

PRINCIPIA

PURPOSE

WINTER 2026



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PRINCIPIA
PURPOSE

WINTER 2026 | ISSUE 392

The mission of the *Principia Purpose* is to build community among alumni and friends by sharing news, accomplishments, and insights related to Principia, its alumni, and former faculty and staff. The *Principia Purpose* is published twice a year.

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FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Purpose in Motion: The Leaders Shaping Principia's Future

BY BARBARA BLACKWELL (HON'22)
Chief Executive



Effective leadership is an active, daily expression of purpose. It has the power to transform lives and move communities forward with clarity. This is what leadership at Principia looks like: grounded in spiritual insight, demonstrated through service, and measured by the good it brings to others.

In this issue of *Principia Purpose*, we celebrate two Principians who exemplify this kind of leadership: Principia Head of School **Terry Grigsby** (US'97, C'01) and Principia College President **Dr. Meggan Madden** (C'93). Their dedication reflects the enduring strength of a Principia education that emphasizes character first, excellence always, and a deep, ever-present commit-

ment to collaboration. As you read, you'll discover how these visionaries are elevating scholarship while thoughtfully stewarding a culture of trust and accountability. You'll

... when leadership
is rooted in Principle,
progress follows.

also see how, by the example they set, they are already inspiring the Principia community to lead with courage and humility. Their visions for the campuses align with our mission and affirm a simple truth:

when leadership is rooted in Principle, progress follows.

Also included in this issue is a pamphlet titled *Living Our Purpose*, which outlines our Purpose, Mission, Values, and Policies. I hope you find this resource both meaningful and practical, as it offers insight into what it truly means to be part of the Principia community and to live our shared values each day.

In closing, I want to thank you for your continued support of Principia and for the leadership you express in your homes, workplaces, and communities. I invite you to engage thoughtfully with the ideas shared in this issue and to reflect on how each of us can continue learning, growing, and leading together. 🦋

A LEADER IN EDUCATION JOINS PRINCIPIA'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dr. Ann Austin has spent a lifetime shaping higher education, from mentoring faculty to studying how colleges can become more inclusive. Principia is proud to welcome her to the Board of Trustees, where her vision and experience will inspire and uplift our community.



Dr. Ann Austin is a University Distinguished Professor at Michigan State University, where she has spent 35 years shaping the landscape of higher education. Over her career, she has held leadership roles including Interim Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic

Staff Affairs, Assistant Provost for Faculty Development, and Associate Dean for Research. She has also served as a Program Director at the National Science Foundation and was a Fulbright Fellow in South Africa.

A Fellow of both the American Educational Research Association and the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Dr. Austin's research focuses on organizational change, faculty development, teaching improvement, and creating inclusive academic environments. Widely published, she recently released a book on teaching evaluation with Harvard Education Press.

Dr. Austin and her husband, John Beck, are proud parents of three grown children and grandparents to three grandsons. She draws inspiration from her Christian Science faith in both her personal life and professional endeavors and is looking forward to serving the Principia community, supporting its mission, and helping guide its future with insight and care. 🌊

Pictured from left:

Ian Forber-Pratt, Todd Boyman, Elizabeth "Liz" Crow, Inez Maubane Jones, Elisabeth Brinton, Dr. Lisle Staley Stigler, Dr. Ann Austin, Gavin Campbell, Kristin Jamerson, Patricia "Trish" Sarkisian, Chestnut Booth, David Walters
Not pictured: Terry McNabb, Dr. Scott Schneberger



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ON CAMPUS SCHOOL

QUICK LOOK

GAME, SET, MATCHHHHH!

SOPHOMORE YIFEI MAKES GIRLS' TENNIS HISTORY

Sometimes, history happens fast. For sophomore tennis star, Yifei, her 6–0, 6–0 victory in the 2025 Class 1 state tennis championship was nearly a blur. “I just remember thinking, oh, that was quick,” she says, excitedly. A quick match, but an accomplishment years in the making: Yifei is the first girl to win the singles title for Principia School.

Looking ahead, Yifei hopes to compete at the collegiate level, but for now, she is proud to represent Principia. “I’ve transferred schools four times in three years, and Prin is different,” she says. “I’ve gotten so many congratulations—it made me feel like, wow, they really care.”



BRINGING LEARNING TO LIFE

Breaking Ground and Honoring the Earth

Long before campus permaculture gardens bloomed or environmental stewardship was in the spotlight, **Ted Munnecke Jr.** (C'57), beloved Upper School biology teacher, mentor, and coach, was leading the charge. His endless supply of wonder, curiosity, and wry humor inspired generations of Principians to appreciate their connection to the natural world—and protect it.

Decades later, during the 2025 Upper School Reunion, Principia students, educators, and alumni gathered to break ground on the Munnecke Nature Center. “We are thrilled to have a space that brings our learning to life,” said **Lynne (Elrick) Scott** (C'01), Director of Stewardship, Partnership, and Impact. “This is something Ted Munnecke was a natural at, and this outdoor classroom honoring how he engaged and inspired so many is a true testament to his work and Principia’s commitment to connecting students with the natural world.”

Funded by the Upper School 50th Reunion Classes of 1975 and 1976 and friends, the space honors the lasting impact that Munnecke’s visionary commitment to sustainability and hands-on learning had on the lives of Principia students, faculty, and alumni across the decades. Munnecke’s enthusiasm for discovery lives on in the new center’s design and purpose, embodying what Principia does best: combining tradition with innovation, honoring the past while building toward a brighter, greener future.

“It is our utmost concern to bring before our students the aspect that we need natural areas, unspoiled and pure,” Munnecke once said. “The foundation for the development of an ecological ethic is to see, touch, and understand that things are interrelated.”



Principia School students, administrators, 50th Steering Committee members **Jeannie (Sellers) L'Heureux** (US'75, C'80) and **Ally (Owen) Keller** (US'76), and others took part in the official groundbreaking ceremony.



IN BRIEF

TIMELESS PERFORMANCE

This fall's Upper School production of *A Wrinkle in Time* was more than a play—it was a celebration of imagination, ingenuity, and teamwork. The students' commitment and focus led to a groundswell of creativity and collaboration.

Students composed an original score, performed on stage and in the orchestra pit, acted as backstage crew, even provided front-office services such as marketing. “It demonstrates the magic that happens when creativity, confidence, and collaboration come together,” said theater arts teacher **Avery Lux**.

PANTHERS ON THE NATIONAL STAGE

Less than a year after winning its first state championship in School history, the boys' basketball team leapt to the next level, taking the national stage by storm. The Panthers traveled to Florida over winter break to participate in the City of Palms Classic, a tournament that draws elite high school teams from across the country, not to mention NCAA and NBA scouts as well. Led by senior Quentin, a blue-chip shooting guard who recently committed to attend Wake Forest, the Panthers took third, unseating the top-ranked team in the nation along the way. When all was said and done, Principia closed out 2025 as the second-ranked team in the country.

