



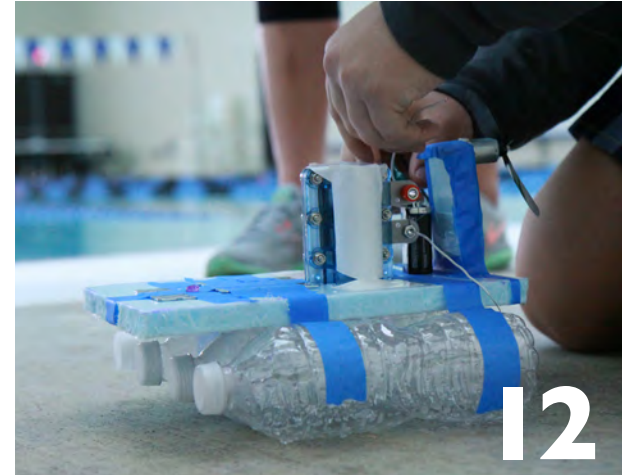
chimes

WESTMINSTER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY



Setting the Stage

World-class spaces allow students to draw on their God-given gifts



On the Cover

With world-class spaces and visionary leadership comes a new realm of opportunities in the fine and visual arts. On the cover, our talented orchestra students practice for the fall instrumental concert in our 600-seat theatre.

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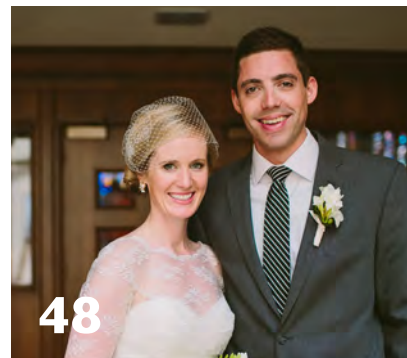
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Tom Stoner, Head of School

I love to drive west on Highway 40 at night on my way home from a Blues game or some other event in the city. I've learned the exact spot where the highway rises a bit and I can look over to see Westminster's sign, illuminated in blue, and our campus sitting upon the hill for all to see. It is a beautiful sight, and I'm always curious to know what our students are doing at that very moment.

I love how hard it is to miss our campus at night just as much as I love the fact that it's hard to go anywhere without seeing students, parents, teachers and alumni! When I was in San Diego last summer, I even ran into a current Westminster family on the airport shuttle! People with connections to Westminster are everywhere, engaged in a myriad of professions, organizations, and activities that are impacting St. Louis and the world.

In this issue of *Chimes*, you'll learn about current students and staff who are making a difference in the classroom, on stage, on the athletic field, and in the community, as well as alumni who are using their God-given gifts in tandem with their years of academic and spiritual preparation at Westminster to impact the lives of others.

Our students, parents, teachers, and alumni make us proud not only of what they do but also of how they do it – living and working as instruments of truth, justice, and goodness in a dark and often distorted world.

Westminster Christian Academy exists to prepare students to engage the world and change it for Jesus Christ. This was the vision of our founders, and it remains our vision today. We are a community of people learning how to be part of God's restoration of creation. *This* is what Jesus meant when he taught his disciples, saying, "You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden...In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:14 and 16).

Thank you for being part of the Westminster family and, by extension, part of the eternal impact of the *campus on a hill*.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Stoner".

“Our students, parents, teachers, and alumni make us proud not only of what they do but also of how they do it – living and working as instruments of truth, justice, and goodness in a dark and often distorted world.”



Celebrating Christian Schooling

Westminster's sister school Saemmul Christian Academy in South Korea celebrated the dedication of its new campus in October 2014. Construction on the school's new campus was completed in July, allowing students to begin the 2014/15 academic year in the new building in August. To celebrate the opening of the new facility, Saemmul hosted a national conference and invited Christian educators and administrators from schools throughout the country to attend. Director of Global Partnerships **Dani Butler** served as moderator for the event; Head of School Emeritus **Jim Marsh** and best-selling Christian author Philip Yancey were keynote speakers; and Head of School **Tom Stoner** spoke about the integration of faith and learning. The conference is an exciting milestone in the relatively new Christian schooling movement in South Korea. Approximately 150 young Christian schools, each no more than five years old, have been established in the country. Through participation in Saemmul's conference, educators and administrators had a unique opportunity to help expand the reach of Christian schooling within the country.

Oh, the Places They'll Go

Westminster seeks to prepare students to live, serve, and work in a global world of people from every language, tribe, and nation (Revelation 5:9).

Beginning in summer 2015, a group of 15 to 20 world language students will have the opportunity to travel to China, France, or Spain to study for a week at an international school corresponding to their foreign language coursework at Westminster.

French language students will study at College Joseph d'Arbaud in Salon de Provence, France; Spanish language students will study at Alfa and Omega Evangelical School; and Chinese language students will attend Hana International School.

These experiences are part of Westminster's new study abroad program, operating under the umbrella of the global partnerships department. While other schools work through a travel agent to create international learning opportunities for students, this new initiative positions Westminster as the only secondary private school in St. Louis to offer study abroad opportunities through its own language department, partnering with sister schools overseas. Students will be accompanied by a group of Westminster teachers and will attend school for one week while staying with a host family. Two weekends of tourism will allow students opportunities to experience local culture and language.

In the near future, the foreign exchange will be reciprocated by the participating international schools. The Spanish students will study at Westminster for a week in 2015; a group of 5th grade Chinese students from Hana International School will visit Westminster this summer to attend Camp Westminster; and French students will complete their exchange and visit Westminster in 2016.

Westminster world language students in 9th, 10th, or 11th grade this year are eligible to participate in the program beginning in summer 2015 and may apply each year thereafter.





Day at the Farm

Our international students were invited to spend a day at a Westminster family's farm in Washington, Missouri. As part of the Westminster community, the family wanted to reach out and support our international students. In addition to getting a tour, students (and a few parents and faculty) enjoyed a home-cooked barbecue lunch!

International Visitors Attend 2014 Graduation

Westminster welcomed visitors and parents of senior international students to the 2014 commencement ceremony. Visitors included board members of the Parents Advancing Westminster (PAW) committees of China and South Korea. Each year, guests from Westminster's sister school Saemmul Christian Academy in Seoul, South Korea, visit Westminster's campus to tour the school; eat lunch with students, faculty, staff, and members of Westminster's own PAW group; and attend graduation.

Westminster Hosts Annual World Languages Speaker Series

Six Nepali students from Gateway STEM High School in St. Louis were invited to participate in a World Languages Speaker Series at Westminster in April. They spoke to a group of Westminster's foreign language students about their experiences as refugees from Nepal and their immigration to America and provided insight about the diverse ethnic groups in St. Louis.

In addition, **Ming Li**, upper school Chinese instructor, spoke about her experiences while living in China; Enisa Dedic, a

counseling student at Covenant Theological Seminary, shared about her immigration to St. Louis from Bosnia, where she was a member of the Evangelical Union of Students; and Hossein Dastgah, retired Director of Campus Recreation at Saint Louis University and father of Academic Hub Facilitator **Marjan Kempen**, spoke with students about Iranian culture and shared about his experiences as a sports journalist, Olympic soccer and swim coach, and professor at the University of Tehran in Iran before his family's immigration to America.

The World Languages Speaker Series was developed to create an educational experience for students by exposing them to the rich culture of other ethnic groups in St. Louis, as well as to be intentional about building relationships with the immigrant communities in St. Louis.

"The world is a very diverse and interesting place and worthy of study," says Westminster Director of Diversity **Aaron Layton**. "It is our hope that our students would engage the diversity of our world through these speakers and eventually integrate their faith with a love for other cultures. My life was forever changed in high school when I met students from around the world. I pray the same for our students."





Cats in the Kitchen

The **Student Garden Club** together with Westminster's food service provider **Campus Cuisine** teamed up to host a pizza cooking demonstration sponsored by Whole Foods Market. Students learned how to make pizzas from scratch (inspired by the ingredients grown in the Westminster garden), played a food-tasting game, and enjoyed eating their freshly made pizzas at the end of the event.

Checkmate!

In March, freshman **David Braton** finished eighth in the State Chess Tournament in Columbia, Missouri. David represented Westminster in the 9th-grade-and-under division and won four of six games. Freshman **Matthew McKinnis** also played well at the tournament.

Westminster places second at Truman State Jazz Festival

The **Jazz Band** led by director **Eric Taylor** placed second at the Phi Mu Alpha Truman State University Jazz Festival. The annual event attracts high school and middle school bands of the highest caliber from across the Midwest; they are invited to compete and participate in clinics and workshops and attend an evening concert. The Jazz Band placed second in the competition, missing first place by only one-third of a point. Sophomore **Christian McGhee** won the Outstanding Solo Performance Award for drums, and senior **Dongbin Lee** received the Outstanding Soloist Award for his performance on the guitar.

Solo & Ensemble Honors

A group of talented Westminster students performed at the District Solo and Ensemble Festival in March. **Khiley Giles** '14 (percussion) earned a "satisfactory" rating, and an "outstanding" rating was given

to soloists senior **Kathryn Hinrichs** (voice), **Danny Dwyer** '14 (voice and trumpet), sophomore **Christian McGhee** (percussion), junior **Avery Drury** (trumpet), junior **Bri Bingham** (violin), and **Lance Richards** '14 (violin) as well as to ensembles featuring **Elise Burton** '14, sophomore **Jonathan Nyenhuis**, **Maya Taylor** '14, junior **Bekah Westrich** (viola), and Bri. An "exemplary" rating (the highest rating) went to **Christina Goetz** '14, **Nathan Richardson** '14, and sophomore **Chris Lee** for their vocal solos and to junior flautist **Haley Weinberg**, as well as to Bri, Lance, and Elise. **Concert Choir** and **Chamber Choir** both received an "outstanding" rating at the state large group festival.

This fall, the following students made All-District Honor Choir: seniors **Hannah Geisz** and **Kathryn Hinrichs** and sophomore **Chris Lee**.

Graduation

Jennie Albertson '14 was named valedictorian and **Annie Schlafly** '14 salutatorian. Each student addressed her class during the 2014 graduation ceremony.





The Center for Teaching and Learning

Ask any student or graduate about the most distinctive element of his or her Westminster experience, and nine times out of ten you will hear “my teachers.” It’s no question that the impact a Westminster

teacher can have is invaluable. Much of this has to do with the school’s commitment to excellence – to hiring the best possible people to educate and mentor our kids. But excellence, *becoming better than we once were*, requires a collective effort to ensure that all Westminster

students learn and achieve at the highest levels. The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) helps Westminster reach that goal.

The CTL provides a nurturing place and dynamic programs for both new and veteran teachers to learn together and challenge one another. In this kind of environment, they can become teachers who are role models for teens and experts in their craft, teachers who create a life-shaping and transformative education for their students.

Director of Teaching and Learning and honors American literature teacher **Cindy Zavaglia** says when it comes to helping teachers become better, research shows that job-embedded professional development (teacher learning that is grounded in day-to-day teaching practices) has proven to be more effective than sending teachers off campus to conferences and workshops. “While those are quite valuable, we have so many talented teachers doing a variety of innovative things right here in our own building,” says Ms. Zavaglia. “Why not showcase these individuals so we might learn from one another?”



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The model for the CTL is Romans 12 and I Corinthians 12:

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us
(Romans 12:3-6).

The Westminster faculty is one body with many members, each of whom God has graciously gifted differently. When those gifts are shared and combined, God's good purposes are fulfilled.

The leaders of the CTL – Ms. Zavaglia, Assistant Director of Teaching and Learning **Anne DeRousse**, Director of Instructional Innovation **Scott Vonder Bruegge**, and Director of the Integration of Christian Faith in Learning **Chris Knerr** – say their job is to serve and lead the faculty by providing support, training, encouragement, mentorship, and resources.

“Teachers help equip teachers by observing one another and asking questions,” says Ms. Zavaglia. “In the CTL, we realize that God has gifted each of us for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7), so rather than a top-down approach, it’s more of a discipleship concept; that is, a few work with a few more, who then work with a few more, the goal being that teachers feel connected and want to learn from one another. As a result, everyone is successful.”

Four primary questions drive the work of the CTL: 1) What do we want our teachers to learn and be able to do? 2) How will we know if each teacher is learning it (and improving as a result)? 3) How will we respond when some teachers are not learning it (or improving)? 4) How will we extend and enrich the learning and leadership for teachers who have demonstrated mastery?



Throughout the year, the CTL hosts a variety of after-school workshops. Wednesday Workshops explore topics such as working with a diverse student body, utilizing best practices in the classroom, and teaching from a distinctly Reformed Christian perspective. Every Tuesday, teachers in their first year of service at Westminster are required to attend workshops in which they take turns teaching a short lesson and debriefing that lesson with their peers. All

Westminster teachers are observed at least twice a year by their department chairs. In addition, those in their first three years of service at Westminster are observed by their mentors (who are assigned to each first-year teacher) and the CTL faculty.

Mrs. DeRousse says the overarching goal is a faculty who desires continual growth. “We are developing a culture of people who want to become better learners, to really understand and implement what it looks like to teach from a distinctively Christian perspective,” says Mrs. DeRousse, middle school science teacher. “Teachers are asking one another to sit in on their classes. Classroom teachers are the ones leading workshops. They are truly going above and beyond, and it’s really encouraging to see.”

