

# CONNECTIONS



ISSUE SEVENTEEN | 2024





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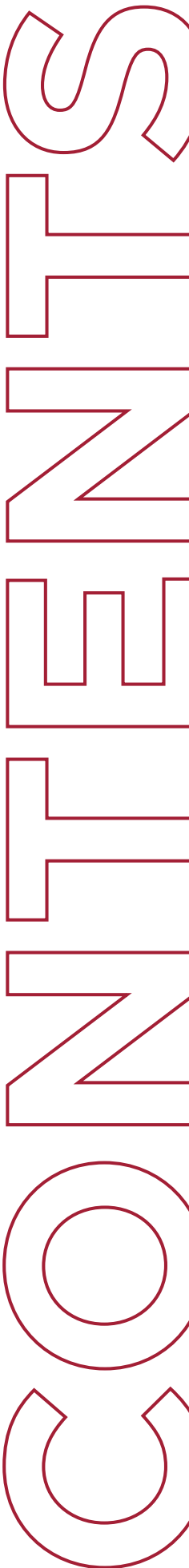
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Dear LCDS Community,

Welcome to the latest edition of *Connections*! Every school year brings so many joyful and exciting developments on campus, and 2023-'24 was certainly no exception. In addition to the countless achievements of our students, we as a community can look back with pride at a critically important accomplishment, the adoption, in October of 2023, of our Vision, Mission, and Values (see the opposite page for a complete version of these statements). This crucial first step in our ongoing strategic planning process benefitted from hundreds of our faculty, staff, students, families, alumni, and friends of the school, who responded to our requests for insights and observations about their past experiences at LCDS and their hopes and ambitions for our future.

With these guiding documents in place, we've been working diligently to assemble a strategic plan that will shape our development in the years ahead. This effort took a meaningful step forward with the help of the more than one hundred community members who gathered at our Community Design Day in April to hear and respond to the initial ideas generated by our planning teams. Armed with this feedback, these teams will now hone their thinking and continue working to create a plan for approval by the school's Board of Trustees later this year, a plan that will continue Country Day's tradition of outstanding academic preparation alongside powerful personal development.

Our school-wide theme for this past year was belonging; the B in the acronymous BRICKS of our Values statement. Knowing the importance of this quality in fostering emotional, physical, and academic well-being, we explored the extent to which students, families, and employees feel valued and embraced by our community, and asked ourselves how we can enhance that feeling in the future.

The kind of deeply-seated relationships that promote a sense of belonging are reflected in this issue of *Connections* which includes faculty and alumni profiles highlighting the strong ties that bind our students and teachers even long after diplomas have been awarded.

You'll also find photos and descriptions of last fall's Alumni Weekend. Needless to say, we'll do it all again in just a few months, as we joyously welcome all our graduates back to campus on September 27 and 28, 2024. In what we hope will be a new tradition, Alumni Weekend will coincide with Homecoming Weekend for students, which will give you the opportunity to see current school life in full swing, with a variety of athletic contests and student activities as part of your visit. Stay tuned for more details.

Finally, I hope that you will reach out if you have any questions or observations, or are in town and would like to stop by the campus. You're always welcome back home on Hamilton Road!

Best wishes,



Matthew W. Micciche  
Head of School



## VISION

Inspiring the students of today to build a better tomorrow.

## MISSION

We empower students to explore their passions, find purpose, and become the best versions of themselves.

## VALUES

Our Bricks:

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**B**ELONGING  
**R**ESPECT  
**I**NTEGRITY  
**C**OMMUNITY  
**K**INDESS  
**S**CHOLARSHIP



# First

## DAY OF SCHOOL

The first day of school started with a welcome from Cuddles the Cougar and Head of School Mr. Micciche, and included the traditional parade of our kindergarten and senior buddies, followed by the whole school processing by grade and a welcome from the Student Government Co-Presidents, Seniors Margaret Heim and Alexa Thomas, that this year also included a rousing rendition of “Take Me Home, Country Day” (with apologies to John Denver) by Mr. Micciche. The morning highlights what makes LCDS so special: we are one school under one roof.

## All-School Picnic & Spirit Week



# HALLOWEEN

## PARADE & FESTIVAL

A collage of photos from a Halloween Festival. The top left features a text box with a white background and black text. The collage includes: a family with a girl in a unicorn costume, a boy in a skeleton mask, and a girl in a white ghost costume; a boy in a skeleton hoodie and orange glasses; a girl in a red witch costume and a boy in a black and white striped costume with a green wig; a group of students in lion, cheetah, and tiger costumes; a group of adults, including one holding a large cookie prop; two students in yellow and green hooded costumes; and a group of three young girls in various costumes. The background of the collage shows a busy school hallway with other students and decorations.

Did you even really go to LCDS if you weren't scared (or doing the scaring) at the Halloween Festival haunted house? This year's Halloween parade, which now has the seniors and their kindergarten buddies working together on coordinating costumes, was followed by the spooky return of the Halloween Festival. Its Haunted Hotel was a must-visit for anyone brave enough to check in.

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# 8th Grade Trip PUERTO RICO

The 8th grade trip to Puerto Rico has become a wonderful addition to our Middle School program. Over this year's spring break, our students learned so much during their time on the island — about the native Taino people, how to salsa, the impact of tourism on the environment, the importance of mangroves for the ecology, how to surf, about the bioluminescence in the bays, and more. Equally as important as the learning opportunities on the trip, each student also gained independence and grew their confidence as they tried new foods, made new friends, and pushed themselves out of their comfort zones in a safe and supportive environment. It was wonderful to see all of that happen during our week in Puerto Rico.

— Jennifer Brubaker, Global Programs Coordinator  
& Middle School Language Faculty

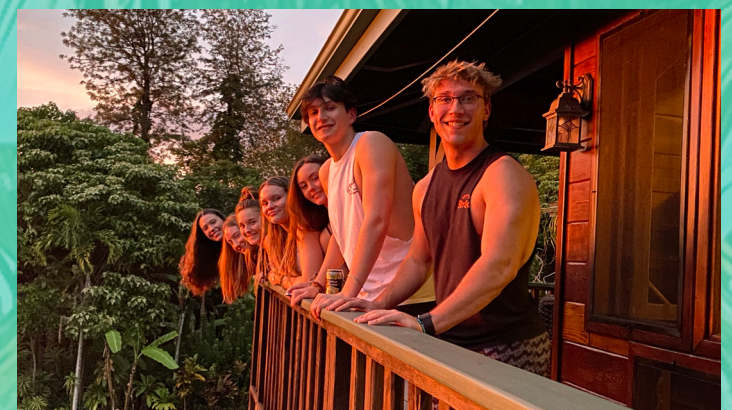


# Science of HAWAII

For the seventh time, 14 Juniors and Seniors (chaperoned by three teachers) spent their spring break traveling to the Big Island of Hawaii, as a part of our Science of Hawaii Upper School course. Together, we explored the landscape and waters of the island, via three rental vans driven by our teachers. Our adventures took us to the tropical side of the island to explore waterfalls, river valleys, and rainforest, as well as to shop in the Hilo farmers' market. We explored the trails of Volcanoes National Park, walking alongside ancient petroglyphs carved into lava flows, observing how alternating layers of pahoehoe and a'a flows shape the slopes of Kilauea.

Students also spent many hours on the shores of Hawaii, snorkeling and exploring the reefs. We had the opportunity to kayak over Kealahou Bay's deep waters to one of Hawaii's more remote reefs. We swam with turtles at Two Step reef - and in many other places - and toured Pu'uuhonua O Hōnaunau National Historical Park to learn about the sacred sight. Perhaps the most exciting experience during a week chock full of excitement: The class spent an evening traveling to Manta Ray Cove to snorkel with reef manta rays. Some of our students even scuba dove to see the mantas from below. At the end of each day, our group would return to our rental house to enjoy home-cooked family-style meals together, overlooking the sunset on the slopes of Hualalai Volcano. It was an unforgettable trip, leaving us with plenty of memories to take home with us.

— Ned Bushong, Middle School Science  
& Science of Hawaii Faculty





# "...and justice for all?"

This year’s theme in the LCDS Theatre Company was a definite departure from last year’s season. Our learners had a phenomenal year exploring some of the sources of injustice in Western society. We explored the instruments of injustice in religion, government, and law.

As a performing arts educator, I found it incredibly edifying to watch our students, cast, and crew tackle such substantial work, especially with more dramatic titles. The freshman class had historic participation numbers; I’m so excited to see how our program grows and evolves as part of the LCDS school community in the coming school year and beyond!

—Steffan D. K. Bomberger, LCDS Theater Director



## The Greek Mythology Olympiaganza

– by Don Zolidis

Two battling narrators attempt to cover the entirety of Greek mythology using audience participation, famous — as well as more obscure — stories, and general theatrical insanity.



## The Sound of Music

– by Richard Rogers and Oscar Hammerstein II

The final collaboration between Rodgers & Hammerstein was destined to become the world’s most beloved musical. Featuring a trove of cherished songs, including “Climb Ev’ry Mountain,” “My Favorite Things,” “Do-Re-Mi,” “Sixteen Going on Seventeen,” and its titular number, *The Sound of Music* won the hearts of audiences worldwide.







12 Angry Jurors

A 19-year-old man has just stood trial for the fatal stabbing of his father. "He doesn't stand a chance," mutters the guard as the 12 jurors are taken into the bleak jury room. It looks like an open-and-shut case—until one of the jurors begins opening the others' eyes to the facts.





GIRLS' SOCCER

The girls soccer team endured a season filled with injuries and other obstacles. They finished with an overall record of 1-15. The lineup featured a number of 9th grade and first-year players who gained valuable playing experience in a competitive Lancaster Lebanon League Section 4. Offensively, **Chloe Flatt '25** led the team with six goals, while **McKenna Kraft '25** had 92 saves in goal. With only one senior on the roster, the future looks bright for the Cougars.



GIRLS' TENNIS

For the second consecutive year, the girls' tennis team finished their regular season undefeated (13-0) and captured the Lancaster Lebanon League Section 3 Title (8-0). In the postseason, the Cougars lost to Hempfield, the eventual champion, in the L-L League Team Semifinals, and successfully defended its District 3 Class AA Team Title with a convincing 5-0 win over Berks Catholic. In the PIAA Class AA State Team Tournament, LCDS defeated a strong team from Hughesville (4-1) in the first round, but could not get past Cathedral Prep in the PIAA State Class AA Team Quarterfinals, losing 3-1. The Cougars ended the season with an impressive overall record of 17-2.

