

chimes

WESTMINSTER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY



SPRING 2025: GROWTH & INNOVATION

New STEM
Programs

Congratulations
Class of 2025

Alumni Spotlight:
Rich Broyles '87

Funding Innovation,
Fueling Growth



Biblically Informed Innovation

A NOTE FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

At Westminster Christian Academy, biblically informed innovation is central to our mission and a reflection of our Creator's infinite creativity. Scripture tells us, "Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge" (Psalm 19:2). From the engineering marvel of a hummingbird to the vastness of the universe, God's handiwork reveals His infinite wisdom. As His image-bearers, we are called to cultivate and steward our creativity in every field—whether the arts, sciences, or emerging disciplines like artificial intelligence.

Innovation at Westminster is not about chasing trends but about faithfulness. As technology reshapes industries and AI advances, critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity are more essential than ever. Our goal is to equip students with the skills to thrive in college, career, and life—grounded in biblical truth, wisdom, and Christlike character, for God's glory.

One of our core values is to "Become Better Than We Once Were" (Colossians 3:23-24), a commitment that fuels the development of innovative programs. From our established

WestminsterYOU Academies to new offerings in aviation, medicine, and oceanography, we are preparing students to navigate an ever-changing world with knowledge and wisdom.

While we embrace fresh ideas, our foundation remains unchanged. Our vision—to prepare students to engage the world and change it for Jesus Christ through an excellent education rooted in a biblical worldview—remains constant.

At Westminster, innovation is an act of stewardship. It is about preparing students to think, create, and lead for God's glory. As Psalm 19 reminds us, God's truth is always speaking—our role is to listen, learn, and apply it in ways that honor Him.

Dr. Barrett Mosbacher
Head of School

Editor

Christian Meeks

Graphic Designer

Amy Roff

Photography

Mike Rohlfiing
Volunteer photographers

Head of School

Dr. Barrett Mosbacker

Head of Academic Development

Micah Gall

Head of Enrollment and Marketing

Jennifer Sengpiel

Head of Finance and Operations

Todd Fuller

Head of Student Development

Dr. Dani Butler

Athletic Director

Cory Snyder

Director of Development Operations

Shannon Kekhaev

Westminster Christian Academy

800 Maryville Centre Drive
Town & Country, MO 63017
314.997.2900 • wcastl.org

Chimes is published by Westminster Christian Academy and mailed to alumni, families of current students, and friends of the school. Westminster honors Jesus Christ by providing an excellent education, rooted in biblical truth as interpreted by the Westminster Confession of Faith, for the children of Christian parents. Faculty and staff enable students to discover and embrace a biblical view of the world and integrate that view into every area of life. To request a free subscription, email info@wcastl.org.

© 2025 Westminster Christian Academy

CONTENTS

Spring 2025

NEWS

4 Academics



6 Arts



8 Athletics



14 Admissions

The Lord Is at Hand

23 Advancement

Funding Innovation,
Fueling Growth

FEATURE

10 From Science to Stewardship: Westminster's Role in Coral Restoration

Westminster's new coral lab offers students hands-on experience, allowing them to participate in coral restoration efforts.



EVENTS

15 Spirit Week



16 Graduation

Celebrating the Class of 2025



18 Community Life

ALUMNI NEWS

19 Alumni Spotlight

Rich Broyles '87



20 Class Notes

22 Alumni Photos

Scripture quotations are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Academics

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

THE FUTURE OF STEM AT WESTMINSTER

The **STEM Academy**, the latest addition to WestminsterYOU, has seen remarkable growth in the past year, with exciting expansions to come in the future. Along with the already-established Ocean Discovery program expanding to include a brand new coral lab (more information on page 10), the STEM Academy has expanded in middle school to include new Aviation and Medical programs.

Aviation 1 was launched in the spring for middle school students interested in manned and unmanned flight. The course is taught by STEM Director Mike Decker, along with upper school STEM teacher Jeff Shultz and U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel John “Chappy” Chapman. It focuses on the history of aeronautics, job opportunities, drone operation, aerodynamic fundamentals, airport operations, and much more. Our students even had the opportunity to sit in the cockpit of a Gulfstream jet, experience professional pilot simulators, and visit Scott Air Force Base, where they got a static tour of a KC-135 Stratotanker aircraft.

Medical 1, led by upper school physics teacher Katie Bachman, allows middle school students the opportunity to explore the medical world as they learn terminology to describe things properly and understand human anatomy. Students hear from several guest speakers who share their experiences in medical-related professions. Bachman worked for many years as a physician assistant before coming to Westminster.

Next year, both programs will expand into the upper school and be offered to freshmen as Enrichments and will then grow each year to include other grade levels. Eventually, students interested in aviation will have expanded experiential opportunities, while students interested in the medical program will have more opportunities for hands-on labs through collegiate partnerships and will be able to earn certifications such as the First Aid CPR/AED certification from the Red Cross.



CYBORG CATS LOBBY FOR STEM FUNDING

Westminster’s **FIRST Robotics team**, the Cyborg Cats (Team 4256), recently traveled to Jefferson City to lobby for two bills—HB 33 and SB 265—advocating increased funding for Missouri’s extracurricular Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programs. The team met with Missouri’s Lieutenant Governor, the Majority Floor Leader, State Senator, and other legislators to discuss the importance of STEM education and its impact on students across the state.

When not working towards improving STEM education in Missouri, the Cyborg Cats compete in FIRST Robotics, a worldwide organization with numerous regional competitions. Teams build robots to compete in unique games and challenges each year. Throughout the year, FIRST Robotics hands out several awards to teams that go above and beyond building and programming robots. Thanks to their efforts to promote STEM in Missouri, the Cyborg Cats received the FIRST Impact Award, a prestigious recognition for community service and outreach in STEM. This award granted the team a ticket to the FIRST Robotics World Competition in Houston, Texas, on April 15-19, where they had an amazing opportunity engaging with teams from across the globe.

We are incredibly proud of the effort, dedication, and initiative our students have shown in robotics. Each one has sought to use the gifts and talents God has given them to engage the world and change it for Jesus Christ.