To measure teachers’ success, Ms. Zavaglia says, the CTL looks for progress. “How my classroom looks after 19 years should be dramatically different from how it looked in my first five years of service,” she says. “The goal is growth, not perfection. We often tell teachers, ‘We hired you because we thought you were the best person for the job, but we want you to go from *good* to *great*.’ When our students are learning and achieving at their highest levels, our teachers will be deemed a success. It is then that we know the CTL is working.” ☺

A Dream Come True

For **Karen Thompson**, middle school science teacher, working at Westminster is literally a dream come true. “This has always been the dream school where I wanted my children to attend,” says Mrs. Thompson. “I really believe that the Lord planted that in my spirit. At my church, I would see older children from families who had chosen Westminster, and there was a certain way about them. My son Zion was an infant at the time, and I was just taking it all in. I was a stay-at-home mom and my husband was working as an educator, so the possibility of Westminster in our future was completely unforeseeable at that point.”

Despite the obvious obstacles, Mrs. Thompson says she continued to say that Westminster was her dream school for her children, though she never imagined she would teach there herself. At the time, Mrs. Thompson was committed to urban education, working as a high school biology teacher in the Jennings School District in North St. Louis. She began teaching at Jennings High School in 1995, immediately following her graduation from Drake University where she majored in biology.



At Jennings, Mrs. Thompson taught multiple biology courses including honors biology, AP biology, human body systems, and principles of biomedical sciences (PBS). Her instruction in PBS was part of the biomedical division of Project Lead the Way, a STEM-focused program that has been adopted by hundreds of schools across the U.S. In 2003, she decided to leave her teaching job to stay at



home with her children and in 2008 returned to the Jennings district for another five years. During that time, Mrs. Thompson received her master's degree in biology from Washington University in St. Louis and believes it was then that God began leading her to Westminster.

“I was preparing to teach AP bio, and I was going to have to go much deeper into evolution than in my regular biology course,” says Mrs. Thompson. “I asked [friend and Westminster teacher] **Aaron Layton** for help in figuring out how I should broach this topic as a Christian. He connected me with **Andrew Shaw**.”

When Mrs. Thompson met with Dr. Shaw to discuss the topic of faith and science, it was the first time she had ever visited the Westminster campus. “At that moment, I thought, ‘Oh, I could work here,’” she says. “That’s when it happened for me personally.”

Soon afterward, pieces began to fall into place for Mrs. Thompson’s transition to Westminster. “It was God completely leading me,” she says. “I went to the school website one day and visited the employment page. There was a posting for an upper school biology

teacher. After my interview, I was asked to come back to teach middle school the following year. What was really providential is that I never applied to another school. It was strictly from Jennings to Westminster.”

Reflecting on her time in the Jennings district, Mrs. Thompson believes there was great purpose in her work there. “Urban education is another type of calling,” she says. “Your role of teacher is definitely broader. You are not simply teacher; you are also nurse, cheerleader, surrogate parent, and counselor.” The difference Mrs. Thompson sees at Westminster is the school’s three-legged stool approach. “School is done well here because the other two legs of home and church are also standing strong. In an urban setting, that’s not always the case, and sometimes the two other legs are missing entirely.”

Mrs. Thompson emphasizes, however, that her excitement to join the Westminster community did not negate the sadness she felt in making the transition from Jennings. “I love and miss my students at Jennings,” she says. “But it was time for a change for me. When I left Jennings and came here, I wrestled with thoughts like, ‘Why can’t everybody be here? Why can’t everyone be educated in this type of place?’ It’s sad. The separation was hard, but what I learned is that it’s important to be in the season to which God has called you.”

In this new season, Mrs. Thompson says that even in the few short months she’s been at Westminster, she has experienced the difference of community. “The difference is invisible, and it’s God,” she says. “In my previous situation, I was trained and conditioned to be an independent, solo operation, which is very unhealthy. [At Westminster], it is the exact opposite. Here it feels like you’re part of a community, and the community is caring, inviting, and genuine.”

Mrs. Thompson has also noticed the same difference in the students. “Kids love to come to school here,” she says. “As a parent and a teacher, I can always judge the quality of a school by how kids are operating within the structure. Here they are successful, and they love school. All schools should investigate what we’re doing here!”

“The difference at Westminster is God. At my former school, I was trained and conditioned to be an independent, solo operation. At Westminster, it is the exact opposite. Here you’re part of a community, and the community is caring, inviting, and genuine.”

Karen Thompson
Middle School Science

In the realization of a dream, Mrs. Thompson has found new hope at Westminster. Through her transition to the school as a teacher and through her oldest son’s attendance, she sees God’s evident grace and restorative work in her life. “My hope has been restored by coming to Westminster,” she says. “My fervor for teaching has been renewed. My students are the brightest part of my day, and I’m so honored and humbled to serve them.” ⊕



Science with the STARS

By senior **Becca Eis**, entertainment editor, *The Wildcat Roar*

For some Westminster students, summer meant sleeping in, going to the beach, and catching up on TV shows on Netflix. But while their classmates were taking a break from schoolwork senior **Stephanie Strothkamp** and junior **Rebecca Liu** spent six weeks of their summers doing scientific research.



Rebecca and Stephanie participated in the STARS (Students and Teachers as Research Scientists) program, a six-week intensive science research program for juniors and seniors in high school that provides students hands-on lab experience alongside a mentor. Students attended lectures at the University of Missouri-St. Louis, worked in the lab with their mentors, wrote a full-length research paper, and gave a 12-minute presentation to peers, mentors, and advisors at the end of the program.

Each student chose a topic to research. Stephanie studied psychology and neuroscience, and Rebecca studied biochemistry and genetics.

Rebecca was first interested in the STARS program after taking the Applied Scientific Research class last year. During this class, she discovered how much she enjoyed research and wanted to further develop her interest in it, which led to her applying for the STARS program.

“I loved the hands-on lab work,” says Rebecca. “There was something new to learn every day and immediate application in the lab to reinforce it.”

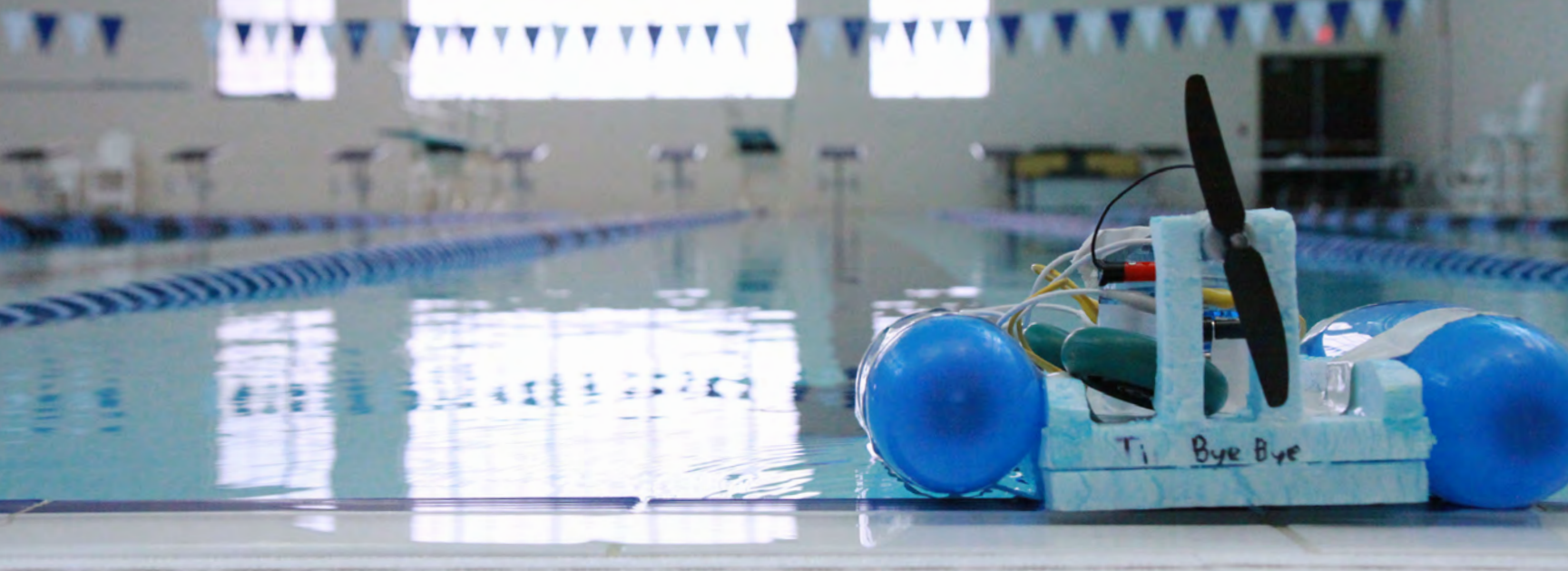
Stephanie had a different experience that led to her interest in the STARS program. Her friend **Ciarra Peters**, senior, had completed the program the summer before, and that encouraged Stephanie to participate herself.

“I really enjoyed meeting different students from all over St. Louis,” says Stephanie. “Some were even from other states. Also, some of the lectures were extremely interesting.”

Through the STARS program, Stephanie uncovered her interest in psychology and neuroscience and is now considering a future career in that field. Rebecca is also seriously considering a career in science. ⊕

Editor’s Note: Several months after the program’s conclusion, Stephanie was awarded the LMI Aerospace Inc. Award for Excellence in Research. She conducted her research paper, Structural Integrity of Cortico-Limbic Networks in Preschool Onset Depression, under the direction of Dr. Deanna Barch at Washington University in St. Louis.





Nationally Certified & Leading the Way

Westminster students who enroll in the engineering program can now receive dual credit for successfully completed courses. Westminster is the first private school in the state of Missouri to receive this college credit certification by national STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) program provider Project Lead the Way (PLTW).

“It can be difficult as a private school to meet all the rigorous requirements of PLTW,” says Westminster engineering teacher **Maggie Moore**. “This certification shows Westminster’s dedication to excellence in the STEM field. Schools that offer a Christian education can tend to focus on either the Christian aspect or the education aspect. I am proud that Westminster not only focuses on but exceeds expectations in both of these areas.”

A four-member team from PLTW visited Westminster’s campus to evaluate and observe engineering classes, interview teachers and administrators, and meet with the Westminster STEM Advisory Board in order to include parents, alumni, students, industry leaders, administrators, and counselors in their evaluation.

“The team commended our implementation of the PLTW curriculum and offered suggestions for improvement,” says physics teacher **Evan Munger**. “We are extremely proud of all the hard work by our faculty and staff.”

PLTW is a nonprofit organization that provides STEM programs to elementary, middle, and high schools across the U.S. Westminster is a registered member of the PLTW Engineering Program and utilizes curricula that teaches students to apply engineering, science, math, and technology to solve complex and real-world problems.





Cyborg Cats on the Prowl

At the 2014 FIRST Robotics St. Louis Regional Competition in March, Westminster's **Cyborg Cats (Team 4256)** ranked second in the qualification matches. The second-place finish qualified the team for a wildcard invitation to the World Championships in April. They were also recognized for pit safety and awarded the Imagery Award for outstanding visual aesthetic integration of their machine and team appearance. When the team competed at the World Championship at the Edward Jones Dome, team leader senior **Alex Kessel** was recognized along with other Regional Dean's List Award winners in a ceremony hosted by inventor Dean Kamen and rapper will.i.am. Several Westminster alumni including **Jonathan**

Bopp '12, Brianna DeGroot '13, and James Zandstra '13 attended the championship event to cheer on the team's younger members. In May, members of the FIRST Robotics team volunteered at the St. Louis Magic House Make-It Workshop. The team brought three student-built robots for children and parents to enjoy. They also provided LEGO robots that the team had constructed for children to play with on their own. Among the team's larger robots was the 2014 Aerial Assist bot, which was built to hold, retrieve, and throw a ball. Westminster students operated the robot while interested children could participate by picking up the ball and throwing it back to the robot. Director of the program and science teacher **Lisa Harding** says it was a privilege for the team to interact

with local children. "Every child in St. Louis has fond memories of experiences at The Magic House," says Mrs. Harding. "It was a wonderful opportunity for our students to feel like they were a part of that experience for other children."

Smarts and Sciences

Senior **Benjamin Linxwiler** was recognized for his distinguished academic achievement and outstanding capabilities in science at the annual Distinguished Achievement Awards for Science Excellence dinner, presented by the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Missouri-St. Louis in the spring. He was honored among a select group of students from other public and private high schools in the St. Louis area.

We the People at Nationals

Westminster's *We the People* team won the Region Award for the second consecutive year as a result of their performances in the first two rounds at the national competition in Washington, D.C., in April. The *We the People* program promotes civic competence and responsibility among the nation's student population and requires comprehensive knowledge of the U.S. Constitution, familiarity with Supreme Court decisions, and a collected demeanor in the face of difficult questioning. Although teams from all 50 states compete, only 10 move on to the final round. With 12 students, Westminster's team was the second smallest in the competition.



National Merit

Six Westminster seniors were recognized as high scorers by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. **Caroline Agan, Alex Kessel, Ciarra Peters, Kevin Stump, Christine Talent, and Jacob Waller** were among 1.5 million entrants who completed the PSAT/NMSQT exam in 2014. All six students joined 50,000 of the highest-scoring test takers in the nation.

This fall, **Jacob Waller** was honored as a National Merit Semifinalist in the 60th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. National Merit Semifinalists represent the top scorers in each state, with less than one percent of student applicants receiving the honor of being selected as a semifinalist. Students are evaluated based on their academic record, school curricula and grading system, two sets of test scores, information about the student's activities and leadership, and a written essay.

Acknowledging Excellence

History teacher **Chris Knerr** was awarded the Arlen R. Dykstra Teaching Prize in 2014. Mr. Knerr is in his 12th year of teaching at Westminster. The award, named in honor of former Westminster headmaster Arlen R. Dykstra, is accompanied by a \$1,000 prize presented annually by the current head of school at Westminster's graduation ceremony. The recipient is determined by a selection committee including members of executive leadership and administration at the school.

