

BLARNEY

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SPRING 2025



Celebrate
THE
MEMORIES



NOTRE DAME
HIGH SCHOOL • CHATTANOOGA

From *our* LEADERSHIP

To our NDHS families and friends —

As the end of my first year as Head of School approaches, I have to reflect on all the wonderful accomplishments that have made this year so special for our school. I remain incredibly humbled and honored to serve in my role: from new hires to our staff to student accomplishments to major improvements on our campus, this has been a year of growth and inspiration.

One of the most significant milestones for our Diocese came with the appointment of Bishop Mark Beckman. We are grateful to have his spiritual guidance and leadership as we continue to grow in faith and community. His appointment marks an important new chapter for both the Diocese and our school, and we look forward to working with Bishop Mark in the years ahead. In addition, NDHS' very own George Valadie was named as the new Superintendent of Schools for the Diocese of Knoxville. George has been a dedicated and visionary leader for NDHS throughout the years.

This year also saw the completion of several exciting campus improvements including major renovations to Phifer Gym, multiple new HVAC units, and a renovated girls basketball locker room. We were also blessed with a new gym floor in our Varallo Center, which was generously donated by our alumnus, John Prater. His generosity is a testament to the lasting bond our alumni have with Notre Dame, and we are deeply grateful for his support. Our community also came together in an incredible show of support at our Green and Gold Gala. The turnout was truly remarkable, and the funds raised resulted in the purchase of our new school bus. A special thank you to all who contributed to this unforgettable evening.

We are moving closer in pursuing additional renovations to our dance studio, football and basketball locker rooms, and new exterior doors throughout campus. Along with our administrative team and advisement board, we are working diligently to outline the

needs, goals, and long-term strategic planning for the future of NDHS and to build our school into the best version we have ever seen.

A personal highlight for me has been to be a part of such a wonderful group of students and staff. We have incredible students who possess remarkable gifts that should make all members of our community proud to be a part of the Irish Nation. I look forward to watching our seniors take on the world and continue to embody the values and lessons that they learned while at NDHS.



Preparations and planning are underway to celebrate the 150th anniversary of NDHS... yes, 150 years! We have SO much to celebrate, and we look forward to having so many of our alumni and supporters back on campus more frequently. I envision the next several years to be full of remarkable growth and

accomplishments for NDHS. We are planning the school's largest campus expansion and facilities upgrade to date to maximize the spiritual, social, academic, and athletic experience of our students.



I want to express my deep gratitude to each member of the Notre Dame community—students, faculty, staff, parents, and alumni. Together, we have made this year one to remember, filled with pride, growth, and community spirit.

Great days are ahead for NDHS! *Go Irish!*

Eric Schexnaildre '96
Head of School

Campus UPDATES



Thanks to the generosity of those who donated to the Capital Campaign, we have been busy improving many facets of our campus and investing in the safety of our students with camera coverage of exits, parking lots and hallways. Included in the updates are new lockers, floors, lighting, and paint, along with bathroom and ceiling renovations for the Girls Locker Room. The majority of our building now has a new roof, eco-friendly windows, new electric heat and air-conditioning systems, and new thermostats have been added in each classroom. These improvements are a true blessing, and we are grateful for your support!



Faculty PROFILES

Ms. Raja Bhandari

by Selena Mullinax '26

From Military Bases to Home Base

After college, Ms. Raja Bhandari joined the Air Force on a delayed enlistment program. Originally her plan was to become an Air Force medic but was introduced to another opportunity that changed everything. Impressed after a trip to one of Macon, Georgia's squadrons, she decided to pursue space operations. She controlled GPS satellites, making sure phones, airplanes, and military systems navigate accurately. Later, she became a certified instructor, evaluator, and manual writer for all satellite operators, passing on her expertise to others.



Road to Notre Dame

Ms. Bhandari loved her career in the military, but she became more interested in education. When her son was at OLPH and Notre Dame, she actively participated in parent organizations, chaired the curriculum committee, all while leading the middle schools Science Olympiad team. Although she was offered a teaching position, she said the timing wasn't right. Two decades into public school, Ms Bhandari decided it was time to join the Notre Dame staff, simultaneously coaching their girl's tennis team to win a state championship. She has now been inspiring students at Notre Dame for three years and counting. She was a natural fit at Notre Dame with her long-time experience and passion for science, specifically anatomy.

"I wanted to be at Notre Dame because it has always had a reputation of being such an amazing Catholic school, and it was one that I trusted to send my son to because I knew he would get a good education. More than that, I just wanted to be here because of the family atmosphere because it truly is like a family."