HONORING OUR OUTSTANDING FACULTY

If you talk to any Westminster alumnus, you will hear over and over how incredible our faculty is. For nearly 50 years, the faculty has been the heart of what makes this school a home away from home for our students. Each year, the Arlen R. Dykstra Teaching Prize is awarded to faculty members who exemplify an outstanding expression of the Christian worldview. These award winners have shown their passion for their teaching matter, have been involved heavily in the life of our school, and seek out creativity and innovation in their classrooms. We are thrilled to present this award to Peter Barrs and Lizzie (Lewis) Vogel '90.

Peter Barrs began teaching at Westminster in 2011, teaching Spanish and French. He is currently the World Languages Department Chair. Lizzie Vogel, who graduated from WCA in 1990, began teaching visual art at Westminster in 2013. We are blessed and grateful for the many years Peter and Lizzie have spent at Westminster, sharing their love for language, art, and Christ with their students.

RISING JUNIORS SELECTED FOR MO SCHOLARS ACADEMY

This summer, rising juniors **Jessica Ma** and **Paul Schultz** will represent Westminster Christian Academy at the annual Missouri Scholars Academy. This three-week program allows rising juniors to take courses from star teachers and professors and explore what it means to be academically gifted.

Founded in 1985, the Missouri Scholars Academy welcomes 330 students each summer to the University of Missouri's (Mizzou) campus. The program, administered by the University of Missouri Honors College, is designed on the ideal that Missouri's gifted students should be provided with "special opportunities for learning and personal development in order for them to realize their full potential." This three-week curriculum consists of interdisciplinary courses and various extracurricular activities such as debate, journalism, community service, archaeology, or creative writing.

While attending the Missouri Scholars Academy, Jessica and Paul will have the chance to pursue studies that differ from traditional educational programs, much like WestminsterYOU's academies and enrichment offerings. They will hear from guest lecturers, attend forums and cultural events, and participate in other programs through the Academy's curriculum.



WILDCATS COMPETE IN GREAT HISTORY CHALLENGE

After taking an online test in December, the top-performing middle schoolers qualified for the Great History Challenge regional competition, which Westminster hosted on February 25. Performing exceptionally at the regional competition, 11 Westminster students were invited to compete at the national competition from May 23-25 in Orlando.



FOLLOW WESTMINSTER ON INSTAGRAM!

Make sure to follow [@wcastl](https://www.instagram.com/wcastl) for great photos showcasing what's going on inside the classroom and around the school, community announcements, and much more.



LOOKING FOR MORE?

For access to even more photos, view full albums at [wcastl.org/photos](https://www.wcastl.org/photos).

Arts

CREATIVE EXCELLENCE



On the Road to Nashville

At the end of March, the choir, jazz ensemble, and orchestra went on a field trip to Nashville, Tennessee. Each group had separate performances around the city, with the choir and jazz ensemble performing at Christ Presbyterian Academy and the St. Paul Senior Center. The orchestra had the opportunity to participate in a workshop at the Blair School of Music, and everyone had an amazing experience listening to the Nashville Symphony Orchestra.

On Saturday, March 29, the orchestra and choir had time to explore Nashville's replica of the Athenian Parthenon while the jazz ensemble competed in the Middle Tennessee State University's Jazz Festival. There, freshman Nathan Polk received the high school-level Outstanding Soloist award on piano, and junior Avunker Pieris and senior Jacob Ranheim received Outstanding Musician awards.

Musicians Receive All-State Honors

This year, we have had an unprecedented seven Westminster students earn All-State honors: freshman Nathan Polk (Jazz Band — Piano), sophomore Paul Schultz (Orchestra — Cello Honorable Mention), juniors Quentin Farquharson (Choir — Bass Alternate), Elizabeth Myers (Orchestra — Violin 2), Sam Wenger-Stickel (Orchestra — Violin 1), Enoch Wong (Orchestra — Organ/Celesta), and senior Charlotte Roberts (Choir — Soprano). These incredibly talented musicians represented WCA at the Missouri Music Educators Association Conference in Osage Beach from January 29 to February 1.



Student Work Selected for Young Artists' Exhibitions

Juniors Noah Adamson, Lucy Kim, Eleanor Mitchell, Ella Summers, Sarah Waldron, and seniors Audrey Roth and Busola Obanigba

were accepted into the St. Louis Artists' Guild Young Artists' Showcase from February 28 to March 29 at the St. Louis Artists' Guild in Clayton, Missouri. The Young Artists' Showcase is a special, juried exhibition of artwork created by high school students in the St. Louis metropolitan area. This year, there were over 400 submissions, from which 153 pieces were selected for inclusion by the juror. Sarah and Busola's pieces were also selected for the Saint Louis Art Museum's 2025 Young Artists Exhibition, Ocean of Possibilities, which opened for public viewing in May.

Taking the Stage by Storm

The Metro St. Louis All-District Band, Choir, and Orchestra holds competitions each year to highlight and honor the best high school musicians in the area. Students are required to prepare music and perform before judges and an audience. This year, 26 incredible musicians from Westminster performed at the competition.

Freshman Clement Wong (clarinet), sophomore Paul Schultz (cello), juniors Audrie Bockman (choir), Ginger Cox (choir), Elizabeth Myers (violin), Sam Wenger-Stickel (violin), and senior Charlotte Roberts (choir, viola) all received honors for their solo performances.

Several musical groups also received district honors, including a vocal octet (sophomore William Havens, juniors Braden Buehrle, Ginger Cox, Adam Schelker, and seniors Christopher Bauer, Kaitlyn Cragg, Carissa Mitchell, Charlotte Roberts), four string duets (freshmen Annelise Schwartz and Angela Mahiany; freshman Viviane Prins and junior Zxphina Strong; junior Elizabeth Myers and senior Raquel Herrera; seniors Charlotte Roberts and Savannah Smith), and three string trios (freshmen Lincoln Roam, Micah Whyte, and Alok Pieris; sophomores Jacob Boling, Paul Schultz, and junior Elliott Stewart; juniors Jacob Pederson, Adam Schelker, and Sam Wenger-Stickel).

Ginger Cox, Charlotte Roberts, Clement Wong, Elizabeth Myers, Sam Wenger-Stickel, Paul Schultz, Jacob Pederson, Adam Schelker, Jacob Boling, Elliott Stewart, and Raquel Herrera all received the highest, exemplary rating and were invited to perform at State.

