



**SC Governor's School
for the Arts and Humanities**

ALUMNINEWS

SEPTEMBER 2024

at the
Governor's School

CONTENTS

3	From the President
4	Campus & Departmental News
6	New Employees for the 24-25 School Year
8	Alumni Accomplishments & Updates
9	2024 Summer Programs
9	From Admissions
10	25th Anniversary Celebrations
10	SCGSAH History...Did You Know?
11	Lauren Vaughn
12	Outreach: Coastal Creatives
14	20 Questions with Xia Bowens
14	Employment Opportunities
14	Alumni on Campus

About the Cover: IT'S OUR 25TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR! LET'S CELEBRATE!

Since opening the doors to our residential high school on September 5, 1999, we've been home to some of the most talented young artists in the nation. Join us this school year for special performances, events, and celebrations around the state featuring our incredible students, alumni, and guest artists. Discover more about our school's history, and check out our full calendar of events on our dedicated anniversary website – [SCGSAH25.org](https://scgsah25.org).

We're here because of YOU! So let's celebrate together and make this year unforgettable!



FROM the PRESIDENT

Dear Alumni,

The fall season is upon us, and I'm pleased to bring you greetings from the Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities. As we opened the 2024-2025 academic year, we officially launched the celebration of our 25th anniversary and our yearlong calendar of performances and events. We've been pleased to see so many of you join us so far and look forward to welcoming even more alumni to campus as your schedules allow.

Our first of our "big" event was a regional reception in Walterboro at the SC Artisans Center. Grant McClure (Creative Writing, '15) was the guest of honor and shared his memories of how the Governor's School prepared him for his undergraduate studies at Wofford College and his career in environmental conservation. He currently serves as the South Coast Project Manager for the Coastal Conservation League in Beaufort, SC.

Without question, each of you would have loved our special all-campus community meeting on September 4 to "Party Like it's 1999." The event included a student-led presentation of historical and cultural events of 1999, a test of Govie trivia, and reflections from Dean Thomas (English faculty in 1999) and ceramics instructor Elain Quave (member of the inaugural class).

We were pleased to be joined by the staff of SCETV as we launched our partnership with their organization for the 25 th Anniversary. In addition to announcing their work during the community meeting, they spent the day filming and conversing with the campus community to build relationships for their work throughout the year.

In addition to initiating 112 new Govies into the life of the campus, we welcomed several new employees to the Govie community this semester. I'm pleased to say that we're off to a great start with Erin Gill (Drama), Jeff Vaughn (Outreach), Troy Jones (Music), Kellianne Floyd (Outreach), Katie Villier (Science), Jake Fowler (Music), Haley Floyd (Visual Arts), Zac Pelicano (Communications), Laura Diaz (Spanish), Seth Russell (Music), Jordan Dantzler (Visual Arts), and Xia Bowens (Student Life).

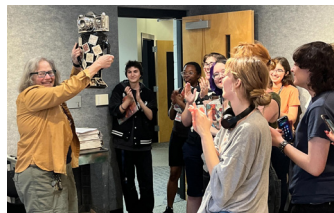
This has been an incredibly special year already and we look forward to extending the celebrations to our alumni, friends, and families. Please make a special effort to join us for those special occasions on the campus or throughout the state as you are able. Along with more information about the founding of the Governor's School and our history, the full calendar of 25th Anniversary performances and events can be found on the microsite at scgsah25.org.

As always, I thank you for your support of the Governor's School and hope to see you soon!

Sincerely,

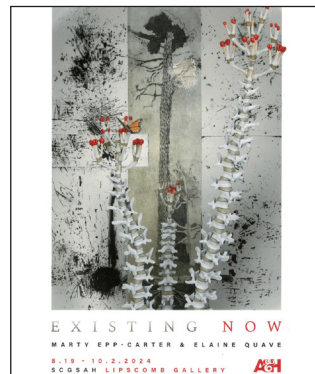

Cedric L. Adderley, DMA
President

CAMPUS & DEPARTMENTAL NEWS



CARLYN TUCKER RETIRES! Ms. Tucker has been a keystone of the Visual Arts Department for 24 years, beginning as an adjunct instructor after teaching classes at the Greenville Art Museum. She has dedicated her career to teaching students the art of photography, while always going above and beyond to help students prepare their portfolios, deliver artwork to competitions across the state, organize field trips, and fund scholarships for seniors. Ms. Tucker was instrumental in developing the Visual Arts Department's Career Preparation class, which has helped hundreds of Govies achieve their dreams. Visual Arts students honored her with a special trophy they created with ceramics instructor and 2001 alumna, Elaine Quave. We offer our sincerest thanks to Ms. Tucker for 24 amazing years, and wish her ALL THE BEST in this next chapter of her life!