Intro to Anatomy

Ms. Bhandari didn't plan to teach anatomy but having already finished a pre-med track in college and later studying it in nursing school, she had the perfect background in the subject. With her previous healthcare knowledge and love for anatomy, teaching was



a breeze. Ms. Bhandari's overall favorite part of anatomy is when she watches the light bulb moments happen during case studies after students use their knowledge and apply it to real life medical situations. She also loves hearing her students share experiences they had outside the classroom where they were able to apply what they learned from her. For example, going to the doctor and being able to translate for your parents what is going on.

"When you learn about the human body it hits closer to home more than anything else that you could possibly take because it's all applicable to yourself."

Ms Bhandari's Approach to Anatomy

Her philosophy mirrors college-level practice and expectations because she models it exactly like her college classes at Chattanooga State. College-style quizzes, model study, and labs ensure that her students are well prepared for future healthcare studies and more. Her former students that are now in college, specifically nursing majors, share how easy their anatomy class is after high school. Anatomy in college, especially for pre-med, is commonly known to be very challenging. Her alumni frequently return and tell her they're passing the class without any trouble thanks to the solid foundation she provided.

Hands-On Learning

Under Ms Bhandari's guidance, Notre Dame's anatomy program has thrived. When I asked her what makes the program so great she said it was because of the autonomy she's given to teach what she feels is most important while still following standards. She also credited her colleagues from Chattanooga State for the curriculum she brings to high school to almost match so that kids see "how broad the scope of material there is". The class has improved with new 3D anatomical models for all systems of the body for interactive learning. The tools and flexible curriculum allow her students to have the best immersive educational experience.

Ms Bhandari to Me

Ms. Bhandari is the most thorough teacher I've ever had, and she is so knowledgeable about so many different parts within the subject. Innovative teaching methods and real-world applications have prepared us for the real world, not just a paper exam. She has cultivated curiosity and critical thinking in the classroom and boosted interest in the medical field by sponsoring the healthcare careers club here at Notre Dame.

"This has been the one place that I've been the happiest in my whole career." 🍀

Officer Neely

by Josiah Morais '26

Officer Neely has become an integral part of the Notre Dame family since he was hired five years ago. Simply called "Neely" by those who know him, he is someone that people know they can trust. It's apparent to all around him that Officer Neely brings passion and joy into the work and service he does every day at Notre Dame. Lunch wouldn't be the same without his entertaining lunch line trivia questions that students always look forward to. His constant watchfulness and willingness to help the student body at Notre Dame illustrates his care for them. Officer Neely is always striving to make the campus safer. Just this year, he oversaw the installation of a new security system.

In addition, he has been working on the privatization of the road in front of Notre Dame High School, which would elevate school security to a whole new level. Officer Neely has truly excelled in his role of protector of the school.



JM: What brought you to Notre Dame?

ON: I used to work with the previous officer that was here, Mr. Sam Clay, and he said they were looking for an extra officer in the evening time. I went into the interview, and I met with Mr. Valadie and Mr. Mullin, and then my journey started here at Notre Dame High School. And that was 5 years ago. I wouldn't change it. It's been the best journey in the world.

JM: What does a typical day look like for you here at Notre Dame?

ON: Well, a typical day at Notre Dame High School consists of making sure everything is on properly in the school, and making

sure the lighting and all the safety things are up to date. I direct traffic to ensure the students get to and from their vehicles safely, because safety is my number one priority here for the students. I do security sweeps and door checks to ensure that no one without authorization gets in with the students, and to ensure that anybody who's supposed to be on campus is on campus. I also try to make the lunch line as fun as possible...giving everyone a fair opportunity to get to the front of the line with the trivia, even if you are coming in late. Making sure everyone on the Notre Dame campus is safe—from students, faculty, staff, and all the way to the cafeteria crew—is my number one priority.

JM: What are some things you do that most people wouldn't know about?

ON: I am also a bounty hunter. I have a team that I am on. We do go pick up people when needed, which can be a little challenging sometimes. Then you are dealing with actual criminals that are trying not to go back to jail. It's not always the safest situation, but it is necessary to keep the community safe. How I always see it: I don't know what side of town my students live on, but if I got a bad guy possibly, I don't want him near my students, my faculty, or anything. I always have Notre Dame in mind and at heart when I'm doing something.

JM: What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?

ON: That I can ensure everyone's safety. I also receive an overwhelming amount of love from my students with the letters and cards, which is something I will always cherish. It is very rewarding for me, even though it is my job to do. Just to have that appreciation and love from your faculty and your students means everything. I still have every last one of them (letters).