IN BRIEF

NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLAR

Upper School senior Amerie is a 2026 National Merit Scholarship semifinalist, placing in the top one percent of more than 1.3 million high school students across the nation who took the PSAT (the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test). In the months since being notified, Amerie has been hard at work writing her application essay and submitting test scores in anticipation of the announcement of National Merit Finalists.

"Principia has built my belief in my ability to grow as a student," she says. "Specifically, my calculus teacher **Velvet (Benzamin) Dow** (C'97). Without her belief in me from the start, I would never have gotten to where I am today."

METEOROLOGIST VISIT

This fall, St. Louis meteorologist **Leah Hill** took a break from tracking storms to visit Principia kindergartners. While their science lessons have taught them to read thermometers and introduced them to terms like "overcast," Hill brought that learning to life.

The students were captivated by the colorful temperature and weather maps she uses on TV, and they especially enjoyed acting as mini meteorologists, reading the maps to announce the temperature. "It was such an inspiring visit," says kindergarten teacher **Lauren Arens** (US'20, C'24). "Our young scientists were so inspired that they created a new classroom job called Classroom Meteorologist, who shares the daily weather during our morning meeting."

FOR THE WINS

HIGH-MINDED, HARD-FIGHTING, AND WALKING THE WALK

It's been three action-packed years since the Bill Simon Field House opened its doors, transforming the School campus. In that time, Principia School's athletics program has entered a new chapter as well! Boys' and girls' basketball teams reached the state championship for the first time ever; Principia celebrated its first ever girls' singles tennis state champion; boys' soccer and wrestling finished second at the state championship; Principians are running and swimming in the state finals. Across every sport, Principia's athletic motto of "high-minded, hard-fighting" is bearing tangible results.

But beyond win-loss records and behind state championships, athletics at Principia are a deeply character-driven pursuit, permeating every level of the School experience. "As Athletics Director and as a fan, it's cool to see these wins on the scoreboard," says **Shawn Brown** (US'00, C'04), "but at the end of the day, athletics at Principia are about students overcoming challenges."

Sarah (Jarvis) Grigsby (C'07) agrees. As a Lower and Middle School PE teacher and coach across Middle and Upper School, she reinforces this focus every day. "The character piece is really important to me," she says. "I always start with a spiritual thought, and by including the students in that, I can see them light up." It's a reminder that, while win-loss records may change, Principia's spiritually based character education endures.



GRAFFITI IN THE GROVE

Ninth Graders Become Public Artists and Project Managers



In the heart of Principia's community in Town and Country, Missouri, Principia's ninth graders recently embarked on a colorful adventure: creating a vibrant mural for the new Blacksmith's Grove tunnel under Clayton Road.

The mural became a canvas for storytelling, reflecting the community's rich heritage and dreams. Guided by Media Arts teacher **Grace (Bonwich) Hinthorne** (US'08, C'12) and former Social Studies teacher **Don Sterrett** (US'95), the students dove deep into the history and values that shape Town and Country. "We wanted the students to experience the real-world process of creating something impactful," explained Sterrett.

After the students presented their designs to the Town and Country Board of Aldermen, one Alderman commented, "These kids are going to be the future project managers of the world!"

On August 15, the mural was officially unveiled, transforming the concrete tunnel into a vibrant scene reflecting the area's history and spirit. From brainstorming to the final brushstrokes, Principia's students left a colorful, indelible mark for the community. "We're looking for character, citizenship, collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking," said Hinthorne. "We hit all six of those with this project."

LEARNING GLOBALLY



FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: YAN WANG, MANDARIN

Principia's new Mandarin teacher **Yan Wang** is a standout educator who joined the School this school year—a native of China who came to the U.S. on a Fulbright Scholarship, earned her doctorate at the University of Kentucky, then came to Principia. She joined the *Purpose* to tell us more.

Where did you grow up?

I was born and grew up in China's Hunan Province.

What brought you to St. Louis?

I came to St. Louis for Principia, but I heard many good things about St. Louis and had visited it before.

What drew you to Principia?

I was drawn to Principia because of its core value of LOVE: Limitless potential; Overcoming obstacles; Valuing God, ourselves, and others; Embracing excellence.

Why is it important that students learn Mandarin?

Mandarin is spoken by a quarter of the world population. China is playing an increasingly important role in the world economy now and in the future. Knowing Mandarin and understanding its culture, which differs greatly from American and other western cultures, will help students effectively engage and participate globally, if we are cultivating future-ready citizens. Mandarin and Chinese culture offers students a different perspective to understand the world.

What changes or new opportunities would you like to bring to the program?

I want to create and lead an educational trip to China that offers students an immersive experience and the opportunity to see China and its diverse cultures through their own eyes.

If there's one takeaway every student could take from your classes, what would it be?

Chinese culture is so rich and fluid.



Upper Schoolers prepare for the Empty Bowls benefit.

Upper School Students Lead with LOVE

STORY BY ERIC MORSE (US'90)

At Principia, learning and impact are so intertwined that it's written into our defining Policies. "Teaching at Principia emphasizes the point of view that education carries with it the obligation to use skills and knowledge for the betterment of humanity and our world," states Policy 10. This approach—what Head of School **Terry Grigsby** (US'97, C'01) once described as "Principia's secret sauce"—is present in the work of School faculty, staff, coaches, and administrators. And the School's core value of "Lead with LOVE" is demonstrated in the actions of students of all ages.

This year, student ingenuity, creativity, and good old-fashioned elbow grease have produced service projects ranging from civic beauti-

fication projects to food drives and direct donations to local, national, and international causes. The organic permaculture gardens on campus provide academic lessons in sustainability as well as sustenance through local food banks.

"Each year, the fourth-grade class sows seeds for a spring garden," explains **Hope Gribble**, the School's garden education coordinator. "They grow fresh lettuce, collards, kale, and radishes to donate to a local food pantry. This enables the students to experience hands-on the interconnection of soil, plant, and human wellbeing. The donation isn't a one-time experience, it's the culmination of many studies and actions, which makes it even more meaningful."

Principia's fourth annual Empty Bowls community dinner took place in November. Principia students crafted one-of-a-kind bowls for a silent auction and for guests to bring home as a gift, and community members provided an array of homemade soups, breads, and desserts for dinner. All proceeds benefited Urban Harvest STL, a nonprofit network of urban farms that help alleviate local food insecurity.

Upper School Visual Arts teacher **Mary Lamboley** reflected on the way Principia students blended creativity with community service. "Seeing what these students produced, and all the growth and joy over just a few short months, is incredible," she said. "Partnering with Urban Harvest STL has been a



Lower schoolers harvest vegetables for local food pantries.

great way to extend our knowledge of the systems that created this food insecurity, while doing something about it. There is room for everyone to share, learn, and grow to make the world a better place.”