Sam Wenger-Stickel in Concert

Junior Sam Wenger-Stickel recently won first place in the UMSL Young Artist and Florence Frager Young Artist competitions. For winning the Florence Frager competition, Sam was invited as a guest soloist with the St. Louis Civic Orchestra, performing in the first movement of the Barber Violin Concerto, at the 560 Music Center in University City. Congratulations, Sam, on your incredible achievement!

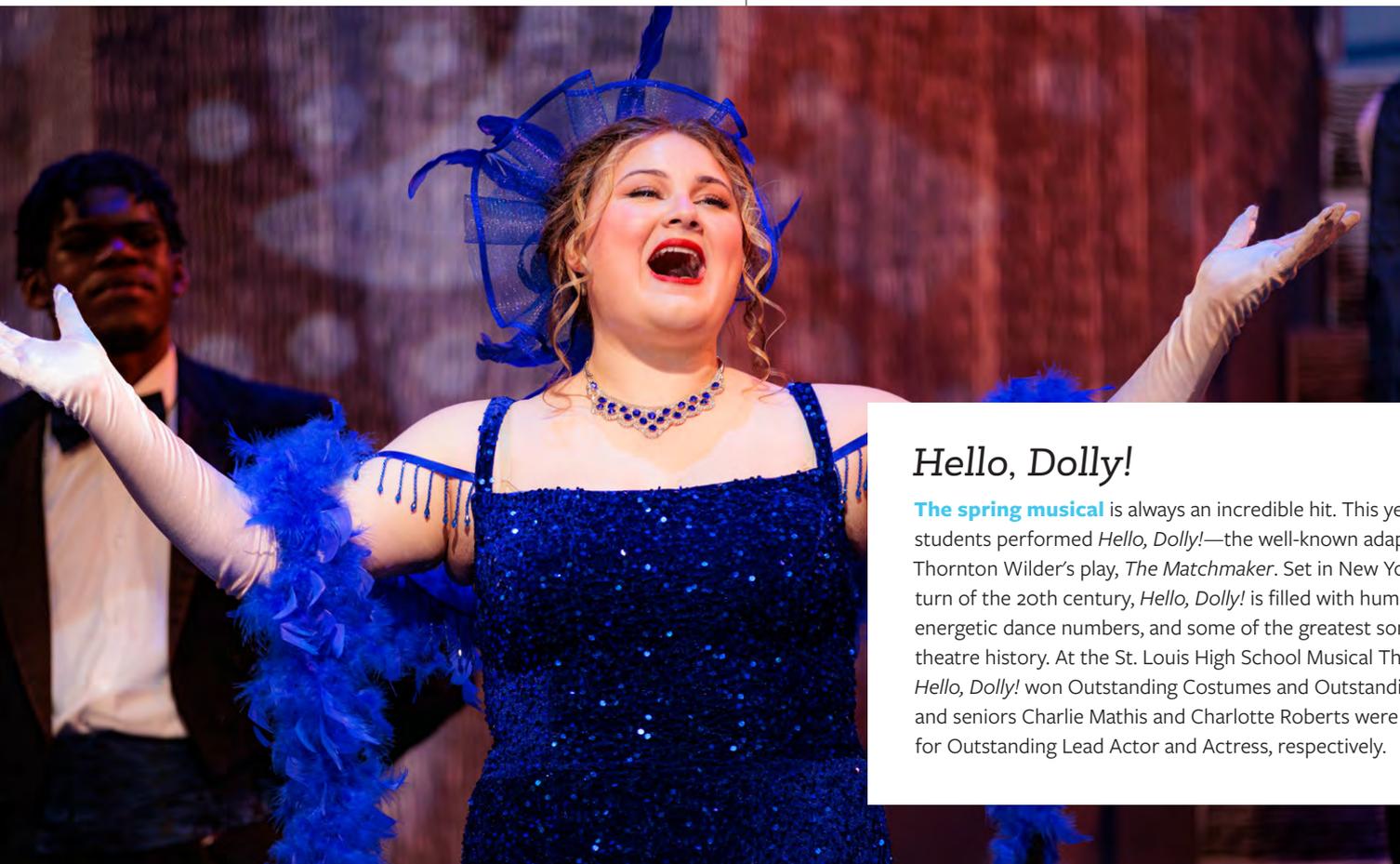


Murder on the Orient Express

In January, our students performed Ken Ludwig's clever adaptation of Agatha Christie's iconic mystery. Set aboard the luxurious train, the story follows the brilliant detective Hercule Poirot as he investigates the murder of an enigmatic passenger, uncovering a web of secrets among a diverse cast of suspects. The play brings humor, tension, and vivid characterizations to the classic whodunit, blending the glamour of 1930s Europe with nail-biting suspense. For senior Chase Borage, bringing Poirot to life was an amazing experience, although learning nearly 300 lines was a challenge: "The hardest part was [learning] a ton of lines. Over 200, nearly 300. Hercule Poirot is meticulous, and I had to really find ways to bring that part of him out in my mannerisms. It was tricky but special."

Art à La Carte

With so many incredibly talented musicians, artists, and thespians in our community, we are always excited to host our spring Art à La Carte showcase. Our upper school students shared highlights from the year's band, orchestra, and choir concerts, as well as musical solos, duets, trios, and groups, and our theatrical stage performances. Meanwhile, our visual art classes showcased their work. Each year, our capstone AP Studio Art class also presents their Visual Arts Academy projects in the Hub. For the first time, students in Ceramics 2 created special bowls to sell to the community as part of an ice cream fundraiser, with the proceeds benefiting Feed My People, a local nonprofit that provides food to those in need in St. Louis. By the end of the night, the students sold nearly 40 bowls, raising \$800. The evening concluded with a show from our hilarious improv group, WIT (Westminster Improv Team).



Hello, Dolly!

The spring musical is always an incredible hit. This year, our students performed *Hello, Dolly!*—the well-known adaptation of Thornton Wilder's play, *The Matchmaker*. Set in New York at the turn of the 20th century, *Hello, Dolly!* is filled with humor, romance, energetic dance numbers, and some of the greatest songs in musical theatre history. At the St. Louis High School Musical Theatre Awards, *Hello, Dolly!* won Outstanding Costumes and Outstanding Musical, and seniors Charlie Mathis and Charlotte Roberts were nominated for Outstanding Lead Actor and Actress, respectively.

