

THE ALTAMONT SCHOOL



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THE ALTAMONT SCHOOL

is one of the nation’s premiere coeducational independent schools for students in grades 5-12. For 50 years, its rigorous academic requirements, leadership education, athletic opportunities and personalized college search program have given students outstanding preparation for higher education and professional leadership.



Photography teacher Amber Quinn and the graduating seniors of her daily Advisory group—Morgan Mack, Tyler Daniels and Camille Eberle

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Cover: Adwitha Bellam, Leilani Jackson and Benjamin Price have a first lesson in microscopy.



The Middle School production of 13 Jr. was part of a landmark year for Altamont’s Theatre Program.

Features

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The Altamont School admits students of any race, disability, color, creed, religious belief, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national or ethnic origin, or disability to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the School. The non-discrimination policy extends to the administration of its educational, admissions and financial aid policies, faculty and staff recruitment and hiring, and athletics and other school-administered programs and activities.



The Altamont School magazine was printed using environmentally safe UV ink and varnish and recycled paper.

WELCOME TO ALTAMONT!

Help us welcome outstanding new faculty and staff!

Cynthia Bond

Assistant Director of College Counseling

B.A., Speech Communications. University of Montevallo

Cynthia Bond comes to Altamont after serving as a Career Specialist at Hoover High School for 20 years. She also served the University of Montevallo as Assistant Director of Admission, Director of Orientation and Senior Admission Counselor.

Iris Fisher

Chief Financial Officer

M.Acc., University of Alabama at Birmingham

B.S., Accounting. Alabama State University

Certified Public Accountant

Iris Fisher has more than 25 years of leadership experience in private and public accounting and administration, most recently as Manager of Accounting for Concurrent HRO.

James Hardin

Chef Manager

B.A.Sc., Culinary Arts/Chef Training. Johnson & Wales University

A.A., Interior Design. Jefferson State Community College

B.A.Sc., Business Administration and Management.

University of Alabama at Birmingham

James Hardin will lead our dining experience on behalf of FLIK Independent School Dining. He brings to Altamont extensive experience in the dining industry, including six years as Chef de Cuisine at Samford University.

Zoe LaBreche

Head Varsity Volleyball coach

M.B.A. University of West Georgia

B.S., Mass Communication/Media Studies. University of West Georgia

Zoe LaBreche brings to Altamont more than 15 years of volleyball experience. She played at Chelsea High School, and was an outside hitter for Jacksonville University and The University of West Georgia.

Gracie Roth

Librarian

M.L.I.S., University of Alabama

B.A., English and Theatre. University of Alabama at Birmingham

Gracie Roth is an active library professional with extensive experience in the Birmingham area. She comes to Altamont from Mountain Brook's O'Neal Library, where she specialized in young adult programs. She also has served the Vestavia Hills and Homewood libraries in teen and adult services.

Jeff Schalk

PE Teacher

B.A., Communication Management. University of Alabama at Birmingham

In addition to coaching baseball for Altamont, Jeff Schalk has served as Travel Baseball Coach and Instructor for D-BAT SW Birmingham. He lettered in baseball for four years at UAB and ranked in the Top 10 in UAB history in At-Bats (818), Hits (211), and Walks (105).

Lillis Taylor

Art Teacher

M.A., China Studies. University of Washington

B.F.A., Industrial Design. University of Washington

Altamont alumna Lillis Taylor '98 is a distinguished artist, educator and nonprofit administrator. She co-founded Birmingham's Bib & Tucker Sew-Op, a hub for sewing activities that promotes empowerment, education and economic opportunity. She also runs The March Quilts organization, a collection of 16 quilts that shed light on themes of racial, gender and environmental justice.

Tobbie Taylor Jr.

Head JV Boys Basketball Coach

B.S. Sports Management from University of West Alabama

Tobbie Taylor comes to Altamont from Homewood High School, where he was the Freshman Head Basketball Coach. He is also the founder and owner of the Alabama Lynx AAU basketball program.

Paige Thibault

Head JV Volleyball Coach

B.S., Interdisciplinary Studies, Concentration in Business and Sports Management. Auburn University

Paige Thibault was her high school volleyball team captain and first team All-State for two consecutive years. She then played for Auburn University as a Libero, and was on the SEC Academic Honor Roll.

Jaylon Underwood

Middle School Boys Basketball Coach/Assistant

Varsity Girls Coach

B.S., Sports Management. University of West Alabama
A.S., Physical Education. Jefferson State Community College

Jaylon Underwood played for JoVanka Ward at Homewood High School, and spent the last three years there as Assistant Basketball Coach. She also coaches in the Alabama Heat Elite travel AAU program, and is a lead coach for Nike Basketball camps.

JoVanka Ward

Varsity Girls Head Basketball Coach

M.A., Technology Integration. Nova Southeastern University

B.S., Sports Management/Athletic Administration. Hampton University

JoVanka Ward has coached at Ramsay, Thompson and Homewood high schools as well as Alabama A&M, Howard University and UAB. She was a four-year letter winner, three-year team captain and Defensive Player of the Year at Hampton University.

Sarah Williams

Music Teacher

B.A., Music Education (Instrumental). University of Alabama at Birmingham

Trumpeter Sarah Williams is an active professional musician and music educator who has performed with Altamont's orchestra and jazz band and many other local orchestras, quintets and bands. In addition to private lessons in multiple instruments, she has taught for Homewood School of Music and Scrollworks School of Music.

