



The FALCON

ARBORBROOK CHRISTIAN ACADEMY

FALL 2025

It's Official! Arborbrook to Break Ground

Three years ago, Arborbrook Christian Academy launched the ROOTS Campaign, a bold vision to expand our campus, invest in our teachers, and create lasting spaces where students can learn, worship, and grow in faith.

Today, we are thrilled to announce that this dream is becoming a reality.

Arborbrook is officially breaking ground!



High school students pose with Coca-Cola products in front of the new building site

Through God's continued faithfulness and the incredible generosity of our community, we have raised \$1.2 million toward our campaign goal. Every gift has been a testimony of God's provision and the collective commitment of families, faculty, alumni, and friends who believe in Arborbrook's mission to cultivate hearts and minds for Christ.

This fall marks a defining milestone.

Financing has been secured with South State Bank, clearing the way for the next exciting step—construction to begin!

Adding to the celebration, we are deeply grateful to announce a \$100,000 gift from Coca-Cola Consolidated in support of the ROOTS Campaign. This generous contribution reflects a shared belief in the power of faith-based education to impact future generations.

Rooted in God's Faithfulness, Growing for His Glory

We invite the entire Arborbrook community to join us for a **Groundbreaking Celebration on Tuesday, December 9, at 3:30 p.m.** The event will take place at the future building site and will include a special time of worship and prayer as we thank the Lord for His faithfulness and dedicate this next chapter to Him.

This moment stands as more than just the start of construction; it is a celebration of what God has done through the prayers, perseverance, and generosity of His people.

The ROOTS Campaign has always been about more than buildings. It's about preparing the soil for generations of students to be rooted in truth, strengthened in character, and equipped to serve.

ROOTS CAMPAIGN MILESTONES

-  \$1.2 MILLION RAISED TOWARD CAMPAIGN GOAL
-  \$100,000 GIFT FROM COCA-COLA CONSOLIDATED
-  FINANCING SECURED WITH SOUTH STATE BANK FOR NEXT PHASE
-  GROUNDBREAKING CELEBRATION: DECEMBER 9, 3:30 PM- JOIN US AT THE NEW BUILDING SITE FOR WORSHIP AND PRAYER

As we look ahead with gratitude and anticipation, we give all glory to God for bringing us to this point. Let's continue to pray, give, and celebrate together as the vision takes shape before our eyes.

To learn more about the ROOTS Campaign, visit arborbrook.org/roots.



ROOTS
— Leaving a Legacy —

Student Life

Student Shoutouts

Maddi Zeni, Freshman, Team USA Competitor

In April, freshman Maddi Zeni participated in the US National Championship for ITF Taekwondo in Orlando, Florida. Competing in three events, she earned gold medals in two, securing her spot on the US National Team (Team USA). As a member of Team USA, Maddi traveled to Croatia to compete in the World Championship, where she represented her country with excellence. In the technical breaking competition, she executed five distinct and highly complex kicks, successfully hitting and fully turning all five boards. Although technical deductions kept her from medaling, she placed 12th overall. Maddi also competed in sparring, finishing 9th in her weight class after several hard-fought matches. We celebrate Maddi's perseverance, skill, and grace as she excels in her sport!



Freshman Maddi Zeni demonstrates her skill in Taekwondo



Senior Durant Elms receives special recognition at All School Assembly

Durant Elms, Senior, National Merit Semifinalist

We are thrilled to celebrate Durant Elms, who has been named a Semifinalist in the 2026 National Merit® Scholarship Program, an honor earned by less than 1% of high school seniors nationwide, and one of only 93 students in the Charlotte area to achieve this distinction. This recognition reflects Durant's diligence, intellectual curiosity, and commitment to excellence. Please join us in congratulating him on this remarkable achievement!



High School students having a blast at the HoCo Hoedown Homecoming Dance

HoCo Hoedown

Arborbrook's Homecoming this fall was a night to remember, themed "HoCo Hoedown." The event perfectly blended Southern charm and school spirit, with a twinkling dance floor set beneath hanging lights, refreshing Arnold Palmers to sip, and country-style snacks, complete with cornbread, of course! Student Council and an incredible team of parent volunteers brought the theme to life, transforming the space with a stunning black-and-white vinyl dance floor, thanks to the creative vision of Kelley Alderman. Students couldn't get enough of the cowboy hat photo wall, which captured plenty of smiles and laughter. But the real highlight of the night was the energy on the dance floor. Once the DJ started spinning, the crowd hardly stopped moving! It was a joyful evening celebrating friendship, fun, and Falcon pride.

See You at the Pole: Our Community in Prayer

Over 75 students, parents, and faculty came together for a meaningful moment of prayer and community at this year's National See You at the Pole event. The Arborbrook family gathered at the flagpole to lift up our school, teachers, students, and nation in prayer, an event organized by the Student Council. Later that week, students continued the tradition during All School Assembly, coming together by class to pray for friends, teachers, and the wider community. These events served as a heartfelt reminder that prayer remains at the heart of who we are as a school family.