The award recognizes the recipient's outstanding expression of the Christian worldview and life view in his or her teaching and lifestyle. It demonstrates the recipient's mastery of his or her teaching matter, involvement with the life of the school through extracurricular activities, and creative and innovative presentation of teaching material.

Student Authors

Eighth graders **Neeve McMillin** and **Raphaella Zavaglia** are among 35 young authors nationwide who were honored by The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration with the publication of their historical family stories. Participating students write a story from their family history based on information they gather from interviewing an older relative. The authors were invited to read and sign their stories at The Grannie Annie Book Signing Celebration at the Missouri History Museum in June.

Novel Accomplishment

Bible teacher **Luke Davis'** debut novel *Litany of Secrets* was recently advertised in *Quest*, the national publication of the Muscular Dystrophy Association. The book is the first in a planned series of seven mystery novels featuring Cameron Ballack, a St. Louis-area detective who has myotubular myopathy, the same disease shared by Rev. Davis' son Joshua.

Westminster Students Participate in UMSL Bridge Program

A group of Westminster students spent a portion of their summer preparing for college and beyond through their enrollment and participation in the University of Missouri-St. Louis' Bridge Program. Each year, students in grades 9-12 may apply to the precollegiate program for opportunities to excel in math, writing, and science, and prepare for college and career. Through their involvement in the program, students have the opportunity to participate in workshops and seminars and access counseling, networking and mentoring resources, and volunteer opportunities. Director of Diversity **Aaron Layton** teaches an intensive writing



course for students in the Bridge Program. This is Mr. Layton's fifth year as an instructor. "I really admire these students, because they have chosen to spend four weeks out of their summer participating in such an intensive program," says Mr. Layton. "The program will equip and prepare them for their transition into college."

Commas & Character

It may have been the Awful Eight, an eye-opening discussion on a current event impacting our nation, or the early mornings he would come find you to sit with you against your locker and go over your paper. Whatever your most poignant memory of Dr. **Scott Holley**, it would be impossible to number the lives that have been impacted in some way by this legendary teacher, who retired in spring 2014 after 31 years at Westminster.

During his tenure, Dr. Holley served not only as an English teacher but also as a coach and academic dean for 11 years. Without question, his work was not bound by assigned reading, grammar sheets, or even the walls of his classroom. His words spoke beyond writing and literature and into the everyday matters that concerned his students. For some, it was the nurturing environment that Dr. Holley created that allowed them to first realize and articulate God's calling on their life. High standards, challenging questions, and genuine love – mixed with a healthy dose of wit and humor – were indisputable hallmarks of any encounter with him.



Any student who had Dr. Holley, 63, would agree that his greatest lessons weren't about vocab words or commas but rather about character, honoring Jesus Christ, and living with purpose and commitment. The same lessons that are so perfectly articulated through his own life and service to Westminster Christian Academy.

How are you enjoying retirement?

It was certainly the right time for me to retire, but it's still a big transition. I continue to wrestle with the question, What is my purpose? I want God to continue to use me in a meaningful way, and I am still seeking out what that looks like.

Describe your new role at Westminster.

I am continuing to mentor some of the younger teachers and help with the administrative transition.

When you think about all your years of teaching, what is your favorite memory?

There are too many great memories to choose just one. My favorite thing about teaching is seeing kids get excited about ideas and seeing them get to define themselves in new ways by what they are thinking about in class. That's what kept me teaching. I would also say that as a teacher you get to laugh a lot. Kids are funny. You never know what to expect but you know they will say something funny.

How have you been encouraged by what God is doing at Westminster?

The thing that has been most exciting to me has been to see how the Lord continues to bring new people to this school who rejuvenate it, challenge how we do things, make it better, and who bring their unique gifts to the school and stretch us in ways we did not even know we could be stretched.

What is the one thing you love most about Westminster?

I love that the people here understand the mission, agree with it, and really try to execute it to the best of their ability.

The Big Finish

By senior **Ashley Klein**, design editor, *The Wildcat Roar*

Dr. **Jim Sefrit**, assistant head of school, will be rounding out his time at Westminster this year – his 11th “one” as he says. Dr. Sefrit has begun each year at Westminster not knowing if he would return for the next one, simply making the decision one year at a time. He says that while he continues to look forward, the direction of his life in its entirety has never been a clear and obvious path to an end, but rather a journey made up of baby steps, each of which he has taken as God has led.



After Dr. Sefrit graduated college with degrees in business and education, he was a fast success in the workforce, holding a profitable title in management at AT&T. While desirable, the position was not the right fit for Dr. Sefrit. “I was blessed with a great deal of success, but never felt that it was my calling,” says Dr. Sefrit. “Through a series of events and a lot of prayer, my wife and I made the decision that we would seek out opportunities in education.” Looking back, he sees how this change was divinely coordinated. “God’s hand was obviously evident,” he says.

Dr. Sefrit began teaching in the Parkway school district in 1971. There, he held positions as a department leader, administrator, teacher, and coach. After 33 years at Parkway, he retired yet continued to stay open to new opportunities.

Westminster had first come to Dr. Sefrit’s attention in the fall of 1983 when he and his wife enrolled their daughter, soon followed by their son. Dr. Sefrit served on the board of directors and education committee and was highly involved as a parent, though he was employed elsewhere. During a period of great growth at Westminster, he was asked to serve for one year as the interim head of

upper school. After that year, he came back each of the following ten. “In the 44 years I’ve been in education, I’ve never wished that I was doing something else,” says Dr. Sefrit.

Over the course of his time at Westminster, Dr. Sefrit has seen significant growth in the areas of academics, athletics, and teaching. He says that it has been his goal to encourage this growth without losing the personal touch of a Westminster education. “One of the biggest challenges for me was to continue to keep [my] vision above the horizon but also to be able to focus on the immediate. There’s a vision that we must continue to work toward.”

While this entails many responsibilities for Dr. Sefrit, his philosophy is simple. “When it comes down to it, it’s honoring God and helping young people.”

During his final year, Dr. Sefrit hopes to propel the school forward and see wise decisions concerning change put into practice. Regarding the next assistant head of school, Dr. Sefrit says he does not believe in “tag leadership,” when a leader abruptly drops his responsibilities upon his successor and walks away. Instead, Dr. Sefrit hopes to make the transition as seamless as possible. “My vision is, ‘How can we make this more of a relay? How can I run alongside and hand that baton to the next person?’” he says.

Dr. Sefrit thanks God for guiding him to each destination throughout his career, even though the path has not always been clear. He admits that while he still doesn’t know which direction he’s heading next, he rests comfortably in the fact that one thing is sure: Christ will show him the way. “God doesn’t tell us He’ll show us a beacon all the way down the line,” says Dr. Sefrit. “He says ‘I am the lamp to your feet. Just keep following Me.’”



The Center for Coaching Excellence

In fall 2014, **Lindsay Carlile** assumed the role as assistant athletic director. While she assists Athletic Director **Todd Zell** in supervising and evaluating the athletic program, her specific focus is on directing the Center for Coaching Excellence program to effectively train, serve, and support the school's coaching staff.

"My greatest passion is seeing athletes and coaches use the platform of athletics to glorify the Lord, so I am incredibly humbled to have the opportunity to support our athletic department in that pursuit with this position," says Coach Carlile.

Coach Carlile, who received her Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology and Pre-Physical Therapy from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and worked on staff with Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) for eight years, has experience collaborating with area coaches, planning and coordinating annual leadership and sports camps, and assisting with coaches' professional development opportunities. She also coached Westminster's varsity lacrosse team and JV basketball team. "Having coached at Westminster the past five years, I've been blessed to connect with many exceptional coaches and athletes," she says.

The Center for Coaching Excellence is based on a key question for Westminster coaches: "Are you a Christian coach or a coach who's a Christian?" Coach Carlile says the truth that Westminster is distinctly Christian is applied to all that we do, not only teaching, and that Westminster should embody the difference between transactional and transformational coaching. "The kids are not a means to an end - to simply win the game," she says. "Instead, we love them as they are and want to help them grow in their faith and develop into the best they can be. It's much more of a relational, ministry-minded approach to coaching."



The Center works to develop a Christ-centered coaching model that illustrates athletics as a vehicle that uses the gospel to transform students' lives through the pursuit of excellence and commitment to the Ten Pillars, the foundational values of the athletic department. The most devastating loss, says Coach Carlile: kids who would leave the athletic program without truly knowing Christ.

"At Westminster, we've been entrusted with a very special platform that we need to take advantage of," says Coach Carlile. "Coaches here have opportunities to impact kids in ways that can truly transform their whole lives. Billy Graham once said, 'one coach will impact more young people in a year than the average person does in a lifetime.' We want to teach our athletes that yes, we love the game, but what matters more is our love for Jesus Christ."

"Westminster coaches have the opportunity to impact kids in a way that can truly transform their lives."

Lindsay Carlile, Assistant Athletic Director

For the coaches themselves, the focus on becoming better is always at the forefront. From Bible studies that promote accountability and address coaching issues from a biblical perspective to an expectation for all coaches to read and apply the principles in *3D Coach*, which uses the FCA relational approach model, the Westminster coaching staff should be a picture of iron sharpening iron.

"I want to see our coaches' hearts transformed so Christ's love is evident in all that they do," says Coach Carlile. "Anyone can be trained on the Xs and Os of coaching. At Westminster we are called to be different. We want our coaches to love the kids in that way. Excellence is at the root of what we do, and our goal is to equip our kids to pursue Christ-honoring excellence in everything that they do," she says. "I'm thrilled to be afforded the privilege to further encourage, equip, and serve the tremendous coaching staff and to see them grow in their Christ-centered approach to coaching with the athletes entrusted to them."

Athletics - Spring 2014

Track and Field

The Westminster boys and girls track and field team hosted the school's first home meet last spring and celebrated with a team win. At the Metro Conference meet, juniors **Connor Hafenrichter**, **Zach Hughes**, **Jack Andrews**, and senior **Josh Sumner** set a Metro Conference record for fastest time in the 800 meter team race. Senior **Brendan Yeager** won the 800 meter individual race and also set a Metro Conference record. Juniors **Makaylah Meredith** and **Alyssa Freiner**, senior **Saenea Williams**, and **Leah Votava '14** set a new school record for the 400 meter team race with a time of 4:12.

Baseball

The baseball team made state history by winning the Missouri Class 4 title for the fourth consecutive season. The team closed the season with a 31-5 record, scoring a 5-0 shutout win over Pembroke Hill for the state championship. In June 2014, the entire team was honored at Busch Stadium before a Cardinals game, and **Coach Rich Van Gilst** threw out the first pitch. Coach Van Gilst was also recognized as the MaxPreps Medium Schools National Coach of the Year.

Girls Soccer

The National Soccer Association of America awarded the girls varsity soccer team the Gold Medal Team Ethics Award of Merit for not receiving any yellow or red cards during the course of play all season. The Lady Wildcats were one of only nine girls soccer teams nationally to receive the recognition.



Sophomore **Kirsten Davis** set a school record in scoring 35 goals during the spring season. Kirsten was the second-leading scorer in the St. Louis area and selected for Second Team All-State at the end of the year.

Captain **Maddie Ottsen '14** was selected by the Missouri Academic All-State soccer team due to her high GPA, athletic skills, and philanthropy in the St. Louis community. Maddie is the first Westminster female athlete to be selected for this honor, in addition to being given candidacy for the Academic All-American soccer team.

Boys Tennis

The varsity boys tennis doubles team finished the season last spring with a repeat state championship win. **Derek Bell '14** and **Bailey Merkel '14** overcame a rough start to the season, as Derek recovered from a wrist injury. "[The state championship] was a really exciting win," says **Adam Barbee**, head coach of the team. "Everything changed with [Derek's] injury, and we had to retool and readjust. But the boys did great with it, and it was neat to see them have that success with all they had to overcome. It was really good for them as seniors to go out on such a positive note with each other." Derek now plays for Florida Southern University.

Boys Golf

During the varsity boys golf season, **Nick George '14** was awarded a full college scholarship through the Evans Scholars Foundation for his outstanding service as a caddie. To qualify for this scholarship, candidates must have at least two years of caddying service, an excellent high school academic record, and commendable character, as recommended by high school administrators and golf club officials/personnel.

Boys Volleyball

The varsity boys volleyball team had a rebuilding year in spring 2014, as six seniors graduated from the team and six new players joined the team's spring lineup. The team competed in the state championship bracket for the third consecutive year. Senior outside hitter **Cameron Hibbler** was named First Team All-State. Coach **Jean Evans** says, "The boys are looking forward to the 2015 season and a fourth consecutive run at the State Title."

Lacrosse

The girls lacrosse team prayed together to kick off the season and celebrate 100 athletes and coaches now involved in the program. Coach **Lindsay Carlile** was named MSLA Coach of the Year, and the team went on to the quarterfinals and for the second consecutive year was awarded the Spirit of the Game Award, presented to the team that displays the best sportsmanship throughout the season. "[This] award is voted on by the lacrosse officials," says Coach Carlile. "They base it on sportsmanship and apparent love for the game by the players, coaches, and fans. Numerous officials have asked me multiple times, 'What is it about your kids?' I love to be able to point them back to Jesus and explain why our kids never quit and how this is our act of worship." **Jensen Holt '14** was selected for All-State team as the first Westminster lacrosse player to ever receive this distinction.

Wrestling

At an annual banquet hosted by area high school wrestling officials, the wrestling team was chosen from among all high school teams in the St. Louis region for a prestigious sportsmanship award. "I was really proud of the guys for the year they had," says Coach **Tim Muehleisen**. "It has been a great group to work with and I think they carried themselves in a manner worthy of the honor."