Athletics

NEWS AND TEAM HIGHLIGHTS



SENIOR LUKE HORNBERG CELEBRATES 150TH WIN

Luke Hornburg had 108 career wins heading into his final season on the varsity wrestling team—an impressive total, but 42 wins away from the elusive 150 mark. By January, however, Luke had won 41 matches, and at the January Tri-Meet, he continued his incredible win streak to officially reach the 150-win milestone.

SENIORS REACH 1,000 POINT MILESTONE

This past winter, Addie Kane and JD Robertson surpassed 1,000 points in their basketball careers.

Addie started her senior year on the cusp of hitting the legendary milestone—one that only eight Wildcats have hit since the '99-'00 season. Going into December, Addie was 18 points away from pushing her scoring total to the 1,000 mark. With only a few minutes left, Kane's total hung at 999. Drawing a foul, Addie confidently stepped up to the line, sank her free throw, and became the newest member of the 1,000-point club.

On the boys varsity team, JD reached 1,000 career points during a matchup against the CBC Cadets. During the third quarter on Senior Night, JD launched a deep 3-pointer in front of the home bleachers, sending the crowd into a frenzy as he officially hit 1,002 career points.



SENIORS TO PLAY AT THE COLLEGIATE LEVEL

This year, 20 Westminster seniors committed to playing their respective sports at the collegiate level next year. Congratulations to these talented seniors on their successful careers at Westminster and the hard work they put into their sports. We look forward to seeing them continue to succeed at the college level.

- **Allie Branstetter**
Softball (St. Louis University)
- **Paige Branstetter**
Softball (Truman State University)
- **Landon Cassidy**
Soccer (Eastern Illinois University)
- **Theodis Collins III**
Football (Morehouse College)
- **Anna Drochelmann**
Cross Country/Track (Truman State University)
- **Joey Fentress**
Baseball (Truman State University)
- **Landon Ingram**
Bass Fishing (McKendree University)
- **Addie Kane**
Basketball (Benedictine College)
- **Cal Leighton**
Baseball (Bradley University)
- **Tristan Loehr**
Baseball (Quincy University)
- **Case-Edward Miller**
Football (Valparaiso University)
- **Janna Moellenhoff**
Swim (Ouachita Baptist University)
- **Evan Montandon**
Basketball (Wheaton College)
- **Jadyn Mueller**
Stunt (Maryville University)
- **Sophie Nall**
Golf (Evangel University)
- **Lauren Pollack**
Lacrosse (Calvin University)
- **AJ Snyder**
Volleyball (Greenville University)
- **Rebekah Thoenen**
Beach Volleyball (Arizona Christian University)
- **Asher Waitkus**
Baseball (Rockhurst University)
- **Isaiah Warren**
Football (University of Central Missouri)

WESTMINSTER HOSTS ANNUAL "PAINT IT" GAME

On January 31, 2025, Westminster and John Burroughs continued their annual "Paint It" tradition, raising awareness and supporting the American Cancer Society's research. This meaningful event took place in the Arena. It brought together student-athletes, fans, and the broad community in a powerful display of togetherness and support for those affected and impacted by cancer.



TEAM HIGHLIGHTS

GO CATS!

WINTER BASKETBALL

Boys — The boys basketball team eclipsed 20+ wins for the fifth time in the last six years under Head Coach Dale Ribble, finishing the season 25–7. The team claimed 3rd place in the Class 5 State Tournament, their second Final Four finish in four years.

Girls — The girls basketball team made significant progress this season under new Head Coach Nic Zenker, winning eight more games than last year and capturing its first District Championship since 2021.

ICE HOCKEY

The hockey team finished the year 7–14–1, claiming the #1 seed in the Founders Cup.

SWIM AND DIVE

Girls — The girls swim team had eight events qualify for Finals with two medalists: 6th place in the 200yd Medley Relay (freshman Lauren McCall, juniors Gigi DeMaggio and Edde Sue Doehring, and senior Janna Moellenhoff) and 5th place in the 200yd Free Relay (Juniors Gigi DeMaggio, Edde Sue Doehring, and Karly Keske and Janna Moellenhoff). The girls dive team had two divers qualify for State: junior Taylor Synowiec and senior Anna Bernhardt. Anna medaled with a final score of 354.75 for 7th place.

WRESTLING

Boys — The boys wrestling team had two State qualifiers this season: seniors Theodis Collins III and Luke Hornburg. Both boys medaled in the State Tournament, with Luke taking 3rd place in 215lbs and Theodis taking 5th in 285lbs.

Girls — Sophomore Kyrsten Brown and senior Kyndal Brown led the charge for the girls wrestling squad. Both sisters finished their season in the final round of the District Tournament.

SPRING BASEBALL

Boys — Wildcats baseball finished the season as District Semifinalists, ending with an impressive 23–10 record (11–0 in conference) and conference champions.

GOLF

Boys — The boys golf team was 9–1 in dual matches leading up to the district tournament. The team claimed the District Championship by 17 strokes, with all five players advancing to State, where they finished 9th in the Class 4 State Tournament.

LACROSSE

Boys — The boys lacrosse team ended their season with a 3rd place finish at the Gold Rush JV Invitational.

Girls — The girls lacrosse team finished the year 9–8 after receiving the #7 seed in the regional championship tournament. They advanced all the way to the Elite Eight before falling to conference rivals MICDS.

SOCCER

Girls — The girls soccer team ended their season with a 9–9 record in a close district championship game against Clayton High School, with Westminster taking second place.

TENNIS

Boys — The boys tennis team finished the year 10–3, facing Parkway West in a District Championship rematch from last year. The doubles pairing of junior Noah Suthar and senior Alan Walker advanced to the state tournament, capturing a 5th place medalist finish.

TRACK AND FIELD

This year, two school records were broken in track and field, and one was set: senior Anna Drochelman broke the girls' 1600m and the 3200m records, and junior Taylor Synowiec set the girls' Javelin record. The team had three athletes advance to the sectional meet: freshman Mackenzie Ikeda, junior Gabe Lee, and Anna Drochelman.

VOLLEYBALL

Boys — The boys volleyball team finished the year 11–18 in their second year as a full MSHSAA sport. The team competed in a tough District tournament, ending their season in the quarterfinals.

From Science to Stewardship

Westminster's Role in Coral Restoration



O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. Here is the sea, great and wide, which teems with creatures innumerable, living things both small and great.