We're THRILLED to announce that our Spark program was chosen as a recipient of the #WhatWorksSC Award for 2024! Awarded by the The Riley Institute at Furman, this grant recognizes exceptional programs making a positive impact on South Carolina public education. Read more [here](#).



The Visual Arts Department is proud to present "Existing Now": A Guest Exhibition by Marty Epp-Carter and Elaine Quave! This show kicks off our yearlong slate of arts events honoring the Governor's School's 25th Anniversary, bringing together work by Marty Epp-Carter, a former Visual Arts instructor, and Elaine Quave, a 2001 alumna from our first graduating class and current Visual Arts instructor! In this exhibition, Epp-Carter and Quave explore the profound experience of existing now and how we hold our memories of the past with our hopes for the future. This event is free and open to the public weekdays from 1:30 - 4:30 p.m. Guests should check in at the Visitor's Center prior to visiting the gallery.



Visual Arts instructor Paul Yanko will have a solo exhibition starting September 12 at the Franklin G. Burroughs-Simeon B. Chapin Art Museum in Myrtle Beach! The show,

"Primary Structures," presents a selection of paintings and monotypes that juxtapose architecture with organic shapes. The exhibition runs through February 23, 2025.



This summer we announced our NEW Arts Summer Camp in Conway, SC! Coastal Creatives, a half-day summer camp was hosted by the SC Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities, offers rising 7th-9th graders the opportunity to explore drama, visual arts, writing, sound, and movement! Each day was filled with engaging and creative activities, and no prior arts experience from participants was required!



Visual Arts instructor The Governor's School was happy to participate in the South Carolina Ag + Art Tour this summer! Presented by the Clemson Cooperative Extension, this tour is the largest free farm and art tour in the nation. Govie representatives attended events in Abbeville, Bamberg, Barnwell, Kershaw, McCormick, Newberry, and Pickens counties and helped students make colorful stickers featuring native plants of SC.

The South Carolina Ag + Art Tour is a free, self-guided tour of farms and markets that features local artisans at every stop! During the tour, visitors have the opportunity to see first-hand where their food comes from, watch artists in action and purchase their works, enjoy the talent of local musicians, and learn more about rural life. Learn more at [AGandARTtour.com](#).

In May, our Govies had the opportunity to participate in the first episode of SCETV Safe Space 2024 which aired on May 24. Our panel

included seniors Sabrina Michelle Francis, Rue Pinto, Tyler Russell, Jordion Slater and school counselor Ms. Prasertkul. Mr. Cameron Pratt, assistant principal at Easley High School, also served on the panel to



provide an administrator's perspective. Hosted by Brittney Brackett, the episode focuses on teen mental health and maintaining healthy relationships.

In September, the Library hosted a special "Crafternoon" where our Govies got to take some time to decompress and craft their own Pop-Tart Plushies! Our awesome library not only offers students access to a massive collection of books, music, films, and other media—it also gives them a space to be creative and express themselves! The makerspace, the L.A.B. (Let Art Blossom), had all the felt, glue, and pompoms our students needed to create a fluffy little friend to keep them company this semester.



Recently our Film Govies got an in-depth look at film lighting from professional gaffers Don Cely and Dan Philipp!

A gaffer is the chief lighting technician on the film set, and

students learned the tricks of their trade—working with lighting, camera dollies, and even giant pieces of white mat board used to create different effects in a shot. They also had the opportunity to operate a MovieTech film dolly, one of the top models in the industry!

Philipp and Cely have worked together since the 90's, creating the Atlanta-based Danny Boy Services LLC to supply the regional film industry with top-of-the-line lighting and shooting equipment.