Hockey

Joseph Woll, junior, tried out for USA Team Hockey and was selected for the National Team Development Program for the 2014/15 season. He will complete two years of training during his enrollment in the full-time program, which is based in Ann Arbor, Michigan. As a part of the Under-17 squad, he has the opportunity to compete in the United States Hockey League, the top junior league in the United States, and play in three international events, including the 2015 World Under-17 Hockey Challenge.



Athletics - Fall 2014

Editor's Note: When this issue was sent to press, some fall teams were entering post-season play.

Cross Country

This fall, the boys cross country team won the Capital City Challenge in Jefferson City. The boys team also placed third out of 38 teams in the Forest Park Cross Country Festival. The girls team placed fourth out of 24 teams at the Frank Horton Invitational in Memphis, Tennessee.

Football

The Westminster football team finished its regular season 8-1 for the first time in school history. The team was rated third in the STLhighschoolsports.com small-school rankings and tied for first in the ultra-competitive Metro League.

Girls Golf

The varsity girls golf team advanced 11-3 in match play for the fall season, marking seven straight seasons the team has won 10 or more matches during their campaign. The team finished sixth at the Angel Classic Tournament and improved to finish third at the Missouri-Illinois River Challenge in which they assisted the Missouri team in winning for the sixth straight year. The girls placed third in the Class 2 Districts match, and junior **McKenna Montgomery** placed fifth at the State tournament.

Boys Soccer

The varsity boys soccer team won third place at the beginning of the year in the Metro League Tournament. The team was 3-2 in Metro League standings near the end of their fall season, qualifying them for fourth place. The players were recognized for their outstanding sportsmanship during games when an official reported that the team behaved and performed on the field with great sportsmanship and respect for both opponents and referees. The players also assisted with a SPENSA (Special Needs Soccer Association) service project in which they served as buddies for the kids and participated in training sessions and games with them throughout the day.

Softball

The varsity girls softball team ended their entire season 13-5. They placed second in the Metro League and won their district and sectional championships, making it all the way to the quarterfinals. "Like no other team I've coached before, these girls really have come together," says **Mallory Rohlfing**, head coach. "Our underclassmen have played well, and our leaders have done a really good job of pulling out all the best in the others."





Boys Swimming

The varsity boys swimming team finished eighth at the Ladue Invitational 15 team meet this fall. Seniors **Sam** and **Eli Parham**, freshman **Evan Parres**, and senior **Bo Thomas** finished fourth in the 200 freestyle relay. Evan finished fourth in the 100 fly, and Bo placed fourth in the 50 and 25 yard freestyle race.



Girls Tennis

The varsity girls tennis team said goodbye to six seniors this season, with the opportunity for new players and a younger team next year. Senior **Sarah Betz** and junior **Emily Stevenson** placed third in district doubles, and senior **Madaline Ross** finished fourth in district singles. “This year we had a great group of girls and a very cohesive team,” says Coach **Adam Barbee**. “Coach Reilly and I had fun working with them and will miss our seniors.”





Volleyball

The girls volleyball team – one of the youngest volleyball teams to date – had four freshman starters at the end of the season. The team celebrated victories over several teams they fell to last season including Troy, MICDS, Visitation, and Notre Dame, as well as a second-place win in the silver division of the Springfield Classic.

A Whole New Field

By sophomore **Katherine Yenzer**, online editor, *The Wildcat Roar*

This year, girls field hockey joined the list of Westminster fall sports offerings. With more than 30 girls, the team has athletes of all levels of experience. Although the team is sponsored by Westminster, the field hockey team acts as Whitfield's JV team.

“Since Whitfield is a smaller school, they don't have enough girls for a varsity and JV team, says sophomore **Sidney Keane**. “So, we play games at Whitfield as their JV team.”

Due to the team's large size and wide age range, getting to know teammates well can be challenging. “A big sister-little sister program is in the works to connect the high school and middle school teams,” says **Michelle Pottebaum**, who coaches the team alongside **Nancy Schmer**. “We want all the girls to have an active role of leadership on the team so that they can use their gifts.”

The high school team is divided into seven different ‘families.’ Each family has a leader who focuses on encouraging team bonding. “As a family leader, my goal is to make sure God is the center of all that we do,” says Sidney.

Last year, field hockey was a club sport offered to Westminster girls in grades 7-12. With 12 girls, last year's club team was a solid start for the field hockey program. “We have already achieved our first goal for this season: to generate enough interest and excitement to field a team,” says Coach Pottebaum. “With 34 enthusiastic girls coming out for the team – enough to field a JV and a C team – our expectations were exceeded!”

Field hockey is not the only new sport this year. A boys lacrosse program is also in the works for the spring 2015 season.





We ♥ Spencer

Scheduling an interview with **Spencer Savory** can be a little tricky, when he is so busy hanging doors, furnishing classrooms, or helping fix a water pipe break on campus. But a few minutes of his time in between maintenance projects will yield a number of funny stories, interesting facts, and fond memories of Westminster days gone by. Twenty-five years' worth of stories, in fact. This year, the Westminster community celebrates a milestone anniversary of a man who has been busily seeing to the upkeep of our campus since 1989. In honor of his years of work and service to the school, we sat down with Spencer as he reflected on his time at Westminster.

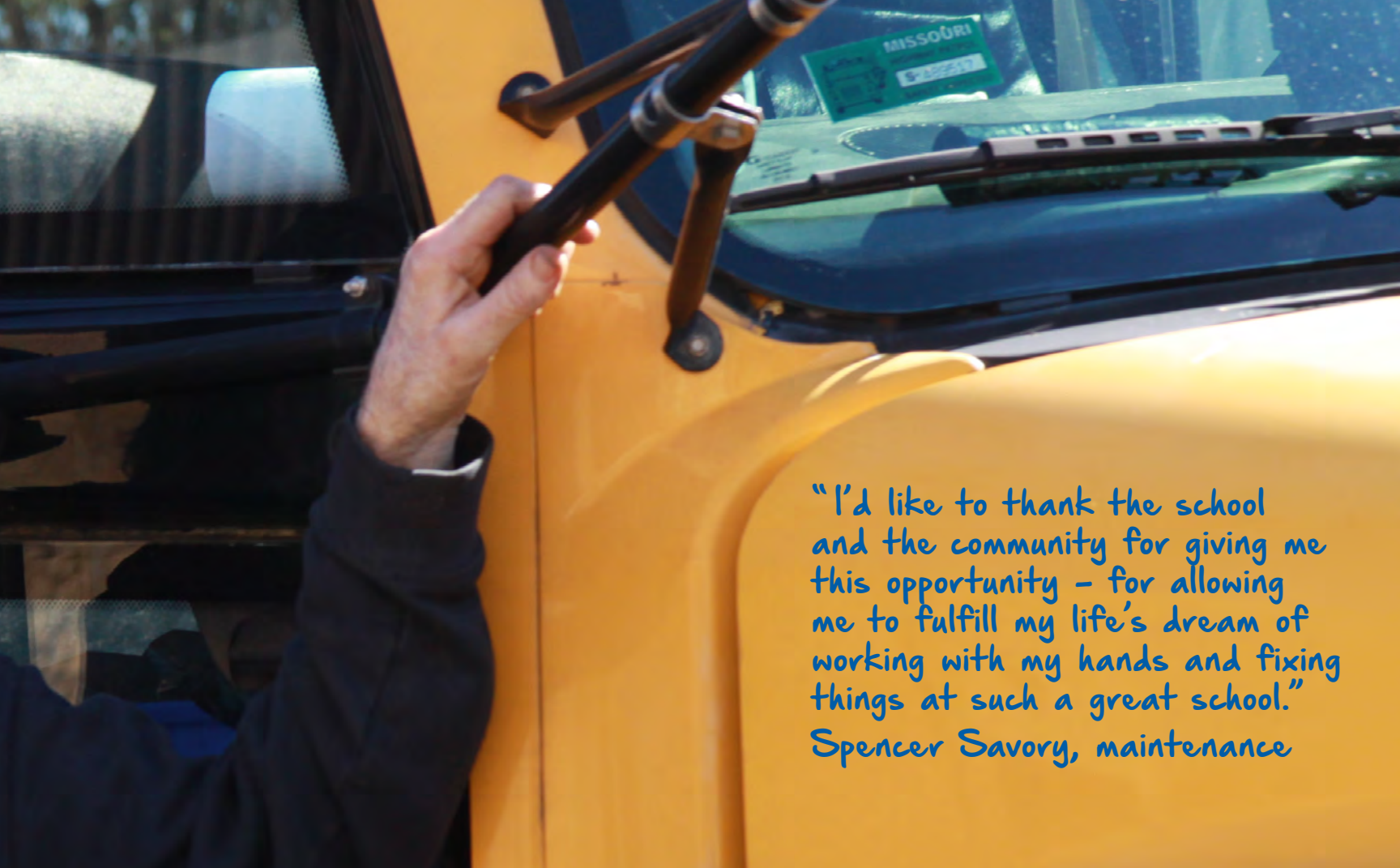
[How did you first come to work at Westminster?](#)

I've been associated with Westminster since 1982. My wife Susan worked in the kitchen, and I helped the school move from Missouri Baptist to the Ladue campus. A few years later, Susan came back to Westminster and worked for housekeeping, and they needed another maintenance man because the school

was expanding so much. I was working at a rolling industry at the time, making food chemical mixes. All my life I had always wanted to do maintenance work – ever since I was young. I found out about the job and interviewed with **Kent Kehr '78**, who was the business manager then. I was actually the senior man at the company I worked for at the time and had worked with for 15 years. I left there to come here.

[How was your dad influential in teaching you skills that have helped you in your job at Westminster?](#)

My dad was a licensed electrician. All my life I'd been around electrical stuff, which is what I specialize in now. My dad was head of an electrical small arms plant, and even when I was a kid, he would take me into transformer rooms at his work. And my father-in-law was in construction. I started working for him at 16 when Susan and I were dating and learned a lot from him. I also took maintenance courses in high school and have picked up a lot on my own on the job.



*"I'd like to thank the school and the community for giving me this opportunity - for allowing me to fulfill my life's dream of working with my hands and fixing things at such a great school."
Spencer Savory, maintenance*

What has stayed the same about Westminster in the past 25 years?
I think what has stayed the same is how the teachers care about the students. They want to help them. That care and love are things that haven't changed.

What is one memory from the past 25 years you'll never forget?
One thing that was very special to me happened when I was a volunteer firefighter after work in the early '90s. We had a young student here - **Jimmy Armstrong '97**. One day a science teacher was doing an experiment with a class in which the students had to run up and down the hall and take their pulse. At the end of the hallway, there was a set of doors that went outside. Jimmy was wearing sandals and when he got down to the end of the hallway, he didn't stop. He put his hand up to stop himself, but it went right through the window and the glass cut his arm. I helped stop the bleeding before the paramedics got there and helped save his life.

What is your favorite part about your job?
It's different every day. One day I may be installing a pencil sharpener in a classroom, and the same day a water pipe bursts. Also, my job is something I've always liked to do. It's fun to come to work because I don't know what's going to happen. I also like sharing my knowledge of what I can fix and passing it on to new people. I like being able to help people by sharing my experiences.

What do you love most about Westminster?
I love being able to provide a safe and comfortable atmosphere for the students and teachers. I like interacting with the kids. One of my favorite things is to drive them to their sports because those are the only sports I watch! I love watching them play football, softball, and baseball. I'd rather go to their games than a Cardinals game, because I know the students and it's fun. I'd like to thank the school and the community for giving me this opportunity - for allowing me to fulfill my life's dream of working with my hands and fixing things at such a great school. ⊕



Drawing on the Dream

By Laurie Bergman

Westminster's move to Town & Country in 2011 heralded the fruition of a dream. Anchored by a vision to engage the world and change it for Jesus Christ, this dream moved by foresight, careful planning, and the sureness of God's hand at work. With that move, seeds of new dreams for the school's Fine Arts Department were planted.

The faculty and staff began considering ways to best help Westminster's existing fine arts talent make the most of its new, state-of-the-art resources and space. To help make these dreams a reality, in spring 2014, Westminster's highly regarded middle school music teacher Kathy Eichelberger was promoted to Director of Fine Arts. In this new capacity, Mrs. Eichelberger oversees the growth of the program and encourages her fellow fine arts faculty to use their gifts to promote Westminster's wide variety of opportunities to the community.

"So much of culture is defined by the arts, and if we want our students to engage with culture, those who God has gifted artistically could be some of the most influential."

Kathy Eichelberger, Director of Fine Arts

"Moving into our new facility was a big deal," says Mrs. Eichelberger. "Now that we've been here for a few years, the question has become, 'How can we use this beautiful facility to promote our fine arts like never before?'"

The need for a director to coordinate all of the activity and programming became apparent to Mrs. Eichelberger as she supervised the production of Westminster's first middle school musical in the spring. "I encountered a lot of first-time issues," she says. "We had a lot of support in place; we were just missing a formal process to help us put our best foot forward. I told [Head of School] Tom Stoner that athletics has a huge platform and a director, and we wanted to spotlight fine arts but had no director. I could see that we needed one to become better." Mrs. Eichelberger outlined what she thought were qualifications for such a director: good communicator, visionary, and solid people skills to get Westminster's name out there. "We needed someone who would be a cheerleader for the fine arts program so that our arts voice would be as strong as our athletics one," she says.



FINE AND VISUAL ARTS

Mrs. Eichelberger did not know, however, that Dr. Stoner had already created a director of fine arts position – one that simply needed to be filled. “It was one of those strange synergies in which we recognize that God is sovereignly directing things,” says Dr. Stoner. “Our very first priority in our strategic plan is ‘Provide world-class opportunities in academics, athletics, and the arts.’ That priority is a school-wide process that includes students, faculty, parents, and Board members. So when Kathy told me we needed a coordinator, I said, ‘What a coincidence! I have a space available.’”

