the Alumni Advisory Council

The Class Agent Program is designed to engage alumni in the wider school community through ongoing communication. Serving as a liaison between the Alumni Coordinator and the alumni community, Class Agents connect with classmates from their specific graduation year, as well as help establish an extended network of Govies from other class years. Class Agents also play an active role in keeping classmates up to date on events and news.

Click [here](#) for more information about becoming a Class Agent.

The Alumni Advisory Council is an advisory group to the Alumni Office whose purpose is to engage SCGSAH alumni in the life of the school through educational, cultural, career and social opportunities as well as benefits and services. The AAC consists of approximately 15-20 members who serve two year terms beginning in January of the respective year.

Click [here](#) for more information about becoming an Alumni Advisory Council member.

Govie to Govie: Virtually or in person we want to welcome you back to campus to connect with our current students. This is an opportunity where alumni lead sessions, share expertise, and exchange stories on how to thrive as an adult and artist after high school. Email alumni@scgsah.org for more information.

Be Sure to Stay Connected By Activating your Alumni Profile!

Now it's easier than ever for you to connect with alumni near and far!
Activating your SCGSAH alumni profile is quick, easy and secure...
just use this link: <https://lnkd.in/gxwd4ey>

Start by logging in using your name as it was when you attended SCGSAH (which would be your first and last/maiden name). As soon as you log in you will be able to update your contact information, get campus updates, and search for your favorite classmates using the mapping feature. **All information is for the school's use only and will not be shared with outside parties.*

Questions? Contact us at alumni@scgsah.org.