A Legacy of Independence



In 1975, two celebrated Birmingham institutions united to create a new school to carry forward their legacies of education. Fifty years later, The Altamont School still represents the best of Birmingham University School (est. 1922) and Brooke Hill School (est. 1941), while growing to serve an ever-changing city.

Altamont's impact is felt more than ever as students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends live the school's core values of respect, integrity, balance, curiosity and leadership. We nurture that culture by remaining not merely private, but independent—providing on our own terms the courses, content and unique programs that best serve our families.

As we celebrate this legacy and our ongoing commitment to our community this year, we will look forward as much as we look back, pointing to exciting new ways for us to help shape the world.

We hope you will join us for our exciting Golden Anniversary events!



CELEBRATING ALTAMONT'S 50TH YEAR

Masquerade Gala

OCT. 30 6 PM
The Club
1 Robert S. Smith Dr.
Birmingham, AL 35209

SAVE THE DATE!



ALTAMONT'S GOLDEN GOLF TOURNAMENT

8:00 AM

SAVE THE DATE!



16 March 2026

Highland Park Golf Course

www.altamontschool.org

More Details to Follow

A GOLDEN CELEBRATION

AUG

15 - First Day of School
Mayor's Welcome

SEPT

Aerial 50 Photo

OCT

28 - 50th Day of School
30 - Golden Gala

NOV

5 - Alumni Decades Panel
19 - Altamont Day of Giving
21 - Grandparents Day

DEC

19 - Alumni Holiday Party
20 - Young Alumni Brunch

JAN

16-30 - 50 Years of Altamont Exhibition

FEB

3 - Former Faculty Reception
12 - B.U.S. Bourbon & Cigars

MAR

16 - Golden Golf Tourney

APR

Day of Service
16 - Brooke Hill Tea

MAY

21 - Class of 2026 Graduation

JUNE

Alumni Family Event

Schmalz Named National Broadband Hero

Altamont Class of '25 graduate Michael Schmalz earned this year's national Student Broadband Hero Award—the first student to receive the honor in its 24-year history. Connected Nation Chairman and CEO Tom Ferree presented the award at Altamont this spring in recognition of Schmalz's dedication to bridging a digital divide that hinders community participation and limits access to essential services.

"Our staff was amazed at how much Michael wanted to help others in his community and by how well he understands the importance of digital literacy," said Emily Jordan, Vice President, Foundation and Education Initiatives for Connected Nation. "He not only leveraged our program to help older adults learn some essential digital skills, but he also used the incentive funds earned through Teens Teach Tech, powered by AT&T, to kick-start a digital literacy program to reach more Alabama residents. That included purchasing devices for the program. He's truly an exceptional teen who's deserving of this honor." Schmalz's work began in Altamont's C. Kyser Miree Ethical Leadership Center. A leadership class and conversations with center Director Beth Dille

helped him refine his ideas, and together they found an opportunity for him to lead digital skills workshops for older adults in the Teens Teach Tech program. He then used his earnings from that work to buy computers and develop his own initiative—Digital Harmonies—to promote digital literacy in rural, low-income, and elderly communities across Alabama, starting with a lab in Birmingham's Church of the Reconciler.

"Michael devoted genuine heart to this work within the Miree Center," Dille said. "He used every resource available to him, but what truly made the initiative succeed was his passion for helping people. Michael represents the very best of ethical leadership, and I have no doubt he'll keep making a real difference in the world just as he has for so many over the last two years."

"I just hope that people can learn more about the digital divide and what it is and how they can take action to bridge it," Schmalz said upon receiving the award. "I also hope that people remember as we move forward in an age that's increasingly dependent on devices that we agree to prioritize inclusion."



Experience For All!

The C. Kyser Miree Ethical Leadership Center represents the summit of experiential learning at Altamont, guiding Upper School students like Michael Schmalz in long-term community initiatives and career-focused summer internships. The Center also guides unique and transformational learning experiences for all students through the LEAD Middle School program, intercultural initiatives, a guest speaker series, global competencies, and work with community partners. Altamont is especially grateful to the grade-level community partners who commit to work with students through an entire year:

Black Warrior River Keeper
Founder's Place
Community on the Rise
Jones Valley Teaching Farm
Kulture City
Lakeshore Foundation
University of Alabama - Birmingham

With their help, Altamont students learn to contribute in any community, and to lead in the areas of their unique interests and abilities!





Single Rider Is Altamont's Ticket to Regional Stage

After three years of building The Altamont School's Theatre Program into a best-in-show winner featuring popular musicals, Director Reid Watson led his students in a challenging new direction this year. The program remains devoted to musical theatre, but Altamont presented the high school premiere of an unpublished work for its fall production. *Single Rider*, by Amanda D'Archangelis (music and book) and Sami Horneff (lyrics and book) is a light comedy that mixes traditional Amish music with pop and rock as it follows three young Amish women at Lucky Land amusement park on the first day of their Rumspringa, the traditional year in which Amish youth explore the "English" world. All three are transformed, but one faces an especially wrenching choice—to return to the world she knows or answer the call of her heart.

A Challenge

Looking back on Altamont's recent audience favorites, Watson acknowledged the risk of committing to a work so new that early rehearsals were essentially workshops for the musical, with additions, rewrites and notes from the authors

shaping the production on the fly. Musical theatre is a challenging art, and presenting an unfamiliar work is daunting for all involved.