As director of fine arts, Mrs. Eichelberger oversees the school's performing arts department while continuing to teach. “She is coordinating all the voices in order to magnify the program,” says Dr. Stoner. “This is intentional leadership. It's people coming together and dreaming about what we want to do for the sake of our students.”

With Mrs. Eichelberger's promotion, a space remained for an additional individual who would need to provide vision and structure within Westminster's visual arts program. Once again, God moved to present





the right person at the right time. Artist and educator John Sarra had been teaching in the fine arts department at Washington University in St. Louis since receiving his master's degree from the institution in 1997. A significant factor that drew him to his post-graduate degree position, he says, was the confidence the school had in promoting the arts.

Mr. Sarra said he never thought of an artist as something to become. "Art is always something I did," he says. "But the things I thought of as 'natural' had as much to do with early exposure to art as they did with ability. When I was three, my mother would bring me with her to a friend's house when she was learning to make pottery," he says. "As I got older, it seemed normal to build things out of clay. I would just gather soil, make things, and dry them in the Arizona heat. A lot of kids get hung up on the idea of 'talent' and think that you simply are or are not an artist. The seeds of creativity may be there, but it's also important that we give students the opportunities to get their hands dirty and to think of that experience as normal."

Today Mr. Sarra works with a variety of media. He says painting is his "home base," but he is also an avid woodworker who spends time gathering freshly cut trees, milling the lumber, and building works of art from that lumber. "It's part of the educational process - a realization of all that needs to happen before you start as well as an increased awareness of all that needs to happen before you'll be finished."

Mr. Sarra's journey to Westminster began with Director of Teaching and Learning Cindy Zavaglia, who had been a longstanding friend. "Cindy had suggested the idea of my teaching at Westminster for years, but I always just shrugged it off," says Mr. Sarra. "But she saw the potential long before I could see it and encouraged me to talk to Dr. Stoner. After a number of meetings with him, I reached the point where I no longer thought of the open position as someone else's job but rather the one I should be doing."

"I was drawn to him immediately – to his thoughts about faith and art and his desire to help students see with the eyes of artists, and that God is the Creative Artist of all we can see," says Dr. Stoner.

Ms. Zavaglia says, "I'm always keeping my eyes open for ways that God might answer our prayers for Him to continue to bring the best and the brightest teachers to Westminster. And even so, I can still hardly believe that God brought us someone of John Sarra's caliber. Westminster now has an artist-in-residence, and especially for a secondary school, that is no small thing."

While the creation of art is intrinsic to his life, helping students see the world as an artist is what motivates Mr. Sarra as a teacher and as visual arts chair. "Our mission in visual arts at Westminster is to get people to see well," he says. "The way that we see has so much to do with how we treat the world around us, because good vision requires us to understand relationships. It's a natural conversation. I want students



to develop the confidence to act and catch hold of the awe and wonder of visual experience. Awe and wonder have much more to do with what we don't know rather than what we do. We know we've learned to see well when we become aware of all the things that have been right in front of us – things that we never saw before."

Mr. Sarra says he wasn't looking to leave WashU and didn't know if teaching at the high school level was something he would enjoy. But the more he talked with Dr. Stoner and the existing arts faculty, his calling was confirmed. "I just kind of fell in love," says Mr. Sarra. "The faculty are a big part of what attracted me here. Westminster already had very capable, thoughtful, talented teachers in place who were hungry to become better, and I could see the potential for what this opportunity could be."

Mr. Sarra assumed his new role with enthusiasm. He is continually working with the faculty to determine what opportunities and offerings should be added to the program to make it truly world-class. "We've been working on our own strategic plan for visual arts, a plan that plays upon one another's strengths and identifies areas in which we want and need to grow," he says. "I want this to be a place that is not only for students who know they're directed toward the arts but also an educational experience for students who may not necessarily think of themselves as artists."

Mrs. Eichelberger applauds Mr. Sarra's work to make the arts curriculum accessible to more students and his development of a long-term plan for art display throughout the campus. "He's a really patient, methodical person," says Mrs. Eichelberger. "He can see the big picture and has an excellent handle on how to incorporate our faith into the arts."

While curriculum development is his main focus, Mr. Sarra says engaging the physical space we have at Westminster is part of that focus. "When you sit down [across from the Welcome Desk] and there are photos on the wall, on one hand, they're making you feel more at home, and on the other hand, they're telling the story of what we do here."

Administrative and leadership responsibilities may consume a great deal of their time, but both Mrs. Eichelberger and Mr. Sarra continue to share their respective passions with students through teaching. Mrs. Eichelberger teaches two sections each of Performing Arts 7 and 8 and will teach Chorus 7 and Chorus 8 next semester. Mr. Sarra teaches three sections of ceramics and one section of drawing (all upper school). In spring 2015, he will teach oil painting and watercolor painting in addition to ceramics and drawing.



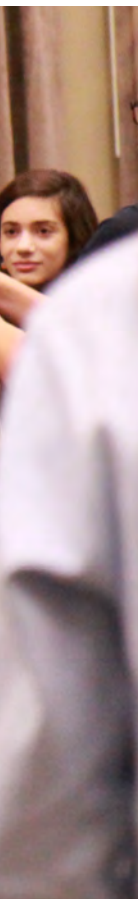


For Mrs. Eichelberger, who served as choral music instructor from 1990-1998 and then returned to Westminster in the fall of 2006, the transition to the role of department “maestro” fulfills her need to be steeped in the creative arts – the place where she derives her energy, where she feels at home. “I was so excited to be able to work in concert with people in our department and bring everyone together,” she says. “I try my best to support and encourage the teachers in what they’re doing with the kids.”

Mrs. Eichelberger stresses the importance of students’ involvement in the arts at some point during the school day. “It trains a part of the brain that the other subjects don’t,” she says. “When kids can be expressive with their voices or with musical instruments, it positively affects their ability to reason. There’s much proof that studying a musical instrument improves concentration and that working together on a show helps students develop restorative skills. These are characteristics that employers are looking for: innovation and the ability to solve complicated problems.”

She hopes to encourage students to pursue the arts not only as a hobby, but also as a profession if they have the ambition, drive, and desire. “We need to encourage kids to consider the arts as a career, whether performing in the theatre, singing, or painting,” she says. “The opportunities are there. God has gifted us all with special talents, and if your passion is anything in the arts, using that passion to advance His kingdom will bring Him the most glory.”

Mrs. Eichelberger encourages Westminster alumni to visit campus and see all that is happening in the arts department. “I’m excited for them to see how we’re continuing to grow and develop the program,” she says. “The high caliber and specialization of talent is something to see! Some of our students have the potential to go really far, and I want alumni to see that early on, they were part of something special, something that has continued to grow, and something that is impacting kids today just as it did when they were students at Westminster.”



“[Mrs. Eichelberger] is coordinating all the voices in order to magnify the program. This is intentional leadership. It’s people coming together and dreaming about what we want to do for the sake of our students.”
Tom Stoner, Head of School

Behind the Scenes

When a production opens and the curtain rises, the spotlight shines on the actors who take the stage. But the success of a production depends just as much on those working behind the curtain – the individuals who spend each moment ensuring that everything looks and sounds just as it should. At Westminster, the crew behind the curtain are Audiovisual (A/V) Club and Set Club.

A/V Coordinator Han Kim joined the Westminster staff in 2000 following his graduation from Millikin University in Central Illinois. At the time, there was a need for A/V help in Chapel. “The technology was very simple back then,” says Mr. Kim. “It was working with microphones and overheads and an analog base.” Fifteen years and countless productions later, Mr. Kim’s role has expanded as audio-visual technology has evolved. “One of my jobs is to work simultaneously with the directors and producers and with the A/V Club,” says Mr. Kim, who says fine arts is a large focus for the club given all of the technology needs in the Theatre.

This year, 26 students make up A/V Club. Acting A/V Club president senior Daniel Welker says Mr. Kim sets an example of service and is a constant support to the fine arts department. “If we can offer any help, whether to band, orchestra, choir, a drama group, a speaker, or an artist, Mr. Kim’s first question to us is, ‘What can we do to help here?’”

Mr. Kim enjoys learning students’ interests in technology and plugging them into a serving role. “It’s really fun to see how kids develop their skills or interests in something that allows others – not themselves – to shine,” he says. “That’s a very Christ-like thing to do. Even though you know you are behind the scenes, you are completely engaged in the performance.”



Mr. Kim says that once students understand this particular brand of servanthood, they excel in A/V. “We work with knobs and buttons and computers, but it’s more about understanding how to serve our community,” he says. “When they get this, it’s fun for me. I become not only a teacher who’s challenging them to be better, but I also get to be behind the scenes constantly encouraging them. When someone on stage is shining, we have done our job. We don’t always get the credit, but I want them to know that they have 100-percent contributed to the result through their hard work.”

Drama III, a new class that Mr. Kim and drama teacher Helen Scott began teaching together this fall, focuses on the development of engineers and tech directors. “We’ve prayed about this for a long time,” says Mr. Kim. “We teach design, sound, light, backstage management, and rigging systems; we’re cultivating students to become producers and directors in theatrical productions. Our hope is that we’ll have more students with a passion for fine arts running behind-the-scenes stuff – becoming directors and producers.”

A second critical component to Westminster’s on-stage success is the school’s Set Club, advised by Visual Arts Chair John Sarra. The club has nine consistent members in addition to freelance designer Paul Avery, who handles the majority of the design process. “We involve students in all of the details,” says Mr. Sarra. “It is completely hands-on in terms of set-building, from the painting to the preparation of surfaces and installation.”

At the time of publication, Set Club is preparing for the fall musical *Seussical*. “It’s incredibly involved; there are about 23 scene changes plus a lot of props and costumes, and we’re building nearly everything from scratch,” says Mr. Sarra. “Being involved in theatre is a new thing for me. In visual arts, while I use metaphors about theatre to illustrate how we see and understand what’s important, now I’m involved in it. It’s no longer just a metaphor!”





getting Creative

Westminster's arts program provides various platforms for creative expression in the classroom and on the stage. But a number of students as well as staff are showcasing their gifts off campus.

For many students, when they engage in the arts outside of school, they are building on a solid foundation of confidence gained at Westminster. Senior Drew Straub says the school's environment is a nurturing one. "Westminster provides an amazing environment for a young actor or actress to turn a hobby into a passion," he says. "Without Mrs. Scott, Mr. Butz, and Mr. Schwamb helping me throughout my six years here at Westminster, I never would have fallen in love with theatre or considered it as a career."

Drew, who attended Interlochen Center for the Arts, a notable summer arts camp in Michigan, says he has been applying to colleges with the intention of completing a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Acting. His goal? To become a professional actor.

The Middle School is bursting with just as much talent. Eighth graders Mark Geisz and Allison Broadhurst acted in Westminster's first middle school musical *Honk!* in spring 2014. Both are veteran St. Louis Muny Kids.

Mark was first exposed to Westminster theatre in sixth grade when the musical *The Secret Garden* called for some younger actors. Mark auditioned and was chosen for the

part of Colin; his older sister Hannah starred as Mary Lennox. Last spring, Mark starred as Ugly in *Honk!* and this past summer appeared in the Muny production of *Tarzan* as an ensemble gorilla. "Theatre is my worship," says Mark. "I feel God's glory when I'm on stage delivering lines or performing a stunt."



Mark says his experience at Westminster has helped his work in secular theatre. "The main thing is being open to other people," he says of his work in the Munny ensemble. "I tried not really seeing faith as a boundary but as an opportunity – as something to talk about with people."

Allison, who has been part of Munny Kids for more than four years, has loved to sing, dance, and act from an early age. She chose to attend Westminster after a day of shadowing classes, one of which was Mrs. Eichelberger's.

"Theatre is my worship. I feel God's glory when I'm on stage delivering lines or performing a stunt. I tried not really seeing faith as a boundary but as an opportunity – as something to talk about with people."
Mark Geisz, 8th grade

"She's very genuine when teaching and I can tell she truly wants us to get better," says Allison of Mrs. Eichelberger. "She makes sure that she works with us one-on-one on technical things so we can get the best out of her class. To me, that's the thing that really stands out about Westminster. The teachers genuinely care about you and want you to use your talents to the best of your ability."

Another one of these teachers theatre instructor Jim Butz considers his work in the professional theatre critical to being an effective teacher in the classroom. An acclaimed Shakespearean actor voted "Best Actor in St. Louis" by the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* this year, Mr. Butz appears in plays both locally and nationally. "When I go to work on a play, I'm reminded of the real-life nuts and bolts that go into making theatre," he says. "Working in the theatre keeps me honest. I know how hard the craft is. I run up against the same challenges and have to address the same problems that students do as they learn to perform. So whether it is memorizing lines or being more comfortable in one's skin, I can relate to my students in a very personal way."