Benjamin, an Upper School junior who partnered with Seed STL to support urban farming beyond Principia’s campus, summarized his experience this way. “The level of food insecurity in St. Louis astounds me,” he said. “I wanted to see concrete evidence of progress, and volunteering at the garden brings a lot of contentment. . . . We’re all about taking action.”

You Can Open Doors for the Next Generation of Principians

Our alumni and friends are Principia’s greatest ambassadors.

Be the gateway for the next generation of legacy makers and help students leverage the excellence of a Principia education:

- Newly minted **National Honor Society**
- **Nationally ranked teams** and multi-sport state championships
- **Entrepreneurship** opportunities, **travel**, and **experiential learning**
- **Over \$5,000,000** available in **tuition assistance** and scholarships
- **State-of-the-art** facilities and sports fields
- **Lifelong friendships** and global connections through our boarding program
- **127-year heritage** of alumni engagement ready to mentor and guide



PRINCIPIA
SCHOOL

A world-class education is within reach.



Learn More



Learn about our Alumni Referral Scholarship: principia.edu/refer

A portrait of Kimbeley Peterson, a young Black woman with her hair in braids, wearing a black headband and a grey blazer over a black top. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a plain, light grey.

ON CAMPUS COLLEGE

QUICK LOOK

KIMBELEY PETERSON: LEADING BY LISTENING

College senior **Kimbeley Peterson** (C'26) has been named a Newman Civic Fellow. A double major in biology and global studies, Peterson demonstrates leadership in every aspect of student life. She is president of the African Students Association, Howard House president, former international student representative on Student Senate, co-captain of the women's tennis team, and manager at the Piasa Pub.

"I believe in taking initiative to address issues within our control, especially those rooted in social and cultural hierarchies," says Peterson. "My work emphasizes listening first, recognizing that sustainable change must be shaped by many voices."

IN BRIEF

SLEET'S SCULPTURE COMES UP RIVER

From its perch overlooking the Mississippi, the James K. Schmidt Gallery hosted *Up River: A Path Forward*, a solo exhibition of works by visionary artist **Thomas Sleet**. Sleet is a St. Louis-based sculptor whose work focuses on the intersection of the natural and man-made worlds, creating sacred vessels out of salvaged and manufactured elements. By incorporating reclaimed materials, then reshaping and repurposing them to create his sculptures, Sleet brings a sense of collected, shared history to his work. The exhibition awed and inspired Principia students of all ages—from College students to the Preschool 3 class that visited this fall!

STUDENTS TASTE THE GOOD LIFE

Student life just got a whole lot tastier. After a comprehensive search process that included five national vendors and input from students, faculty, and staff, Fresh Ideas Food was selected to take over all campus dining operations.

Benefits now include extended dining hours, all-you-can-eat meals, and \$250 per semester in "Prin Bucks," flexible dining dollars for students to use at the Piasa Pub and C-store, a mobile app, and expanded dietary options. And it's not just the food that's getting an upgrade. The Scramble Room is undergoing significant renovations this school year as well!

BETTER NEWS

25th Monitor Night Live Rises Above the Fray

How to stay informed while navigating today's media landscape of sensationalism and outrage? That's what the 25th Monitor Night Live set out to answer.

The event, aptly titled "Above the Fray: How to Heal the Divide, Think Critically, and Love the News," addressed the duty of journalists in today's political climate and *The Christian Science Monitor's* distinct perspective.

Monitor Editor **Christa Case Bryant** (C'03) was joined onstage by Environment and Climate Change Writer **Stephanie Hanes**, Chief Culture Writer **Stephen Humphries**, and Middle East Correspondent **Taylor Luck**—all no strangers to controversial topics. What transpired was a conversation grounded in love, respect, and a desire to listen.

"[*The Monitor*] wants to lift people above the ideological tug of war," Bryant told the packed Robert Duvall Theatre at the McVay Center for the Performing Arts and over 1,000 online participants. "Let's find a place where we can all get a higher perspective."

"In some media, people see that their role is to convince others of a truth that they believe," added Hanes. "Our goal is to share a loving truth."

Luck, who has been stationed overseas to cover the Gaza-Israeli war, added, "As a journalist, I never take a side, but I always take a stand—for justice, for life, and fairness." Now that's a higher perspective indeed.



Missed it live? Watch the livestream recording.



IN BRIEF

NEW DEAN OF STUDENTS

Mark Hagenlocher (US'84) has been appointed Principia College's new Dean of Students.

With nearly a decade of experience in student life, including a year as Interim Dean of Students, Hagenlocher has championed gender-inclusive housing, Student Code of Conduct reforms, and advancements to the Spiritual Life program.

"Mark was selected because of his extensive leadership and experience in student affairs; his dedicated service to character education; and his drive to create respectful, supportive communities," said College President **Dr. Meggan Madden** (C'93).

SOLAR ARRAY POWERS UP

The lights are on in Elsay! Principia College's solar farm is now officially in operation. With the capacity to generate 3 million kWh of electricity per year, the array could power roughly 272 average American homes. While the solar farm will downsize the College's carbon footprint and insulate the institution from rising electricity costs, the sustainability benefits don't stop there. The array also provides acres of pollinator-friendly habitat, offering a home to species and a living classroom to students. "I'm delighted Principia has completed development of this solar array, and I'm so glad to have a statement of our values present near our front gate," says **Dr. Nicholas Johnson** (C'04), associate professor of sustainability and economics and chair of the Sustainability Department.

ART + SCIENCE = MARRIAGE

CRAFTING A MOSAIC OF CHANGE

Award-winning UK artists **Rob and Harriet Fraser** brought their unique blend of poetry, photography, and environmental art to the College as the fall 2025 Annenberg scholars. Much of the Frasers' work explores what they call the "Data of the Heart," weaving together art, science, and community collaboration to imagine more sustainable futures.

During their residency, they engaged students and faculty across disciplines from environmental studies and land stewardship to creative writing and fine art photography, inviting them to pause and consider their own connection to the land and see creativity as a form of stewardship. At an all-campus lecture, Harriet elaborated that art can impact environmental change, "There needs to be a culture of people who care about a landscape. What we're trying to do is make space for attitudes to change, but not forcibly."

Near the end of their stay, Rob and Harriet recreated their *Sense of Here* installation, planting their signature canvas sheet on Principia's Chapel Green, inscribed with the words "All the Small Things." It asks viewers to look closer and see that "all these small things contribute to the bigger picture and are relevant to global issues."



NEW ATHLETICS DIRECTOR

Coach Ro: Passion, Vision, Excellence

Following a competitive national search, a familiar College face now has a new role. Coach **Ramiro Dominguez**, affectionately known as “Coach Ro,” is the new College Athletics Director.

A nationally recognized coach and educator, Coach Ro brings more than three decades of experience developing championship programs and mentoring student-athletes. He has led the Players First Basketball Organization for 32 years, guiding its 16U and 17U teams to national titles competing at more than 250 tournaments. His career reflects a deep commitment to excellence and the transformative power of athletics.