Actors, especially, bear a heavier creative burden when developing a new production. "They can't get online and watch a YouTube clip of how somebody else played this role because there is no reference for them," Watson said. "So, they have to really use their imaginations and create something fresh." As a technical challenge, he observed that the actors' diction was especially important for audiences who can't fill in the details of pop hits as in recent productions of "Mama Mia!" and "A Chorus Line." Students in Altamont's new Technical Theatre class stepped up, too, developing the in-demand professional skills required to manage costumes for 17 *Single Rider* characters and creating an amusement park onstage at the school's Cabaniss-Kaul Center for the Arts. The show also featured live accompaniment by Altamont student musicians.

Watson says someone must take up these challenges for theatre to grow. "Supporting new

work is so important, because that's how we get the greats like "Hamilton" or the older shows from Rogers and Hammerstein," he said. "Even though this is a new work, audiences might really fall in love with it."

A Regional Stage

Audiences did fall in love with Altamont's production of *Single Rider*, and the honors rolled in. The musical earned Best In Show and top individual awards at district and state levels of the Walter Trumbauer High School Theatre Festival. Trumbauer judges also selected *Single Rider* as Alabama's inaugural entry in the new Studio category at the Southeastern Theatre Conference (SETC) in Baltimore, Maryland, in March. The cast and crew accepted that challenge, too, and took the show on the road.

"I really think *Single Rider* was such a special experience because I certainly didn't expect this much to come of it," said Trumbauer All Star Casting honoree Ali LeJeune. "It was such a fun show to perform, and taking it to Baltimore and performing at SETC was such an honor. Within the show, getting to create my own role from the guidelines I was given was such a wonderful creative test, and Moira was such a fun character to play. Being able to share new shows like this one is such a privilege, and I just hope we get to do more amazing stuff like this in the future!"

Kaavya Karthikeyan shared All Star Casting honors with LeJeune and Lottie Kanter (Abigail). The Altamont stage veteran graduated this year, but carried with her one of the highlights of Altamont Theatre history. "I think that ending my senior year with *Single Rider* was truly unforgettable, because not only was I able to create the character of Angela with my own experiences, but we were also able to take the show to the highest level and introduce the show to the theatre world," Karthikeyan said. "I know that Altamont theater will continue to reach new heights, and I am so grateful that I got to be part of what I think is one of many new opportunities."



Martin Kinney earned first place in photography at the district level of Alabama's Visual Arts Achievement Program, and second place in state competition.

The artwork of **Emory Carter, Margaret Overton** and **Scarlett McCoy** was selected for the Alabama Art Education Association's Virtual Art Exhibition.

Ben Poczatek earned first place honors at the Pensacola Fingerstyle Acoustic Guitar Competition and the University of Louisville Guitar Festival.

Vassili Trenin earned piano honors from Birmingham Metro Music Forum, Alabama Music Teachers Association and the Gulf Coast Steinway Society.

Reid Watson directed and choreographed The Virginia Samford Theatre production of *Oklahoma* this summer. The show also featured student **Madeleine Price** and alumna **Kirstan Davie '24**, with dream ballet assistance from **Olivia Vanlandingham '24** and **Caitlin Cornelius '24**. **AJ Gallitz** served the theatre as an intern through Altamont's C. Kyser Miree Ethical Leadership Center. **Mitchell Hughey** and **Emma McLain** were Miree Center interns for Red Mountain Theatre.



Olivier Maloney, Johnny Stumpff (Valedictorian) and **Raju Sudarshan** (Salutatorian) were named semifinalists in the prestigious National Merit Scholarship Program.



Aubrey Sanders earned a National African American Recognition Award (NAARA) from the College Board National Recognition Programs, and was the recipient of Altamont’s Ransom Johnson Dunn III Award, which recognizes a male student who has unselfishly served The Altamont School as a leader and helper. He also earned Altamont’s Bausch and Lomb Junior Class Science Award.

Aaditya “Aadi” Raval’s essay —“Don’t use Public Lands for Private Harm”— earned both a regional Gold Key award and a Silver National Medal in the prestigious Scholastic Art and Writing Awards competition. Altamont writers earned a total of 20 Silver Key and Honorable Mention awards at the regional level.

90 Altamont students were named ACT Rising Stars based on their 2024-2025 PreACT 8/9 scores. Fourteen earned the top honor of Distinguished Scholar (top 5%). Sixty-three were named Rising Scholars (Next 10%) Thirteen were named Early Scholar: (Next 35%)



Vanya Dudeja, Aki Michel and **Shreya Wajapeyee** earned 1st, 2nd and 3rd places in the Middle School Short Story category of the regional University of Mississippi Writing Competition, and **Manasvini Chava** earned 2nd place in the Middle School Essay category.



2024 AP[®] CSP Female Diversity Award



Altamont was named to the College Board’s 2024 AP School Platinum Honor Roll for developing an AP program that creates a college-going culture and gives students opportunities to earn college credit and to maximize their college outcomes. Altamont also earned the organization’s 2024 AP Access Award for ensuring AP coursework is equally available to students no matter their backgrounds, and the AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award for achieving high female representation in AP Computer Science Principles.