JM: What new security technologies have been installed, and how will they improve school security?

ON: Yes, we do have a new security system here at Notre Dame. Our cameras are audio and video. To be able to always have an eye on your students (and) to make sure they are safe everywhere on campus, is good, and I'm glad we actually got that (new security system). So, our cameras have helped us see things in the neighborhood overnight that weren't school related. Our camera systems have definitely done the job, and we are very grateful that we can protect our students.

JM: I heard that there are efforts to privatize the road in front of Notre

Dame. Can you just tell me a little bit about how this will make campus safer?

ON: Privatizing the road up front would mean that we would be able to block off the two streets. That would enable us to protect the campus a whole lot better to ensure a higher percent(age) of safety; more than what we already have. That would actually be a great thing if and when that happens. Considering that it is a city street, you know, our upper administration is in contact with the city of Chattanooga; they have had multiple meetings and planning. And that's why I'm always on campus, to make sure the safety of my students and faculty is my number one priority. 🍀

Student STORIES



1876 Society

We are so excited to introduce The 1876 Society. This society recognizes our senior leaders: ND prefects and captains, Green and Gold ambassadors, all titled officers from national societies and those with the most service hours.

Black History Month



As part of Black History Month, our students visited Selma, Alabama to learn more about its role in the Civil Rights Movement and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Along with Mrs. Silva and Mrs. Bradford, they also traveled to Montgomery to see the Equal Justice Initiative's Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice.



Serving Others

Students served at the Brainerd Community Food Pantry and at Sleep in Heavenly Peace, where they built beds for youth in the Chattanooga area.

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS

Mock Trial

The Notre Dame Mock Trial teams went to competition. The teams are sponsored by Mrs. Broxton and Mr. Mariani along with attorneys Theresa Critchfield and Liz

Little '15. Students participated in rehearsed trials as attorneys or witnesses to learn more about the legal system and compete against teams from other schools.

Team members include:

Joseph Ankar
Eli Costellow
Anna Cat Critchfield
Kaitlyn Critchfield
Maggie Critchfield

Lucy Dibrell

Scarlett Distasio
Sam Fant
Emma Ford
Joshua Jacobson
Hannah Johnson

Ben Kammerer

Caroline Lee
Natalie Newton
Katherine White
McKinna Wiles
Casch Wilson



Fighting Irish Robotics

The Fighting Irish Robotics team competed in the Pumpkin Spice Vex V5 Robotics Competition. They placed 5th in qualifiers, made it to quarter finals, and ranked the highest in defense.

Team members include:

Reynaldo Acevedo
Gus Blair-Barnett
Deric Bono
Gavin Borchers
Quentin Crawford
Boone Hammond
Joshua Jacobson
Jude Rogers
Oscar Streko



ACCOMPLISHMENTS *in the* **ARTS**

Theatre

Congratulations to the Theatre Department on their outstanding production of *The Fall of the House of Usher*.



Alex Walker, Alicia Malpartida, Sam Fant, Connor Johnson, Megan Polickoski, and Adeliene Crawford as Tavern Patrons



AJ Parten played Rodrick Usher



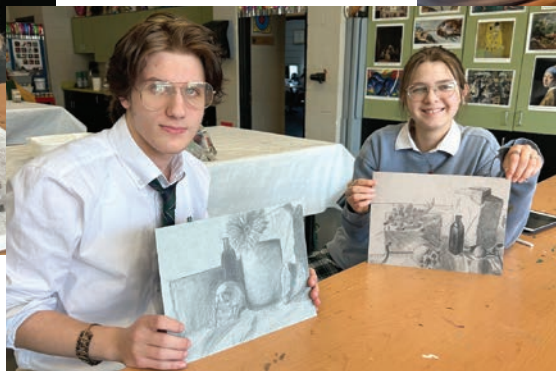
Congratulations to the students selected as cast members for Notre Dame High School's Spring production of *The Lightning Thief: A Percy Jackson Musical*.

Drew Miller, Alicia Malpartida, Connor Johnson, Alex Walker, and Megan Polickoski as Tavern Patrons

Visual Arts



Mrs. DeVilliers' Honors Portfolio Art class finalizing many pieces for their portfolios



Students in Mrs. DeVilliers' art class creating paper mache sculptures



Ash Wednesday

We entered the season of Lent with our all-school Ash Wednesday Mass.