In just five seasons as head women’s basketball coach, he has elevated the program to historic heights, leading the Panthers to their first-ever SLIAC Championship in the 2025 NCAA Tournament. His achievements have been recognized nationally through such honors as 2025 Division III Women’s Coach of the Year from the Illinois Basketball Coaches Association and SLIAC Coach of the Year in 2023.

“Coach Ro is a passionate, visionary leader who understands that sport provides opportunities to develop character, excellence, leadership, and resilience,” said College President **Dr. Meggan Madden** (C’93). “His proven success and heartfelt dedication to student growth will strengthen the culture of Principia Athletics going forward.”



TAKING CENTER STAGE

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT: JOHN O'HAGAN

Professor of Theatre **John O'Hagan** may be on leave from teaching, but he is anything but idle. After acting in a feature film; developing, producing, and performing in improvisational theater; and founding a producing organization; he was named understudy for the iconic role of Atticus Finch in the UK touring performance of *To Kill A Mockingbird*.

Stepping in during opening night in Edinburgh, O'Hagan wowed audiences. UK reviewers hailed his debut performance as “standout,” “spectacular,” “superb,” and “an emotionally charged powerhouse.”

While the Center for the Arts is eager to have O'Hagan back in Elsah, Center Director **Leah (Gallant) McFall** (US’89, C’93) says, “John’s work furthers two objectives that are very important to the College’s arts programs. First, we consciously inform the education through our own active professional practice in the arts. Second, we actively make connections in the professional world to open pathways for our students. John has been doing this for years, but his recent activities have increased his worldwide contacts exponentially.”

An Icon Gets Its Glow-up: College “P” Is Fresh for a New Era

STORY BY ERIC MORSE (US’90)



A bold panther and an iconic “P”—two of the modern and timeless marks of Principia College’s new branding.

The kids call it a glow-up. When a stalwart look is transformed, revealing a beauty—even an identity—so long hidden as to be forgotten. The results can be breathtaking, and if the collective gasp from the student body was any indication, the reveal of Principia College’s new brand nailed the assignment.

All College brand elements have been rethought, from brand mark to typeface to coloring. Even the iconic panther is fresh. “There are a whole lot of reasons why we decided to undertake this work,” says College Director of Marketing and Communications **Steve John** (US’89, C’96). “In the higher education environment, there are fewer students available, so you have to stand out in a sea of sameness. You have to express your brand in a way that will draw attention.”

College President **Dr. Megan Madden** (C’93) adds, “Our grounding in Christian Science, which is central to who we are, needs to be celebrated and expressed. Our branding needs to capture the grandeur and beauty of our campus while representing Principia ideals that embrace our legacy. As we look for ways in which we can introduce ourselves to the world, we recognize that a new brand image would help us express the Principia ideals in our operational mission and academic vision.”

For John and team, establishing a future-looking brand required communing with the past. “When we started doing this,” he says, “the rules were very simple: seek what is authentic, what is ownable, and what is timeless. . . . It started with a deep reverence for Principia College.”

To uncover the authentic and the timeless was an act of visual excavation. St. Louis-based creative agency Grown spent hours poring over Principia archives. “From Bernard Maybeck’s architectural renderings to historic signets, inspiration emerged for a new custom typeface and a refreshed logo mark,” John recounts.

“The Principia archives were a treasure trove of artifacts, symbols, and signets to draw from. In addition to old publications, exhibits, and artwork, we drew a ton of inspiration from the campus itself. There are many shapes and textures within the crests developed for the College and its Academic Centers that are drawn directly from patterns we observed in the stonework, tapestries, and other decorative elements around campus,” says **Dan Rayfield**,

co-founder and design director of Grown. “The Mistake House, especially, became something of a mascot for us as we tried different things and proved out different approaches until we landed on one that felt true,” adds **Caroline May**, Grown’s co-founder.

What the team uncovered turned out to be a Principia original: a “P” dating back over 90 years, “blending tradition with modernity and honoring our legacy while looking boldly ahead,” says John. Indeed, anyone familiar with the College campus will recognize the subtle nod to its storybook feel. Against a landscape of collegiate, block-lettered Ps (think Princeton or Purdue) this mark is fluid and welcoming. The vision is carried forward with a custom font that is calm and confident, featuring lithe stems and swooping legs—a 21st-century update to the lettering that dates back to Principia’s founding.

“One thing that struck us about Principia is its profound sense of place. It really feels magical, and we wanted to preserve that in the new typeface and mark,” says May. “Everything we created for these brand systems is intended to preserve that which is distinctive and special. Principia isn’t like everyplace else, so it didn’t deserve a brand identity that looked like everyone else. It invites you to linger and really look, and I think that’s a nice visual nod to the student experience and campus culture.”

“This new identity is more than design; it is a promise,” says Madden. “It points to the qualities we nurture here every day: character, curiosity, creativity, courage, and a deep care for one another.”



find your place and your center.

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OF NOTE

QUICK LOOK

ALUMNI BRING GLOBAL ENGAGEMENT HOME

Hunter Hummell (US'17, C'21), **Marie Sherman** (C'20), **Logan Landry-Jennings** (C'18), **William Johnson** (US'19, C'23), and **Weston Williams** (C'16) convened on campus this fall for a panel discussion hosted by the Center for Civic and Global Engagement.

The alumni discussed how their Principia education had prepared them for success. "My path wasn't linear," said Sherman. "But Principia helped me build the skills that served me through grad school and in my current work. The concept of being a global citizen has been so crucial for how I approach everything in my life."

Read more about the launch event for the **Center for Civic and Global Engagement** on p. 30.

TRUST-BUILDING EXERCISE

Swire Sparks Connection

Ben Swire (US'91) made a recent appearance on the Design Better podcast. Swire is an award-winning writer, founder, and the author of *Safe Danger: An Unexpected Method for Sparking Connection, Finding Purpose, and Inspiring Innovation*.

"We're living in a moment when people are more connected than ever yet often feel more alone," Swire says, and he poses the provocative question: What if the greatest threat to achieving our goals is the safety we cling to?

Swire's work combines the latest research with his years of experience working with corporate teams to build connection and fuel collaboration. He points to seven powerful qualities: joy, vulnerability, curiosity, optimism, connection, trust, and creativity. "Building real trust . . . is no longer optional; it's the glue that holds communities, organizations, and even families together."

"Principia was the first place that taught me how powerful it is when a community truly sees you," he recalls. "Even now, decades later, that's at the heart of my work with Make Believe Works: helping people connect with themselves, with each other, and with the unique potential that comes alive when those two forces meet."



Scan for more on
Swire's work.

READY FOR HIS CLOSE-UP

Breathing New Life into a Classic



Dr. David Lubin (C'72), one of the country's preeminent art historians, recently retired after a distinguished career that spanned over 40 years and included roles at Oxford, Wake Forest, and Colby College, as well as fellowships from Harvard, Stanford, Yale, the National Gallery of Art, and others. Over that span, Lubin published eight books and was awarded the Smithsonian's Charles Eldredge Prize for "distinguished scholarship in American art."