Camille Eberle, Ivan Riley and **Keegan Thrasher** earned the Think Award for coding achievements at the VEX V5 robotics Alabama Championship, and advanced to the VEX Robotics World Championship, where they earned the Inspire Award for their positivity and passion for competition. Altamont’s Robotics Team won two tournaments and an award for robotics design earlier in the season.



Hannah Lebensburger presented her research on health inequality at the American Society of Hematology (ASH) annual meeting, an exceptional honor even for senior professional researchers.



Sarah Peter won the 2025 All Girls State Chess Championship and represented Alabama for the third year in a row at the Ruth Haring National Tournament of Girls State Chess Champions.



Altamont French students earned dozens of honors at the 2025 Alabama Federation of French Clubs Convention, and previewed their interpretations of the convention’s theme –“Les Îles de France”– at an all-school assembly.

The Altamont School’s annual poetry competition is its oldest tradition. In English classes, students select poems, introduce them to their peers, and explain the personal appeal of the works. Winners of the class-level portion of the competition advance to a semifinal round. The finalists present their poems in a schoolwide assembly. Congratulations to the 2025 honorees! **Cecilia Weinert** was our Middle School Champion, with “Back Soon; Driving—” by Carl Phillips. **Landon Dowe** (“Let America Be America Again” by Langston Hughes) and **Camden Pierce** (“Mother to Son” by Langston Hughes) were our Upper School Co-Champions.

Johnny Stumpff ’25 led debate honors this year with a nationals-qualifying varsity victory in the Tournament of Champions Digital Series in the spring. Rising JV debater **Jackson Shah** earned the title of 1st Place Speaker in the TOC winter competition.



Salmon’s Focus on *Community Lifts Knights*

Athletic Director Sheri Salmon brought to Altamont not only her own All American athletic achievements, but also more than forty years of observations about why students choose a school, and why they stay. Those experiences have shaped her first year of leading Altamont athletics.



Community Support

One of the most noticeable developments of the last year is a strong emphasis on community turnout at athletic events. Supporting players in person and representing Altamont in the broader Birmingham community is everybody’s responsibility, Salmon said, and the students notice. “They’re here all hours of the night,” she said. “They’re studying and making good grades. They’re performing and, quite honestly, they deserve that support.” Several new initiatives are making it easier than ever to support the Knights.

Expanded concessions might seem a small thing, but family schedules are easier to manage if meals are available at games. A new Altamont food truck featuring fresh-grilled items was very popular this year, Salmon said, and helped increase turnout at soccer and baseball games, in particular.

A new line of Altamont apparel will help the whole community show support at games and through the whole Birmingham area. A growing Altamont Athletics social media presence—including team accounts— will promote constant community engagement.

Salmon said families are responding enthusiastically, with many parents volunteering their special abilities and interests. Attendance at athletic events is up overall, but Salmon hopes to see more support for certain teams. Girls basketball, in particular, needs support in the stands. “Home court advantage is undeniable, and to not have it is a shame,” Salmon said, especially when the Knights see that kind of support for their opponents.

Recognition

Recognizing the work of players and coaches, past and present, also makes a strong statement about the role of athletics at Altamont. So, championship banners will be restored to Patton Gym to showcase the school’s long history of success. Altamont’s legendary track and field program has an impressive collection of blue (first place) and red (second place) state map trophies, but they’re scattered throughout the school. Gathering them in a new display can remind the entire community—and visiting teams—of what the Knights have accomplished, Salmon said.



The school has the happy challenge of honoring 25 teams, with seasons spread through the year. This year, Salmon moved sports honors from long schoolday assemblies to evening banquets that encouraged families to participate. She said that approach likely will transition to off-campus celebrations by individual teams for the 2025-26 school year, combined with a refined schoolday recognition. The separate events will help Altamont's Athletics staff and many multi-sport athletes participate fully.

A Core Altamont Experience

Altamont students of all ages have athletic opportunities they might not have at large public schools. Approximately half participate in at least one sport, and they don't have to sacrifice competitive intensity or opportunities to reach the champion's podium. Salmon said this distinctive feature of Altamont not only helps students, but is

vitally important to the future of the school. As an experienced college enrollment professional, she knows the importance of involvement in retaining students and motivating them to recruit others. She is watching for new opportunities to involve even more students. "Everybody deserves their own great Altamont experience," she said. "Athletics can play a part in that."

2024-25 Highlights

State Champion for Girls Indoor Track

State #2 for Girls Cross Country

State #3 for Boys Indoor Track

State #4 for Boys Cross Country

State #4 for Girls Outdoor Track

Area Champion for Varsity Volleyball

Area Champion for Baseball

Section Champion for Girls Golf

Area #2 for Boys Soccer, State Quarterfinals

Area #2 for Girls Soccer

Section #3 for Boys Tennis

Section #4 for Girls Tennis

Section #3 for Boys Golf

Sarah Marshall was the Alabama Cycling Association Mountain Bike state champion in her class, and **Madison Comer** was state #2. Comer is riding for Western Colorado University starting this fall.

Raju Sudarshan was the area winner of The Bryant-Jordan Student-Athlete Scholarship (see sidebar).

Izzy Sellers earned Altamont's 2025 Lily Cup (varsity soccer).

Laura Elizabeth Spann, Mary Beverley Spann and **Sykes Ticknor Carlson** earned Altamont's 2025 Joseph Wheeler Sewell Award (varsity athletics).