Playing #1 singles, **Sienna Castelli '26** finished the season with an overall individual record of 23-2, captured the L-L League AA Singles title for the second consecutive year, and teamed with **Sophia Babar '25** to win the L-L League AA Doubles title. Babar finished the season with an overall record of 19-3 playing #2 singles. Castelli and Babar finished 2nd and 3rd, respectively in the District 3 Class AA Singles Tournament. The doubles team of **Delanie Edwards '24** and **Monica Lopez '25** finished 3rd at the District 3 Class AA Doubles Tournament. All four players qualified for the PIAA Class AA State Singles & Doubles Tournaments, a first in program history.



GOLF

After losing most of the team to graduation, Head Golf Coaches Ty Book and Brian Kramp took a different approach to the 2023 season and decided to focus on player recruitment and development. A total of 11 students registered for the team, some of whom had no previous golfing experience. The coaches were able to give players individualized attention at practices, which resulted in robust improvement over the course of the season. A few players were able to participate in L-L League Section 4 matches, and the team posted an overall record of 7-18. More important than the wins and losses, however, is the investment made in the future of the program.



BOYS' SOCCER

The boys soccer team finished their regular season with an overall record of 3-13, 2-9 in Lancaster-Lebanon League Section 4 (5th place). Offensively, the Cougars were paced by **Nehemiah Smith '25** (12 goals, three assists), **Jeremy Ouilikon '25** (eight goals, three assists), and **Julian Colino '26** (five goals, three assists). **Ben Sponaugle '25** had 117 saves in goal.



FIELD HOCKEY

The field hockey team had one of the most successful seasons in school history, finishing their regular season with an overall record of 16-1, 9-1 in L-L League Section 4 (tied for 1st). Thanks to an epic 3-2 OT victory over Annville-Cleona late in the season, the Cougars earned the first League Section title in program history. In another program first, LCDS qualified for the L-L League playoffs, where they ultimately lost to Manheim Central in the quarterfinals. The Cougars also qualified for the District 3 Class A tournament, but lost in the first round to Annville-Cleona. They ended the season with an overall record of 16-3.

Offensively, the Cougars were led by **Anna Fisher '26** (37 goals, 13 assists), **Margaret Heim '24** (16 goals, 13 assists), and **Cara Costello '25** (13 goals, four assists). **Carolina Lang '25** was stellar in goal with three shut-outs and save rates of 82-percent (league games) and 77-percent (all games). **Amelia Woodard '24** and **Nina Wiggins '25** anchored a strong defensive unit that only gave up 35 goals throughout the season.



J.P. MCCASKEY CROSS COUNTRY

The McCaskey Boys' Cross Country Team finished their regular season with an overall record of 2-5 (tied for fifth place in L-L League Section 1). **Max Wiggins '24** and **Seth Carter '25** qualified for the District 3 Championships.

The McCaskey Girls' Cross Country Team finished the regular season with an overall record of 4-3 (tied for third place L-L League Section 1). At the L-L League XC Championships, **Gabby Thiry '24** placed 3rd overall and helped the Tornadoes to a second place finish. Thiry earned a medal with an 11th place finish (19:23.3) at the District 3 XC Championships, and was the second highest Lancaster Lebanon League finisher (44th) at the PIAA State Championships with a time of 19:56.



LCBS GIRLS' VOLLEYBALL

The Lancaster Catholic High School girls' volleyball team finished their regular season with an overall record of 10-4, 9-3 in L-L League Section 3 (tied second place). The Crusaders qualified for the L-L League playoffs, and lost to Section 2 champion Ephrata in the quarterfinals. In the District 3 Class AA tournament, LCHS earned the #5 seed, but lost to Bermudian Springs (#4 seed) in the quarterfinals to end the season 10-6.





BOYS' BASKETBALL

With only one starter returning, no seniors on the roster, and no one taller than 6'1", the boys' basketball team was in complete rebuild mode as they approached the 2023-24 season. Despite these obstacles to start the season, the Cougars found their new identity and made history with a magical postseason run.

After finishing the regular season with an overall record of 14-8, 4-4 in Lancaster Lebanon League Section 4, the Cougars entered the District 3 Class A Tournament as the #2 seeded team. After a disappointing loss to High Point in the Quarterfinals (61-56), the team moved to the consolation bracket and managed to stave off elimination twice, including a resounding 49-39 victory over La Academia — a team that beat the LCDS by 30 points earlier in the season — to finish in 5th place and qualify for the PIAA State Tournament.

In the opening round of the state playoffs, the Cougars stunned District 11 Champion Notre Dame - East Stroudsburg (41-33) and District 1 Runner Up Phil-Mont Christian (56-43) in the second round to advance to the Elite Eight for the first time in school history. The clock struck midnight in PIAA State Quarterfinals with a loss to District 6 Champion Berlin Brothers Valley (75-48). The Cougars ended the season with a record of 18-10.

**Chris Dukes '25** (17.3 ppg) and **Jordan Ashby '26** (14.5 ppg) led an unselfish and balanced attack that made 169 three point shots during the season (6 per game). **Jeremy Ouilikon '25** (7.9 ppg) was steady and efficient at the point guard position. The Cougars also received valuable contributions from **Ben Sponaule '25** (5.8), **Kane Kirby '26** (6.4 ppg), and **Cam Harris '27** (5.3 ppg) on both ends of the floor. With no seniors on the roster, the future continues to look bright for the program.

J.P. MCCASKEY BOWLING

The JPM bowling team finished the regular season with an overall record of 15-83, 10-81 in a talent-laden Lancaster Lebanon League Section 1.

J.P. MCCASKEY SWIMMING

The JPM boys' swimming team finished the season with an overall record of 4-6, 2-3 in Lancaster Lebanon League Section 1. In his first season with the program, **Luke Horvat '24** made valuable contributions each meet in a multitude of events.

The girls' swimming team finished the season with an overall record of 3-7, 0-5 in Lancaster Lebanon League Section 1. **Keira Alhadeff '25**, **Kaylina Bansal '26**, **McKenna Kraft '25**, **Lennon Krista '27**, **Evelyn Westbrook '24**, and **Amelia Woodard '24** all played integral roles for the Red Tornado. At the L-L League Championships, Woodard earned a trip to the medal stand in the 200 Free (7th) and teamed with fellow Cougars Alhadeff, Bansal, and Kraft to place 7th in the 400 Free Relay. Alhadeff placed 9th in the 100 Fly and 100 Back and qualified for the District 3 Championships in both events.



GIRLS' BASKETBALL

The girls' basketball program also entered the 2023-24 season in rebuilding mode after losing two seniors, including All-State Guard Genesis Meadows '23 and her 1,609 points. With three starters returning from last year's 15-7 team, the cupboard was not bare for first year Head Coach Fernando Sanchez. Thanks to four first year players, two transfers, and one exchange student, the Cougars carried a healthy roster of thirteen players, and finished the regular season with an overall record of 10-11, 6-6 in Lancaster Lebanon League Section 4 (4th place) and qualified for the postseason.

As the #3-seed in the District 3 Class AA Tournament, the Cougars knocked off #2-seed Lancaster Mennonite 34-33 in the semifinals and advanced to the championship game vs. top-seeded Millersburg, held at the Giant Center in Hershey. The LCDS community came out in droves to support the upset-minded Cougars, who battled until the final buzzer, but lost 46-28. (LCDS qualified for the PIAA State Tournament, but opted out due to the lack of healthy and eligible players due to injuries and school trips over spring break.)

Offensively, the Cougars were led by **Sophia Sanchez '25**, who averaged 18.3 ppg and made an astounding 66 three-pointers in 23 games. Other players who made valuable contributions were **Bella Lewis '24**, **Alexa Thomas '24**, **Chloe Flatt '25**, **Rebecca MacKinnon '25**, and **Emma Trout '25**.

VARSITY SQUASH

The boys' squash season began with the realization that many players had graduated the last two years, so this year would be about rebuilding. As the only senior, **Daniel Sigmund '24** stepped up to the task and captained the squad to a record of 1-14 while personally going 4-0 at Nationals at the #1 spot (with three of the team losses at Nationals ending with the score of 3-4). The squad included newcomers such as **Cole Gable '26**, **Nolan Toro '27**, **Nicholas Scepansky '27**, and **Dalton Groff '27**, and looks well-poised to continue with a large cohort of eighth grade boys looking to play next year, including **Dangiso Montemarano '28**, who played in the #3 roster spot this season.

The girls' squash team was also captained by a lone senior, **Margaret Heim '24**, and had many more players, despite the loss of Co-Captain **Natalie Drew '24** for the season (due to injury). Due to a large number of juniors around the same level, there was consistency throughout the starting lineup, and the team finished the season with an overall record 5-8. At Squash Nationals in Philadelphia, the girls' team posted a 2-2 record, including a thrilling 4-3 victory over Hewitt from New York City. **Lily Fisher '28** went 4-0 playing at the #5 spot in the lineup at Nationals for the Upper School girls team. The girls also look well-positioned for next year with many experienced players returning.





BOYS' TENNIS

After graduating two of the best players in program history, the boys' tennis team needed to fill a few holes in their lineup if they wanted to match the success they had seen over the past two years. The only certainty heading into the season was that the Cougars would have a proverbial target on their backs during each match. The Cougars finished the regular season with an overall record of 12-1 and 7-0 in league play to capture a 3rd consecutive Section 3 Title and L-L League Title, with wins over Cedar Crest in the semifinals (3-2) and Hempfield in the finals (3-1).

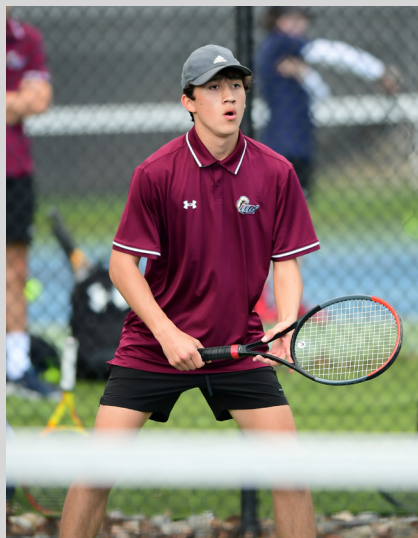
The Cougars entered the District 3 Class AA Team Tournament as the two-time defending Champion, and performed well, defeating Pequea Valley (5-0), Wyomissing (5-0), and Conrad Weiser (3-1), en route to a third consecutive title.