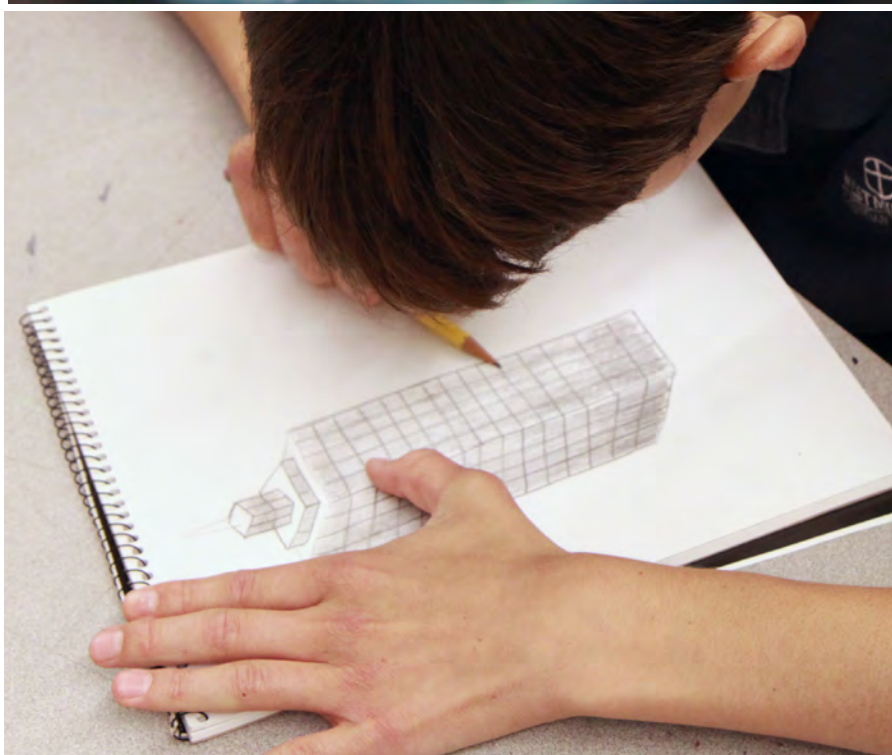


Students more inclined to the visual arts also take advantage of opportunities to express their creativity outside the classroom. This fall the Art Club participated in Washington University's National Portfolio Day, an event during which university professors from around the country review high school student art portfolios and answer questions about careers in art. The club has seen an uptick in participation this year, growing from five or six students to nearly 30. Co-president senior Anna Evans attributes the spike to the work she and co-president senior Baxter Estes have put forth to promote the club, which exhibits a low-pressure, acceptance-filled vibe.

"Art didn't have much exposure before," says Anna. "We wanted to give kids a place to put their art out there. Art Club is a set-aside time to come and create," she says. "I really like working with people and being able to help them after a stressful day at school. This is just a good environment to have an afternoon snack and talk about your day while creating art."

Baxter, who is also a member of Westminster's robotics team, says he likes that Art Club offers a way for students who might not want to take a formal art class to get involved in the local art community. "We have studio days when we work on specific projects, we plan on going to a nursing home to paint with the residents, and we take trips to the Art Museum," says Baxter.

Art Club advisor and art teacher Lara Goeke says creating is an inherent desire God has placed in us. "The first thing the Bible says is, 'God created.'" says Mrs. Goeke. "I think that the more we create on our own, the more we develop a sophisticated level of wonder and an ability to observe and engage the world around us. That's the mission of Westminster - to engage kids and get them out of a bubble and into the world." ⊕



Running, Racing, and Advancing

By Shelley Milligan, Executive Director of Institutional Advancement & Strategy



Morning runs wake me up. My favorite time to exercise is first thing in the morning, after hitting the snooze button a time too many, before any of the day's troubles surface and derail my good intentions.

Morning runs clear my mind. They show me I'm a small part of a very big world. For whatever reason, I connect with the Lord easily as I awaken along with the rest of creation.

Morning runs inspire my best thinking. Connecting with the Lord by traversing my neighborhood streets brings new ideas and insight,

unsticking me from seemingly impossible situations and encouraging new attempts at creativity.

Morning runs prepare me for the race of the day ahead. While I wish every run generated thoughts of sunshine and roses, some days my body feels clunky and just *off*. I persist, reminding myself that being faithful is about discipline and trusting the Lord with results.

On a recent morning run, I thought about Westminster, and my mind drifted to Hebrews 12:1: *Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a*



cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.

Many people run to prepare themselves for a competitive race, and while that's not my motivation, I thought about Westminster and how we as a school are running a race. We exist to educate students to engage the world and change it for Jesus Christ. The faculty and administration take their calling seriously, and their passion for this work is what drove me to accept a position in institutional advancement at Westminster.

I came to Westminster in early August and was welcomed graciously by so many on campus. I learned our history – how God has provided for this place over and over again, in ways that demonstrate His favor and blessing. I learned how He orchestrated the sale of property, the purchase of facilities, and the construction of new space. I learned about leadership and generosity and faithfulness against seemingly insurmountable odds. I learned about throwing off weights and running with endurance.

I am learning about our present – how God brings an ever-increasing student body to learn from incredibly dedicated and passionate faculty. I am learning about our facility and the opportunities it has afforded – opportunities

“Advancement seeks to encourage, immerse, and involve witnesses so that Westminster’s race will be sustained not only for our future but also for posterity, for St. Louis, and for a world that needs to be engaged and changed for Jesus.”

Shelley Milligan, EdD
Executive Director of Institutional
Advancement & Strategy



My prayer is that our efforts in institutional advancement help us run the race more smoothly by developing witnesses. Witnesses aren't simply bystanders who cheer for the runners; at Westminster, so many of you actively give of yourselves in truly sacrificial ways. You serve on boards, you staff the Coffee Bar and Concessions, you answer phones, you host gatherings at your home, you organize activities and events, you pray, and you give – all so that those of us at Westminster will be able to lay aside, to run, and to endure. Thank you for your witness and the ways in which you advance us. ⊕

Prior to assuming her role as executive director of institutional advancement & strategy at Westminster at the start of the 2014-15 school year, Shelley served as associate provost at Washington University in St. Louis, preceded by a role as the university's assistant dean of arts and sciences and formerly associate director of development in arts and sciences. She began her career as director of the annual fund at her alma mater Washington & Lee University in Virginia and came to Westminster with a breadth of experience in advancement and school leadership.

Head of School Tom Stoner says Shelley is a proven educational leader. "Shelley's leadership in both advancement and academics at some of our nation's finest schools will be valuable in her role at Westminster," says Dr. Stoner. "We are thrilled that she is using her considerable gifts to help advance our mission and serve families in St. Louis, and her addition to our leadership team reflects our strategic priority of establishing Westminster as a distinctly Christian private school with world-class opportunities in academics, athletics, and the arts."

that at one time were only dreams and are now becoming a reality. I am learning about change and transition and new administrative structures. I am learning more about our race and how so many are running so faithfully in the same direction.

And I begin to learn about our future, how God calls us toward higher and better, to be world-class for the sake of His Kingdom. I begin to envision running the race longer, freer of financial constraints. I begin to realize that advancement seeks to encourage, immerse, and involve witnesses so that Westminster's race will be sustained not only for our future but also for posterity, for St. Louis, and for a world that needs to be engaged and changed for Jesus.

Westminster is coming to Naples!

In February 2015, join Tom Stoner and Jim Marsh along with alumni parents Larry and Mary Catherine White for a special Westminster event in Naples, Florida.

If you have plans to be in the area, please send your address to lwestrich@wcastl.org so we can send you an invitation!



THE WESTMINSTER INVESTORS CIRCLE

Will you be a
charter member?

wcastl.org/give

The Westminster Investors Circle is a new group of leadership donors who share **The Westminster Annual Fund** commitment to Westminster through gifts at the \$1,000 level. These families make a commitment to give at least \$1,000 every year and encourage others to do the same. We are grateful for these donors who lead the way so that others may follow in their path. These families lay the foundation of giving for Westminster and are vital to our financial health. Members of The Westminster Investors Circle will receive invitations to special events throughout the year as well as unique donor communications.

Will you pray and consider how God might enable your family to give at the \$1,000 level? We invite you to be among the charter members of The Westminster Investors Circle. A monthly gift of \$83 secures your membership in this leadership group. To establish a monthly gift of \$20, \$50, or \$100 to Westminster, visit wcastl.org/give and click Make a Gift Today.

Please contact Carolyn Holt at cholt@wcastl.org to learn more and to participate in The Westminster Annual Fund and The Westminster Investors Circle.

TheWestminster**Annual**Fund

TheWestminster**Annual**Fund is the place where everyone can make a difference, where every gift matters. It provides a way for all of us who are blessed by Westminster – students, alumni, parents, grandparents, faculty, staff, and friends – to support the school's mission.

While Westminster has received annual gifts in the past, we hope that our entire community will now join together to invest in TheWestminster**Annual**Fund. Our vision is for the annual fund to serve as a strong foundation of giving that brings all those who love Westminster together to make a difference.

Alumni, did a Westminster teacher have a significant impact in your life? Parents, are your children reaching their God-given potential because of Westminster? Grandparents, are your grandchildren growing into the next generation of Christian leaders who will inspire others? Alumni parents, are you thankful for the impact Westminster had on your adult children? If so, then please join together with your community and participate in TheWestminster**Annual**Fund.

Every gift, large or small, impacts students today. A gift to TheWestminster**Annual**Fund enables Westminster to offer the highest quality programs in academics, the arts, and athletics. These gifts also promote and protect our investment in world-class faculty and facilities.



Every gift, large
or small, impacts
students today.

wcastl.org/give



"We give to Westminster because we see God's hand at work here. This school's families and teachers are having a huge impact on our family. Westminster is a very big part of our lives, and we feel honored and compelled to contribute to its mission."

-current parent

**Westminster parents,
will you join us in giving to the annual fund?**

"We give to Westminster because we want to live out Proverbs 13:22, 'a godly man leaves an inheritance to his children's children...'" We believe that a Westminster education is equipping students for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16)."

-grandparent of alumni

**Westminster grandparents,
will you participate in the annual fund?**



"My husband and I often say that Westminster is the best investment we ever made. We give to Westminster out of gratitude for what Westminster gave to our now adult children."

-parent of alumni

**Westminster alumni parents,
will you make a life-changing investment?**

WILDCAT WEEKEND & ALUMNI HOMECOMING

Wildcat Weekend & Alumni Homecoming was filled with good friends, delicious food, Wildcat victories, and non-stop fun with the entire community. Thank you to everyone who came and made it an unforgettable weekend!





Walking in Memphis

Five Westminster alumni are fulfilling their calling to serve in a city that was recently labeled one of the poorest in the nation: Memphis, Tennessee. These graduates are not simply going to work each day; they are living the gospel as they pour into their communities. As they shine their lights in what is often a very dark city, they illustrate Westminster's vision for all of its students as they actively engage Memphis and work to change it for Jesus Christ.

CHRIS DAVIS '03
DOWNTOWN CHURCH

"Westminster was huge in cultivating my heart for the gospel and gospel diversity!"



MICHAEL SHAW '04
ADVANCE MEMPHIS

"Dr. Holley's class made me want to get as involved as I could in seeing Christ's work redeem the lives of the poor in the same way that He is redeeming my own."

NOAH GRAY '05
BINGHAMPTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

"Westminster laid the strong spiritual and academic foundation that I built upon in college and continue to build upon to this day."



ALLISON MITCHELL THIESSEN '08
LEBONHEUR CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

"Whether I am actively discussing my faith with a family or simply showing love to their child, I try to be a witness to them in any way I can."

COLIN CHAPELL '01
UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

"My desire is to make my students think about what is broken in humanity and how it can be repaired."



CHRIS DAVIS '03

DOWNTOWN CHURCH

HIS WORK

I serve as a pastor on staff at Downtown Church, a growing evangelical Presbyterian church planted by Second Presbyterian Church in Memphis. My experience there has been both challenging and rewarding. During the four years I've served as a teaching pastor, I've been stretched in incredible ways. It is a gospel-centered, disciple-making, multi-ethnic church. We have the resourced and under-resourced, blacks and whites, and republicans and democrats all doing life together. Our mission is to look like our city, to make much of Jesus, and to send our people out to be a part of the mission of God in Memphis. It's not always the easiest task, as we are naturally wired to live, be in relationship with, and worship with people like us – people from the same side of the tracks. But as a teaching pastor, I'm charged to consistently preach gospel-saturated messages, recruit and train leaders for our small groups, and facilitate general pastoral shepherding and care for our people.

HIS IMPACT

I'm passionate about gospel-centered, multi-ethnic ministry because I'm convinced that Jesus not only died to reconcile us to God but also to one another! The Abrahamic covenant in Genesis 3 points us to the reality that God's heart was not just for the Jews but also the Gentiles. Heaven will be a beautiful place of all tongues, nations, and people groups and I'm crazy enough to believe that we ought to experience that kind of diversity in Memphis! My hope is that our people, in an Ephesians 2 kind of way, would embrace the "wall of hostility" being



CHRIS DAVIS '03

broken down in Jesus' flesh, that the people at our dining room tables would change, and that the relationships our children have would change – all because we have a better understanding of the gospel.

HIS PREPARATION

Westminster was huge in cultivating my heart for the gospel and gospel diversity! I was born and raised in inner-city St. Louis, yet Westminster gave me a network of people and friendships that were completely foreign to me. After experiencing an enormous culture shock, Westminster helped to shape my love for Jesus and my passion to see the people of God living in relationship together, no matter our ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or political persuasion. I'm confident that the gospel can bring us together!

MICHAEL SHAW '04

ADVANCE MEMPHIS

HIS WORK

I serve at Advance Memphis, a nonprofit that exists to express the coming Kingdom of God through relationships and economic development that bring hope and life to the neighborhood we serve – one that was, at one point, the third poorest urban zip code in the country. We offer multiple classes and programs designed to create opportunities for meaningful employment; these include a soft skills job training course, money management classes, high school equivalency classes (GED and HiSET), a staffing service, and an entrepreneurship class, as well as anger management, addiction recovery, and parenting classes. I teach three sections of GED classes (morning, afternoon, and evening) – predominantly math.

This is my fifth year working at Advance and my third teaching GED. When I first started, teaching was nowhere on my list of things that I was interested in doing until they saw the need to start the program but didn't have the resources to hire from the outside. At the time, I was doing microfinance and managing matched savings accounts. I thought it was a good time for a change of pace and asked to give it a try. I loved it and still do.