NEW EMPLOYEES FOR THE 2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR



Erin Gill, Theatre Instructor

Erin Gill served as Co-Theatre director at Woodmont High School for 6 years. She has had the privilege of working with theatre students and teachers throughout South Carolina for the past thirteen years. Erin has directed numerous high school productions, most recently including Antigone, which received a Superior Rating from both the Greenville County Schools Festival and the Palmetto Dramatics Festival. Erin earned a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre from Winthrop University in 2011, and a Masters of Fine Arts in Theatre Education from Mississippi University for Women in 2023. Erin serves as Co-Lead Theatre Teacher for Greenville County Schools and the Chair for the High School Division of the South Carolina Theatre Association.



Jeff Vaughn, Outreach Teaching Artist

Jeff Vaughn is a percussionist, educator, and rhythm-event facilitator based in Greenville, South Carolina. Leveraging sound as a vehicle for experiential learning and personal development, Mr. Vaughn encourages others to explore the world within and beyond themselves as expressive beings. His programs often combine sound and social connection with creative play to facilitate enriching life experiences that engage participants with diverse learning styles.



Connor Vetter, Acting Instructor

Conner is a South Carolina-based director, actor, teaching artist, and improv comedian. Connor graduated from Wofford College with a BA in Theatre in 2014 and studied acting at the Moscow Art Theatre School under master teachers Sergey Zemtsov and Igor Zolotovitsky in 2012. As an acting trainer and director, Connor founded and ran the advanced teen training studio, Actor’s Studio, at the Spartanburg Youth Theatre from 2017-2021. Selected directing credits include the upcoming production of Hamlet (Warehouse Theatre), Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story (Centre Stage), Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! The Musical! (South Carolina Children’s Theatre), and To Kill a Mockingbird (Spartanburg Little Theatre). Selected acting credits include Friar Lawrence in Romeo and Juliet (Warehouse Theatre), four years as a principal company member in Scrappy Shakespeare, and five years as a principal team member in Sparkle City Improv.



Troy Jones, Percussion Adjunct

Troy Jones began playing percussion at age 14 in his hometown of Louisville, Kentucky. While working toward a degree in Percussion Performance at Eastern Kentucky University, Troy performed in all major music ensembles including indoor drumline, African Drum and Dance ensemble, and the ECU steel band. During this time, he toured the country with Drum Corps International (DCI), and later embarking on a music and cultural tour of Brazil. Upon graduation, Troy made Nashville, TN his home base, performing professionally across the southeast with bands from varying genres. In 2014, Troy settled in Greenville where he now owns and operates a private teaching studio.



Kellianne Floyd, Assistant Director of Outreach

Kellianne Floyd is a native of Spartanburg, SC. She began dancing at the age of 2 and has had a passion for dance and the arts for her entire life. Kellianne taught dance in the public schools in South Carolina for 19 years where she worked to build and expand dance programs in Fairfield County School District (Fairfield Central High), Lexington-Richland School District 5 (Chapin and Dutch Fork High), Spartanburg School District 2 (Hendrix Elementary) and Spartanburg School District 1 (GT Dance at all six elementary schools and expanded the program to middle and high schools; most recently full-time at Campobello-Gramling School teaching K5-8th). She holds a BA in Dance Education from Winthrop University, MS in Parks, Recreation, and Tourism Management (with an emphasis in Therapeutic Recreation) from Clemson University, and an Ed. S in Elementary School Administration from Converse University.



Katie Villier, Science Instructor

Katie has a degree in Biology and a minor in Science Education. She has been teaching for 8 years and has taught middle and high school science! In her classroom she puts a focus on hands-on learning, and feels as though students learn best from exploring. She strives everyday to ensure her classroom is a safe and accepting space for her students to thrive.



Jake Fowler, Bassoon Adjunct

Bassoonist Jake Fowler has been regarded by American Conductor Mark Powell as possessing “deeply committed musical eloquence tied to singularly mad technical skills.” Formerly a bassoonist with The Arkansas Symphony Orchestra, Fowler is currently serving as 3rd bassoon and contrabassoon with the West Virginia Symphony Orchestra. Fowler has acted as guest musician with such organizations as The Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, The Richmond Symphony, The Charlotte Symphony, The Nashville Symphony, The Lexington Philharmonic, The Atlanta Ballet Orchestra and The New World Symphony. Fowler attended the Eastman School of Music for his Bachelor’s as well as his Master’s Degrees where he was also unanimously awarded the prestigious Performer’s Certificate.