In the PIAA State Class AA Team Tournament, the Cougars were convincing in their opening round win over South Park (5-0) and faced Lewisburg, a formidable opponent in the quarterfinals. The Dragons came out of the gate on fire, but the Cougars weathered the storm and came away with a tremendous 3-1 team victory to advance to the semifinals, where they defeated Sewickley Academy 3-0. For the state championship match, the energy in the Hershey Racquet Club was palpable, and the Cougars put on an epic performance against Erie Cathedral Prep. Clutch wins from Gavin Georgelis at #3 singles and Ivan Bene/Andrew Yanero at #1 doubles tied the match at 2-2, and it all boiled down to #1 singles. Michael Georgelis slammed the door on the Ramblers with a three-set victory to clinch back-to-back state team titles; it was a poetic ending to another magical – and somewhat unexpected – postseason run.

The Cougars were led by singles players **Michael Georgelis '25**, **Carson Weigle '24**, and **Gavin Georgelis '26**, as well as doubles teams **Ivan Bene '25/Andrew Yanero '25** and **Carter Burkholder '26/Max Herr '25/Henry Wilcomes '25**. Michael Georgelis captured the L-L League Class AA Singles and Doubles titles, as well as the District 3 and PIAA State Championships en route to a perfect singles record on the season. Michael was the second Cougar in the past four years to win state gold (Abadir '21).

At the District 3 Class AA Doubles tournament, LCDS had two of the top four seeds with Carson Weigle/Gavin Georgelis earning the top seed and Ivan Bene/Andrew Yanero seeded third. Weigle/Georgelis reached the finals with three straight set victories, while Bene/Yanero knocked off the #2 seed from Wyomissing in the semifinals in a three-set thriller. In the final, Bene/Yanero captured the District 3 AA title after winning the first set 6-4 before the match was stopped due to medical injury.

At the PIAA Class AA Doubles Championships, Bene/Yanero won their opening round match 6-0, 6-2, but fell to the eventual state champion team in the quarterfinals (6-2, 5-7, 6-1) to finish the season with an overall record of 20-2.



GIRLS' LACROSSE

The girls' lacrosse team finished their regular season with an overall record of 3-15, 1-9 in L-L League Section 2. The Cougars were very young and inexperienced, but saw significant improvement over the course of the season under first year Head Coach Mike Chadwick. Kinzley Miller led the offense with 39 goals and 7 assists, and **Isabelle Perdomo '27** recorded 128 saves in goal. With a large number of freshmen receiving significant playing experience this year, the future looks bright for the girls' lacrosse team.

BOYS' LACROSSE

The boys' lacrosse team finished their regular season with an overall record of 6-12, 2-8 in L-L League Section 2 (5th place). **Connor McCaster '26** led the Cougars with 44 goals and 2 assists, while Oliver Tongel had 229 saves in goal.

MCCASKEY GIRLS' TRACK & FIELD

The J.P. McCaskey Girls' Track & Field team finished the regular season with an overall record of 6-0 and captured the Lancaster-Lebanon League Section 1 Title. In addition, the Tornado captured the L-L League Team Championship for an unprecedented 4th consecutive year, and successfully defended its District 3 AAA Team Title with convincing performances on the track and in the field. JPM placed 3rd at the PIAA State Championship Meet. **Gabby Thiry '24** and **Lilli King '24** played integral roles in the team's overall success.

MCCASKEY BOYS' TRACK & FIELD

The JPM Boys' Track & Field team finished the regular season with an overall record of 6-0 and captured the Lancaster Lebanon Section 1 Title. The Red Tornado placed 3rd at the L-L League Championship Meet.

MCCASKEY BASEBALL

The JPM Baseball team finished their regular season with an overall record of 2-18, 0-15 in Lancaster-Lebanon League Section 1 (6th place).







# Jonathan B. Snively '98

Jonathan B. Snively '98 has been deeply interested in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics since his days as a student at Country Day. That love of science, he says, was nurtured by his time as a member of the school community from 5th through 12th grades.

We spoke to Snively about his work with NASA, his fond memories of '90s computer graphics, and the teachers who most impacted him during his years at LCDS.

## LCDS: JONATHAN, PLEASE TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR CAREER PATH.

**Jonathan Snively:** After college ('01, Elizabethtown College) in Engineering Physics, I started an MS in Electrical Engineering at Penn State with plans to study electromagnetics. In my first semester, there was a schedule conflict for a course on antennas, so I enrolled in two acoustics courses instead. When meeting with my research advisor, he asked "So, what courses are you taking?" and I confessed "Well, I'm taking two courses in acoustics..." And he was (surprisingly) thrilled, since he had a new grant to study acoustic-gravity waves above thunderstorms — which are much like waves in the ocean, but in a compressible atmosphere — and to develop a new numerical model to simulate them. I was immediately fascinated, and it became my MS thesis project and the basis for my PhD.

What I didn't realize then was that this early work would determine my career path for more than 20 years. After my PhD (2007), I started a Postdoc at Utah State University, where I worked with experimentalists — who are now leading the NASA Atmospheric Waves Experiment (AWE) mission that I am a Co-Investigator on — to create model simulations for the effects of waves and how they are observed in the mesosphere. And, in 2010, I started as faculty at Embry-

Riddle and began teaching and working with graduate students and colleagues to develop new projects in this research area. Since 2021, my work has been entirely focused on research in CSAR.

## IS THERE A MOMENT OR TWO FROM YOUR CAREER THAT YOU'RE ESPECIALLY PROUD OF? (BASED ON THE CAREER YOU'VE HAD, WE KNOW THAT THERE ARE LIKELY MANY!)

I am always pleased when our models predict new observations or help to explain data. In 2013, my colleague and I wrote two papers on low-frequency acoustic waves over thunderstorms and how they may be imaged in the Earth's airglow (~85-95 km altitude) or the ionosphere (~250 km altitude). A few weeks later, another group separately reported observations confirming some of the features we had simulated with our models, showing that acoustic and gravity waves could be mapped over severe weather using networks of Global Positioning System (GPS) receivers to measure their fluctuations in the ionosphere.

We were thrilled, but our simulations were slow and tedious. After a few more years and publications, our students began to test new applications for our models, including to simulate acoustic waves launched by earthquakes. As our work was becoming more realistic in agreement with data, I was thrilled to find support for a new project, working with a group of computational scientists to achieve much higher performance in models like ours, and with experimentalists to validate the models for a wider range of problems.

## WERE YOU ALWAYS INTERESTED IN THE STEM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING AND MATHEMATICS) FIELDS?

Absolutely! I was fascinated by science and technology, including its history. I enjoyed playing with radios, electronic kits, and photography. But a big moment for me was attending a computer camp around second grade, and learning to program in BASIC. I was obsessed, and later was grateful to attend other educational camps on computing or science locally at LCDS, North Museum, and Franklin & Marshall.

## DO YOU FEEL THAT YOUR TIME AT LCDS NURTURED YOUR LOVE OF SCIENCE AND LEARNING?

LCDS definitely nurtured my interests in science and computing. I really appreciated that AP CS courses were offered and, even beyond that, Mr. Wolf was happy to accommodate special topics and our odd requests.

While I enjoyed all of my science classes, it was finally in my senior year that I took Physics with Mr. Ringlein, and this really put things together. Physics seemed so intuitive, and this course is really what inspired me to pursue engineering rather than computer science in college. Over time, I realized that what I enjoyed most about computing was solving problems, so applying computational methods in physics became a natural career fit.

I am grateful that LCDS also provided great exposure in the arts and humanities, which I came to appreciate more and more over time. I remember learning how much effort and patience was required to write well (and to a



reasonable grade standard). And I loved being able to study computer art and photo editing, and help with the yearbook layout.

Some of the most rewarding parts of my job involve working with students and colleagues, to help present and communicate our group's work, to collaborate in diverse teams, and to think strategically about our impact and trajectory. All of this requires a broader perspective than in science and technology alone. I appreciate that LCDS provided an environment to support individual STEM interests, while also providing a compelling early exposure across the arts and humanities, which definitely helped to prepare me for both my college experience and my eventual career.

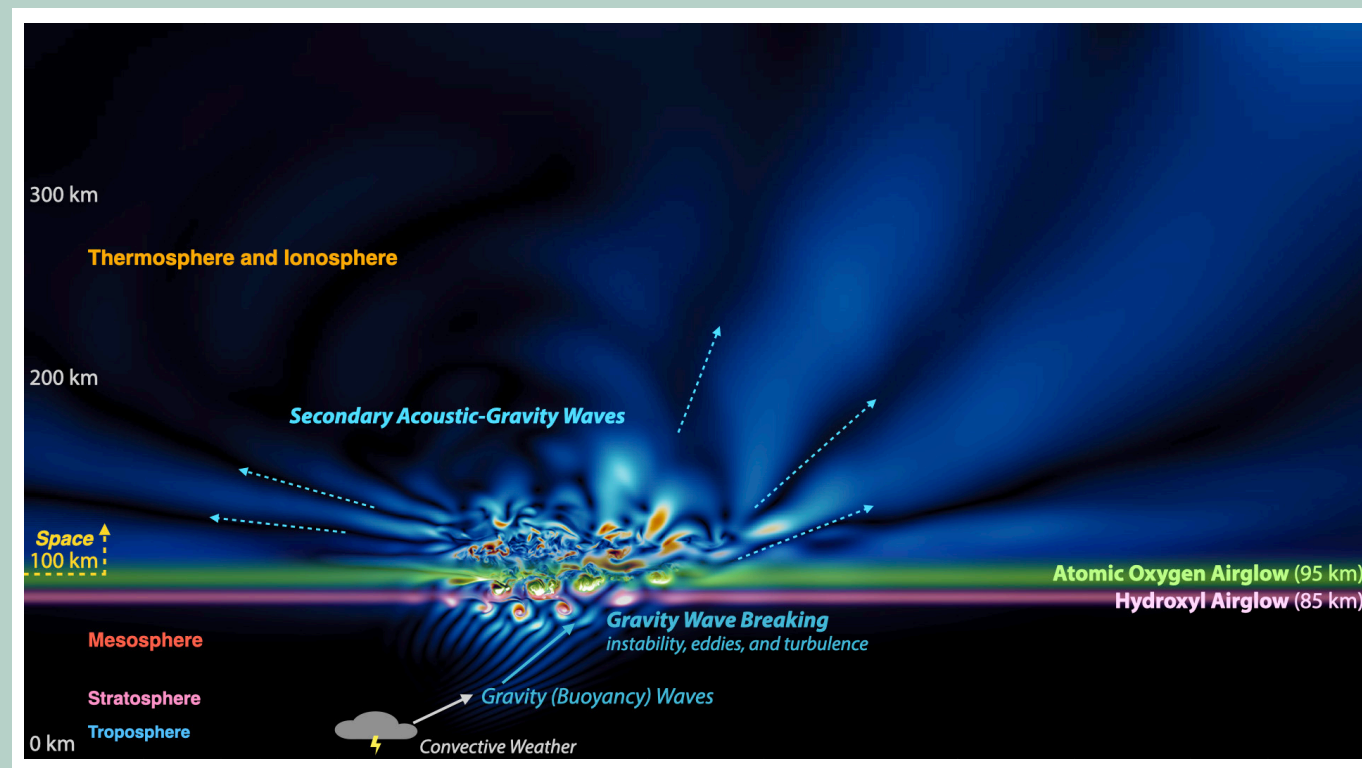
### DO YOU HAVE ANY SPECIFIC MEMORIES FROM YOUR TIME AT LCDS THAT HAVE STUCK WITH YOU?