HIS IMPACT

About a year in, my wife and I decided to move into the neighborhood surrounding Advance where the majority of my students live. The move was mainly an effort to put ourselves in a position where we would be constantly reminded of our need for Christ and could create fewer barriers and excuses for God to use our family to bring His Kingdom. Secondly, the move has strengthened my relationship with many of my students, some of whom live directly next door, and opened new opportunities for us to share the gospel with them through both word and action. I believe that Christ died, rose again, and is alive. It would be a lie to say that this is what I believe while living my life in the same way as those who don't believe it. My life should look different. I don't teach GED because I'm a Christian, but I'd be failing in my vocation if my students got their GEDs, went to college, and found better jobs but never saw or heard about Jesus and His love for them. If I believe that Christ has redeemed me and is making all things new, then I need to be a different kind of teacher. For me, that meant moving into my students' neighborhood. And I think it also means providing more than just help with geometry. I'm grateful that Advance encourages me to do this.

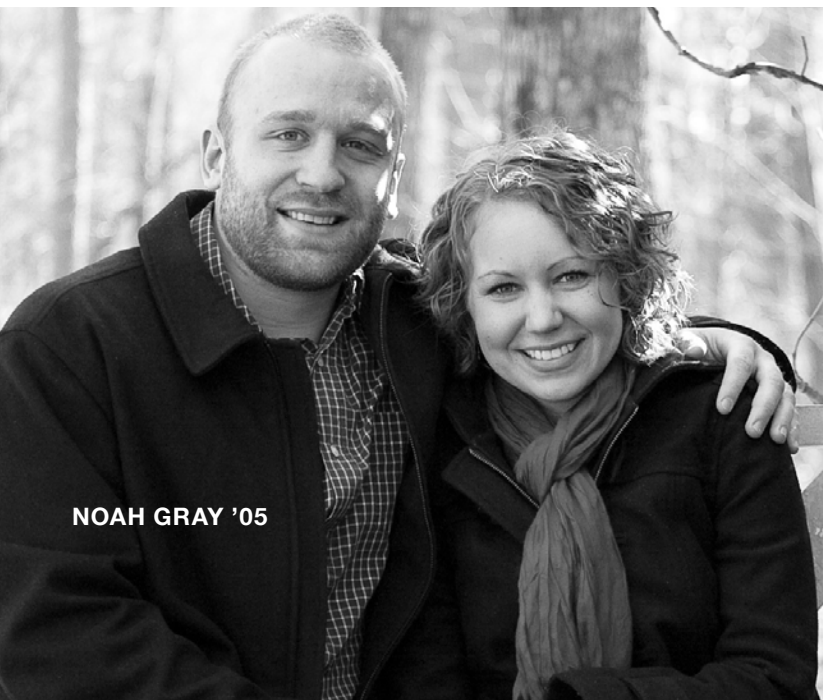
HIS PREPARATION

In Dr. [Scott] Holley's class during my senior year at Westminster, we read a news article about education inequality in the city of St. Louis. Unfortunately, this was my first exposure to issues of

inequality and the many factors that lead to poverty. I found the discussion fascinating, and I used my senior integration project to further explore the issues of inequality and poverty – specifically educational inequality. The assignments in that class and the accompanying discussions spurred an interest to get as involved as I could, in both my lifestyle and vocation, in seeing Christ's work redeem the lives of the poor in the same way that He is redeeming my own. I am glad that Westminster continues to expose students to issues of poverty (its history, its causes, and the Church's role in fighting it) and ways that we as Christians should be using our vocations to love our neighbors in bold ways.



MICHAEL SHAW '04



NOAH GRAY '05

NOAH GRAY '05

BINGHAMPTON DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

HIS WORK

I've been working for the Binghampton Development Corporation since graduating from Mizzou in 2009. The BDC is a nonprofit community development corporation working to improve the quality of life for residents in the inner city Binghampton community of Memphis. The BDC focuses on job training, economic development, housing and financial counseling, early childhood and youth development, and residential and commercial property development. My wife Emily and I have been married four years and own our home in Binghampton. We love our neighborhood and have started after-school Bible studies to mentor urban youth.

HIS IMPACT

We see many disparities in Memphis, and the gaps between the wealthy and the marginalized are growing. We see disparity in housing, education, healthcare – you name it, but there is hope because of all the great things going on in Memphis.



ALLISON MITCHELL
THIESSEN '08

HIS PREPARATION

Westminster laid the strong spiritual and academic foundation that I built upon in college and continue to build upon to this day. One of the things that drives my relationships with the youth is the model that a Westminster coach set for me years ago. His discipleship was consistent, supportive, and loving – characteristics that are often lacking in our community.

ALLISON MITCHELL THIESSEN '08 LEBONHEUR CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

HER WORK

I am a nurse at the Cardiovascular ICU at LeBonheur Children's Hospital. We care for babies and children who were born with congenital heart defects and require open heart surgery. I am also a certified ECMO specialist. ECMO is a continuous 24/7 cardiopulmonary bypass pump that we use for patients for whom all other therapy has stopped working and are at high risk for mortality. I am in charge of running the bypass pump for these patients and troubleshooting any kind of problems.

HER IMPACT

I love my job because I get to see people in a unique and vulnerable setting that most people don't get to be a part of. These children are incredibly sick, and some of them even pass away. To be able to sit with a family and offer comfort to them in a situation in which they have no control is such an incredible gift. I hope that I impact families simply by being a support system to them. I hope that I am able to relieve some of their stress by paying attention to little details that may not seem important for a child who is so critically ill (i.e., making sure they have clean sheets or ensuring that family questions are brought up in our medical rounds every day). Whether I am actively discussing my faith with a family or simply showing love to their child, I try to be a witness to them in any way I can.

HER PREPARATION

Westminster helped equip me first and foremost with an excellent education that in turn prepared me for nursing school. It helped lay the foundation for the career I have now. My teachers at Westminster also instilled in me a strong work ethic and taught me how to work as part of a team – both things that I incorporate into my profession every single day.



*“Westminster prepared me with a foundational understanding of worldviews, which is vitally important working in any environment but particularly one in which most of my colleagues believe differently than I do.”
Colin Chapell '01*

COLIN CHAPELL '01

UNIVERSITY OF MEMPHIS

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HIS WORK

I teach U.S. History at the University of Memphis. My courses include the survey courses as well as a few classes on southern history, the Civil War and Reconstruction, and occasionally special topics such as religion in American history. Most of my classes are either online or at one of Memphis' satellite campuses, where I teach a mix of traditional undergrads and students who are returning to college after being out of school for years (sometimes decades).

HIS IMPACT

I teach history for a number of reasons. I love to discover new cultures and new places and learn how and why people think differently than I do. This is what history is; it is exploring a foreign place. I also enjoy a good story, and history is all about stories. Moreover, history is about the need for something more than ourselves. Throughout history, people are trying to make life better, easier, or more pleasurable, and they consistently demonstrate a search for something beyond themselves. As a Christian, I think this is clear evidence of the search for God, often in all the wrong places in an attempt to soothe one's soul. My desire is to make students think about what is broken in humanity and how it can be repaired. Teaching at a public institution, there are times when my own answer to this has to be limited, but for many students, simply getting them to ask those questions can lead to interesting discussions. I'm hoping to plant seeds.

HIS PREPARATION

Since middle school, I knew that I wanted to teach, but exactly what I wanted to teach varied depending on which teachers I liked best. But by junior year, it was clear that I definitely should not teach math! Papa [Mark] Hearne and Tim Baldwin were significant influences and contributed to my love of history. Ken Boesch's PoliSci class made me want to find out why the Framers and Founders thought the way they did, and why we now understand things differently. Asking how things have changed over time is a fundamental question in the study of history. From a broader standpoint, Westminster prepared me with a foundational understanding of worldviews, which is vitally important working in any environment but particularly one in which most of my colleagues believe differently than I do. Moreover, Westminster drilled into me the understanding – again, a foundational thought – that all truth is God's truth and that all vocations can be glorifying to God. ⊕

82 **Michael Gerson** is a syndicated columnist whose articles appear all over the country. His column was recently picked up by the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. The *Post-Dispatch* editor Tony Messenger says,



"We believe that Mr. Gerson's commitment to 'compassionate conservatism' and his roots in St. Louis will better connect with our readers, regardless of their political bent." ▶

86 **Denise Farrar Shelly** married her husband **Andy** in September 2013. Her son senior airman **Daniel Farrar** served as a groomsman and is stationed at Ramstein Air Base in Germany. She and Andy reside in Quakertown, Pennsylvania, where she is employed by Bucks County Correctional Facility as part of the administrative team for the medical facility that treats the inmates.



▶ Learn more at wcastl.org/ChimesWinter201415

87 **Steve Johnson** recently won Emmy awards for breaking news coverage and team coverage from the Heartland Regional chapter of NATA for his television station's work during the deadly tornadoes that struck Moore, Oklahoma, in 2013. Steve was the co-interim news director of the station at the time.



90 **Bob Stulac** moved from Minneapolis to northern Virginia in 2011. He is a member of Grace Presbyterian Church and teaches Latin at Paul VI Catholic High School.

96 Inspired by friend and fellow alumnus **Brian Goessling** who currently serves as headmaster of Restoration Academy in Birmingham, Alabama, **Alan Bronowicz**, **Jarrod Taylor**, and **Steve Douglass** together with Brian created Cultivating Hope, a nonprofit affiliate of Restoration Academy. Cultivating Hope's mission is to expose inner-city high school juniors to other cities, careers, and events beyond their neighborhood so that they

can instill a desire in the students to pursue higher education and career paths.

In May 2014, the first group of juniors from Restoration Academy visited New York with Alan, Brian, and Steve. While there, Alan introduced them to the chief financial officer and general counsel at his employer Thomson



Reuters. The students also had the opportunity to visit an app development company and take in a Yankees game, as well as attend a service at Redeemer Presbyterian Church. The Westminster alumni plan to continue Cultivating Hope at Restoration Academy and, over time, expand their vision beyond Birmingham. Search "Cultivating Hope" on Facebook to learn more.

97 **Kelly Beckemeier** Johnston and her husband **Shane** welcomed their fourth child **Reid Joseph Johnston** in July 2014.



Tara Bollinger Jacob has been traveling as Miss Missouri USA 2003 and has spoken to more than 100,000 students. She is the founder/director

Hear them roar in '94!



The Class of 1994 reunited after 20 years at The Cheshire Hotel in Clayton, Missouri. From Left: **Matt Bronowicz**, **Reid Olson**, **Sarah Wallace Doepke**; **Joel Bell** and **Reid Olson**; **Sarah Wallace Doepke**, **Stephanie Hines Taylor**, **Dave Stulac**; **Michael Masters** and **Jason Bahnak**; **Sarah Wallace Doepke**, **Kelly Hall Veitch**, **Stephanie Hines Taylor**

CLASS NOTES

of INSPIRE School Programs, a nonprofit organization providing positive character-building programs for middle and high school students. "I see a need in our country for quality school programs that foster character education," says Tara. See her full story in *Southwest NOW Magazine*. ▶



Annamarie Meyer Door received a B.A. in elementary education from Covenant College and taught elementary school in Pittsburgh for six years. She then taught in Suriname for three years before she returned to get her master's degree in science education (grades K-8) and began work as a teacher at a classical Christian school in Reston, Virginia. On July 12, 2014, Annamarie married Justin Door, an astronautical engineer from northwest Michigan. Also pictured is **Holly Meyer Miller '99** and **Toby Meyer '95**.

Holley Maher and former Board member **Bill Maher** were the father-daughter team behind the SmartBenefits private exchange. They say working through challenging times can be tough given their close relationship but also very rewarding because they get to spend their days together. ▶

99 **John Herbold** is vice president of GoNoodle, a company that recently introduced a new classroom tool that reels unfocused kids back into a ready-to-learn state of mind. ▶

00 **Heather Kea**, Westminster varsity girls volleyball coach, married Joe Cumbee from Charleston, South Carolina,



on May 10, 2014 at the vineyards in Augusta, Missouri. Heather's maid of honor was classmate **Nicole Boyer '00** and one of Joe's groomsmen was **Gabe Kea '97**.

02 **Ashley Wibbenmeyer** Edwards and **Brian Edwards '00** celebrated their first wedding anniversary on

October 5, 2014. They were married at Central Presbyterian Church, and the wedding party included alumni **Cara Matteuzzi**, **Molly Fehlig**, **Allison Stanford** Kruse,



Ben Stanfield '99, and **John Biebel '00**. The couple reside in Clayton, Missouri.



Chrisilla Chard Fitzsimmons and her husband John joyfully welcomed daughter Alex Sandra in April.

03 **Joe Bubenik** published his first book in late autumn



2013. *Believer* is a Christmas story that follows the life of an orphan named Francis. Westminster teacher **L.B. Graham** was instrumental in the editing process.

Heather Haas Spanogle and her husband Jeff welcomed daughter Lydia Mae, granddaughter of Junia and **David Haas**.



Kris Johnson and his wife Yelena welcomed their first child Juliette Ellie on May 8, 2014. They live in Orange County, California, where Kris is a contract administrator in supplier management for the Boeing Company in Long Beach and Yelena runs a salon in San Clemente.



Wildcats in D.C.



Alumni in the Washington, D.C. area gathered at Old Ebbitt Grill to catch up with old friends and meet Westminster's 2014 *We the People* team before it represented Missouri for the 14th time in the national competition. Alumni pictured: **Kevin Goldfarb '10**, **Alex Langley '11**, **Sarah Moore '07**, **Anna Sugg '08**, **Morgan Koetting '14**, **Steve Lauer '89**, **Michael Gerson '82**, **Ashley Reinecke '03**, and **Dawn Miller Gerson '82**

04 **Emily Roig** raps in her new video "Go," produced by **Mike Rohlfig '05** and filmed in Westminster's Theatre.