PSALM 104:24-25



Tim Hall and Mike Decker in Westminster's Coral Lab



Mike Decker spent months traveling to Hawaii with his parents as a boy. While they worked in the event production business, Decker spent his time on the beaches and reefs, making friends and developing a lifelong love for the ocean. Growing up, Decker took every science course he could and eventually pursued a degree in biology from Webster University.

In 2012, Decker joined a project overseen by Dr. George Balazs of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), working with green sea turtles in Hawaii. Dr. Balazs is one of the foremost experts on green sea turtle conservation, giving Decker an incredible opportunity to conduct studies while learning how to treat this endangered species better. His passion and love for the ocean have always been essential to Decker's life story, even after he joined the Westminster community in 2013.

Four years after coming to WCA, Decker and the STEM department traveled to San Jose, California, to visit Valley Christian School, hoping to get a closer look at their unique, forward-thinking applied science programs. The team made strong connections with Valley Christian, and when they began to expand their Ocean Discovery class in 2020, they asked Decker to teach their course virtually. This course would eventually become the basis for Westminster's Ocean Discovery program.



Dr. Vaughan at "Plant A Million Corals" Carefully Cutting a Small Piece of Coral

WestminsterYOU first launched during the 2021-2022 school year, allowing students to dive deeper into subjects they are excited about outside the normal academic schedule. This program enables students to apply to specialized academies like Business or Law & Constitution, or take academic enrichments during the school day. These enrichment courses, while not for a grade, give students time each week to discover their passions. When WestminsterYOU launched, faculty and staff were asked for ideas, and Decker suggested his virtual course.

Ocean Discovery began as a middle school enrichment course in which students learned about coral reefs and how to monitor them remotely, using underwater livestream cameras. As far as the Midwest is concerned, this program was unique. As WestminsterYOU grew and we looked for ways to develop each subject further, the question was how Ocean Discovery could expand.

"The thought came to mind of how wonderful it would be if we could grow coral here on our campus," said Decker, now the director of STEM. What if students could grow coral in Missouri and then travel south during the summer to 'adopt a reef' and help restore the ocean? "I wanted to provide students an exciting, tangible way to engage with the wider world. I wanted them to see that we live here, but we can have a positive impact out there." As exciting as the idea was, implementing it would be challenging. No other school, not just in Missouri but anywhere, was doing anything like this.

The first step was determining whether growing coral in St. Louis was feasible. "I sent emails to anybody I could get in touch with that was a coral expert or was currently growing coral," says Decker. "I heard back from everyone—from Puerto Rico, Mexico, Brazil, French Polynesia, Panama, and even Dubai—but Dr. David Vaughan of *Plant a Million Corals* was kind enough to share some of his knowledge and invited me to a coral restoration workshop he was leading in Summerland Key, Florida. I got approval from WCA and went down to do my first hands-on work with coral restoration."

In his conversations, it was clear that coral experts were hesitant about the likelihood of Westminster being able to run a coral lab. Dr. Vaughan rejected the idea outright. Atlantic stony coral, which WCA wanted to grow, is a federally protected species with numerous laws and regulations tied to possessing and planting it. However, Decker continued to stay in contact with Dr. Vaughan, bringing him in to participate in our Ocean Discovery class as a virtual guest speaker. At the time, that was the extent of our program. Growing and outplanting coral was just too complicated.

As a Christian school, we firmly believe that God is in control. Everything that happens does so according to His design. Eventually, after three more trips to Florida and two more workshops, Decker exhibited that his idea of growing coral in Town & Country was more than a passing fancy. We were genuinely committed and passionate about the project. Dr. Vaughan eventually agreed to try to help make things happen. Was it possible for us to grow coral? Yes, but the question remained: how?

In December 2022, St. Louis experienced unusually cold weather, resulting in a water line bursting in one of our 7th grade science classrooms. Thankfully, a couple of staff members were in the building over Christmas break and discovered the issue before the damage could spread further. Unfortunately, the damage was severe enough to replace carpeting and drywall in ten 7th grade classrooms, including the STEM storage room.

While the 7th grade hallway underwent repairs, the STEM department began considering how their storage room in that space could be converted into a coral lab. At the same time, the Robotics team secured additional funding from donors, freeing the necessary resources required for the proposed coral lab. Originally a simple "what if?" project, the lab was fully approved in August 2023. Construction began a year later.

“Decker reached out to me to see if I could 3D print some prototypes for this coral project he was helping with,” says alumnus Luke DeGroot '19. Luke, who helps mentor the Robotics team, was eager to help. “I made some models and printed them so *Plant a Million Corals* could cast multiple copies and start growing coral on them. Then I was asked to make stands for the tanks.” Joe Faszl, with SeaScape Studios—one of the most reputable marine aquarists in the area—designed and custom-built the tanks. The lab’s lighting system is unique to Westminster, allowing our students to study the impact of designs that have never been tested.

Everything about the lab is cutting-edge. With conditions mimicking South Florida as much as possible—such as temperature and salinity—our lab is more akin to what you would find in a zoo or aquarium rather than other coral farms, thanks to our partnership with the St. Louis Aquarium’s Life Support Systems Manager, Tim Piedimonte, who helped with getting the technical and equipment side of the lab up and running. Westminster’s coral lab is state-of-the-art, enabling our students to work hands-on in a way no other school has been able to do.

Beginning next year, our STEM Academy will extend to high school students. While middle schoolers in Ocean Discovery 1 will continue learning about coral reefs and remote monitoring, upper school students in Ocean Discovery 2 will work directly in our lab. To do this, Westminster has pursued a license to grow federally protected Atlantic stony coral as part of the 2018 Florida Coral Rescue Act. Currently, we are the only high school with this opportunity and one of only approximately 29 institutions globally (such as SeaWorld Orlando and the Georgia Aquarium) allowed to store and maintain protected Atlantic coral genetic broodstock.

Overseen by our Coral Lab Manager, Tim Hall, students working in the lab will conduct research and document their findings as they get real, hands-on experience, just as they would in professional labs and farms. Ocean Discovery 2 will teach students about micro-fragmentation, in which a small fragment of coral is placed on a coral plate (designed by DeGroot). After the coral has grown, the plate is broken or cut into multiple pieces, allowing for the growth of more fast-growing colonies. Through this process, our students will have the opportunity

to observe and research rapid coral growth rates nearly 25 to 40 times faster than what occurs naturally. At the same time, upper school students in the brand-new STEM 101 course will design and build prototype remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) to be used in the outplanting process, allowing all our students to see how they can positively impact reef restoration worldwide.