This was the '90s, so we were all very interested in computer graphics and spent a lot of time learning about fractals, as numerical solutions can provide aesthetically-pleasing results. Working with Mr. Wolf and learning about mathematics with Mr. Tony, our team decided to code a Mandelbrot set Windows application in Borland C++, with graphical interface and an ability to zoom. The feeling of struggle while debugging – followed by the excitement of success – was exactly the same as I experience today while working towards new results!



### DESCRIPTION OF DIAGRAM: (Pictured below):

Similar to how ocean waves approaching a shore can steepen and break, atmospheric "gravity waves" can steepen and break as they enter the rarefied upper atmosphere. They are generated routinely by weather and sporadically by natural hazards, following disturbances of the atmosphere's balance maintained by buoyancy and gravity (with no relation to the "gravitational waves" of general relativity!). They cause fluctuations extending into space — in the thermosphere and ionosphere — and generate turbulence and "secondary" gravity waves. Simulating the effects of waves as they reach space, and how they are observed, is one goal of Jonathan Snively's models (demonstrated here). The blue color represents the magnitude of wind fluctuations caused by the waves.





# Eric Kneedler '91

Eric Kneedler '91 didn't anticipate that he would one day serve as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Rwanda. And yet – looking back – his path to this prestigious appointment was an excellent fit for the LCDS student who was interested in travel and loved learning about international affairs.

Ambassador Kneedler was appointed by President Joe Biden in August 2022, and the Senate confirmed his post one year later. We spoke to Kneedler about his impressive career and his memories of the time he spent at LCDS, from 3rd through 12th grades.

## LCDS: AMBASSADOR KNEEDLER, PLEASE TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOUR CAREER.

**Eric Kneedler:** I joined the Foreign Service in 1998 after finishing graduate school at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies. I entered as a political officer, which is one the five Foreign Service Generalist “cones,” or career tracks for Foreign Service Officers.

For my first assignment, the State Department sent me to Hong Kong via six months of Cantonese language training in Washington, D.C. Although I am a political coned officer, my job in Hong Kong was in

the Consular Section, which is the office at any American overseas Embassy or Consulate that handles visa issues and American Citizen Services, among other things. It was a really fantastic posting and, although I wasn't doing the political work I signed up to do yet, my wife and I got married there and enjoyed exploring Asia.

Next up we moved to Mauritius, where we had an Embassy at the time which covered Seychelles and Comoros. I traveled quite a bit in that job and covered economic, political, and consular issues for our Embassy across all three countries. My wife, Kristin, also joined the Foreign Service while we were there, and I peaked as an athlete by playing basketball for Real Port Louis – the two time Mauritius Basketball Association champs.

After Mauritius, we moved to D.C. for two years, where both of our kids were born. I worked for the State Department's 24/7 Operations Center for one year, before spending a year as a Staff Assistant in our Bureau of European Affairs.

After D.C., we moved to Indonesia for two years. I worked in the Political Section there with a job focused on understanding domestic Indonesian politics and putting things into context for Washington policymakers. Following Jakarta, we moved back to Washington for a year of Thai language training. We then headed back out to Southeast Asia for four years in Bangkok. I was the Deputy Chief of the Political Section in Thailand and had a job that was heavily focused on understanding domestic Thai politics. After Thailand, we moved

to the Philippines for four years, where I was the head of the Embassy Manila Political Section. All told, we lived in Southeast Asia for a total of ten years between 2006-2017 and loved every minute of it.

After a decade in Southeast Asia, we moved to Kenya for five years. I started there as the head of the Political Section, before moving into the Deputy Chief of Mission job. As the Deputy Chief of Mission, I moved away from covering political issues to a role somewhat akin to that of a Chief Operating Officer in the corporate world. After about a year and a half in that job, our Ambassador departed and I moved up into the Acting Ambassador job for the rest of my tour.

In August of 2022, President Biden nominated me to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Rwanda. I was confirmed by the Senate in August of 2023, and we moved to Kigali the following month.

## IS THERE A MOMENT OR TWO FROM YOUR CAREER THAT YOU'RE ESPECIALLY PROUD OF? (BASED ON THE CAREER YOU'VE HAD, WE KNOW THAT THERE ARE LIKELY MANY!)

This is a tough question. I've been really fortunate in the sense that I've enjoyed all the jobs that I've had. I've lived and worked in some of the most interesting places on the planet, and had the opportunity to work with great colleagues.

If I had to pick a highlight or two, I would probably start with my last assignment in Kenya, where I had a chance to be a part of an Embassy





team that helped elevate the U.S.-Kenya relationship to a strategic partnership level. It sounds a bit esoteric, but this was a big breakthrough in diplomatic terms and will likely translate into tangible things like more jobs for Kenyans and Americans in the long run.

I was also very privileged to be part of an Embassy Manila team that strengthened security ties between the U.S. and Philippines.

### **WERE YOU ALWAYS INTERESTED IN DIPLOMACY?**

My path to the Foreign Service was anything but linear, although in hindsight it perhaps looks a bit more logical and planned out than it really was. Growing up as a teenager, I loved reading about international affairs and had the travel bug, but never really considered a career in diplomacy.

I attended Pomona College, and it was during my junior year abroad in France that I first heard about the Foreign Service. I loved the idea of a career that would allow me to serve my country and see the world.

### **DO YOU HAVE ANY SPECIFIC MEMORIES FROM YOUR TIME AT LCDS THAT HAVE STUCK WITH YOU?**

I really feel like I hit the lottery attending LCDS — it was the perfect school for me. The class sizes were just right and the teachers provided a very supportive learning environment.

I'm grateful in particular to Wendy Puff

for teaching me how to write, to Fred Smedley for being a mentor and making school fun, as well as to Dale Mylin for pushing me to work hard and fueling the competitive fire. I also enjoyed playing sports year round and participating in student government.

Having said all that, the highlight was growing up with my classmates and building lifelong friendships. My friends from Country Day are more like family members than friends, and the older I get, the more I realize how fortunate I am in that regard.







# 2024

116TH COMMENCEMENT | CLASS OF 2024

Mina Rose **Achorn**  
Charlotte Isabel **Barbour**  
Jerome Victor **Benz III**  
Ashe Nathaniel **Bilder\***  
William Fortune **Calder\***  
Diego Miguel **Delahoz**  
Isabella Jordan **Deraco**  
Natalie Fracassi **Drew**  
Delanie Kate **Edwards**  
Michael Maximos **Hawthorne**  
Margaret Elizabeth **Heim\***  
Luke Michael **Horvat\***  
Jason **Huang**  
Marissa Ann **Jacobs\***

Nathaniel G. **Karwejna**  
Lillian Grace **King**  
Molly Jane **Kissane**  
Alfie Lisle **Koenig**  
Lucy Jeanne **Krista**  
Tobe Paul **Kuntz**  
Isabella Aja **Lewis**  
Paul Joseph **McGinley**  
Leah Lavonne **Parsons\***  
Jacob Joseph **Rodriguez**  
Vaneeza Ahmed **Sheikh**  
John Thomas **Showers\***  
Daniel Way **Sigmund\***  
Katherine Elizabeth **Slacik**

Miles A.S. **Straton**  
Erin Grace **Tate\***  
Olivia Louise **Taylor**  
Elise Heckendorn **Thiry**  
Gabrielle Emma **Thiry**  
Alexa Lilly **Thomas**  
Carson P. **Weigle**  
Evelyn Rose **Westbrook\***  
Maximilian Lisandro **Wiggins\***  
Larsen Eric **Wohlbiere\***  
Amelia Rose **Woodard\***  
Sarah Rebekah **Zeigler**

\* Indicates Lancaster Country Day School Lifer

## MEET THE CLASS OF 2024 AWARD RECIPIENTS



ELISE THIRY



ALEXA THOMAS



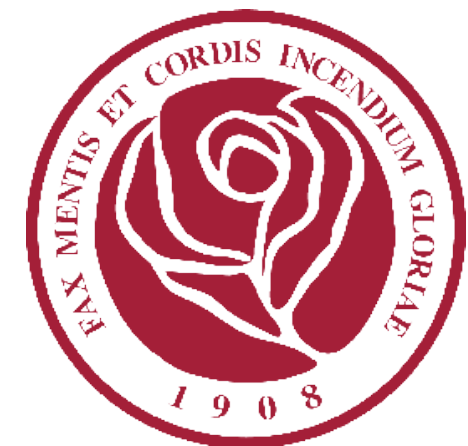
AMELIA WOODARD



MARGARET HEIM



SARAH ZEIGLER



### THE TRUSTEE PRIZE

#### ELISE THIRY

Awarded to the seniors with the highest grade point average.

### HEAD OF SCHOOL AWARD

#### ALEXA THOMAS

Presented annually by the Head of School, this award recognizes the seniors most deserving of special praise for exhibiting qualities such as leadership, school spirit, persistence, and civic virtue.

### ANN MUSSELMAN AWARD

#### SARAH ZEIGLER

Given in honor of Ann Musselman, who was an LCDS teacher for 30 years, this prize is awarded to the student who has enthusiastic curiosity, takes intellectual risks, loves to learn, and lives life to the fullest.

### FACULTY AWARD

#### ELISE THIRY, AMELIA WOODARD

Given to the student who embodies what the faculty most respects in a scholar and a person, an individual who has a true love of learning and is a model citizen.

### RUTH S. HOSTETTER

#### AWARD

#### MARGARET HEIM

This award honors the memory of a Shippen School graduate from the Class of 1931 and recognizes a senior who, over an extended period of time, has worked selflessly and enthusiastically to enhance the school community.



# CATHERINE HADDAD

By Maddy Pontz | Photo Credit: Nate Grann



In 2012, Catherine Haddad joined Lancaster Country Day's world language department to start the school's Chinese language program. That first year, she taught a small, close-knit group of just ten students.

Now, finishing her twelfth year at LCDS, the program has grown significantly — to include two faculty members (Haddad and Cecile Bongazni), more than 120 students, school-led trips to China, community-wide cultural events, and nine courses spanning 5th through 12th grades, including an AP offering.