Emily moved to Nashville this fall to focus on her music career. ▶



Jon Wilkinson and his wife Linda welcomed Robert Charles (Charlie) on February 15, 2014.

This fall, **Michelle Scott** MacFarlane and husband Simon celebrated the birth of their second child Titus Creed, grandson of Westminster teacher **Helen Scott**.



05 **Jeff Christianson** recently completed his PhD in Theoretical Physical Chemistry at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He and his wife Megan (Schmidt) moved to Elkton, Maryland, where Jeff has begun a post-doctoral research position at the Catalysis Center for Energy Innovation at the University of Delaware.

Emily Ottsen and Jerry Weber of Evansville, Indiana, are engaged to be married in November

2014. Emily is the tennis coach at CBC in St. Louis and a local tennis teaching pro.



Charles Minnick and **Megan Valli** were married on June 14, 2014, at Central Presbyterian Church. The wedding party included **Michael Seiter**, **Jeff Glidewell**, **Andrew Wittmaier**, and **Dominick Valli '08** (not pictured). **Ian Farmer '11**, **Patrick Farmer '13**, **Harrison Farmer '15**, and **Mitchell Farmer '19** were ushers.

Mike Rohlfig married Westminster teacher **Mallory Scholten** on June 7, 2014 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The wedding party included



David Rohlfig '12, **Matt Rohlfig '08**, **Daniel Hoover**, **John Powell**, and **Emily Roig '04**.

For the 10th consecutive year, **Mike Rohlfig** led a team in the St. Louis 48-Hour Film Project. Their movie EVT starring senior **Harrison Farmer** won Audience Choice (eighth year running), Best Sound Design, Best Graphics, and Best Film of St. Louis (second year in a row). In the spring, the movie will compete against the 120+ other 48-Hour Film Project city winners from around the world in Los Angeles. Everything was

created, written, shot, and edited within a 48-hour time period using mandatory elements revealed at the start of the competition. The film also won Best Short Film at the St. Louis Filmmakers Showcase in July and was featured on an episode of Cityscape on St. Louis Public Radio. Other alumni who participated include **Alex Docekal '07**, **Harrison Farmer '15**, **Daniel Hoover '05**, **Luke McGowan '06**, **Justen Beasley '07**, **Bill Bubenik '07**, **Maggie Massot Bubenik '07**, **Drew Port '15**, **Dustin Reppell '00**, **Garrett Henry '06**, and **Sarah Haas '04**. ▶



Amy Oberle Schirmer and her husband Ben welcomed twin girls Elizabeth (Ellie) Mae and Emma Ray in July 2014.



06 **Kat Bear** and **Adam Brown** were married on September 13 at Graham Chapel in St. Louis. **Christi Bear** Provost '98 was the matron of honor and **Matthew Bear '02** was a groomsman. **Amanda Renaud** Lewis '06 and **Sarah McReynolds** Frick '06 were readers during the ceremony. The couple reside in New York City where Kat works as an account supervisor



Oh FOUR!



The Class of 2004 celebrated their 10-year reunion at The Four Seasons Hotel in Downtown St. Louis. From Left: **Lauren Steingrub** Tillman, **Scott West**, **JoBeth Black**, **Fredo Derazin**, **Crystal Beasley** O'Malley; **Whitney Bond**, **Whitney Mooney** Allen, **Caroline Gamache** Howard; **Amy Pierce** Auman, **Lane Anderson** Koch, **Whitney Bond**, and **Liz Forkin** Bohannon.

CLASS NOTES

at Ogilvy & Mather Advertising on the Tiffany & Co. account. Adam is an underwriter at the insurance company ACE USA.

07 Rachel Wisdom's first novel *A Shopkeeper's Daughter* was published by a division of Thomas Nelson in March. The book is based on the true story of a young woman who fell in love with the Crown Prince of Norway in the 1960s.



Garen Lafser and Hank Hicks work together at a solar energy company called Energistics. They recently launched a small-scale product called



GridUp – a portable solar charger that can charge a phone, tablet, or any other USB device. Search GridUp on Facebook for more information.

08 Paul Friz graduated from Truman State University in 2012 with a B.S. in physics and graduated from Missouri S&T in 2014 with a M.S. in aerospace engineering. He is currently interning at the NASA Jet Propulsion Lab in Pasadena, California. There he is working with the Rosetta spacecraft, which was built by the European Space Agency and has been traveling to comet 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko for the past 10 years. In November 2014, the lander Philae will detach from Rosetta and, if successful, become the first spacecraft to land on a comet.



Dominick Valli and wife Danielle recently welcomed son Nolan William.

Sam Stufflebam married Catherine Klotz on June 21, 2014, at Central Presbyterian Church. Sam and Catherine live in Clayton where Sam is a financial advisor for Edward Jones. Catherine is a P.E. teacher at Kirk Day



School. Sam graduated from Taylor University and Catherine from Samford University. Catherine also works with the Micah Project in Honduras and traveled there this fall with several other Westminster alumni.

09 Adam Miller attended Colorado State University where he conducted research that combined biology, economics, and development to create win-win solutions for both humans and nature. After he graduated with honors with a B.S. in fish, wildlife, and conservation biology, he was selected for the Fulbright Fellowship program to go to Indonesia. Adam was one of four students from CSU to ever be selected for Fulbright, a prestigious merit-based exchange program run by the U.S. Department of State. While there, he taught English in a high school and ran environmental outreach programs that focused on building leadership and analytical skills through conservation learning for Indonesian high school students.



As a direct result, Adam founded Planet Indonesia, a nonprofit dedicated to the conservation of Indonesia's ecosystems and communities fostering sustainable relationships among people, economies, and the natural world. The organization creates and supports local initiatives that integrate development with conservation science by balancing human livelihoods with ecological outcomes. Adam is now looking to align this organization with research and activism generated through his doctorate work in ecology and environmental science. www.planetindonesia.org



MLB pitcher Jacob Turner signed with the Chicago Cubs in late summer 2014. Jacob credits St. Louis Cardinals Manager Mike Matheny with mentoring him throughout his career. ▶

Earlier this summer Ben Becker appeared on CNBC's Retail Investor Roundtable segment. ▶

SLU athletic training student Ju Kim is back at Westminster for his clinicals. His preceptor is SLU MAT alum and Westminster athletic trainer Hillary Orf.



10 Elizabeth Korb helped organize "Wōmen: Contemporary Chinese Art" last year as one of the Mildred Lane Kemper Art Museum's inaugural Greenberg Curatorial Fellows. "We wanted to explore sociopolitical themes that speak both to Chinese society and to our broader globalized culture," says Korb, a senior communications design major in the Sam Fox School of Design & Visual Arts who helped curate the exhibition. ▶



In summer 2014, J.D. Hartwig and two friends completed a 3,300-mile cross-country bike ride to raise \$50,000 to build a school in Mt. Olivos, Honduras. Their project Riding with a Reason is in partnership with 147 Million Orphans, a nonprofit organization that delivers food, water, and supplies. The team began its ride in Oceanside, Oregon, and ended in Washington, D.C. They rode six days a week for four to six hours, traveling between 65 and 75 miles per day. ▶

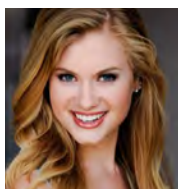


Madison Nye was a member of The Entrepreneurial Action Us (Enactus) chapter at Texas State University. Her chapter, a business organization that helps entrepreneurs, charities, and startups with their business plans, was named national champion at the 2014 Enactus U.S. National Exposition held in Cincinnati, Ohio. The team won out from a field of regional champion teams representing more than 200 colleges and universities. Texas State advanced to represent

the United States at the 2014 Enactus World Cup in Beijing, China, in October.

Alex Cusumano started his summer 2014 golf season with a second-place finish in the Old Warson Cup. ▶

In the spring, **Danielle Pfyl** earned Offensive Player of the Week honors from The National Women's Lacrosse League. The then-Missouri-Baptist-senior received the honors while leading her team to a 17-4 victory over Fontbonne University with nine goals and two assists in the win.



Madison Burke is an anchor and producer for the international news outlet Newsy, which produces videos for AOL, MSN, Time Magazine, and E.W. Scripps media outlets in addition to its own site. She previously worked as a local news reporter for KMIZ out of Columbia/Jefferson City and was recently featured in the *Washington Free Beacon*. ▶

David Alexander and Southwest Airlines partnered to celebrate National Dance Day. Check out his blogpost and video. ▶



Johnny Kehr and his wife Rachel were married in summer 2014. Friend and classmate **Forrest Hughes** beautifully captured their special day on video and film. ▶

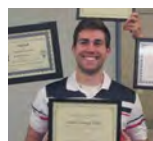


The 2009 Wildcat football team was on the front lines as **Karlton Smith** married **Shaylynn Weststeyn** on July 25, 2014. The wedding party included **Rebecca Zandstra**, **Suzanne Weston**, **Kelly Penning**, **Harrison Smith '07**, **J.D. Hartwig**, **John Bergman**, **Eric Levenhagen**, **Max Piazza**, **Landon Burke '12**, **Justin Weststeyn '09**, and **Trevor Weststeyn '16**. ▶

Richard Copeland and **Ryan Allee '11** recently released a video from RnR Music. ▶

11

Mike Hall was recently named as the Resident Assistant of the



Year by the National Residential Hall Honorary and Missouri S&T. He also received Program of the Year award from the Quadrangle Hall Association and was named a Programming Hall of Fame inductee by the Missouri S&T Department of Residential Life. Mike is currently a junior pursuing a degree in engineering management.



Kelsey Kindbom was on the homecoming court at the The University of Tulsa this fall.

Ryan Allee and **Richard Copeland '10** and recently released a video from RnR Music. ▶

Daniel Everett was the anchor leg of Columbia University's distance medley relay team at the NCAA Division I indoor track and field meet in March. His team finished fifth overall and was awarded All-American status.

12 **Tate Matheny** played on the USA Baseball Collegiate National Team, which played both on the East Coast and in the Netherlands and Cuba. He was also named to the American Baseball Coaches Association (ABCA) All-Midwest Region squad after having an outstanding season in the Missouri Valley Conference and was voted the Missouri State Bears' MVP for 2014. ▶

Evan Miller and **James Hoekzema '13** received academic achievement awards at the Missouri University of Science and Technology, Computer Science Annual Awards Banquet for earning a 4.0 GPA. They were two of 13 undergraduate students receiving the award. Evan was also awarded a Computer Science Alumni Scholarship at the event. ▶

Jonathan Bopp, mechanical engineering major at Missouri S&T, was a second-year member of the Mars Rover Design Team. He spent most of his spare time in the Student Design and Experiential Learning Center working to perfect the next Mars Rover.



We love having alumni join us for the Andy Benes Golf Tournament! From left: **Drew Benes '07**, **Jeff Ehrhardt '06**, **Shane Benes '14**, **Nick George '14**, **Claire Kopsky '14**, **Sam Bettlach '14**.



Several alumni played key roles when Promise Christian Academy purchased 4.5 acres of property this year: **Meredith Wiggers Heintz '89**, **Laura Siedhoff Wagener '94**, **Doug Hickel '95**, and **Ben Stegmann '03**.



It's always fun to see alumni together! Kappa Alpha Theta sorority members and pledges at The University of Tulsa: **Kaylie Duke '13**, **Rachael Gantner '12**, **Maddie Ottsen '14**, **Rebecca Krause '12**, **Kelsey Kindbom '11**, and **Jenni Jurgenson '14**.

CLASS NOTES

Former Westminster golfer **Matt Brugner** founded the Baylor Club Golf team during his freshman year at Baylor University; the team recently won the National Club Championship. Matt also caddied for Mariah Stackhouse and Team USA in the 2014 Curtis Cup, a tournament hosted by the USGA and LGU that pits the best women amateur golfers from United States against the best from Great Britain and Ireland. ▶

Connor Einertson was named the North Coast Athletic Conference Player of the Week this past year.

13 **James Hoekzema and Evan Miller '12** received academic achievement awards at the Missouri University of Science

and Technology, Computer Science Annual Awards Banquet for earning a 4.0 GPA. They were two of 13 undergraduate students receiving the award. Evan was also awarded a Computer Science Alumni Scholarship at the event.

Brooke Cusumano led the Missouri Women's Amateur Championship in Kansas City after the first of three rounds when she scored a 1-under 71. ▶

Brianna DeGroot shares how our robotics program inspired her to become an engineer. "[Westminster's program] is the only reason I went to [Missouri] S&T and why I have really been interested in engineering." ▶



Bennett Lewis, sophomore at Washington and Lee University, was a place-winner at the NCAA East Regional wrestling tournament hosted by King's College in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and was recognized by the NCAA as an Academic All-American Athlete during his freshman year. Bennett placed fifth for the Generals in the 197-pound weight class and was only one win away from advancing to the NCAA championships. He finished his rookie season with a 21-10 record.

We encourage our alumni to visit our campus, participate in school events, update contact information, and keep us informed! Contact us at alumni@wcastl.org.



SHARE YOUR PHOTOS

Email us photos from when you were a student so we can share them on our alumni Facebook page, Twitter, and Instagram on Throwback Thursday!

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Bird's Eye View



Photo by junior Hannah Vitiello

Even while on summer break, junior Hannah Vitiello applied lessons from Lara Goeke's photography class to her personal images by incorporating principles of composition, lighting, and artistry. Hannah captured this photo of a hummingbird while vacationing in Vail, Colorado. "I was waiting for a bus to arrive and had time on my hands, so I decided to snap some photos of hummingbirds that were flying around a nearby feeder," says Hannah. "I took pictures of all the birds for nearly half an hour and managed to get this shot as one of them rested on a branch. I happened to be in the right place at just the right time."