In 2017, Lubin returned to Principia College as an Annenberg scholar. This fall, Lubin's eighth book, *Ready for My Close-Up: The Making of "Sunset Boulevard" and the Dark Side of the Hollywood Dream*, was heralded by reviewers as a vital and unflinching look at one of American cinema's seminal works.

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LIMITLESS LEAVOY

Softball Coach Ken Leavoy (C'75) Inducted into Canada Hall of Fame



Ken Leavoy (C'75) has long been venerated among the hallowed halls of beloved Principia coaches. Now, the former Upper School and College head softball coach, 2011 SLIAC Coach of the Year, and Canadian National Softball Team coach finds himself in another hallowed hall: the Softball Canada Hall of Fame.

As an assistant coach on the 2015 Canadian National Team, Leavoy helped guide the program to a gold medal in the 2015 Pan Am Games—an underdog story that cemented the team and coaching staff in the Canada Hall of Fame.

Yet to Leavoy, the awards and recognition are not goals, but way markers. “Success is proof that you’re on the right path,” he says.

Winning international tournaments may seem like a full-time job, but for Leavoy, it was only a side gig. When he wasn’t elevating Team Canada, Leavoy was leaving his mark on Principia’s softball teams. “By far, the privilege of coaching at Principia was the opportunity to help students make the connection between metaphysics and success in life,” he says. “I was honored to ponder spiritual ideas with the students and help them see themselves as limitless.”

HERE'S HOPING

A Deep Dive on a Buoyant Topic

In a recent interview with Australia’s ABC Radio National, **Anna-Zoë Herr** (C'18) is described as a “titan of research.” Indeed, the depth and volume of her work are deserving of that label; but considering her subject matter and methods, another title comes to mind: pioneer.

Herr has spent months in Tasmania, Australia, interacting with scientists who are studying the very concrete impacts of climate change. But the global studies and studio art double major has focused her graduate studies on something previously considered intangible: hope. “We know from studying victims of catastrophes that there are specific mindsets that separate those who survive from those who perish,” says Herr. “In short, the difference is hope. It’s almost a blueprint. Hope is causal to our survival.”

Her work has the potential to fundamentally change how we talk about an overwhelming topic. “I found that when people find meaning or hope in something,” she continues, “they start to prioritize it.”



Scan here
for Herr’s
interview:



SPIRITUAL LENS

A SPIRITUAL PATH FORWARD

BY IVAN VASHCHENKO (US'23, C'27)

We live in a season where the future can feel foggy and sometimes dim. Looking ahead can stir a mix of emotions—anticipation, curiosity, fear—sometimes all at once. Uncertainty has always been part of the human experience, but today it can feel amplified. Wars flare across maps. Policies shift overnight. Climate alarms sound. Even our personal horizons feel unsettled as students wonder what work will look like in an age of AI. And the noise arrives instantly, as our news feeds update in milliseconds. In such a torrent, hope can seem naïve.

In moments like these, it can be tempting to believe the message that says, “You are not safe.” But I’m learning to read it differently: “You do not yet see.”

That shift has mattered to me, especially as I’ve watched it happen in my own life. In 2022, I expected to graduate high school in my hometown of Zaporizhzhia, Ukraine, and then study in Kyiv. That was my plan—what I wanted and what I thought I needed. Then Russia invaded. Rockets stitched the sky above my hometown. The future shrank to a single, urgent question: Are my family and friends alive today?

A few months later, I was in a refugee camp in Germany, measuring life by new variables I couldn’t control. And soon after that, I arrived

in the United States with more uncertainty. At that time, I didn’t even know the *Christian Science Hymnal* existed. If I had, I would have found comfort in Hymn 148: “And safe is such confiding, for nothing changes here. . . . God is round about me, And can I be dismayed?”

Previously, I emphasized that I *wanted and thought I needed* a particular future. There’s a sentence from *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* by Mary Baker Eddy that I carry like a pocket stone. “Divine Love always has met and always will meet every human need.”

“Whether an issue feels minor or immense, our work is the same: to think more generously, to pray more honestly, and to keep seeking a better world . . .”

What this statement doesn’t promise is that every desire will be met. But if something is truly required for growth, safety, or purpose, it won’t be withheld. And if something I want is withheld, perhaps it is mercy I don’t yet recognize. That thought has kept me from panicking and has helped me to act with trust instead of haste.

I’ve come to believe there’s no



such thing as a small impact. We can be surprised by how much sincere prayers and thoughts can mean. Each act of care is significant and may play a crucial role in someone’s life. And as life keeps bringing challenges of every size, no “problem scale” should measure our trust in God or the depth of our thoughts and prayers. Whether an issue feels minor or immense, our work is the same: to think more generously, to pray more honestly, and to keep seeking a better world for all of us.

I don’t expect the fog to lift on command, but I do expect enough light to see the next faithful step.

Between the moment I write this and the moment you read it, the world will most likely have shifted again. There may be new waves of uncertainty. I am choosing, instead, to step forward with a wider attention and deeper trust.

“In this period and the forthcoming centuries, watered by dews of divine Science, this ‘tree of life’ will blossom into greater freedom, and its leaves will be ‘for the healing of the nations’” (*Retrospection and Introspection*, p. 94). 

Meggan Madden's mission to

"enhance the academic as well as the personal experience"

STORY BY CLARA GERMANI

Recently appointed Principia College President **Dr. Meggan Madden (C'93)** has made homes in many places—from extensive travel and study in Asia to scholarly perches at prestigious universities, including George Washington University in the East, Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey in the West, and University of Toronto in Canada—but “home,” she says, was always Principia. “It’s a community where I felt like I belonged.”

A leader who “shows up”

Drawing on six years as dean of academics at the College and 15 years of teaching and scholarly work in international higher education, Madden’s respect for “community” is emerging as a pillar of her leadership style.

“Dr. Madden listens carefully, engages respectfully, and brings people together to move forward,” says Principia Chief Executive **Barbara Blackwell (HON ’22)**. “Her care for students is evident in every decision, and her support for faculty and staff turns shared goals into real progress.”

Her collaborative manner is an “inspired . . . new tone,” says

Faculty Senate President **Dr. Sarah Andrews (US’03, C’07)**. “You can just tell she’s a solid metaphysician while still being very clear-eyed and transparent about the challenges all liberal arts colleges are facing.”

“She shows up,” is the delightfully blunt assessment of Student Body Vice President **Amarachi Ejimadu (C’27)**. It surprises students that Madden breaks away from the presidential suite—or from her nights and weekends to judge the Game of Homes house competition, listen to capstones, and cheer on student-athletes (once, even wandering into a basketball *practice*).

She doesn’t just show up, adds Student Body President **Rafa Ascencio García (US’23, C’27)**, she engages. “She always has a smile

on her face,” he says. “You can have a conversation with her.”