In our school's embrace of this language program, LCDS beat the odds, according to Haddad, as all but one neighboring school has canceled their Chinese language programs in recent years. Ours, however, is thriving — thanks in large part to Haddad and Bonzagni's dedication, care, and expertise.

Haddad earned Bachelor's and Master's degrees in English at Nankai University, located in Tianjin, China. While she was at the top of her class and taught many English as a Second Language (ESL) classes as a graduate student,

Haddad shared that had no desire to move away from her family or live in the United States.

It was only through a twist of fate that she met her husband, an American teaching for one year at Nankai University. Haddad agreed to move to the U.S after she completed graduate school in China. The couple landed in Texas — where she earned an MBA at The University of Texas at Austin and they got married.

Despite her natural proclivity for the field of education, after graduation, Haddad was hired in consulting, followed by business development and marketing at IBM.

When her husband — “an absolutely fabulous American Studies/History professor” — had the chance to join Penn State's faculty, the pair relocated to Pennsylvania, where Haddad continued her work for IBM.

In 2011, fate once again intervened, setting Haddad on a new career path. Not long after Haddad's husband earned a Fulbright, she was laid off from her position at IBM. The Fulbright opportunity took the couple and their two young children to Hong Kong.

“I devoted myself to my kids during that time in Hong Kong, and to figuring out what was next for me,” she shared.

When her family returned to the United States, Haddad officially pivoted to a career in education, joining the faculty at Penn State Harrisburg with the task of starting the university's Chinese program.

Around that same time, both of Haddad's children were accepted as students at LCDS. She decided to email the school's then-Admissions Director to inquire about teaching at LCDS. Very soon after, she received an email from the then-Head of Upper School. She interviewed, shared her references, and was offered the job in the span of just a few whirlwind days. The administrator who hired her let her know that the school did not offer

Chinese language courses at that time — which meant that it would be up to Haddad to fully design, launch, and run this new program.

“There was lots of excitement and lots of challenges, too, that first year,” she said. “The kids and parents were so invested. We only had ten kids the first year, and they were so excited and wanted to learn.”

Mandarin Chinese is often considered to be one the most challenging languages to learn, which posed a unique conundrum for Haddad. How could she build LCDS's program to provide her students with a true basis of knowledge in a language and culture that many scholars have dedicated decades of their lives to studying?

“It was hard to figure out how to push the kids,” she said. “I asked myself: How rigorous could I make it for them? It was challenging, but so rewarding, too, to see the kids be able to speak and read.”

Haddad continued, “We had small classes, so I got to know every student so well. I worked to the individual availability of each student — from AP all the way to someone who struggled with learning a language. I wanted every student in the same classroom to feel that they can do this.”

Isaac Schlager '17 studied Chinese during his time at LCDS, under Haddad's thoughtful tutelage.

“Studying Chinese at LCDS challenged me in ways other classes had not and enabled me to look at language differently,” Schlager said. “Mrs. Haddad and my other Chinese teachers at LCDS made a daunting language both easy and fun to learn.”

Haddad designed the program to include lessons on listening, speaking, reading, and writing, as is done in all of LCDS's world language courses, she shared. She has also focused on sharing cultural lessons.

“Culture and language is inseparable,” Haddad said. “It's the culture that really brings the



language alive. Learning the culture even teaches you how to speak better.”

She continued, “For example, we’ve been hosting a Chinese Lunar New Year celebration since the first year I taught at LCDS… That’s become a tradition.”

After graduating from LCDS, Schlager earned a degree in political science with a minor in Chinese language and global China studies from New York University (NYU) Shanghai. He now works as a programs and research coordinator at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce China Center in Washington, D.C.

Schlager cites his studies with Haddad as a driving force in his educational and career paths.

“I will always remember Mrs. Haddad taking myself and a handful of LCDS students and faculty to China in 2014,” he said. “Our trips to Beijing, Shanghai, and Xi’An were so much fun and motivated me to continue my Chinese studies further in school… That trip, of course, had a major impact on where I chose to go to college.”

As she does for many of her students, Haddad went above and beyond for Schlager; she once waited with him and his family after school to find out if he had been accepted to NYU.

“I will never forget Mrs. Haddad postponing her doctor’s appointment so she could stay with me after hours as I opened my acceptance email from NYU,” Schlager recalled. “We played

Mahjong and Chinese chess while we waited for the results to be released, and promptly celebrated with my family in the Upper School hallway.”

In recent years, Haddad has taken on an additional role at LCDS as the school’s wellness coordinator — sharing her knowledge of meditation, breathwork, and other healthy practices with the larger community.

“My whole life, I’ve liked to take care of myself that way, with meditation,” Haddad said. “During COVID, I had a lot of students struggling with their mental health. That brought those skills to the forefront.”

Over the course of her 12 years at LCDS, Haddad has developed a reputation as a caring, dedicated educator, most recently winning the Ruth Stoner Bowers ’38 Endowed Faculty Chair at this year’s graduation ceremony.

In her wellness position, for instance, she has spent more than 1,000 hours training and practicing to become certified in the SKY Schools breath and meditation program, which she “swears by.” As Haddad put it: “I know it’s going to change our students’ lives.”

# REMEMBERING DONNA LUTTRELL

At Alumni Weekend 2023, Laura Ranck White ’83 shared the following memory and song with alumni gathered to remember their beloved teacher, Donna Luttrell.

Back when we were in 7th or 8th grade, Mrs. Luttrell assigned us to write a parody, and I did one of the song “Dah Do Ron Ron” (“Dah Don’t Run Run”).

Her reaction was basically, “Meh,” so I took that as a sign that I have a real gift for writing mediocre parodies and have been using it ever since. I thought about dusting off the one I’d written in honor of her retirement from Country Day, but then I realized it’s on a floppy disk somewhere in my basement, so I started from scratch.

I hope you’ll forgive me: To honor the person she was in my life as fully as possible, I felt compelled to include some inside jokes and personal pieces, but I hope that enough of it’s universal that it’ll resonate with all of you.

With apologies to Rodgers and Hammerstein, here’s...



### DBL Memories

Studying English could not have been more fun  
Every lesson: sexu'l repression  
Dickens and Steinbeck, Fitzgerald and Lee  
These are a few DBL memories  
Astute observer of student drama  
Staunch devotee of the Oxford comma  
Christmas po'ms for ev'ry class read with glee  
These are a few DBL memories  
Homecooked Italian with unbroken noodles  
Margins of pages all filled up with doodles  
Bilbo and Piggy and Scout and Gatsby  
These are a few DBL memories  
When the dog bites, and the bee stings  
And I'm feeling sad,  
I simply remember the great times we had,  
And then I don't feel so bad  
\*\*\*  
Editing yearbook amid hearty laughter  
Rides to the corner to catch the bus after  
Cropping and putting each photo in place  
Valiantly freeing the trapped white space!  
Gettysburg road trip and  
Miniature horse farm  
Irrev'rent wit and inIMitaBLE charm  
Playfully brimming with vitality  
These are a few DBL memories

Raking up dead leaves and tending her flowers  
Pond'ring existence into the wee hours  
Simon and Garfunkel-fueled reveries  
These are a few DBL memories

When the dog bites, and the B... minus stings  
And I'm feeling sad,  
I simply remember the great times we had,  
And then I don't feel so bad

\*\*\*

Wizard at measures of general knowledge  
She was a lifeline when I was in college  
She understood things weren't always a breeze  
These are a few DBL memories

Hailing from Trenton, but purged of her accent  
Finding the humorous: definite asset

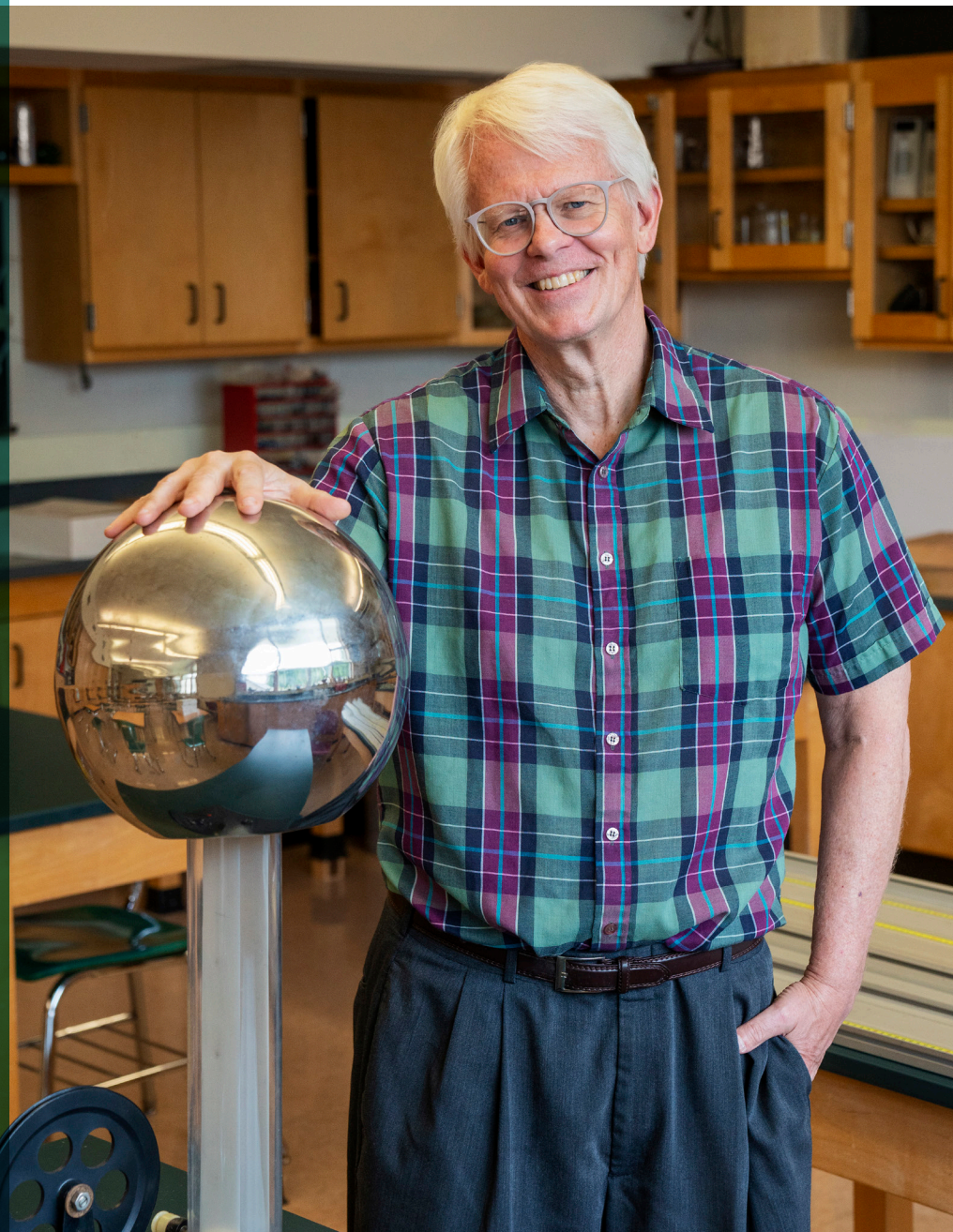
Yet she paradoxically genuinely took her students incredibly seriously (and told me gently, but firmly that I definitely had a tendency in my writing to get carried away with adverbs ridiculously)

These are a few DBL memories  
Yes, her death bites, and the grief stings  
And I'm feeling sad,  
But when I remember the privilege I've had (to have known her),  
Then I don't feel so bad  
Yes, when we remember the privilege we've had,  
I hope we won't feel so bad



# JIM RINGLEIN

By Maddy Pontz | Photo Credit: Nate Grann



Jim Ringlein has had a lifelong interest in education. Now, nearly 40 years after he started his first teaching job, he is still just as passionate about his work as he ever has been — if not even more so.