Sudarshan Named Area Winner in Bryant-Jordan Scholarship Program

The Bryant-Jordan Student-Athlete Scholarship program selected Altamont School student Raju Sudarshan as its 2025 winner for Area 3A of the Alabama High School Athletic Association. The

program's mission is to recognize students who, by ability and effort, have achieved excellence in both academics and athletics, and who motivate and encourage all segments of the student population to strive to be the best they can be.

In addition to being active in many school activities, Sudarshan was one of three Altamont National Merit Scholar semifinalists this year, and a multi-sport athlete with a distinguished record of achievement and leadership in cross country, indoor track, outdoor track, soccer and tennis.

Altamont Latin teacher Jamie Rediker coached Sudarshan as a runner for 11 seasons over four years, and nominated him for this year's honor. "Raju's resume in running is one of the most decorated in my eleven years of coaching," Rediker wrote in his nomination.

Notable athletic honors include:

Cross Country All-State Athlete (2022, 2023, 2024)

Cross Country All-Section Athlete/individual Section Champion (2022, 2023, 2024)

Cross Country State Runner-Up Team (2023) State #2 1600m outdoor (2024)

Top three fastest in school history – 1600m (indoor); 3200m (indoor); 5000m (cross country)

"Raju's leadership in our running program has been superb," Rediker wrote. "Electing him as boys' team captain this year was a quick and easy decision – our team of 20+ boys follows his guidance every practice, every race, every success, and every challenge. He is a cerebral athlete who deftly pairs his academic acumen with physical talent to maximize training and performance. Raju's diligence in training is infectious, and our boys' team collectively is one of my strongest ever because those behind him follow his example."



- Alex Curtis Agarwal** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Silver)
- Gracie Albright** - Lynn Clark Creative Writing Scholarship
- Tanner Battle** - Jeanne Classé Armes de Paris Medal
- Valeria Blanco-Barajas** - Global Seal of Biliteracy (French and Spanish)
- Lila Butler** - President's Volunteer Service Award (Gold)
- Sykes Carlson** - Faculty Cup, Joseph Wheeler Sewell Award, President's Volunteer Service Award (Bronze)
- Tyler Daniels** - Gainey Arts & Humanities Award
- Nish Doppalapudi** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Bronze)
- Vanya Dudeja** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Bronze, Gold)
- Vivaan Dudeja** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Gold)
- Talia Floyd** - Helen C. Abele Award, Global Seal of Biliteracy (Spanish)
- Sanjana Gaddamanugu** – Smiley Award
- AJ Gallitz** - Ann Robinson Vrocher Alumni Scholarship
- Nivedha Goli** - Outstanding Upper School Mandarin Student, Global Seal of Biliteracy (Mandarin)
- Nandhini Gutti** - Allene Benners Martin Cup, President’s Volunteer Service Award (Bronze)
- June Heine** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Gold)
- Andrew Herrin** - Speech Arts Club of Birmingham Book Award, Global Seal of Biliteracy (French)
- Meghana Hiremagalore** - John Wallace Johnston History Award, Global Seal of Biliteracy (Latin)
- Carrington Hunter** - Most Outstanding Visual Artist
- Zahid Issa** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Gold)
- Lottie Kanter** - Katharine Ireland Mitchell Award
- Kaavya Karthikeyan** - Margaret Gresham Livingston Leadership Award, Global Seal of Biliteracy (Spanish)
- Julia Kelly** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Bronze)
- Arissa Khan** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Silver)
- Bennett Mitchell** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Bronze)

- Eden Moody** - Joyce Ackermann Scholarship
- Aiden Owens** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Bronze)
- Camden Pierce** - Donovan Award, President’s Volunteer Service Award (Gold)
- Joe Porter** - Margaret Matthews Gage Prize in American History
- Lauren Prince** - Paul Nii-Amar Amamoo Award, Global Seal of Biliteracy (Spanish)
- Ivan Riley** - Clarice Locke Award, Carver-Gorgas Senior Science Book Award
- Ashlyn Reynolds** - Nancy Perrin Bailey Award
- Francie Roth** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Gold)
- Aubrey Sanders** - William NAARA, Ransom Johnson Dunn III Award, Bausch and Lomb Junior Class Science Award
- Michael Schmalz** - Mignon Comer Smith Book Award,
- David Hart White** - Spanish Award, Global Seal of Biliteracy (Spanish)
- James Sears** - Hallie Porter Shook Cup
- Isabella Sellers** - Lily Cup
- Alexander Skowronski** - Altamont Citizenship Award, Global Seal of Biliteracy (French)
- Laura Spann** - Joseph Wheeler Sewell Award, Global Seal of Biliteracy (Spanish)
- Mary Spann** - Joseph Wheeler Sewell Award, Global Seal of Biliteracy (Spanish)
- Johnny Stumpff** – Valedictorian, Outstanding Upper School Mandarin student, Global Seal of Biliteracy (Mandarin)
- Raju Sudarshan** – Salutatorian, Susan M. Hulsey French Prize, Global Seal of Biliteracy (French)
- Charles Youngson** - Sophia Mize Clifford Music Award
- Cecilia Weinert** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Bronze)
- Samantha Whelan** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Bronze)
- Virginia White** - President’s Volunteer Service Award (Gold)
- Will Wright** - Joyce Ackermann Scholarship



Heine Earns Mullins Teaching Prize

English teacher Jess Heine earned the school’s 2025 Edna Earle Mullins Endowed Teaching Prize. The award honors the dedication and devotion to education of the former head of the Brooke Hill School, and each year recognizes one of Altamont’s best and brightest teachers.