MILESTONES IN MUSIC



1st Band: Lander Smith, Austin Suggs and Miles Gilbert



2nd Band: Kyle Verro and Maddie Taylor

All-East Tennessee Band Awards



Honorable Mention:
Ellie Wesson



Band Plays in Orlando

Our band took a trip to Orlando in March to perform at St. Andrew Catholic Elementary School, and they also had a chance to visit Disney World!



Irish Rhapsody

2024-2025 Color Guard members include: Alicia Malpartida, Zoe Tavarez, Maddie Grass, Sandra Verro, AnnaCat Critchfield



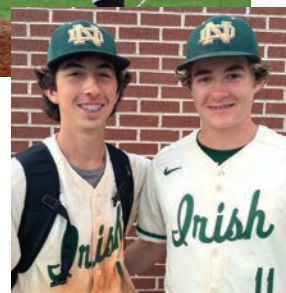
ATHLETICS ACCOLADES

PROFILE: Cooper Jones '25

"In my time at Notre Dame, I have been a part of the baseball, bowling, and golf teams. This has allowed me to form relationships with many different people. As a freshman, I got the opportunity to play on the baseball and bowling teams with my cousin, Ryan, who I had never gotten to play on a team with before that year. My junior and senior years, I was blessed to be able to bowl with my brother, Carter, who I also had never been on a team with before. Those opportunities mean so much to me and speak to the family atmosphere that is cemented into our school."



Cooper Jones (Baseball), East Tennessee State University, and Joseph Myers (Swimming), Berry College



Cooper (right) and his cousin, Ryan (left)

"My coaches taught me to never get complacent and always strive to be a better version of myself. Participating in multiple sports has helped to ensure that I am always busy. I believe my experiences will help me succeed when I am going to college and playing baseball at East Tennessee State University the next few years."

"Being at Notre Dame has taught me to cherish the relationships that I've built with my peers, teachers, and coaches because they will last a lifetime. I have met my best friends at Notre Dame while also being able to grow in body, mind and spirit. I will be

forever grateful for my four years spent at Notre Dame, and I couldn't imagine them spent anywhere else."



PROFILE: Joseph Meyers '25

Joseph Myers represents a student who has taken advantage of the Notre Dame experience. He is a member of the swim team and band. His swimming coach, Dale Tillman, said, "He strives to be a better version of himself each day, and he makes everyone else around him that much better. The best part about Joseph is that because of his somewhat reserved demeanor, he is the kid you never saw coming, and then bam! There he is taking the world by storm."

Our band director, Marcie Smith, added, "Joseph is a prime example of what band could be for every kid in this school: a phenomenal athlete who just likes to play."



Joseph Myers, Nathan Jungels and Katelyn Neill competed at the TISCA State Swimming Championships. Katelyn dropped 3 seconds in the 500 freestyle, Nathan set a new personal record in the 100 freestyle, and Joseph finished as a top 10 backstroke in the state of Tennessee. Joseph was recognized as a National Swimming Academic All-American — a recognition that only 2% of high school swimmers nationwide receive.



Dryden Anderson affirms the Fighting Irish spirit of our football team.



After finishing with an overall record of 28-17 and winning both the District and Region Runner-Up Titles, the Lady Irish Volleyball Team advanced to the Elite 8 in the postseason. This season there were significant milestones met by Sam Brown with 1,000 kills and Callie McCormick with 1,000 digs.



The NDHS Irish and St. Jude Saints squads cheer our athletes on to victory!



In the District 2 Basketball Tournament, the Boys Team finished runner up and the Girls Team won the title.

The Girls Head Basketball Coach Jason Hill was named the District 2 Coach of the Year.



Gaas Herman '25 hit the 1000 point mark this season.



Luke Deitch, Alex Pham and Miles Carter qualified for the State Wrestling Tournament.



Landon Goeller '25 was named All-State in the Division II-AA classification.

STORIES *from our* **SISTER SCHOOLS**

News from Our Lady of Perpetual Help School

The OLPH Middle School Soccer team achieved an incredible 3-peat, winning the ISC Championship for the 3rd year in a row in an exciting, rain-soaked game!



Mary Curtiss (left) and Carleen Evans (right) were recognized at the Diocesan In-Service in February 2025 for their dedicated years of service to OLPH

School. Ms. Curtis has been a valued member of the OLPH community for 46 years, while Ms. Evans has contributed her talents and commitment for 41 years. Their dedication to our school and students is truly appreciated!

8th-grade student Eva Morales was featured as a Budding Young Artist in the Spring issue of CityScope Magazine. Her article, The Art of Self-Expression With Eva Victoria Morales Joubert, highlights her artistic journey and is showcased alongside other talented young artists



who are already gaining recognition through exhibitions, awards, and published work.