And that smiling approachability doesn’t evaporate when there are “elephants in the room,” Ejimadu adds—topics like student financial aid issues, dining operations questions, or controversial student clubs. “She actually listens.”

A leader who listens

Her ear for understanding and leveraging what she hears is legendary. For her former George Washington University graduate student **Dr. Meg Holland**, it’s the “earnestness” in her ability to pull out problem-solving threads.

“I wouldn’t have finished [my

dissertation] if it weren't for her," she says of Madden, her mentor and dissertation advisor. She recalls how Madden encouraged her at a critical moment when personal challenges seemed insurmountable.

"I kept saying I was gonna take a break," says Holland. "And she said, 'No you're not.' And you just knew she was seeing the best parts of you when she would talk about what's next and how we're going to get there."

Empathy—infused with her faith and own similar experiences—is foundational to Madden's sense of community, suggests Holland, now an associate dean and lecturer at George Washington University. Education is a very personal journey for a student, she explains, and Madden wants to "help enhance the academic experience as well as the personal experience."

Madden feels the importance in modeling this skill. "In the world today with so much polarization happening," she says, "we need models of how to work effectively in a community where you can have mutual respect."

And modeling is simply part of her innate curiosity, she explains: "I'm listening for how [students] see the world and for what makes them unique [to] help them see their own uniqueness."

Madden's lead-by-listening

style is deliberate and disciplined. Principia College classmate and tech entrepreneur **Dr. David Gutelius** (C'93) describes her "quiet confidence" as strategically powerful and influential.

Former Principia College Philosophy professor **Dr. Karen Grayson** (C'86) agrees, recalling that even in her student days,



Dr. Madden speaks at College Commencement.

Madden exhibited a "courage" and "tenacity" beyond her years. "She has this ability to pull out the kernels of truth in disparate positions . . . see the value even if she doesn't agree . . . and take the gems and create something really strong," says Grayson. "She's really good at that, which is what makes everyone think, 'Oh, she heard me.'"

Leading boldly and strategically

Madden's presidency didn't come out of nowhere. Drawing on her PhD in higher education and comparative, international, and development education, as well as more than two decades of experience in higher education, she stepped in as acting- or interim-president twice during recent leadership transitions—periods that earned her the informal campus title "Presi-Dean." Her able negotiation of those transitions demonstrated her willingness and ability to face uncertainty and navigate big challenges.

Madden is candid about the College's existential problem: enrollment. Today's enrollment is about a third of its high of 900 students four decades ago, and operating expenses don't drop in proportion.

In two key speeches this fall, Madden laid out her enrollment priority: creating new opportunities by broadening the vision of who serves the Cause of Christian Science. She shared two personal testimonies of Christian Science healing of people who did not identify as Christian Scientists, noting that these healings serve the Cause, because those healed become communicators of their demonstrations.

Madden shared her great-grandfather's healing of a debilitating work injury, after a neighbor referred him to a Christian Science practitioner. While he remained a Presbyterian, his openness to healing resulted in Madden's grandmother joining the movement. Principia can be that neighbor, sparking study and further understanding, suggests Madden.

She also recalled a similar experience right after college, when a Baptist roommate was healed of asthma through Christian Science prayer. Though he remains a Baptist, he openly acknowledges that Christian Science healed him.

Both cases, she says, demonstrate how receptivity to the values of Christian Science can serve the Cause.

But Madden asserts that turning enrollment around will require a collective effort. "We need alumni help."

She is "very excited" about mobilizing Principia's alumni network to help boost the student body by identifying three types of students: the traditional Christian Scientist; the "renaissance" student seeking a wide range of opportunities in an intimate setting; and the "adventurer" interested in study-



A Principia College abroad to China was formative to Madden's path.

ing abroad or participating in research across Principia's 2,300 acres.

Blackwell believes Madden's blend of strategic thinking and student-focused leadership is the right combination at the right time. "Dr. Madden's commitment is heartfelt and enduring," she says. "I have no doubt we are entering a chapter defined by principled leadership, collaborative partnership, and lasting impact."

For all of the experience, accolades, and professional esteem Madden brings to the office, those close to her never fail to mention she does "have a life" full of humor and adventure.

Madden and husband **Lee Eubank** (C'97), a landscape architect and the College's director of facilities, are well-traveled coastal and mountain hikers, known for epic cross-country road trips to California and

Florida. But no conversation about them is complete without including their miniature terrier, Beau, and his collection of dog clothes. (It all started logically during Madden's time at the University of Toronto when her previous shorthaired dog couldn't take the Canadian cold, and a sewing class led to designing and sewing dog outfits.)

There's intentional hilarity in a leather dog jacket or dinosaur t-shirt, but true to form, Madden's levity is guided by empathy-driven policy: A good outfit, she says, must "reflect the personality of the dog, and then it has to be well-fitted on the dog, too."

Even in fun, Madden is good at what she does. 

“Character and Leadership”:

Head of School Terry Grigsby calls upon lessons learned as a Principia student and naval officer

STORY BY CLARA GERMANI

People who know Terry Grigsby (US’97, C’01) often have flashbulb memories that illuminate his character: early pinpoints on an arc of success that would ultimately lead to his appointment last fall as head of Principia School.

Character and competitiveness

For CedarS Camps Executive Director Emeritus **Warren Huff** (US’68), who first met Grigsby as a scrawny-legged grade-schooler in shorts and cowboy boots, it was the moment a teenage Grigsby saved a ski boat. Huff had forgotten to put in the hull drain plug as he was backing the boat into the lake; Grigsby confidently “whoa!-whoa!-whoa!”ed his boss to keep the boat from taking on water.

It was an early glimpse of the alert and responsible young man who would go on to wear a Navy commander’s dress whites.

For **Bob Beeman** (C’76), Grigsby’s Principia College basketball coach, the memory of the young man who was first to practice and



Grigsby gave the keynote address at the Principia School graduation in 2019.

last out of the gym still visibly chokes him up. “He was our hardest worker,” explains Beeman, adding that it “was a character and leadership decision” to always put Grigsby in the starting line-up. He understood how to mobilize

the team, “a *we* guy, not a *me* guy,” says Beeman, remembering Grigsby even offering to sit on the bench to get what he considered a better player out on the court.

In pursuit of a “best self”

That same *we* guy stepped in as head of school last fall, after three years overseeing substantial admissions growth as assistant head of school. A graduate of Principia School and College, Grigsby has a diverse background: from experience in financial services to a 20-year Navy leadership career, gathering along the way deep cultural experience working in Asia, Europe, and the Mediterranean, and earning two master’s degrees—one in procurement

and acquisition, and another in national security and foreign affairs.

"I'm not a credentialed academic teacher," Grigsby acknowledges. "I'm a character educator."