Haley Floyd, Photography Instructor

Attended Lander University as an undergraduate and earned an MFA in Photography in 2016 from Clemson University. Haley worked as an adjunct at Lander University immediately following graduation and eventually became a Full Time Lecturer and Foundations Coordinator in 2020.



Zac Pelicano, Public Information Coordinator

Having lived in the Upstate for the better part of 30 years and being a proud SCGSAH graduate (*Drama Class of ‘05*), Zac is excited to be part of the Governor’s School’s unique mission. After high school, Zac graduated from the Stella Adler Studio of Acting in New York before returning to South Carolina where he spent five years directing theater and founding Fireside Radio Theater, an audio drama troupe that performed both original and classic works for over a decade.



Laura Diaz, World Language Instructor

Originally from Peru, Laura Diaz Rubio received her Bachelor of Arts in Modern Languages at Cesar Vallejo University of Peru and taught ESL in Peru for 4 years. Laura moved to the United States 10 years ago to teach in the Spanish immersion program in North Carolina. This will be her 3rd year working as a Spanish teacher.



Dr. Seth Russell, Cello Adjunct

Dr. Russell performs internationally as a chamber musician, soloist, and orchestral player. Audiences have praised his technical wizardry, adventurous programming, and inspiring musicianship. He has performed solo and chamber music recitals in venues such as Carnegie Hall’s Weill Recital Hall, Boston’s Jordan Hall, Eastman’s Kodak Hall, and Taipei’s Elite Performance Hall. In 2017 and 2019 he was awarded a top prize in the New York International Artists Competition. He became the Principal Cellist of the Greenville Symphony Orchestra in South Carolina in 2021.



Jordan Dantzler, AP Art History Adjunct

Jordan is an interdisciplinary visual artist and educator who has obtained her MFA from the University of South Carolina. At UofSC, she concentrated in ceramics and taught 3-Dimensional Design. Dantzler also received a BFA from Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. In addition to her artist practice, Jordan has worked at several museums and other art institutions including the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA), ZuCot Gallery, and the Columbia Museum of Art. Passionate about art and accessibility, Dantzler is teaching AP and Honors Art History at the Governor’s School where she enjoys inspiring emerging artists and bridging the gap between contemporary and historical art.



Xia Bowens, Residential Life Coordinator

Originally from Greenville SC, Xia is a graduate of Claflin University in South Carolina. She completed her degree majoring in Music and minoring in Education with a concentration in Instrumental Music. Xia served as the South Carolina Music Education Association Advocacy Chair on the Collegiate level in her last year of school.

ALUMNI ACCOMPLISHMENTS & UPDATES



Bella Bishara (*Visual Arts, '23*) joins three other artists selected for a year-long fellowship highlighting the diversity of Greenville's visual arts scene. The Egyptian-born, mixed media painter's work focuses on the artist's own personal experiences, along with themes of spirituality and mental health. Read more [here](#).



Nicole Beharie (*Drama '03*) received an Emmy nomination for Best Supporting Actress in a Drama Series. She's nominated for her performance in the Apple TV+ series "The Morning Show," where she plays Christine Hunter, a former Olympian and co-host of TMS.



André North (*Music '05*) returned to campus for his 5th year of teaching summer music students. His love of music and teaching is evident when he works with our young musicians and students in Hanahan where he earned the well-deserved title of Hanahan Middle School Teacher of the Year in 2022.

André graduated from the University of South Carolina and attended Penn State where he received a Masters of Music Performance. During the school year, André is the Director of Bands at Hanahan Middle School, Assistant Director of Bands at Hanahan High School, and the director and founder of the Berkeley County Honors Middle School Jazz Program.



Two productions featuring Govie alums brought home Tony awards! Stephen Sondheim's "Merrily We Roll Along", featuring **Christian Strange** (*Drama, '14*) as Ru/Reverend, won in the Best Musical Revival category, while "The Outsiders", featuring **Wanza Johnson** (*Drama, '12*) as Ensemble/understudy for Dallas, took home the Best Musical award. In addition, both shows were the most-awarded productions of the night, with each show winning four Tonys!