“I’m grateful for the opportunity to work on this,” says DeGroot. “It has been a great way to apply things I learned in Robotics at WCA, like 3D printing and structural design. I can’t say restoring the ocean was exactly on my mind when I was at Westminster, let alone being able to grow coral, so I’m excited to see what students will learn from this project.”

As we look to the future of STEM at Westminster and the future of our coral lab and Ocean Discovery program, we want to seek out more learning possibilities and additional opportunities for our students to be active agents in the kingdom of God. What this looks like, only God knows. Our students could someday take coral grown in our lab to Florida and outplant it on a reef in the Atlantic Ocean. Our coral may be shared with other institutions and zoos such as the Georgia Aquarium, ensuring these endangered species live on if conditions continue to decline in the wild. Whatever God has in store, we remain grateful for the blessings He has provided our school and students. •



Micro-fragmentation





The Lord Is at Hand

By Jennifer Sengpiel
Head of Enrollment and Marketing

“The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

PHILIPPIANS 4:5–7

One of our school verses this year is this powerful reminder from Paul’s letter to the Philippians. He encourages them to rejoice and remain steadfast in their faith. These words have always resonated with me—both personally and professionally—and remind me of Christ’s constant presence in our lives and, most especially, in *His* school.

This admission season has been a striking example of God’s unwavering provision, even in the face of what seemed like insurmountable odds. The St. Louis region is home to over 200 private and independent schools, and in 2024, the *St. Louis Business Journal* reported a 7% year-over-year decline in private school enrollment across the area—a sobering statistic that could easily provoke anxiety. But as Paul assures us: *“The Lord is at hand.”* Despite these broader trends, Westminster opened the 2024–25 school year with growing enrollment, and we are well-positioned as we look toward the 2025–26 school year. God continues to bless His school, and we continue to grow, even when market trends look challenging.

In recent years, the reasons families seek out Westminster have been varied; yet, a common theme emerges: a desire for an education rooted in biblical truth, without compromising

academic rigor and innovation. Many students arrive on campus hoping for something different—an environment where they can live out their faith and grow in their relationship with Jesus. Some families are leaving schools that no longer align with their values. Whatever the reason, we are very grateful for each opportunity to share the love of Christ and the mission of Westminster. And, with this interest and the varied paths people take to arrive at our doors, our admissions process must remain intentional and prayerful. We are transparent about who we are and what we believe. We have not compromised our standards or application criteria; instead, we view the process as a meaningful opportunity for families to share their story and their faith, ensuring that Westminster is the right place for them.

Interest in Westminster is strong! We continue to see record-breaking attendance at admissions events. Our most recent Open House in October welcomed 550 visitors through our Grand Entry—the highest attendance in our history! These events generate momentum, drive applications, and help ensure a healthy, vibrant school community. But above all, our priority is to remain centered on Christ, trusting that He will bring the right families to our doors regardless of enrollment trends. *“The Lord is at hand.”* •

Jennifer Sengpiel serves as the Head of Enrollment and Marketing at Westminster. If you have questions about admissions or know someone interested in enrolling, please contact her at jsengpiel@wcastl.org.



SPRIT WEEK is always one of the year's highlights. An intense week full of class versus class competitions, games like tug-of-war and ultimate chicken, and elaborate dress-up days, this year saw the senior class win the coveted Florence Johnson Lewis Memorial Cup. The seniors showed their creativity, winning the Artboard, Film Project, and Lip Sync competitions, while the juniors took the gold medal in Boys Poms. Congratulations on a job well done to all of our students!





161
GRADUATES

99%
ATTENDING
COLLEGE

\$27 Million
TOTAL
SCHOLARSHIPS
EARNED

22
BRIGHT FLIGHT
RECIPIENTS
WITH ACT 32+

12,266
HOURS SERVING
THE COMMUNITY



CONGRATULATIONS

CLASS OF 2025

Spring brings bittersweet memories as we say goodbye to our graduating seniors. Congratulations to the class of 2025. We have been blessed by your time at Westminster, whether you came in middle school or high school, seeing you grow and mature into the men and women God has designed you to be. Congratulations to valedictorian Karissa Hsu and salutatorian Arianna Henderson on your academic achievements.

We praise God for every one of our seniors and recognize the creativity, ingenuity, and dedication they showed to their school, their communities, and each other. Please join us in praying for our graduates as they venture forth and that they live out our school's mission to go and change the world for Jesus Christ, no matter where the Lord sends them.



Community Life

NEWS & EVENTS



TRIVIA NIGHT

Westminster Christian Academy will celebrate 50 years next school year, but the celebrations began this past March with the WCA Trivia Night: Stayin' Alive Since 1976! The evening brought together alumni, faculty, staff, and community members for dinner and a variety of trivia questions. Those in attendance had the chance to bid on exciting teacher experiences such as laser tag with security officer Tim DeWitt and history teacher Tara O'Sadnick, bowling with History Department Chair Dr. Jeff Gall, or attending the Muny with school counselor Mollie Pfuetze.



WELCOMING SAEMMUL CHRISTIAN ACADEMY TO WCA

This past January, we welcomed 17 students and the Head of School from Saemmul Christian Academy in Seoul, South Korea. Westminster and Saemmul have been closely connected for many years. Every summer since 2012, Westminster students have traveled to Seoul to host an English camp, and each January, Saemmul students visit St. Louis to take classes at WCA.



WE ARE ONE

Our annual Black History Month celebration, We Are One, was held on February 20. Each year, the program highlights a different theme, with this year focusing on the history of African American dance and dancers. The evening showcased student performances alongside a DJ and student art exhibits. Dr. Philip Woodmore, an artistic director at COCA, was this year's keynote speaker.



SPECIAL OLYMPICS

The sophomore class welcomed athletes from six special school district schools for our annual Special Olympics Challenge Day on March 10. The day was spent with our students partnering with a special school district athlete, participating in an exciting opening ceremony, basketball in the Arena and Gymnasium, and other fun activities in the Blue Gym. This annual day of service is part of our dedication to ensuring our students understand the value and importance of serving others.