"Mission success" in any organization, including a private pre-K–12 school, relies on the discernment of your team's skills and the ability to lead them, he asserts. From camp counselor to military leader, Grigsby built broadly transferable skills in managing people, social dynamics, and finding that balance between nurturing and challenging.

"I've been able to work in environments where I haven't necessarily had the exact skill set," he says, "but you know the ability of the people you have working for you and then you're able to drive everybody to be their best selves."

Principia's leadership-focused choice of a naval commander to lead the School is strategically intriguing, says Retired U.S. Navy Commander **Torkel Patterson**, who mentored Grigsby on the decision to enter the military.

Grigsby rose as a naval logistics expert to the role of deputy division chief of the Global Defense Transportation Command. "That's a *big* job," says Patterson, noting logistics is the most "under-understood" role in the Navy and widely considered a key to winning wars.

Successfully juggling the complexities of billion-dollar budgets, payroll, acquisition, and distribution of food, fuel, equip-

ment, and maintenance makes Grigsby a formidable manager, but human interaction is another thing. Patterson describes Grigsby as a "disarming, natural bridge builder," a skill hard-won through Grigsby's experience negotiating all kinds of human interactions—from Principia to the military to the business world.

Patterson echoes a recurring description of Grigsby as skilled at interpersonal relationships, entering a room with a touch of humor when needed or drilling down with empathetic inquiry.

Principia Chief Executive **Barbara Blackwell** (HON'22) sees Grigsby's "strong leadership skills, proven management expertise, exceptional strength of character, and drive for learning" as not just transferable but essential to maintaining and continuously improving the School. "Terry's journey demonstrates the power and promise of Principia's whole-person education," she says.

Achieving "mission success"

It surprises Grigsby to be labeled naturally empathetic. He considers his de facto leadership style—whether on the basketball court, teaching archery at camp, managing supply chains on naval ships, or helping faculty meet goals—more about the logistics of team-building for the win; that is, to intuitively

support a team in achieving "mission success."

Guiding his work as head of school, Grigsby says, is Mary Baker Eddy's definition of education: "The entire purpose of true education is to make one not only know the truth but live it — to make one enjoy doing right, make one not work in the sunshine and run away in the storm, but work midst clouds of wrong, injustice, envy, hate; and wait on God, the strong deliverer, who will reward righteousness and punish iniquity" (*The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany*, p. 252).

As the School's tone-setter-in-chief, Grigsby sees his job as helping to "curate a spiritually infused culture" at Principia—intentionally extracting the timeless lessons of Jesus, the disciples, and Old Testament patriarchs, and getting those concepts in front of students.

The value of "boldly and proudly" offering this framework is clear, he says, as increasing numbers of students of other faiths are drawn to apply. And he notes how that attraction, in turn, serves the Cause of Christian Science by spreading its values widely.

These values have impressed **Volodymyr Hrimov** (US'25, C'29), a Ukrainian Orthodox student who came to Principia School three years ago and is now a freshman at Principia College. Hrimov, who now identifies as a Christian Scientist, spends

holidays in the Grigsby home and specifically appreciates that Grigsby's embrace goes beyond the Christian Science social bubble "where we all feel safe."

Character shaped by coaches

Grigsby was raised until age 10 by his great-grandmother, Gwendolyn, who he says, "bought into the whole-person concept" and had a plan: focus his life on education and faith and find a Christian Science family to continue that when she could no longer care for him. The plan worked—but the young man had his own work to do.

Coming from a marginalized community, there were academic deficits to overcome, and because his great-grandmother steered him away from sports, which she felt was too often an identity substitute for achievement for African-Americans, he had no experience handling balls or understanding rules. Ironically, it was Principia's sports programs that provided pathways of discipline and social connections.

"I wanted to play on these teams," Grigsby reflects. "I loved the coaches. I loved the players. And I knew to have exposure to [them], I needed to work harder than everybody else to get a seat at the table."

"When coaches said this is what you need to do to be successful,

then I just did it," he says.

Coaches continue to shape his life today. Grigsby's wife, **Sarah (Jarvis) Grigsby** (C'07), is a coach and PE teacher at the School, as well as a standout long-distance runner and mother of their two daughters. She recognizes how Principia molded her husband into a man of integrity, guided by the Golden Rule—at home and at school. Sarah adds that his character was built on a foundation laid by his great-grandmother, and reinforced by "the rock of love,

accountability, and spiritual support" from his adoptive parents **Cathy (Brantingham) Tinsley** and **Doug McClelland**.

Reflecting on Grigsby's character-focused approach and integrity-centered leadership, Blackwell calls him "a selfless, devoted leader who has been willing to step in at a moment's notice to uplift our students and programs."

"We are blessed beyond measure," she says. 🟢



Grigsby's experience as a Principia student-athlete instilled a deep love for whole-person education.

Finding Their Center

Years in the works, Principia College's reimagined academic structure launched this fall, replacing the traditional department model with five multidisciplinary Academic Centers. Together, these Centers unite majors for greater integration and impact, emphasizing creative and critical thinking in a character-focused, collaborative setting—the heart of a Principia liberal arts education. In the pages that follow, discover how the Centers were introduced, alongside alumni whose career paths exemplify the promise of Principia's broad, interdisciplinary academic approach.

STORY BY ERIC MORSE (US'90)

Illuminating All Angles

While each of Principia's five Academic Centers is unique—challenging and preparing students for success while adding to the College campus and culture in distinct ways—let's be honest: if you're going to throw a party, you're gonna want some performers.

Those performers were on display in full force at the Center for the Arts launch event. Musicians, danc-

ers, actors, and visual artists gathered in the Robert Duvall Theatre at the McVay Center for the Performing Arts to mark a new chapter in Principia's commitment to developing whole thinkers through performance and scholarship.

The Prism Concert was a multi-dimensional showcase of the depth and diversity of artistic expression at Principia College. From student photographic work to symphonic performances by the College Orchestra, a dance flash mob to a high-energy sword-fight scene from the upcoming student production of *The Three Musketeers*, every performance showcased the spirit that defines the new Center.