4th-grade student Kasey Mosley was honored for her beautiful artwork, which was selected to be featured on the Diocese of Knoxville Christmas card.

Thirteen of our 7th and 8th graders proudly represented OLPH at the Tennessee State Junior Beta Convention, held Nov. 24-26 at the Opryland Resort in Nashville.

Competing alongside 7,000 fellow Junior Beta members, they showcased their talents in events such as Quiz Bowl, Musicology, Creative Writing, Speech, Performing & Visual Arts, Cake Decorating, and more. Embracing the convention's theme, "Radiate," our students truly shined, demonstrating the spirit and pride of OLPH!



In March, our Robotics went to the State Championship in Hendersonville, TN. Our teams have had an outstanding season, bringing

home an impressive 10 middle school and 3 elementary trophies so far. We are incredibly proud of their hard work and dedication and can't wait to see them compete at the state level!

During Catholic Schools Week, the OLPH Student Council delivered posters and handwritten notes to the local veterans center. During their visit,



students had the opportunity to engage with the veterans, who expressed heartfelt appreciation for their kindness and support.

2024 - 2025 has been a GREAT year at St. Jude School!

Senator Bo Watson joined Principal Overton, Father Charlie, and Father Alex on September 11, as St. Jude School was chosen as the first elementary school in TN to host the Freedom Flag in honor of Patriot's Day.

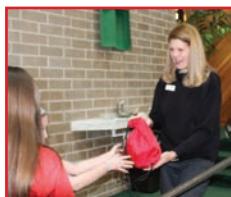


St. Jude's Lucinda Millard was honored at the Diocesan In-service in February, 2025, for her 25 years of teaching, service, and dedication to our Saints family.

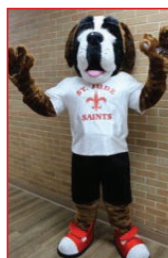
Middle School Science Teacher, Allison Hix, congratulated the winners of the 8th grade Science Fair: First Place - Evelyn Overton and Jimmy Sabba, Second Place - Sophia Sprinz and Third Place - Landon Dillefeld.



Focusing on their mission of service, St. Jude students have helped local ministries by collecting items for Bethel Bible Village and the Chatt Foundation, and making friendship bracelets for the children at the Chambliss Center.

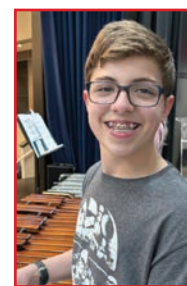


Basketball Champions! All 4 St. Jude Basketball teams, girls and boys Elementary and girls and boys Varsity won the ISC tournament! Our beloved Athletic Director and PE teacher, Jason Hill, also serves as the head coach for the Notre Dame Lady Irish! His Saints Family is so proud that he was named District 2 Girls Coach of the Year!



St. Jude's Mascot, Jude, celebrated his first birthday during Catholic Schools Week, January 31, 2025. We love Jude and he is a big part of our school life!

Ten St. Jude students were selected to participate in the recent Junior Honor Band at Bradley Central High School.



ADVANCEMENT & ALUMNI NEWS

In the summer of 1995, my father brought home an “Irish Forever” sticker for me. He had been working on a project at his alma mater, Notre Dame High School, and I was getting ready to begin my freshman year here. I put the sticker on my travel trunk and it followed me to summer camps, then off to college, and later into each home I have lived in since. Like that sticker, I have carried Notre Dame- the memories, lessons, and friendships, into every phase of my life.



In January, I was honored to accept the role of NDHS Director of Advancement and Alumni Relations, and quickly realized I am not alone in carrying my Irish experience. Alumni light up when talking about their ND days. Faculty count the generations they have taught and how these halls feel like home. Parents describe the incredible impact this school has had on their children and families. Donors share with me their reasons behind giving and the importance of continuing the deep-held traditions here. It brings me so much joy to reconnect and be reminded each day what makes this school so exceptional.

As I look to the future, I see many doors opening for our school; thanks to the time, talent, and gifts from YOU - our alumni and supporters. I look forward to someday handing my daughter her own “Irish Forever” sticker as she is welcomed into this wonderful community. I extend my deepest thanks to each one of you for making this legacy possible.

See you Alumni Weekend!

Keely Anderson, Class of '99

Director of Advancement and Alumni Relations

Homecoming '24 was a huge success. Thank you to our alumni council for such a warm welcome of our alumni. **Homecoming '25 is set for September 5th, 2025.** We look forward to having you back on campus!