Immediately after graduating from the University of Notre Dame with a B.S. in mechanical engineering, Ringlein cut his teeth as an engineer at Alcoa (first at their Richmond, Ind. facility, then transferring to Lancaster). While he enjoyed his day-to-day work in engineering, education remained of interest to him.

After about five years in this position, Ringlein “saw the writing on the wall” for the production plant; he worked in Alcoa’s ‘closures’ plant, which produced aluminum bottle caps and other items. When the larger world began to transition to using plastic bottle caps, Ringlein realized that he would likely be transferred to an engineering position in Texas. Looking to avoid moving from Pennsylvania, he, “spoke to a headhunter about my lifelong interest in education.”

“When I left engineering, I asked myself what I was really good at,” he shared. “It was physics

and teaching. I wanted to be an educator. I could always see myself doing that job, I always felt called to it.”

And so Ringlein embarked upon his first adventure in teaching, joining the science faculty at Lancaster Catholic. After a decade at LCHS, he joined the Lancaster Country Day School community – for the first time. During his first 11 years at LCDS, Ringlein taught both Middle School and Upper School science. He also served as head of the science department and a Middle School advisor.

In 2003, Ringlein took on an additional role: faculty advisor for the CougarBots – a Middle School robotics team that engaged in local and regional competitions under his guidance. “It all started because somebody donated a robotics kit to us around 2000 or so,” he shared. “We started tinkering around with them as a Middle School club. We would just do fun little things with the robots.”

When students began to show an increased enthusiasm for robotics, the CougarBots team began to ramp up.

“Bryce Velletri ‘09 came along and really got everything moving. He got us organized,” Ringlein said. “The team was even featured in the Teen Section of *Lancaster Newspapers (LNP)* and on WGAL.”

Ringlein also credits the Rye family (Caitlin Rye Banta ‘06, LCDS trustee; Oliver Rye ‘13) and the Seavey family (David ‘13 and Maddie ‘15) with being “super helpful” to the CougarBots program.

After more than a decade at LCDS, Ringlein left the school – but he didn’t go far. He joined the staff at the North Museum as their Director of Education.

But the siren call of LCDS was too strong to stay away for long, as Ringlein returned in 2012, and has been with the school ever since.

“In 2012, I had the opportunity to focus on what I’ve always wanted to teach, which is high

school physics and AP Physics,” he said. “LCDS was doing great, and I needed to get back here. It felt like the right thing to do for myself and my family. And I always loved teaching physics.”

He also took on a new title in this second period at LCDS: coach.

“Finding a home with coaching has also been a highlight of my ‘second decade’ at LCDS,” Ringlein said. “Coaching Middle School girls’ basketball was a great fit for me from 2013 to 2020.”

Over the years, Ringlein’s dedication to his students has remained steadfast.

One surprising example that he enjoys sharing: each year, he adds a piece of student artwork from the Senior Exhibition to his classroom bulletin boards. That artwork is displayed for years to come, and he delights in telling anyone who asks about the exceptional talents of his students.

“Usually the pieces have something to do with science, but sometimes they just demand to be put on display,” Ringlein said. “And my memories of the creators are priceless.”

“There have just been a lot of things that have been really great here,” Ringlein shared, reflecting on his career at LCDS so far – and why he is looking forward to the years ahead.

He continued, “From the time I joined Country Day in the mid-’90s to now, the quality of the families and education has been great. Our students and families are people that are looking for a real challenge and to be in an environment that can help them be the best they can be.”





Laura Trout has known that she wanted to be a teacher since she was in the second grade.

And so she surely made her younger self proud when, this year, Trout was awarded the prestigious James Bryant Conant Award in High School Chemistry Teaching from the American Chemical Society.

“My mom has a project that I did in second grade on what I wanted to be when I grew up, and it says that I wanted to be a teacher,”

Trout said with a laugh. “As a kid, I used to try to teach my little sister math lessons. I also tutored a lot of my friends in high school.”

Then and now, her love for education stems from her ability to explain a complex topic in a way that reaches a student at their level — an excellent skill for the High School Chemistry Teacher of the Year to have.

“I’ve always loved the challenge of getting somebody to understand something when they don’t,” Trout shared. “That light bulb turning

on in their mind just feeds me. I’ve dedicated my whole career to finding the perfect lesson for each topic, to make sure the kids actually understand the material.”

(Writer’s Note: As someone who was not naturally predisposed to chemistry – or, perhaps more accurately, the required mathematics – I can say from experience that Mrs. Trout is exceptionally dedicated to meeting students where they are and ensuring their understanding from a place of kindness and patience.)

Trout grew up in Washington State, and earned her undergraduate degree in Math & Science Education from Central Washington University. Immediately after undergrad, she began a Ph.D. program at the University of Washington, with the idea that she would one day become a professor.

However – during her advanced studies – Trout found that the aspect of her graduate degree that she most enjoyed was working with students in the lab as their teaching assistant (TA). According to Trout, she developed a reputation for being the TA that students sought out when they were utterly lost in the material. She’s proud that she was often able to help them find their way through even the most complex subjects.

After earning her Master’s degree, Trout decided to exit the Ph.D. path and begin teaching.

“There were a lot of growing pains,” she shared. “But, slowly, I learned how to be a better teacher.”

Then, in her third year as an educator, Trout attended a conference for science educators that would change the trajectory of her professional life.

“A Dow Chemical workshop introduced me to the idea of inquiry,” Trout said. “It was in that workshop that I realized how important inquiry is. It totally opened my eyes to what education

should be.” (Inquiry is the process by which students learn through experimentation; they complete a hands-on lab to begin the lesson – instead of classes being taught in the lecture-format.)

She continued, “My students were so excited about it. Through the process of inquiry, they were actually learning things deeply and well. That was pretty exciting, as a teacher.”

In 2000, attending a conference once again changed the direction of her career.

“I really just stumbled into my first POGIL workshop kind of by accident,” she said. “I was at a conference and there was nothing else going on during that hour, so I found the workshop based on the fact that the description used the word inquiry. That was all I needed.”

The POGIL Project – a nonprofit based in Lancaster, Penn. – focuses on increasing student opportunities for process-oriented guided inquiry learning in STEM and other content areas.

At the conclusion of the workshop, she sought out the presenter from The POGIL Project to ask if they were offering lessons for high school students. The presenter said that he wasn’t sure students below the university-level would be able to handle their style of lessons, which made her “so mad,” according to Trout.

“I went home from that conference and started writing POGIL activities for my classroom,” Trout shared. “Two years later, at that same conference, I was giving a presentation on the use of guided inquiry in the high school classroom, and that same presenter walked in. When I was done, he asked where I had learned to do this with high school students. And so I changed his mind.”

In 2004, POGIL came knocking when they were applying for a grant to write high school curriculum.

In a moment of true kismet, Trout was already planning a move to Lancaster, after meeting and



falling in love with her now-husband and fellow member of the LCDS Science Faculty, Todd Trout. (Guess where they met? Yes, that’s right: a conference.)

After moving to Lancaster, Trout taught at Manheim Township School District until her daughter, Emma ‘25, was born. She then joined the LCDS science faculty part-time, while she also served as the editor-in-chief of The POGIL Project’s new High School POGIL Initiative (HSPI).

“That was a huge growing experience, as I took on some major leadership responsibilities,” Trout said. “That’s when I really figured out how to write good POGIL activities. I had to deconstruct the process of writing a POGIL and teach others how to do it better, as well. That’s where many of the current POGIL workshops come from – the HSPI project.”

And, oh, yeah: four textbooks came out of that project, as well – books that have sold tens of thousands of copies to date. Trout was editor-in-chief for all four books. (Trout is currently working on another textbook for AP Environmental Science, then AP Statistics is up next, she shared.)

In 2014, the science department here at LCDS realized that the Lower School curriculum needed a bit of an overhaul, one that would benefit from a full-time LS science coordinator. Though she had previously never taught in the elementary grades, Trout felt called to this position and moved from the Upper to Lower School.

“I just fell more and more in love with the challenge of that job,” she said. “My philosophy at the time was that Kindergarten through second grade should be play-based. We asked one question, and then we pursued experiential learning. For example, we looked at magnets attracting and repelling each other, etc.”

She continued, “In third through fifth grades, we spent a lot of time building the basics for experimentation. For example, we learned that you can only change one variable at a time in an experiment. We learned how to create a data table.”

Trout built her Lower School curriculum around Pennsylvania science education standards, but did not focus on testing. Rather, she wanted to ensure that every LS student left with a rich background in the sciences.

“I didn’t want LS science to be worksheets, tests, taking notes, reading,” she said. “I really wanted the students to just have experiences. Across the country, kids were getting tested to death with the Common Core, and science programs were dying. I didn’t ever want Country Day to be like that.”

After seven years in this position, Trout transferred back to the Upper School faculty, in order to allow more time to dedicate to her work at The POGIL Project.

Now, in addition to teaching US Chemistry and AP Chemistry, Trout coordinates the creation of POGIL workshops and continues to write activities and textbooks.

This year, she was recognized for her three decades of dedication to the field of science education via the James Bryant Conant Award in High School Chemistry Teaching, a prestigious national award.

“The award was the culmination of everything I’ve done in my career,” Trout said. “I felt like it was validation for the work I’ve done all these years.”