Katie Wilkins, one of Westminster's Pathways para educators, shared a devotional with the students before the athletes arrived: "We are all called to serve, love, and include those whose needs are greater than ours. By playing basketball with these students today, you are saying loudly to all those lucky enough to observe that this child is made in the image of God, just like you. We may not be economically poor or physically needy, but we all share in the pain of sin. But through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit became our advocate. If you believe in Christ, you have the world's greatest story of advocacy and inclusion built into your life."



A Higher Calling

RICH BROYLES '87

Since his junior year of high school, Rich Broyles '87 knew he was called to be a pilot. Realizing early on he wasn't meant to be confined by walls or a desk, he was driven to explore, experience the world from above, and turn his passion for flying into a lifelong career.

"I started at the bottom: towing, cleaning, and refueling airplanes, and worked my way up. 30 years later, the Lord has blessed me beyond what I could have imagined."

As a corporate pilot and Vice President of Flight Operations for Nestlé Purina, Rich leads a dedicated aviation team that ensures the safe, efficient, and reliable transportation of executives and associates worldwide. With a deep commitment to operational excellence and safety, he oversees all aspects of flight operations, including strategic planning, regulatory compliance, team development, and maintenance oversight.

"What I love most about being a private pilot is the blend of precision, leadership, and service it requires. Every flight is different and an opportunity to deliver peace of mind and top-tier service to our company executives and guests. Leading our flight department is not just about managing aircraft. It's about building a high-performing team, fostering a strong safety culture, and supporting the broader mission of Nestlé Purina to enrich the lives of pets and the people who love them."

Rich says one of the most meaningful aspects of his current role is being able to mentor the next generation of aviation professionals by modeling and encouraging the fruits of the Spirit; specifically, characteristics such as a teachable mindset and a servant's heart. Rich credits Westminster—along with his parents and church—for providing a strong spiritual and academic foundation that shaped his character and work ethic.

"I knew then, as I do now, that my teachers genuinely cared about me. They challenged me, held me accountable, and invested in my growth in academics, athletics, and extracurricular activities. That support and high expectations prepared me well for college and my career."

Rich has been connected to Westminster for over 40 years, first as a student, then serving on the school board, being a proud parent of four Westminster graduates (Emily '15, Sarah '17, Jake '20, and Josh '20), and more recently, involved in Westminster's new Aviation program.

"Over the years, I've looked for opportunities to share my passion for aviation, but it's clear that God's timing is always better than mine. With the expansion of Westminster's innovative programming, I truly believe this moment has been prepared for 'such a time as this.' I'm grateful to be part of what God is doing in the lives of these students through Aviation. No program, let alone a mentor with my experience, was available to me in high school, so it is amazing to see how much Westminster has grown in this area. I'm excited to help students discover the unique experiences aviation offers—not just the thrill of flight, but the chance to explore and admire God's handiwork in creation from an entirely different perspective. It's a meaningful way to inspire curiosity, purpose, and a deeper appreciation for aviation and faith." •



REFLECTIONS

A Note from Your Alumni Relations Coordinator

On May 19, we welcomed 161 new members to the Westminster Alumni Association, strengthening a growing legacy of unique and diverse men and women, united by shared memories and a common bond, impacting generations worldwide.

The Class of 2025 joins over 5,000 alumni, spanning nearly half a century, who have experienced some of their most foundational moments, impactful memories, and deepest friendships while walking the halls of Westminster.

On April 18, 2026, we will be gathering to commemorate WCA's 50th year. Mark your calendars for an epic celebration!

No matter which campus you called home, we want you to know that Westminster remains true to the same foundation of faith and unwavering mission on which it was founded. We love highlighting and celebrating the ways that our alumni are carrying out that mission. You'll find in the following pages a small sampling of the great stories being lived by Westminster graduates.

No matter when you graduated, we would love to hear from, see, and welcome you back home. Once a Wildcat, always a Wildcat!

— Kelly Beckemeier Johnston '97

Class Notes

ALUMNI NEWS



'86

Lester Stuckmeyer was appointed Jefferson County Municipal Judge in June 2023 and is also the principal partner of his law firm, Martin, Leyhe, Stuckmeyer and Associates LLC.



'12

Matthew Brugner and his family—his wife, Faith, and their two sons, James (2) and Noah (5)—recently moved back to St. Louis from Texas. Matthew is now the President at Missouri Pipe Fittings, a 92-year-old manufacturing business.



'04

Lane Koch was recently elected as the Chesterfield Ward 3 City Councilwoman.



'13

Kaylie (Duke) Stone and her husband, Andrew, welcomed their third little girl, Lillie, to the family last year. She joins big sisters Elanor and Eden.

'11

Dan Moore is the proud owner of DJ Shark Attack. Dan's company DJs for 120 weddings and events yearly, including all of Westminster's proms and homecomings. Dan has had an awesome time getting DJ Shark Attack plugged in and working alongside WCA.

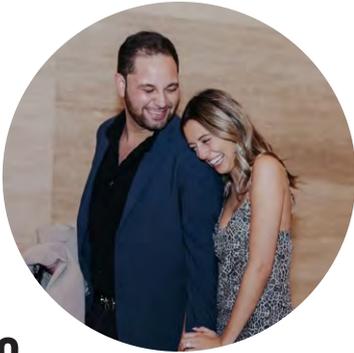


'15

Riley Adkisson married Breeyn on March 28, 2025. Luke Shields '15, Caleb Mundorf '15, and David Kerkhoff '17 were part of the wedding party.



Luke Shields and **Emily Sulewski '15** were married on March 8, 2025. Several alumni were in the wedding party, including: Lauren White '11, Matt Weber '15, Riley Adkisson '15, Whitney Dykstra '15, Jordan Harvey '15, Caleb Mundorf '15, Joby Seitz '15, Hannah Ruckman '15, Taylor Wright '15, and Grace Keane '16.



'18 Parker Gelber and **Elizabeth Meeks '18** got engaged earlier this spring and are planning a fall wedding.

Avery (Engelmeyer) Sems recently matched for residency at her dream job in Anesthesiology at UMKC.



Emily (Zell) Herron was recently named St. Louis Public Schools Secondary English Language Arts Educator of the Year.



'19 Jimmy Obertop recently signed with the Colorado Rockies. Jimmy played both catcher and first base for Clemson and Michigan.



'21 Luke Coco recently graduated Grand Canyon University, where his marketing team, Canyon Creative, won five American Advertising Awards (ADDYs): Printed Annual Report or Brochure (gold), Magazine Design (gold), Website (gold), Television Advertising (gold), and Student Best of Show.