Alumni Council Members

Alaina Marinello
Amanda Goodhard
Amber Hagen
Anne Wehunt
Christina Kinzer
Eric Schexnaildre
Hannah Ingle

Jay Adamson
Kate Roden
Kathy Mara
Kevin Schaffluetzel
Liz Ciabattone
Mary Weaver
Megan White

Mike Nolan
Paulette Schievelud
Ronny Ankar
Vickie Guthrie
Yogi Anderson



LOVE OF A LIFETIME

High School Sweethearts

by Melissa Wolff

According to the law of Google, high school sweethearts have a 2% chance of “til death do us part”. In other words, a love that sparks in the halls of any high school has a very small chance of making it down the aisle, but apparently there is something in the water at Notre Dame. With so many high school sweethearts from our own community, I had to wonder why only 2%. After reading notes, conducting interviews, and reminiscing on the couples I taught, I might have an answer. It is because Notre Dame fosters relationships in a unique way, and high school sweethearts have a unique and enduring bond that begins in the formative years of their lives. Meeting during a time of growth and self-discovery, these couples navigate the ups and downs of adolescence together, creating a foundation of shared experiences and memories. They grow together at Notre Dame: mind, body and spirit.



Heather Smith Wilson '92 and Brandon Wilson '92

Started dating: 1993
Married: 1998
First Met: 8th grade, St. Jude
Favorite Memory: Riding home from school together



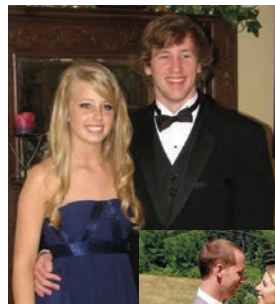
Jordan Reinert May '09 and Dillon May '10

Started Dating: 2006
Married: 2016
First Met: 5th grade, OLPH - Jordan finally gave Dillon a shot freshman year
Favorite Memory: Driving to school, passing notes in hallway, and prom



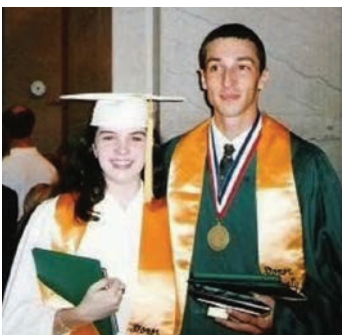
Meg Slowikowski Smith '95 and Dr. Ben Smith '95

Started Dating: 2001
Married: 2005
First Met: Band Camp, 1991
Favorite Memory: Friday night football games with the marching band



Hannah Payne Klassen '09 and Zach Klassen '09

Started Dating: 2009
Married: 2016
First Met: Cafeteria in 2005 through mutual friends



Marcie Hunter Smith '97 and David Smith '97

Started Dating: 2004 - close friends in high school
Married: 2006
First Met: 9th grade, Religion class
Favorite Memory: Singing Green Day songs in Coach K's History class



Favorite Memory: spring break, bowling, Moe's, wrestling and the lake

continued on pg 20



Glitz, Glamour & GIVING AT THE 2025 *Green and Gold* GALA

Irish supporters gathered February 8 at The Chattanooga to celebrate and raise their paddles for school transportation needs- generating nearly \$140,000 in proceeds! The evening featured dinner, games, dancing, and a lively auction. Due to your generosity, Notre Dame High School has purchased a new 2024 GMC bus. Students, coaches, and faculty will enjoy this safe and reliable transportation for many years to come. We extend special thanks to the Gala planning committee, our generous sponsors, and all who joined in making this night so memorable. We look forward to celebrating with you next year!







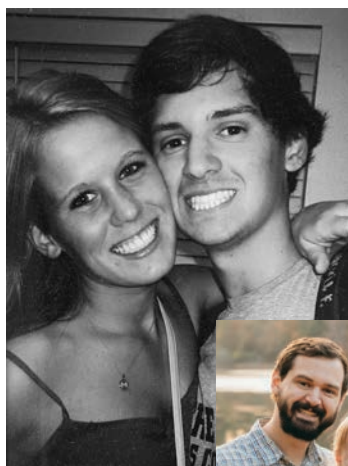
Maia Renshaw (soon to be Rubio) '17 and Vance Rubio '17

Started Dating: 2017
 Married: 2025
 First Met: 9th grade, Mr. Fisher's history class sealed the deal
 Favorite Memory: Senior Prom