# RACHEL SCHMALHOFFER

By Maddy Pontz | Photo Credit: Nate Grann

When Rachel Schmalhofer joined the Lancaster Country Day School faculty in 2011, she set out to re-envision, restructure, and revitalize the school’s learning support program (now known as The Lab at LCDS). She knew that she had a big job ahead of her – but it was a challenge that she felt excited and uniquely qualified to take on.

“The Lab is many things to many people,” Schmalhofer said. “But when I started 13 years ago, the Upper School program needed structure and new policies, so I started from scratch and built a brand new system.”

Now, Schmalhofer serves as the director of learning services and the US learning specialist. She has brought Jill Englert – Middle School learning specialist and ESL/ESOL instructor – and Kim Gladys – Lower School learning/reading specialist – onto her team, as well.

All three members of The Lab team previously worked together at the Janus School in Mt. Joy. It was at Janus that they received, “a unique level of training... in learning differences, specifically,” Schmalhofer shared.

The Lab’s expansion has been strategic, in an effort to have the greatest possible positive



impact on students, as well as the school’s larger community, according to Schmalhofer.

“I’m very energized by what learning support looks like here. Jill, Kim, and I have been a great team,” she said. “Since I started at LCDS, I have really wanted to expand our learning support programs, and be a resource not just for students, but for faculty and parents, as well.”

She continued, “We’ve done a lot of work over the years designing and providing professional development to our faculty – not just on working with kids with learning differences, but sharing the latest science and research on learning, in general, so that we’re teaching in ways that most benefit all our kids.”

Schmalhofer’s ongoing interest in the science of the brain has led to the development of a number of programs for constituencies throughout the school community. For parents and guardians, the Lab hosts ‘Brain Food’ sessions throughout the school year.

“We started incorporating our Brain Food sessions to talk about all kinds of things that we thought would be helpful to our parent community as a whole, across all divisions,” Schmalhofer shared. “These have included sessions on things like: how best to support your kids at home, questions to ask on the way home from school, study tips, the power of dopamine and why cell phones are so addictive, and more.”

To reach LCDS faculty and staff, Schmalhofer has developed a partnership with The Center for Transformative Teaching and Learning (CTTL). This program has included: leading the entire faculty in reading Neuroteach: Brain Science and the Future of Education by Glen Whitman and Ian Kelleher; professional development opportunities with Whitman; an annual summer intensive for new and returning faculty; and more.

“Our partnership with CTTL has been a huge boon to the school,” Schmalhofer said. “We want to make sure we’re walking the walk, and

that we have made a commitment to staying current on the fundamentals of learning, based on science and research.”

She continued, “These days, we know so much more than we did 25 years ago (when I started in education) about how the brain works, how learning works, about how learning differences work in the brain, as well as what we can do to maximize success for students with neurodivergent learning profiles.”

During her time as a student at LCDS, Alexa Stadel ‘19 spent “every study hall, free time and sometimes lunch in the Lab,” she shared. She attributes much of her academic success to the support of The Lab team.

“The Lab shaped me into the person I am today,” Stadel said. “They ingrained in me organizational skills, time management skills, and much more. However, the most important skills I learned were my self-advocacy skills and how to carry myself.... Rachel and Jill were not just teachers, but my biggest supporters.”

Nicki Liss ‘13 also credits Schmalhofer with being a true supporter of her academic successes. After graduating from LCDS, Liss earned a BFA in photography from Temple University’s Tyler School of Art, with an art education certificate. She now works as a visual arts instructor at Sanford School in Hockessin, DE, which she calls her “dream job.”

“[Schmalhofer’s] never-ending patience and support...gave me the tools needed to succeed,” Liss shared. “She is a genuine support system who goes above and beyond for her students, celebrating their victories as if they were her own.”

Liss continued, “I credit Rachel significantly for helping me navigate academic challenges and fostering my growth. Her dedication and personal investment in my success have made a profound impact on my educational journey.”

In her career as an interior designer in Charlotte, NC, as well her time earning a B.A. in interior architecture and design from Queens

University of Charlotte, Stadel has continued to rely on the skills that she developed working with Schmalhofer.

“To this day, I use the skills I learned in the Lab, [and I] am not ashamed of having dyslexia,” Stadel said. “The Lab was a safe space to truly be myself and not allow my learning disability to define or rule my life.”

Looking to the future: Schmalhofer and her team aim to continue their own education, as well as to grow The Lab program to serve as many members of the LCDS community as possible.

“We’re focused on developing a more robust program every year,” Schmalhofer said. “LCDS is so community-oriented. We want everyone who supports our students to be able to get involved and support them to the best of their abilities.”

She continued, “We want to walk the walk of being lifelong learners.”



### SUPPORT LCDS TODAY!

As an independent school, Lancaster Country Day depends on the generous support of our entire school community to provide the enriching environment that alumni remember.

There are many ways you can contribute to your school. Scan the QR code to view options or contact our development office today.

**Shelby LaMar**, Chief Advancement Officer: 717-397-7240  
**Corinne Topper**, Director of Annual Giving: 717-397-8126  
**Ellen Simpson ’73**, Development Officer Emerita: 717-392-2916 x 3315





We recognize that social media is an easier way than Class Notes for our alumni to stay in touch. Please see page two for a listing of LCDS social media accounts. You'll notice alumni news and updates moving more onto these networks, even as Class Notes continues to be a place to see alumni submissions, reunion updates, and event pictures. To submit a class note for print or web publication, contact the Alumni Office at [alumni@lanastercountryday.org](mailto:alumni@lanastercountryday.org).

## 1950s

### 1954

#### Barbara McMinn McKnight

I recently moved to Atlanta, Georgia, to be closer to two of my three children after living in Winter Park, Florida, for over 50 years! The transition has been a smooth one as I was able to reconnect in Atlanta with alumni from Rollins College where I got my Master of Arts in Teaching degree after graduation from the University of Miami with a business degree. The attached photo was taken with President Grant Cornwell at a local alumni event held in Atlanta at the Cherokee Town and Country Club in February.



### 1959

#### Margaretta (Marge) Light Edwards

We, the Class of 1959, are looking forward to reuniting at LCDS September 27 and 28, 2024. We would love to have class members who preceded us and followed us to join in the fun! So far, we know of 8 from our class, 1959, who hope to attend...God willing! Please join us.

## 1960s

### Class of 1960

#### Mary Barlow

Since Covid, Gale & I have traveled to Egypt, Iceland to cruise to Svalbard, Norway and then by train to Stockholm. and in December 2023 to Antarctica. Also have spent time in Tucson, Arizona and Hollywood, Florida, with our intrepid Burmese cat travelers,"Tucson" and "Terra." We are very happy living in Crosslands in Kennett Square next to Longwood Gardens.

#### Liz Atlee Jones

Liz lives at Willow Valley retirement community. She sees Connie Santarelli from time to time. Pat Mossman is also at WV as is Liz's sister Ann '55 & we see a lot of each other.

#### Connie Dunlap Santarelli

I get to Lancaster monthly for Board meetings of Lancaster History and food and plant shopping. Our oldest granddaughter Lily is off to Boston U from Los Angeles and Don and I have not downsized yet - he is not retired at 86. Keeps him going.

#### Anne Campbell Slater

Anne lives outside Philadelphia. She feels like an Old Lady, but I AM doing what I love: reading a couple of books a week, in a French reading group (monthly), leading a weekly short-story discussion group (Zoom) and (barely) singing in the church choir. A little gardening but minimal yard work: that's what teenagers are for...Plus my kids and their families (including 2 great-grands) are all within 90 minutes' drive.

#### Kim Stephenson Sullivan

We moved to Chapel Hill in 1972. Since 2015, we have lived in a wonderful CCRC (Continuing Care Retirement Community). Our daughter and her partner are in nearby Durham - we see them frequently! Our son, our Parisienne daughter-in-law and their two daughters are in Montréal. We see them several times each year and we'll be there soon for the 16 year old's high school graduation. The girls started kindergarten in London at the age of 4, thus the early launch!

That family is bi-lingual and I have long been grateful for our LCDS grounding in French, especially when grocery shopping in Paris and now in Montréal. As an aside, I exempted the first two years of French at Northwestern, so landed in an upper level French Lit class! In Montréal, it is amusing as a store proprietor is likely to greet one with "bon jour hil" so as to elicit one's language preference.

We'll all be together (including my sister, Linda and her husband) in August in our favorite spot on the beach in South Carolina. Life is good!

#### Nancy Lane Gibbs

I've been busy doing a bit of traveling: went on a Kenyan safari in early November and have made two trips to California to see grandchildren. Also in two book clubs and playing Mah Jongg with my condo mates.

### 1961

#### Alix Shuman Roth

Alix is adjusting to life without her beloved husband, Les, and would love to hear from classmates and other LCDS friends. Alix's email address is [alixroth8@gmail.com](mailto:alixroth8@gmail.com).

### 1965

#### James Lehman

We have returned to the East Coast. After more than 40 years in Southern California, where I taught economics at Pitzer College in Claremont, we have retired to Fran's native Rhode Island. Hoping to make it to one of the semiannual class gatherings this next year. We are enjoying getting reacquainted with four seasons.

### 1966

#### Christine Welch

I am alive and well, living in Brownstown, retired from teaching and the proud grandmother of two grandsons, one college bound and one starting high school. I spend my time working in my studio, gardening when the weather is fair and knitting when it is not.

## 1970s

### 1970

#### Mike Herr

I have, along with my wife Donita, retired, closed our medical office and completely removed myself from the world of medicine, as of the first of October, 2023. The world of travel has beckoned and we have made it to Ireland, Italy, England, Mexico, Seattle, Asheville and East Petersburg, PA during these past months. Also Clymer, NY, for the eclipse recently (south of Buffalo). Home projects include multiple forms of down-sizing, especially reviewing, scanning and discarding thousands of photographs which have built up through the decades. Jigsaw puzzles, HO-size model trains and the daily walk all have their place in the daily routine. We love it!

### 1973

#### Jeff Wilson

I retired as a professor of Psychology (with a primary

focus on Neuroscience and Learning Theory) from Albion College (MI) as Covid reared its ugly head. Since then I've enjoyed having no schedule, and developing my interest in astrophotography.



### 1974

#### Eugene Sensenig

I am the director of the Lebanese Emigration Research Center (LERC) at Notre Dame University Louaize (NDU) in Lebanon. Together with my wife, Dr. Rouba El Helou, I was awarded the FORGE Fellowship from New York University Law School in 2024.'



### 1975

#### Joe Leonard

My wife and I are living in Canada, originally Montréal and now Ottawa. It's been almost 17 years since I took a position in Montréal and we emigrated. I'm mostly retired now, merely helping out with customer questions. We're looking forward to using the extra time to get back to traveling, as Covid recedes into the past and international travel recovers from the hiatus. Next year will

be my 50th which strikes me as a good time to visit Lancaster again.