Tony and Grammy Award-winning actress and singer **Patina Miller** (*Drama '02*) wowed audiences on the White House South Lawn with her performance at this year's Juneteenth concert! This is her second year in a row performing for this event, and she appeared alongside legendary artists like Gladys Knight, Patti LaBelle, Charlie Wilson and Anthony Hamilton. Read more [here](#).



International Ballet announces **Adair Kempf** (*Dance, '03*) as the new Academy Director for the 2024-2025 Season. The Academy Director is a brand new full time position created by International Ballet leadership to support the faculty, students, and families of the non-profit. Read more [here](#).



Jay Will, Greenville native and Govie grad (*Drama, '16*), stars as the lead character in the film "Rob Peace," out in theaters nationwide TODAY. Based on the bestselling biography,

"The Short and Tragic Life of Robert Peace," by Jeff Hobbs, the film tells of a brilliant but disadvantaged young man from Newark, NJ raised by a single mother struggling to



Academy Award-nominee **Danielle Brooks** (*Drama, '07*) stars alongside Jack Black and Jason Momoa in "A Minecraft Movie," the first feature-length adaptation of the

popular video game. Audiences got a first look at Danielle and the rest of the cast in the wild, vibrant trailer released in September.

2024 SUMMER PROGRAMS

ALUMNI INVOLVEMENT

Our summer Govies have learned from top notch arts educators, many of whom were once in their shoes! This summer we had 19 SCGSAH alumni on campus to take part in summer programs. These alumni took on the roles of instructors, residential life coordinators and program assistants. They participated in a campus wide alumni panel discussion with the students to share their experiences as working artists. This session concluded with a Q&A. Panelists answered a variety of questions including what made them want to attend SCGSAH, defining college/career choices and what challenges they face as working artists. Check out this lineup of exceptional alumni who joined us this summer:

Arts Instructors:

- Andre North** (*Music, '05*) - Music
- Aidan Forster** (*Creative Writing, '18*) - Creative Writing
- Kat Eaves** (*Visual Arts, '17*) - Visual Arts
- Adair Kempf** (*Dance, '03*) - Dance
- Elaine Quave** (*Visual Arts, '01*) - Visual Arts

Summer RLCs:

- Xia Bowens** (*Music, '20*)
- Trey Buie** (*Drama, '23*)
- Samuel Hudman** (*Music, '23*)
- Christy Hudson** (*Visual Arts, '23*)
- Natalie McElhinny** (*Drama, '21*)

Department Chairs:

- Zach Hodges** (*Drama, '11*) - Drama
- Lauren Vaughn** (*Music, '06*) - Music

Program Assistants:

- Jet Joyner** (*Visual Arts, '23*) - Visual Arts
- Aleta Larkin** (*Visual Arts, '22*) - Visual Arts
- Aimee Larue** (*Dance, '21*) - Dance
- Emma McArtor** (*Creative Writing, '22*) - Creative Writing
- Olivia Shoemaker** (*Drama, '24*) - Creative Writing
- Dawson Williams** (*Music, '22*) - Music
- Abigail Cargo** (*Creative Writing, Summer '17 & '18*) - Summer Programs Office

From ADMISSIONS

As we celebrate the Governor's School's 25th anniversary, the Office of Admissions is reminded of the impact our Alumni have on the school's legacy. Your stories of dedication, success, and artistic excellence continue to inspire the next generation of Govies and play a crucial role in shaping the future of our community.

This is an exciting and busy time for us - the application opens in October, our recruiters are traveling statewide, and we're hosting a variety of in-person and virtual events to connect with students and families. We're here to answer questions and offer guidance as they explore the opportunities available at the Governor's School.

We warmly invite you to join us in encouraging the young artists in your community to apply to our Summer or Residential High School programs for 2024-2025. The priority deadline for all programs is January 15, 2025. For more information, please visit [SCGSAH.org/admissions](https://scgсах.org/admissions).

25th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS!