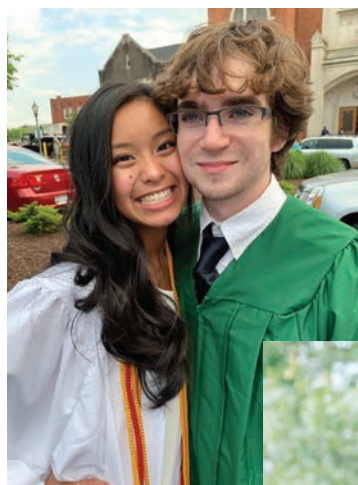
Allyson Ross Wurm '13 and Nick Wurm '11

Started Dating: 2010
 Married: 2016
 First Met: "Let it Grow!" at OLPH: Nick was playing basketball, and Allyson walked over to join them. They got to know each other through tennis.



Mary Cabell Kelly McCutcheon '11 and Michael McCutcheon '11

Started Dating: 2008
 Married: 2019
 First Met: They technically "heard of" each other at a middle school Super Bowl party but met for the first time at Notre Dame.



Kimmie Nguyen '19 and Ian Wilkinson '19

Started Dating: 2017
 Married: 2024
 First Met: Study Hall with Mr. Hicks
 Favorite Memory: Friday night football games



Katie Ward Labbe '13 and Michael Labbe '13

Started Dating: 2013
 Married: 2017
 First Met: Ms. Wheeler's English class: became better friends as SEARCH retreat leaders
 Favorite Memory: Flirtatious glances in the hallway and crushing on each other before they ever dated



From East to West:

KOLBY MCGOWAN

by Hayden Seay

As a student in Coach Charles Fant’s personal finance course, Kolby McGowan ‘18 discovered his love of the financial world. These lessons sparked his interest in the field, setting him on a journey leading him to San Francisco’s Financial District. As a West Coast Sell Side Account Manager for Bloomberg L.P., McGowan found his passion in life and dreams of launching his own business. From writing his own finance book to managing a robust roster of clients, McGowan has quite the story to tell.

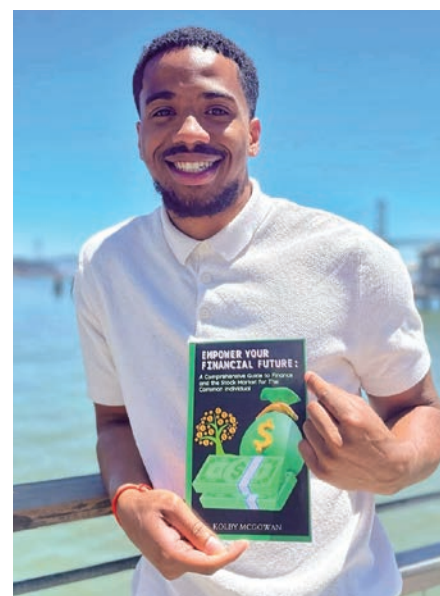
ND: *What have you been up to since leaving Notre Dame?*

KM: Right after I left Notre Dame, I went to Cornell University to play football [in] Upstate New York, and that was my first time just kind of being out of Tennessee and away from home. Before graduating, I did an internship with Bloomberg in San Francisco my junior year of college, going into senior year, and I got the return offer from that internship. Immediately after graduating from Cornell, I just decided to start my full time career here in San Francisco.

Now, I’m currently working for Bloomberg. I’m in our sales department, but my title is account manager, so my main responsibility is looking after 600-plus [individual] clients across major sell side institutions and banks like J.P. Morgan and Goldman Sachs. It’s more like a consultive role where I’m helping them use our software and upselling any opportunities that I identify.

ND: *What has been your biggest accomplishment since graduating from high school?*

KM: My biggest accomplishment so far has been being able to move out and support myself, like on a completely different side of the U.S. That was a really huge accomplishment for me. It was getting my first apartment and being able to pay my own rent and just be an adult.



ND: *How did your time at Notre Dame prepare you for everything you have accomplished?*

KM: Once I got to college, I felt pretty prepared. I think Notre Dame does really well in structuring your workflow and your



classes and getting you used to more challenging tasks and assignments. I think there's more of a personal feel at Notre Dame given the size of the school, so you get more direct time with the teachers, and I feel like that way you learn faster and you are able to learn more when you have those personal connections. I think that was really huge for me.

ND: *Who were your biggest influences and supporters in high school?*

KM: I definitely have to shout out to Mrs. Wolff; she was my English teacher at the time I was there. Her teaching style was just a bit different than other teachers in the fact that there is more engagement in the way she spoke to her students and the way she got us engaged [in] the content. I think that was really huge; she was really good at being able to pick up on different personalities and different teaching styles and how to cater to each kid. I think that played a major role in my trust of the system and also just feeling like my teachers were also on my side and they were looking out for my best interests.