Community Highlights

Alumni Feature: Nicole Riha



Arborbrook Alumna Nichole Riha, Class of 2019

Currently working in Maryville, Tennessee, Nicole Riha (Class of 2019) serves as a cytologist at Prisma Health Blount Memorial Hospital, where she analyzes cell samples under a microscope to help pathologists diagnose cancer, infections, and other

abnormalities. She also steps in as a histotechnologist, preparing and staining tissue biopsies for further study. After earning a master's degree in Cytopathology Practice from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Nicole received board certifications in cytology (CT) and histotechnology (HTL) through the American Society of Clinical Pathology, all while maintaining a 4.0 GPA. Her dedication and excellence were recognized with the Cyrus C. Erickson Award for Cytotechnology. Reflecting on her time at Arborbrook, Nicole fondly remembers Mrs. Mangas's Anatomy and Physiology dual enrollment class, where students created music videos and songs about body systems, an activity that filled the room with laughter and creativity. She recalls her graduating class as one of the best, filled with friendship, fun, and unforgettable memories.



Alumni, please take a moment to update your contact information using this QR code!

Teaching Through History: Ms. Mitchell at Mount Vernon

This summer, Upper School history teacher Ms. Jillian Mitchell participated in The Great Experiment: George Washington and the Founding of the U.S. Government, a highly competitive, week-long program at George

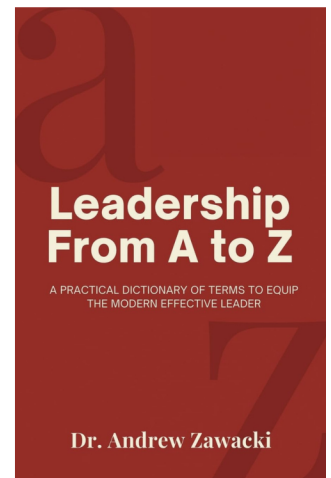
Washington's Mount Vernon. "I feel immeasurably blessed to have participated in the Mount Vernon Teacher Institute," Ms. Mitchell said. She described behind-the-scenes access to archives and collections, seeing Washington's firsthand documents and artifacts, and exploring the grounds at sunrise. "The sessions conducted by the historians were thought-provoking, insightful, and full of practical strategies and primary resources to enhance our curriculum. Most of all, the people I met at this institute were incredible, and it was so encouraging to be surrounded by other history teachers who love this subject with their entire hearts." Since returning, Ms. Mitchell has already begun using what she learned in her classroom this fall, giving her students fresh ways to engage with the stories and artifacts of our great nation's founding.



Ms. Mitchell poses in front of George Washington's home at Mt. Vernon

Dr. Zawacki Gets Published!

Arborbrook is thrilled to announce that our very own Dr. Zawacki has been published! His new book, *Leadership from A to Z*, is more than a clever nod to his name, it's a heartfelt guide for anyone seeking to grow as a leader. This book walks readers through the alphabet of leadership, offering a well-rounded, spiritually grounded vision of what it means to lead with purpose today. We're incredibly proud of Dr. Zawacki's work and the legacy it reflects, and we invite you to grab your copy today and be inspired—available now at Amazon and Barnes and Noble.



Cultural Connections

Growing Global Friendships: Arborbrook's German Connection

As a recipient of the 2025 Fund for Teacher Fellowship, Mrs. Brossy traveled to Germany to explore school garden programs and learn about German ecology and culture. This journey began two years earlier when she met 5th-grade German-English teacher Frau Felicia Gloria through another program. Their cross-cultural conversations grew into a friendship, and soon their classes began an engaging pen pal exchange focused on nature and culture—an initiative that exceeded all expectations.

"I wanted to write a grant proposal that would deepen my understanding of German culture and its relationship with nature," said Mrs. Brossy. "Before my trip, I loved facilitating our class exchanges but felt limited by my lack of firsthand knowledge. The fellowship offered the perfect opportunity to expand both our program and my perspective."



Students at Käthe-Kollwitz Gymnasium pose with Mrs. Brossy as they plant a tree to honor their special partnership with Arborbrook

During her fellowship, Mrs. Brossy spent a week in Saxony visiting partner school Käthe-Kollwitz Gymnasium (KKG) and staying with Frau Gloria's family. KKG warmly welcomed her, even dedicating a tree to symbolize the schools' friendship. Mrs. Brossy delivered handmade gifts from ACA's 5th graders and shared Arborbrook swag with the KKG head of school. Students were eager to learn about life in the U.S. and at Arborbrook. Mrs. Brossy also visited other school garden programs in Saxony, meeting students and environmental educators. She then spent another week in Bavaria with her own

family, hiking in the stunning Bavarian Alps and reflecting on her learning experiences.