LET’S PARTY LIKE IT’S 1999

In honor of the school's opening on September 5, 1999, we donned our best 90's inspired looks and came together as a campus to celebrate during a September Community Meeting! Student Body Co-Presidents River McGee and Charlie Ratterree led us through a presentation on some of the biggest historical and cultural events of 1999 –including the opening of the Governor's School, of course! Mr. Brookie and Dr. Steenerson tested our knowledge with a game of Govie trivia. Special guests from SCETV spoke about our new partnership, the resources they offer young creatives in the state, and shared some opportunities for our Govies to contribute to their programming. To wrap it all up, we heard some touching memories and reflections from Dr. Adderley, Dean Thomas, and ceramics instructor Elaine Quave, who is also an alumna of our first graduating class.



Members of our administration hosted a reception in Walterboro to say "Thank You" to the community for its support over the years. Along with friends of the school, alumni Grant McClure (*Creative Writing*, '15) and Emma Barnes McClure (*Visual Arts*, '10) were also in attendance to reminisce about their time at the Governor's School and reflect on where their paths have led them.

As part of our year-long anniversary celebration we will be sharing milestones in Governor’s School history with our current students in the form of weekly trivia, guest speakers, and a variety of presentations, and with alumni in our newsletters and on social media.

SCGSAH HISTORY...DID YOU KNOW?

SCGSAH was privileged to receive leadership and advocacy efforts from the following Governors of South Carolina.



The Honorable Richard W. Riley
Governor of SC 1979-1987
United States Secretary of Education 1993-2001

Governor Riley established the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts by Executive Order in October 1980. Summer Programs

were held on the campus of Furman University.



The Honorable Carroll A. Campbell, Jr.
Governor of SC 1987-1995

Governor Campbell signed the legislative bill in 1994 to create the nine-month residential high school.



The Honorable David M. Beasley
Governor of SC 1995-1999

Governor Beasley signed legislation and approved capital funding to help build the high school.



The Honorable Jim Hodges
Governor of SC 1999-2003

Governor Hodges was an advocate and supporter for the Governor’s School and was in attendance at the dedication of the campus on April 1, 2000. His son Luke attended the high

school for Creative Writing and is a member of the Class of 2011.

REMEMBERING THE PAST AND PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

BY LAUREN VAUGHN



As I reflect on my professional journey, I find that my path has often been driven by a desire for change—new environments, fresh faces, and novel experiences. Yet, in this current chapter, the comfort and familiarity of teaching at the Governor’s School have become profoundly fulfilling. There’s something both surreal and rewarding about leading a department that I once called home as a student. Despite the school’s physical sameness, I am acutely aware of how much I have evolved since my high school days. I can still vividly recall the people, concerts, downtown excursions, and even the distinct smell of the practice rooms from my student days. These memories continually influence how I approach my role, helping us navigate the present and plan for the future.



When I graduated high school, I was eager to leave South Carolina to broaden my horizons. My educational journey took me from North

Carolina to Ohio and California. In all of these places, I performed great music in beautiful venues and studied with teachers who recognized the importance of developing oneself in ways that extended beyond musical performance. While living in California in the midst of figuring out my next steps after finishing my master’s degree, I was given practical advice to pursue my final degree in a place I could stay after graduation. It was at that point that I was ready to return to South Carolina in 2013. The next three years in Columbia allowed me to connect to the music scene, and at the completion of my doctoral degree I was fortunate to have adjunct teaching positions, a position with the Augusta Symphony, and various freelance opportunities around the state. After eight memorable years in Columbia, we decided to relocate to Greenville where an opportunity to teach in the Governor’s School summer program led to my full-time position.

Throughout my educational journey, I often thought back to the unique artistic environment at the Governor’s School. Although I never anticipated returning, especially in the role of music department chair, I can

genuinely say that this is my dream job. Walking into the school each morning, I am greeted by a blend of nostalgia and current responsibilities. Every time I pass the steps of Smith Recital Hall, I remember the evening practice sessions, when practice rooms were scarce, and we found little nooks throughout the building to practice. My time as a student at the Governor’s School was transformative, and now, as department chair, I strive to ensure that all students also have an enriching experience. We have maintained the best aspects of the founding model while incorporating new musical opportunities and classes into our curriculum. I use my experience in higher education to guide students in their college and conservatory applications, staying current with the professional music world to broaden their perspectives on potential degree paths.