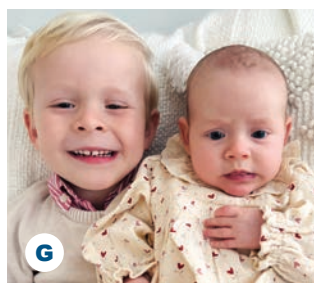
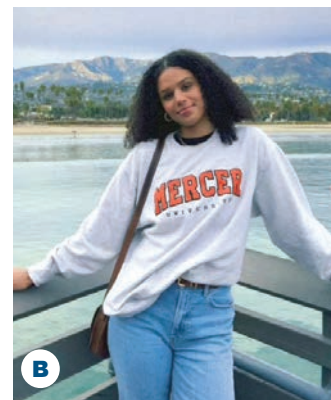
I also have to shout out George Valadie, [he] was extremely, extremely supportive, he always wanted the best for me. I feel like when there was time to give advice or when there was time to kind of give guidance or feedback on certain things, he was very straightforward, but also he did it in a way that was helpful for me and I needed it at that time.

ND: *So, what's next for Kolby McGowan?*

KM: I think now, I've really just been focused on, in the next five years, my personal development, career-wise. I picture myself, hopefully being in a leadership position in the company within five years and being able to lead a group in our corporate sales department would be ideal. I'm still very ambitious and kind of entrepreneurial, [so] I do want to eventually start my own business one day and hopefully within the next five to ten years, through [the] learning, I'll be able to make that a reality, especially being out here in Silicon Valley. 🍀

ALUMNI UPDATES

- A Sophie Romeo '21** was engaged to William Bissell in December. They are planning a wedding for July in Chattanooga.
- B Mackenzie Johnson '19** has started a podcast on YouTube, *Retired Athlete Podcast*, as she begins her career in sports journalism.
- C Nick Romeo '17** was engaged to Jordan Bagley in November.
- D Emilee Manz '15** graduated from East Tennessee State University with a Doctorate of Physical Therapy in December.
- E Dominique (Lee) Boyd '14** and her husband, Matthes, welcomed their first child, Collette, in November.
- F Cecilia (Young) Garrett '13** and her husband, Parker, welcomed their third child, Benjamin Walsh, on September 16 to join Lila (6) and Webb (2).



- G Katy (Johnson) Russell '10**, her husband, Nick, and son, James, welcomed a baby girl, Harper Raine, to their family in December.
- H Dan Hall '06** was sworn in as a Council Member for the City of Santa Monica, California.
- I Mary (Purdie) Lambeth '82** was named principal at Mother Clelia Morning Star High School in Pensacola, Florida – a Catholic high school for students with exceptionalities such as Down's syndrome, autism and spina bifida. Her students graduate with a Florida diploma.
- J Ken Mara '68** is being inducted into the National Wrestling Hall of Fame in Stillwater, Oklahoma as a Meritorious Official for his 56 years of service to the sport of wrestling.



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Space is Limited



VOLLEYBALL

MAY 27-30

9am-12pm

GIRLS BASKETBALL

JUNE 2-6

9am-12pm

WRESTLING CAMP

JUNE 2-6

9am-12pm

DANCE & CHEER

JUNE 9-13

Dance 9am-12pm

Cheer 1pm-4pm

BOYS BASKETBALL

JUNE 16-20

9am-12pm

GOLF

JUNE 16-19

8am-1pm

STEM

JUNE 16-20

9am-12pm

*Register
Today!*

Friday, July 18

40TH Annual Irish Classic Golf Tournament*

8:30am & 1:30pm Flights

WindStone Golf Club, Ringgold, GA

Green and White Game 7-on-7 Fighting Irish Football

5:00pm • Jim Eberle Field • Stands open to All Alums

"Better Late Than Never" Class of 2020 Prom

6:00pm • NDHS Atrium

All Class Bash*

7:00pm – 11:00pm

Varallo Athletic Center, NDHS

Saturday, July 19

All Alumni Mass

9:00am • NDHS Alumni Chapel

Golden Grads Brunch*

10:30am – 12:00pm • NDHS

Questions? 423-624-4618 or
alumni@myndhs365.com



Scan or register online at
www.myndhs.com/alumni/alumni-weekend

ALUMNI

Weekend '25



*Scan the
QR code
to register for
these events by
Wednesday, July 9!