Assistant Head of School JP Hemingway noted Heine’s expertise and enthusiasm in teaching literature as an exploration of the human condition, but also praised her support of students beyond the classroom. She said Heine “makes the world around her a little brighter for the rest of us” as a constant presence at Altamont plays, concerts and sporting events, as a leader of Fall Project Week trips, as a quick volunteer bus driver, and as the leader of Altamont’s Christian Collective affinity group.

“Her students don’t simply leave her classes better readers, writers, and speakers; they leave our school as better people because of her nurturing encouragement,” Hemingway said. “Compassionate, dedicated, scholarly, and selfsacrificing ,she embodies the characteristics oftruly great teachers – those whose impact lasts a lifetime.”



National Honor Spotlights New Role for Lopez-Rogers

Altamont’s new Alumni and Advancement Services Manager, Caitlin Lopez-Rogers, is the inaugural recipient of the Harold Brown Scholarship, presented by the national Independent School Management (ISM) organization. The honor recognizes her energy, professionalism and vision, and provided tuition for her to attend the 14th Annual ISM Advancement Academy in California this summer.

The scholarship was created to celebrate the legacy of Harold Brown, a beloved mentor, leader, and advocate for independent school advancement professionals. Brown, who died in January this year, believed in the power of relationships and the promise of education, and dedicated his life to mentoring those who carried forward that mission. The award now given in his honor recognizes an emerging leader who shares that same commitment.

“Caitlin stood out for her long-standing commitment to independent schools and her dedication to professional growth,” said Michael Christopher, ISM consultant and coorganizer of Advancement Academy. “She embodies the spirit of Harold’s legacy.”



Thank You!

Altamont graduates go on to do amazing things as professionals. They are informed, independent and intellectually curious, and build their own reputations alongside the school's. They connect with new generations of Altamont students as teachers, guest speakers, mentors and hosts for internships. As donors, they also ensure that we are able to maintain the school's essential work and create new experiences undreamed of even a decade ago. Tuition does not cover the full cost of an Altamont education, so gifts to the Altamont Annual Fund are essential to our community.



GIVE TODAY!

We invite all Knights—alumni, family and friends—to consider a gift in support of The Altamont School, whether through our Annual Fund, estate planning, or participating in one of our upcoming events!

Scan the code to make a gift online or email sbrooks@altamontschool.org.





In her eight years of service as Altamont’s Librarian, Testing Coordinator and Archivist, **Caitlin-Lopez Rogers** has been immersed in the school’s past and present. Increasingly, she also has taken on the advancement work that secures Altamont’s future. Now she combines all this experience as our new Alumni and Advancement Services Manager. “In this new chapter, I’m excited to focus on creating and maintaining strong relationships with our alumni,” Lopez-Rogers said. “I look forward to strengthening our connections to the Birmingham community, our national and international communities, and celebrating all that makes Altamont so special.”



Jordan Giddens ‘12 steps into the role of Altamont Alumni Association President after serving as Young Alumni Chair. “It’s been a privilege to engage with fellow alumni and celebrate all that makes Altamont such a special place,” Giddens said “As we prepare for the school’s 50th anniversary this year, I look forward to continuing this work—building connections across generations, supporting exciting events, and helping Altamont prosper and excel for the next 50 years.”

Your complete Alumni Executive Council includes:

- Jordan Giddens ’12, President
- Elizabeth Turnipseed Grant ’06, Vice President
- Cameron Givianpour ’08, Treasurer
- Christena Holcombe Smith ’08, Secretary
- Alexandra Pritchard ’19- Young Alumni Committee Chair
- Terry Hamilton ’65- Brooke Hill Legacy Chair
- Joyce Butterworth McKinnon ’03, Chair, Community Partnerships Committee
- Jessica Friedman ’01, Co-Chair, Mentorship Committee
- Amrita Lakhanpal ’19, Co-Chair, Mentorship Committee

Onwenu Embodies Altamont’s Community Focus

The Altamont School is uniquely devoted to preparing young people to lead in career and community. Justin Onwenu ’14 embodies that focus, mirroring Altamont’s core values in his impressive record of academic achievement, advocacy and public service.

Onwenu earned a B.A. degree from Rice University (International Health and Policy) and a J.D. degree from Columbia University Law School, where, as Student Body President, he led his community through a period of unrest, working to bring people together and to combat hate.

Crisis refined Onwenu’s leadership skills and helped prepare him for his first next steps as he returned to his Michigan roots. National media featured his organizing work in the Detroit and Downriver communities, focused on clean air and water, investment in education, job creation, fair wages, affordable housing and COVID-19 response. He helped pass the most significant ethics and term limits law in Michigan history through a constitutional amendment bipartisan ballot initiative. In 2020 he was appointed to Michigan’s first Black Leadership Advisory Council and Advisory Council for Environmental Justice.



In 2024, the City of Detroit appointed him as its first Director of Entrepreneurship and Economic Opportunity.

In a very short time, Onwenu has built a statewide reputation not only for his personal dedication to these causes, but also, as a professor at UDM Law School, for equipping new generations to lead. “I truly believe that a strong economy uplifts workers and small businesses, so it’s been an honor to teach students about the rights of workers and bring in my perspective as someone who works closely with mom and pop shops and startups,” he said.