The Governor’s School has long been a beacon for arts education in our state, nurturing creativity and inspiring growth, and the environment at the Governor’s School encourages creativity in teaching and demands ongoing growth in my own musicianship and educational expertise. Every day, I seamlessly integrate creativity, musical development, teaching, and performance. Sharing my journey with students is immensely rewarding; they challenge and inspire me, pushing me to seek new and improved teaching methods and curriculum. Teaching, to me, is a commitment to being a lifelong learner, and I see myself as a guide on both my journey and theirs. My career has been shaped by a combination of dedication and patience, and I’ve learned to appreciate the unexpected turns along the way.



My husband, Jeff, works as a Music Teaching Artist in our outreach department, and our 5-year-old son, Weston, aspires to be a Govie one day, with interests in visual arts and music. The infectious energy of the school never ceases to invigorate me, even on challenging days. I am grateful to do work that nourishes my artistic soul and to share that passion with young musicians from South Carolina.



OUTREACH: COASTAL CREATIVES

What is creativity? Why is it important to grow our creative mindset? Can our creativity support those around us, and if so how can we lend our creative energy to empower others? How can we work together and use the arts to solve challenges? What do young creatives need now to be successful later in such a dynamic world? These questions - and MANY more - became the foundation for Coastal Creatives, a dynamic new summer outreach experience hosted last July. The project, piloted in collaboration with Horry Georgetown Technical College, hosted an engaged group of students from six schools/ homeschools in the Conway/Myrtle Beach area.

Each day began with special "Early Drop-Off" sessions for those who couldn't wait to get started, and quickly transitioned into the patchwork of arts based activities scheduled throughout the morning. Students and teachers worked collaboratively, facing

one another, sharing thoughts and ideas - sometimes sitting around a collection of classroom tables, piled high with collage fodder, or stamp-making materials, or watercolor supplies, or giant sticks with marker tips. Other times we stood in circles or sat on the floor to develop characters, who might find themselves bouncing out of an imaginary bag or flying onto the whiteboard or crawling around the floor or a number of other fascinating scenarios naturally flowing from their young minds.

We honed in on the power of observation, and used our senses to guide our focus during daily walks around the beautiful host campus. Guided by clipboard activities, these "field trips" not only provided an opportunity for sunlight and the beautiful coastal breeze, but helped us appreciate the value of the world around us in our personal creative development.



After necessary water breaks, individual and group observations were further developed through hands-on collaborative activities facilitated by our team of Outreach Teaching Artists. We found ourselves drawing a ramp we noticed for tiny turtles, tearing paper to recreate a special bird-shaped trash container, listening to the water fountain, tracing and decorating our handprints, turning maps into art, and so much more.

Special memories were made that week. Many of which are found throughout the torn, bent, taped, and shaped reflections added to our collaborative wallspace between sessions.

As part of our commitment to Service Learning, we were also fortunate to have Creative Writing student River McGee join us in a unique role as a peer mentor. River is a senior at the Governor's School, a member of Connecting Arts Through Service, and serves as co-president of student government. She is also from Horry County, and has been involved with a variety of experiences on the HGTC campus before enrolling at the Governor's School.

We consistently observed River engaging each young creative with care and support. She found herself serving all kinds of important duties throughout the workshop - like producing and organizing our wallspace, assisting with snacks and meals, lending her talents as a creative storyteller, and even serving as "best Coastal Creatives tour guide in history" during our observation "field trips." Her direct, peer-level support became an invaluable and organic aspect of the Coastal Creatives experience for participants and for our Teaching Artists.

At the end of the experience, one student bravely shared "It was special to be with other people like me - other creative people that are willing to share and explore interesting ideas." As families came to pick up their child for the last time, students began to select some of their creations to take home and we quickly found ourselves in the middle impromptu sharing sessions with curious adults who "had been hearing all sorts of interesting stories throughout the week." Many began asking about when we could host the next Coastal Creatives.

After much reflection (and a little rest), we're excited to share confirmation that we will be hosting our second year of Coastal Creatives this summer! The Governor's School Outreach team is in the creative stages of planning for our next events at Horry Georgetown Technical College, and strengthening our commitment to nurture the creative potential of young South Carolinians. If you or someone you know is interested in this unique opportunity, be on the lookout for more information soon.