'23 Jaron Lewis, after completing basic training, became a member of the prestigious U.S. Navy Honor Guard, where he is detailed to presidential ceremonies in and around the nation's capital. As a member of this elite group, Jaron served at Jimmy Carter's funeral on January 9, 2025.

IN MEMORIAM

Thomas Schlafly '00 passed away on February 19, 2025, surrounded by his loved ones. Tom loved roller hockey, baseball cards, and producing a weekly hockey magazine. We pray that God provides His comfort and grace for Tom's family, including his wife, Ashley, and his children, Finnegan and Eliana.

Dr. Madalyn Nicole Elliott '10 passed away on May 4, 2025, in a tragic car accident along with her parents, Norleen and John. Madalyn became a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine in 2022 and was in her last year of residency in internal medicine. She loved snow skiing, traveling, exploring the outdoors, and embracing her adventurous spirit. Join us in praying for God's love and comfort for Madalyn's sister, Melissa (Elliott) Lauer '08, and her nieces Claire and Emma Lauer.

SUBMISSIONS

What's new in your life? Whether you just started a new job, earned a promotion, got engaged or married, moved to a new city, began a new degree (or just graduated), received an award, or accomplished any other personal or professional goal, we want to celebrate with you. If you would like to be included in the next issue of Chimes, please send us your update, including your graduation year and a recent, high-res photo to alumninews@wcastl.org. We can't wait to hear from you.

SPIRIT WEEK ALUMNI JUDGES



Boys Poms

Whitney (Mooney) Allen '04, Becca (Davis) Castaneda '02, Eric Timm '03, Sydney (Stillman) Weinberg '15, Sam Stillman '21, and Virginia (Greenplate) Kruta '97



Lip Sync

Rachel (Denny) Moll '98, Madison (Burke) Loethen '10, Anna (Pitzer) Johnson '92, Daniel Moore '11, Joanna (Reiso) Browning '94, Jeff French '00

ALUMNI EVENTS



Alumni Hockey Game

Back Row: Chad Kim '03, Drew Gingerich '23, Michael Bianca '08, Zack Kilgore '22, Matt Burgess '21, Kyle Bateman '07, Coach ('04-'07) and referee Robert Bateman, Nate Hoening '99, Aidan Penberthy '20, Joey Morici '24, Caleb Bross '22, Emily Grieger '23, Zach Nall '17

Front Row: Andrew Bateman '04, Cody Kilgore '24, Harry Ottsen '22, Jerrod Jarboe '98, John Burgess '09, Andrew Tipton '18, Matt Brown '01, Gus Duda '22, Daniel Kim '08, Nate Brown '03

UPCOMING REUNION DATES

OCTOBER 10, 2025

Class of 1990
35-Year Reunion

OCTOBER 11, 2025

Class of 2010
15-Year Reunion

Class of 2005
20-Year Reunion

Class of 2000
25-Year Reunion

Class of 1985
40-Year Reunion

Class of 1980
45-Year Reunion

NOVEMBER 5, 2025

Kansas City Alumni Gathering
Acre Restaurant, Parkville, MO

THANKSGIVING WEEKEND

NOVEMBER 28-29, 2025*

Class of 2015
10-Year Reunion
**Exact Date TBD*

APRIL 17, 2026

Class of 1995
30-Year Reunion



CELEBRATE THE STORY

APRIL 18, 2026

Westminster's 50th
Anniversary Gala

Save the date for this special
occasion. Details to follow.

Funding Innovation, Fueling Growth

LET'S DREAM TOGETHER FOR WESTMINSTER STUDENTS



By Shannon Kekhaev
Director of Development Operations

What do you want to be when you grow up? Let's be honest; it's a question many of us are still answering as adults. But it's a question posed to kids all the time. If you asked me in 6th grade, my answer was to make it big on Star Search (the Gen X version of America's Got Talent). I wrote a stirring ballad about my first crush that was sure to win the hearts of America. I also had a choreographed dance to Janet Jackson's Escapade in my back pocket. I kept my options open.

While making it to Hollywood didn't pan out, it's only natural for kids to dream big! When we're young, our minds are curious. We are constantly encountering new ideas and situations. We're discovering our interests and skills and learning if they align. As a mom, I want my kids to explore unique environments, meet interesting people, and see the great big world God created. But here's the truth: providing access to innovative opportunities doesn't just happen. It requires thought, planning, time, resources, funding, and, many times, relationships.

Over the past few years, it has been a joy to watch leaders at Westminster cast vision for our students and invite them to explore new worlds—from Ocean Discovery (in landlocked Missouri, might I remind you) to our new Aviation program to Business Academy Junior. *In addition to* the core curriculum, students gain exposure to skills, experiences, and career fields that can help them connect their interests and God-given abilities.

School should be the best place for kids to engage the world in innovative ways. We are their primary center of education and learning. We must remain committed to providing a solid academic foundation while allowing students to explore the rapidly changing world they're stepping into.



As Director of Development Operations, it's my role to understand funding needs at Westminster and ask God to lead our team to people He will use to meet them. In fact, through our current funding efforts via *Our Faith. Our Future. Our Time. The Campaign for Westminster*, we are committed to raising funds to invest in innovative programs for our students. One of the first gifts supporting this vision enabled the renovation of our Hub (student center), which has provided numerous opportunities for fellowship, community building, and student experiences, in addition to housing our Pawprint Coffee Shop.

Time and again, if God wants an idea or program at Westminster to launch, He provides a way. As we continue to develop innovative opportunities for our students, I invite you to consider how He might use your skills, knowledge, expertise, and resources to make them possible.

Let's keep dreaming together about providing Westminster students with unique and innovative experiences—framed within a biblical, Christ-centered worldview—that keep them engaged and curious, inquiring and growing. They don't *have* to know what they'll be when they grow up, but let's do our best to provide them with plenty of options to consider. •

Do you have experience that could strengthen one of our current programs? Has God put an innovative idea on your heart? To explore opportunities for funding or supporting innovative programs for Westminster students, please contact our advancement team or Shannon directly at skekhaev@wcastl.org or 314.997.2901, ext. 6424.



Westminster Christian Academy
800 Maryville Centre Drive
Town & Country, MO 63017
wcastl.org 314.997.2900