Onwenu recognizes how all this work for the world aligns with the values and focus of his alma mater. “Altamont has been foundational to my growth, Onwenu said. “Detroit has always been home and I’m so glad to be back in Michigan with my mom and family, but living in Birmingham shaped me in profound ways. Altamont taught me a lot about connecting across differences, listening, being focused on results, and paying it forward. I’m grateful for the love, education, and grounding.”



KNIGHTS NATION



Add your profile to the Knights Nation alumni site to help us build a vibrant alumni network!

Bryce Brown '20 introduced Altamont students to the history, engineering and state-of-the-art design represented in Birmingham's Barber Motorsports Museum.

Mas Crawford '88 gave Altamont physics students a fascinating look into his work with nanomagnetic particles.

Margaret Eby '04 and Nick Russell welcomed son Lorne Eilish Russell in February.

Edith Turnipseed Grant '06 and **Andy Grant** welcomed son Maxwell Wiley Grant in June.

Altamont History **Teacher Marilyn Sullivan** and **Mark Sullivan** welcomed son Mark Sullivan in April.

Elias Hendricks '05, **Nicole Vaughn '16**, and **Lillis Taylor '98** shared powerful experiences, insights and advice on arts professions in a schoolwide assembly.

BE Hornak '19 earned the Charlotte Hornets' "Rookie of the Year" Sales & Service Award.

Emma Lembke '21 was named one of Forbes' 2025 30 Under 30 in recognition of her efforts to promote youth mental health through her LOG OFF organization.

MK Stump Quinlan '03 and **Joyce Butterworth McKinnon '03** shared their business expertise with Altamont sixth-graders in support of the C. Kyser Miree Ethical Leadership Center!

Margaret Schedler '23 (Bryn Mawr) presented her research on Maj. Gen Edward P. King Jr. at the annual Nimitz Conference at the National Museum of the Pacific War.

Christena Holcombe Smith '08 and **Clint Smith** welcomed son Lane Louis Smith in March.

Scooter Thomas' 08 and **Megan Thomas** welcomed son Edward Franklin Thomas IV in July.

If you have birth, wedding, or remembrance announcements to share please contact our alumni office or DM us on Instagram @altamontalumni

Higher Education Milestones

Reese Alexander '21- B.A., English Language and Literature/ Letters. Barnard College of Columbia University

Isaiah Alexander '21- B.S., Business Administration and Management. The University of Alabama

Hannah Ashraf '21- B.S., Integrative Biology. Rice University

Mamie Grace Barnard '21- B.S., Mechanical Engineering and Music. University of California at San Diego

Zoya Bashir '21- B.S., Biopsychology, Cognition, and Neuroscience. University of Michigan

Gage Bell '21- B.S., Conservation Biology. Furman University

Simms Berdy '21- B.S., Chemistry and German. Williams College

Harris Blackstone '21- University of Alabama at Huntsville

Claire Buha '21- Samford University

Aryan Caplash '21- B.S., Sports Management. New York University

Lilla Carroll '21- B.S., Physics and Astronomy. Mount Holyoke College

Jaye Conn '21- B.A., Government and International Politics. George Mason University

Lilly Davis '21- B.S., Quantitative Economics and Finance. Tufts University

Merritt Edwards '21- B.A., Psychology and Spanish. Elon University

Cece Guyader '21- B.S., Business Administration / M.S., Business Analytics and International Business. Elon University

Jesse Hungerpiller '21- B.S., Sports Medicine. Samford University

Daniel Kutsch '21- B.A., Physics / B.S., Business Administration and Mangement. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Landon Lee '21- B.S., Management and Finance. Tulane University

Emma Lembke '21- B.A., Political Science and Government. Washington University in St. Louis

Isabella Maldia '21- B.S., Business Administration. University of Southern California / B.B.A, World Business. Hong Kong University of Science and Technology / B.S., Business Università Bocconi.

Matthew Mugweru '21- B.A., Economics and Film and Media Studies. Columbia University

Wilson Narducci '21- B.S., Biomedical Engineering. University of Alabama at Birmingham

Emerson Neely '21- B.S., Geological and Earth Sciences. Skidmore College

Hampton Pak '21- Lousiana State University

Lauren Perry '21- B.A., Environmental Sociology and Religious Studies. Vanderbilt University

Matthew Poczatek '21- B.S., Genetics. Auburn University

Robert Pritchard '21- B.A., Computer Science and Slavic Languages and Literatures. Northwestern University

Jehme Pruitt '19- University of Alabama Manderson Graduate School of Business

Eleanor Roth '21- B.A., Global Security Studies and Russian and East European Studies. Middlebury College

Kuleen Sasse '21- B.S., Computer Science and Applied Mathematics and Statistics. Johns Hopkins University

Ethan Sellers '21- B.S., Accountancy. University of Mississippi

Bay Stackpole '21- B.A., Greek, Latin, and Ancient Mediterranean Studies. Reed College

Aaron Swiney '21- B.S., Earth and Environmental Sciences. Fordham University

Kaia Todd '21- B.Sc, Neuroscience and Africana Studies. Tulane University

Kalia Todd '21- B.S., Nursing. Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University

Samantha Torch '21- B.A., Strategic Communications. Texas Christian University

Ollie Vance '21- B.S., Economics. University of Colorado at Boulder

Tyler Walley '21- B.A., Political Science and Government. Duke University

Maaz Zuberi '21- B.S., Electrical and Computer Engineering. Rice University

Remembrances

Please keep our Altamont family in mind as we mark the passing of alumni, staff and longtime friends.