The fellowship deeply enriched Mrs. Brossy's teaching, inspiring her to weave more global perspectives and environmental awareness into her lessons. She now incorporates stories, photos, and practices from her time in Germany to help students see how nature connects people across cultures. Her renewed passion for hands-on, cross-cultural learning continues to motivate her students to explore the world with curiosity and care. To read KKG's article about Mrs. Brossy's school visit (use Google Translate if needed), scan this QR code.



Mission-Minded and Globally Engaged

This summer, sophomore Ruth Carey spent a week serving on a mission trip in Bilsht, Albania, helping lead a camp for middle school students, many of whom had never heard the gospel. "Missions have always been something that has been on my heart," Ruth said, explaining why she felt called to go. She raised the money, put in the time and effort, and stepped out of her comfort zone to experience missions in a completely new way. One early morning, she and the youth from the Albanian church hiked to a mountaintop overlooking the town, and as they sang worship songs over the city, she said she could truly feel God's presence there. The trip challenged Ruth to share her personal testimony despite her fears and taught her not to compare her story to others, realizing that God meets each person in the situations they need Him most. It also gave her a greater understanding of another culture and strengthened her sense of calling toward future overseas mission trips.



Sophomore Ruth Carey in Albania

Experiences like Ruth's are a perfect example of the Arborbrook advantage, where students are equipped and supported to share their faith, serve others, and pursue meaningful opportunities that shape who they are becoming.

Athletics

Making History Together: A Record-Breaking Fall Season

Arborbrook Athletics had a season to remember this fall! For the first time, our Falcons competed in the NCISAA State Playoffs, a milestone for our program. Across nine sports, our student-athletes showed grit, teamwork, and heart, with four teams earning postseason spots. What an incredible way to celebrate a season full of growth, achievement, and Falcon pride. Go Falcons!

Highlights from an Unforgettable Season

Girls Tennis

The varsity girls tennis team finished the regular season with a perfect 7-0 record, making history as one of Arborbrook's first teams to compete in NCISAA postseason play. They dominated Round 1 of the state playoffs and gave it their all in a hard-fought Round 2, coming up just short. We celebrate their dedication, sportsmanship, and teamwork.



Girls Volleyball



Led by four talented seniors, the **varsity volleyball** team swept the SPAA conference with an 8-0 regular season and earned both the conference regular-season and tournament championships. They earned a home playoff game, triumphed in Round 1, and battled fiercely in Round 2, falling just short of advancing. Their leadership, determination, and team spirit continue to set a high standard for Falcon excellence.

Our **middle school girls volleyball** capped off their season with an unforgettable finish, winning the SPAA conference tournament championship in front of a packed home crowd. Their victory was a testament to teamwork, perseverance, and the incredible support of the Falcon community.

Arborbrook's **5th and 6th-grade girls** volleyball laid the groundwork for the future of Falcon volleyball. Competing fearlessly, often against older and taller opponents, these young athletes showed courage, enthusiasm, and steady improvement all season, leaving a bright path for the years to come.



Boys Soccer

The Arborbrook boys soccer team demonstrated tremendous growth and unity on the field. With every player eligible to return next year, the foundation has been firmly set for an exciting and competitive season ahead. The future looks bright for Falcon soccer!



Cross Country

Arborbrook's Cross Country program reached record participation, with over 20 runners competing across the region. Both the Varsity Boys and Girls teams ran in the State Championship meet at McAlpine Park on October 24, where the Girls team finished 5th overall in 1A NCISAA, an outstanding accomplishment. Congratulations to Caroline Lacina for earning a spot on the NCISAA All-State Cross Country team!



Middle school girls volleyball (left) and varsity girls volleyball (right) are presented with SPAA conference championship trophies

Arborbrook Hosts SPAA Volleyball Tournament

Arborbrook had the honor of hosting the SPAA Conference Volleyball Tournament, and our gym was electric with excitement! Both the middle school and varsity volleyball teams claimed conference tournament titles in front of a full house of cheering fans. It was a powerful moment that showcased not just athletic talent, but also the heart and unity that define Falcon Athletics.

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Arborbrook Students Shine in Four Fantastic Performances of *Annie Jr.*

Arborbrook Christian Academy is proud to celebrate the outstanding work of our grades 4 through 8 students, who delivered four fantastic performances of *Annie Jr.* over three days, drawing record-breaking crowds and even selling out one show. With heart, energy, and impressive professionalism, our students brought the classic story of Annie to life, sharing its themes of hope, resilience, and the joy of belonging. Their work reflected the expectant hope we have as sons and daughters of God, and the entire production stood as a wonderful example of what young performers can achieve with dedication and teamwork. Congratulations to the cast and crew for an outstanding production, and many thanks to Mr. Buksbazen and the dedicated team of volunteers whose hard work made this unforgettable show possible. This year's Annie Jr. will be remembered as one of Arborbrook's most successful and inspiring shows to date.