I visited my university (UPenn) a few years before Covid to walk around to see what students looked like and what all had changed. Huge amount of development, but the buildings I remembered were still there and the major difference with the students was the hair. I was disappointed to see all of the building security that is present, but that's not unexpected for an urban campus - wasn't that way back then, and West Philly was still, umm, salty. The biggest realization was that I was invisible to pretty much everybody as I walked about. As I sat there enjoying the sunny day, I realized that I would have similarly ignored somebody from the Class of '38 who wandered campus back then... I write as you might be old enough to have a similar experience at LCDS.

Aside from bits of buildings I expect that pretty much everything is different there. But it was a good 7 years and I hope today's kids enjoy their time.

In the past two decades, we've built incredible systems that enable almost anyone to be heard. However, almost no progress has been made to ensure any quality or meaning in what occupies our attention. If only there was any money in that.

### 1978

#### Paul Zanowski

I retired as Head of School at Woodlawn School in Davidson, NC. I now teach History part-time at Greensboro Day School, in Greensboro, NC. I love being back in the classroom! It's hard to believe my teaching career began 40 years ago at LCDS!



1990

**Robert Bachman, Jr.**

Aloha from Oahu, Hawaii!

Just a quick email that my brother Bradley Bachman, who would've been LCDS class of 1997, still lives in the Lahaina area on Maui where the tragic wildfires happened. He and his family live in Kaanapali right on the border of Kaanapali and Lahaina and they had to evacuate. They witnessed Lahaina town burn from their lanai. Brad and his family are safe. Their house did not burn down. But they are using their house as a disaster relief center for the Lahaina congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. Brad and his wife Kimberly and children Jasmine, Pierce and Chase are focusing on giving spiritual comfort and practical physical assistance (clothing, food, shelter) to so many who lost everything in the Lahaina fires.

As for me and my family, I lived on Maui in different parts for two decades. Lahaina was my home for years. And so we have been involved in sending relief supplies inter-island. Nine years ago Andrea and I and our children, Aria and Bobby, moved to Kailua here on Oahu. We're doing well and as a family we devote much of our time to community volunteer activities. For 32 years I've been involved in the health and fitness lifestyle business. Checkout my website [home.Sunrider.com/aloha](https://home.Sunrider.com/aloha).

Also my son and I have an eBay store DaCardSellers. Below is a family photo taken a few months ago when we visited the Great Barrier Reef, Australia.



## 1980s

1987

**Jeff Woodland**

Aliya and Jeff are excited to share the news of the arrival of our delightful little girl, Scarlett Rose Woodland. She is a blue-eyed ball of joy who gives us huge smiles every time Jeff sings to her.



1987

**Bernadette Gardner**

While visiting Napa, CA, Bernadette and Eugene Gardner '87,'84 had the chance to visit with fellow alum, Tony Spleen '82 and Thom Thompson.



## 1990s

1994

**Orla Connaughton Duffy**

XXXXXXX

1999

**Bobby Laffey**

We recently moved back to Severna Park, Md. and I will be transitioning into my new position at Indian Creek School this summer as the Director of Auxiliary Services and Assistant Athletic Director.

## 2000s

2004

**Caroline England Harlin**

Caroline and Tayt Harlin announce the birth of their daughter Faye Barbara Harlin born Feb 11, 2024.



2006

**Charlie Walp**

Charlie and Brittany Walp welcomed their daughter, Carys Teagan Walp, into the world on February 7th, 2024.



2007

**Molly Rigas McDermott**

Molly Rigas was married to Matthew McDermott in December of 2023 at the James A. Michener Museum in Doylestown, Pennsylvania. The wedding was planned and executed by her brother, Nicholas Rigas ('11). Fellow LCDS alums Megan Medina (Macalarney) and Melissa Harvey (both '06) were also in attendance and Jana Fry ('07) was the bride's matron of honor.



2008

**Katie Mersky Boorse**

I just completed my 12th year in education at two Independent Schools: Springside Chestnut Hill Academy in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and St. Luke's School in New Canaan, Connecticut. This school year, I just completed my first year as Head of Middle School at St. Luke's School. Through the caring relationships I had with my teachers and coaches and an academic environment that challenged my thinking and encouraged my curiosity, I am forever grateful for the strong educational background that Lancaster Country Day School provided me. It has guided my work to continue to create school environments where students can discover themselves as leaders, learners, and community members. I look forward to many more students joining me as a product of an exceptional school, like Lancaster Country Day School.

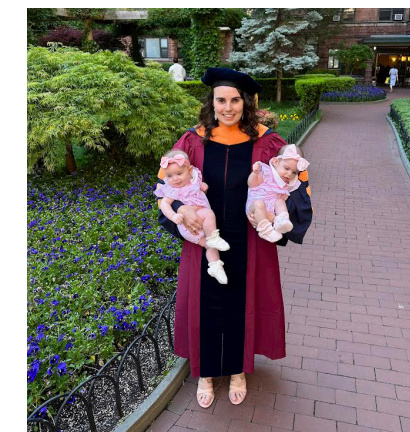
Brian and Katie welcomed their first child, Charlie Wittman Boorse on May 24th weighing 8lbs 10oz and 21 inches long.



2009

**Kristen Casale**

Kristen graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with her Doctor of Nursing Practice and added twin girls to her family in December 2023!



2009

**Bryson Velletri**

Mentioned in our feature on Jim Ringlein, Bryson wrote, "Dr. Ringlein had a big impact on me, endowing me with a love of practical physics that has been a thread throughout my post-LCDS life."



Lancaster Country Club served as the host of the US Women's Open golf championship for the second time in nine years in 2024. The event received acclaim as did the championship logo, a collaboration between Orla Connaughton Duffy '94 and the USGA design team. The logo incorporates a heraldic rose, originally used in Lancashire, England, created by Orla, a graphic designer in Westmeath, Ireland, and refined specifically for the championship. The design was so popular that the USGA eclipsed its own record for merchandise sales at a Women's Open and set the all time single day record twice on Saturday and Sunday of Championship Week.





**2008**  
**Kara Kennedy**

*I Will Never Leave You* is a Young Adult paranormal thriller publishing with Delacorte Press, an imprint of Penguin Random House, on July 23, 2024. It was chosen as a Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection and has received a starred review from Kirkus Reviews.

**2010**  
**Ben Murdoch**

After two years working at Bain, I have finally left consulting to join Intuit's corporate strategy and development team. In this new role I am focused on how generative AI can be integrated throughout the product suite.

**2012**  
**Sarah Murdoch Davis**

Sarah recently moved from New York City to Denver, CO where she continues to work in Business Strategy for Airbnb. She was married last year in Hilton Head, SC.



**2014**  
**Navia Flowers Phildor**

Hi LCDS, and congrats to the class of 2024!

This year marks 10 years since I graduated from LCDS. My husband and I have just welcomed our second baby girl in November. Her name is Nyla and she is absolutely precious in every way. Nyla was born with chronic liver disease and has already had one surgery and is due to go on the transplant list in a few weeks. She has been through a ton in her short 5 months of life so far and has been so strong! Any well wishes and words of encouragement as we continue on this journey would be lovely. Just thought I'd share our story.

Thanks everyone!



**2016**  
**Tahra Wohler**

Upon graduating from High Point University in 2020, Tahra enjoyed initial career success, having spent the past four years serving clients with Goldman Sachs - Wealth Management. In the summer of 2023, he was offered an opportunity to continue his work with the firm and moved from the NJ/ NY area to his current home in Washington, DC. He is joined there by his girlfriend, Ruby Lou Taylor, and even friends from his LCDS graduating class!



**2017**  
**Victoria Willis**

I got accepted to the Master of Arts Program in the Humanities at the University of Chicago and am going to be attending this Fall. I'm planning on taking classes in Cinema and Media Studies, Comparative Literature, and Classics.

**2019**  
**Carly Civello**

I was promoted to Art Director in 2023, and I now work at McCann Health New York on an endometrial cancer brand. I launched my small business in 2023 as well—I sell linocut pieces and art prints on Etsy. I frequently share my latest work @carlycivello on Instagram!

**2020**  
**Christopher Matthews**

Christopher graduated from the University of Pittsburgh in April 2024 with Majors in Linguistics and Italian! This summer he is walking the Camino de Santiago in Spain (gracias Señora Heim!) and then participating in a Fulbright-Hays GPA Program in Kenya where he will study intensive Swahili for 2 months.



**FORMER FACULTY AND STAFF LUNCHEON**

Former faculty and staff gathered to reminisce at LCDS at the annual lunch.



**IN MEMORIAM**

Margaret J. Neff '43  
Barbara Eckman Butzer '48  
Daisy Adams Baker '50  
Sarah "Sally" T. Buckwalter '52  
Barbara Hilliard Dunlap Michael '60  
Daniel C. Herr '64  
Herbert Roy Eshelman III '65  
George D. May '65  
Craig D. Messner '78  
Paula Y. Wolf '80  
Francoise Nagle  
Ashton Clatterbuck 2019  
Sean Hagen 2000

**NEW FACULTY & STAFF**

Jerrill Adams  
Reed Bohannon  
Cheyenne Brown  
Libby Caldwell '05  
Kathleen Dolan  
Julie Horst  
Justine Jago  
Maddy Pontz '13  
Engamo Sadiki  
Morgan Shrom  
Ashley Smith  
Elizabeth Tabbutt

**DEPARTURES**

Katey Appelt  
Todd Berner  
Euler Celi  
Damian DiGiulio  
Dace Eaby  
Sergio Flores  
Kellen Gault  
Dany Huanira  
Christopher Mauger  
Erin Myers  
Bill Neal  
Eden Parks  
Pavel Pochobradsky  
Gretchen Ripple  
Pamela Troxell  
Gregory Woodbridge



# ALUMNI EVENTS

Lancaster Alums | Shippen Society Luncheon | Alumni Weekend 2023 | Lifers' Lunch



LANCASTER ALUMS



SHIPPEN SOCIETY LUNCHEON









# SAVE the DATE

LANCASTER COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL ALUMNI WEEKEND 2024

**Friday, September 27**

All Alumni Cocktail Party from 6:00-8:00 PM

**Saturday, September 28**

Tour the school and join us for other events on campus.

In addition to the many program options for alumni, some classes ending in 4 & 9 will host individual class events during the weekend to celebrate their different reunion milestones.

**Want to help plan your class reunion?**

[connaughtonj@lanastercountryday.org](mailto:connaughtonj@lanastercountryday.org) or call 717-431-2592.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU!**



Congratulations  
Class of 2024