Helen Abele '19

Louise Black (Staff)

Gilbert Carpenter '66

Cornelia Fox Crumbaugh '53

George Davenport '68

Mary-Bestor Grant '94

Helene Griffith '58

Mary Walter Haynes '57

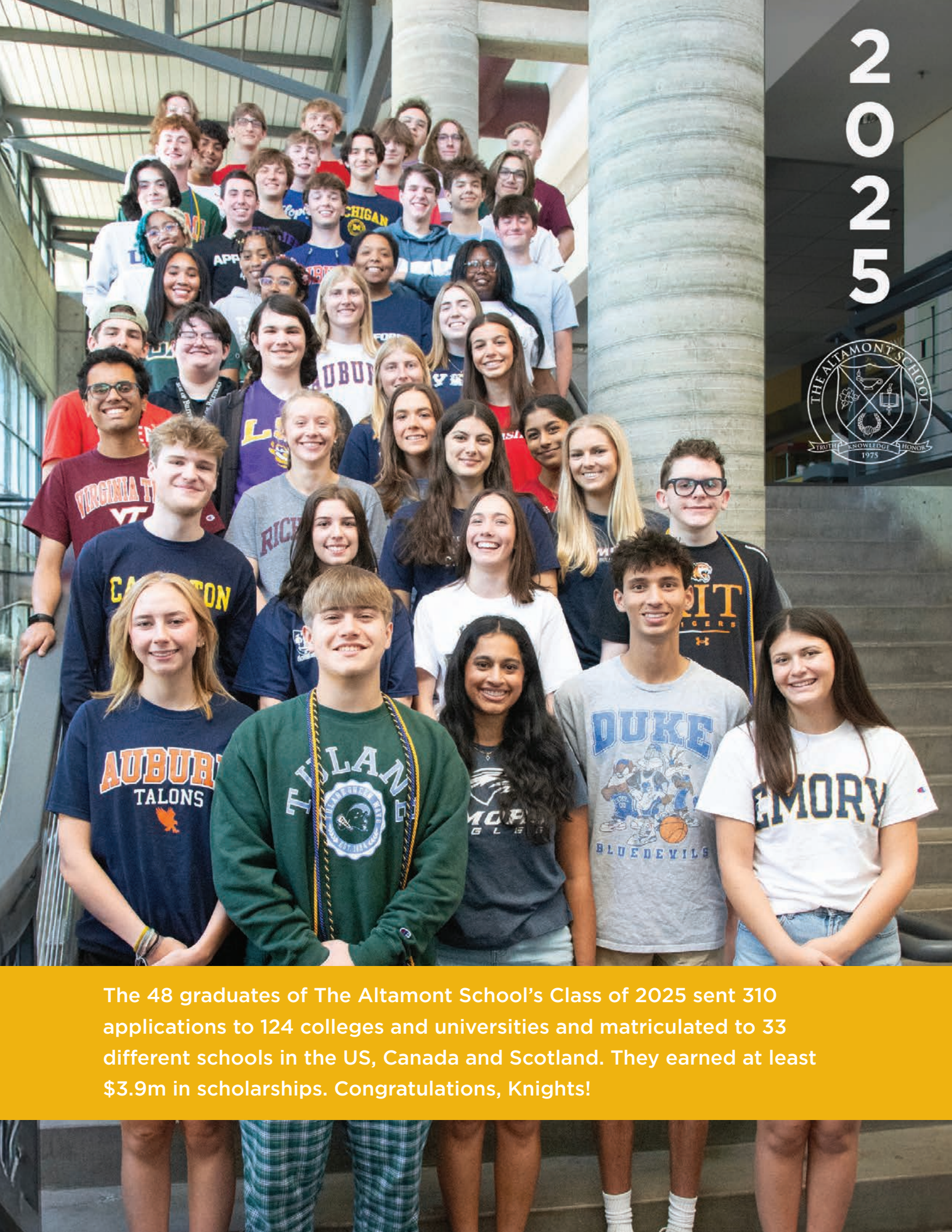
Lois "Penny" Lawson (Staff)

Jennifer Mason '97

Margaret Benners Shaw '47

Nicholas "Niko" Tsivourakis (Staff)

Charlotte Jackson Whitaker '66



2025



The 48 graduates of The Altamont School's Class of 2025 sent 310 applications to 124 colleges and universities and matriculated to 33 different schools in the US, Canada and Scotland. They earned at least \$3.9m in scholarships. Congratulations, Knights!

THE ALTAMONT SCHOOL



Independence

Our community is independent. We read the books we want to read, live our values and welcome you for who you are.

Opportunity

Expert teachers, staff and coaches guide us through athletic and academic teams, clubs, arts, leadership initiatives, internships and the college search.

Experience

We meet honors-level challenge in every class, and apply what we learn. We are informed and active leaders for Birmingham and beyond.

An international network of alumni is waiting to welcome and guide us. We are prepared to shape the world.

The Altamont School is one of the nation's premiere coeducational independent schools for students in grades 5-12. We improve the fabric of society by graduating compassionate, well-educated individuals capable of independent thinking and innovative ideas.

Learn More →



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