20 QUESTIONS WITH XIA BOWENS

- 1. Where were you born?** I was born and raised in Greenville, South Carolina.
- 2. What three words would you use to describe yourself?** Resilient, ambitious, adept
- 3. Are you an introvert or an extrovert?** Both
- 4. What was your first job?** The Children's Place
- 5. What is your pet peeve?** Slothful Working
- 6. What was your major in college?** Music with a minor in Education
- 7. What is your favorite comfort food?** Pasta
- 8. If money were no object, what's the first thing you would buy?** Land
- 9. What's Something About You That People Would Be Surprised To Know?** I am the youngest of 9 siblings.
- 10. What part of the driver's test are you most likely to fail?** Backing up in a straight line
- 11. What advice would you give to a current Govie?** Stay true to who you are. Authenticity is better than being complacent.
- 12. What was the first concert you ever went to?** Fantasia
- 13. Are you a good dancer?** Not at all
- 14. What's on the top of your bucket list?** Going to Dubai
- 15. What was your last vacation?** Cruise to Bahamas
- 16. What #hashtag best describes you?** #Livinginmytruth
- 17. If you could have any superpower which would it be?** Power mimicry
- 18. What would the title of your autobiography be?** I Just Want to Be Free
- 19. What's your proudest accomplishment?** Completing my degree
- 20. How did your Governor's School experience and education impact you?** My experience here at the school helped me learn to adapt and be flexible. This unique educational experience helped me learn that I am in my own lane and I can't compare my experience and level of artistry to anyone else because they aren't me and I'm not them. Academically, I was challenged to strive for excellence because there were so many individuals that came from different backgrounds that pushed me to do my best (I am very competitive). The Governor's School is a one of a kind experience that can't be summed into words. The love of Art runs throughout campus wildly. The "want to be here" is like no other. The feeling of knowing that you aren't alone and when you need help having a campus full of adults that are in the field you want to pursue is one in a lifetime. Here, I had the music world in my hands and I am eternally grateful.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The student life department is looking to hire several part-time RLCs for the months of December and January. If you will be in Greenville during this time (or can be) please reach out to Jason Englisbe at jenglisbe@scgsah.org to see how you can potentially pick up some part-time work at SCGSAH!

ALUMNI ON CAMPUS

October 29th | 7:30 pm
Smith Recital Hall

Music alum Robert Young ('02) returns to Smith Recital Hall for a special performance featuring captivating saxophone and piano music by Black and women composers. Joined by pianist Dmitri Vorobiev, Dr. Young will showcase an inspiring program that celebrates these exceptional voices in music. Admission is free and open to the public.

October 30th | 7:00 pm
Smith Recital Hall

Music alumna Catherine Con Morse will be on campus in October to read from her book, *The Notes*.

Support the next generation

As we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Governor's School, we invite you to honor the impact it had on your creative journey! **Support current students** and ensure that future generations of artists can benefit from the same inspiring environment that helped shape your talents.

Join us in **making a difference today** to help secure 25 more years of artistic excellence. Your support is essential for continuing this legacy—**act now to invest in the future!**



Engage Your Employer

Whether through corporate sponsorship or giving matches, check out your employer's giving options.



Leave a Legacy

It's never too early to consider estate planning! Consider including the Foundation to support future Govies!



Give Now!

Make a gift to support meal plans, Guest Artists, Outreach, or even your former department!



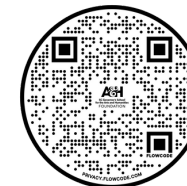
Tell Us More About Your Experience

Give the Foundation insight into your Govie experience to help us better tell the Governor's School story!



Attend Performances & Events

Grow the Govie audience by coming back for student performances and alumni events.



Scan here to donate, tell us your story, or connect with campus!



**SC Governor's School
for the Arts and Humanities
FOUNDATION**

save the date!
**4.26.25 | Anniversary Gala
Greenville, SC**
more details to come



864-282-1570

jared.martin@gsafoundation.net

www.scgsah.org/give

ALUMNI NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2024

at the
Governor's School



15 University Street, Greenville, SC 29601 | 864.282.3777 | SCGSAH.org