One of the evening's most memorable moments featured **Arnold Kalala** (C'26), a senior engineering major,

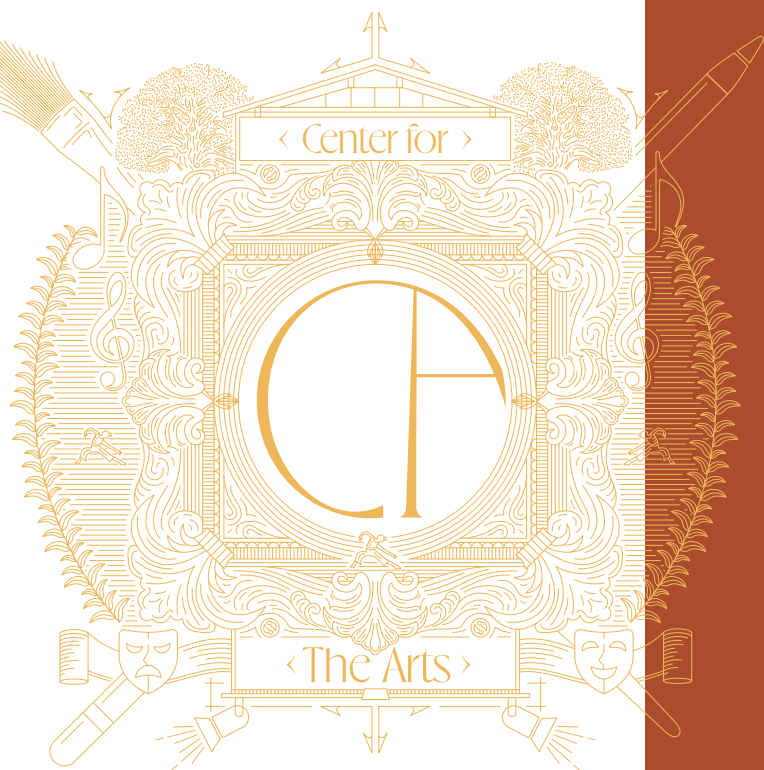
singing a moving rendition of "The Lord's Prayer," accompanied by the College Orchestra and Choir. The performance exemplified Principia's liberal arts ideal: technical and scientific training are compatible with beauty and spiritual expression.

Reflecting on the evening, **Dr. Rose Whitmore**, chair of the Music Department, emphasized the connection between artistic study and Principia's liberal arts mission. "Music, dance, theatre, and art give us languages to harmonize the layers of complexity that shape humanity today. Character-based education teaches students to notice and value nuance in meaning—and to work together in ways that honor and uplift their communities. The world needs this care."

When all was said and done, the evening offered more than entertainment; it embodied the vision of Principia as a community where art and inquiry meet, producing graduates who approach challenges with creativity and understanding.



The Center for the Arts' Prism Concert featured rock musicians, orchestral ensembles, dancers, and actors.



Create things that have never existed; find new ways to express the complexity of the human experience; revel in the beauty and poignancy of movement, language, music, and the visual world.

Areas of Study:

Music |
Music Studies |
Performing
Arts |
Visual Arts

Carolina Queiroz Couto (C'20)

From Rio de Janeiro to Elsah, Illinois; from Baton Rouge to LA—**Carolina Queiroz Couto** (C'20) has come a long way. A working actor and an instructor at Seven Pillars Acting Studio in Los Angeles, Couto epitomizes the Principian whole-person ideal.

While she was a student at Principia College, Couto augmented her theatre major with a philosophy minor and a range of classes that spanned literature to computer science. But acting was always her passion. An award-winning star turn at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival got her noticed—and got her hooked.

After stealing the spotlight at the 2021 URTA auditions—a mass audition for graduate school programs—she was offered a sought-after full ride scholarship to Louisiana State University. There, she saw the value of her liberal arts foundation. “When I got to grad school, I was working with professionals, some of whom had been in the field for years,”

she recounts. “But it was interesting how much technique and theatre etiquette I already knew, thanks to my acting classes with Professor **Chrissy Calkins Steele**.”

Now that she splits her time between being a working actor—Couto has a feature-length film coming out, as well as multiple stage projects—and teaching, Couto has a broadened perspective on her undergraduate education. She sees the multidisciplinary alignment in the new Center for the Arts as a career accelerator. “I’m grateful for my Principia studies,” she says. “I’m able to relate to people more, I’m able to relate to characters, too. Mostly I just feel like I’m a better human; I can have a conversation with anybody, on any subject!”



Dr. Crist Inman (C'85)

You'd be hard-pressed to find a better proof of the promise of the liberal arts than **Dr. Crist Inman** (C'85). An equally tall order: identifying an individual with a bigger impact in rethinking conservation funding over the past 30 years.

Evolving from his Principia English degree to a Cornell PhD to a distinguished career developing environmentally conscious tourism and hospitality businesses, Inman has been developing sustainable tourism since its inception. "I have always valued the liberal arts education," says Inman. He credits **Dr. Charles Hosmer** (C'53), former Principia College professor of history, with instilling the skills to produce the dissertation that launched Inman's career—and consequently a \$300 billion eco-tourism industry. "I devoured his course," Inman says. "It gave me a love of qualitative archival research, which I used in my dissertation that turned out to be the turning point for the rest of my life."

His study of the century-long evolution of two nature tourism destinations led him to this conclusion: "Under the right circumstances, people will treat conservation as a business opportunity."

Three decades ago, Inman coined the phrase "entrepreneurial conservation", which caught the eye of Costa Rica's newly elected president, José María Figueres. Before he knew it, he was leading a team for the Costa Rican government to create a model for sustainable tourism. "I thought I would spend a year or two in Costa Rica," says the now-30-year expat, "but it became my life's work: helping governments and the private sector build an economy where tourism funds conservation."

Crist and his wife, Amie, formed La Paz Group, a full-service eco-tourism management firm developing properties in Latin America, Europe, and Asia. Together, they have protected thousands of acres of rain forest and reduced plastic waste by hundreds of tons. "Conservation is a wise investment," he likes to say.

True to his broad skillset and endless curiosity, Inman pivoted again after 20 years to create Authentica, a socially conscious retail establishment specializing in authentic, locally sourced products. He also partnered with son, Seth, to create Organikos, which offers "taste of place" products to Authentica and via its website serving the USA.

The path from English major to conservation entrepreneur may seem unlikely, but thanks to his "liberal arts mindset," Crist Inman found a world of possibility.



Artificial Intelligence, Actual Business



Tech founder **Dr. David Gutelius** (C'93) hosts an AI workshop to celebrate the Center for Business and Computer Science.

For **Dr. Lucia De Paz** (US'96, C'00), director of the Center for Business and Computer Science, the best—she might say the only—way to learn is by doing. So, when it came time to demonstrate the promise and opportunities her Center provided, she knew exactly what she had to do. “From the beginning, we knew we wanted it to be a workshop,” says De Paz, “and not just a lecture.” And since nothing combines the Center’s areas of emphasis better than AI, she knew just the person to call.

“**Dr. David Gutelius** (C'93) has started six companies, including a very successful AI startup,” De Paz explains. “So he was the perfect person to share his business experience and offer a workshop on pragmatic AI.”

entrepreneur showcases the breadth and depth that a liberal arts education can give you.” That broad liberal arts foundation proved to be a powerful appeal: nearly a quarter of the student body attended the event, filling Holt Gallery.

“I was grateful that somebody with David’s knowledge and professional career could come speak to the students,” De Paz continues.

Gutelius even demonstrated the quick-pivot flexibility that is the hallmark of every successful entrepreneur, offering one-on-one consulting times for students enrolled in Center majors, and holding a second workshop for College faculty members unable to attend.

“If my career since graduating from Principia has taught me anything,” he says, “it’s that being

endlessly curious and building a broad interdisciplinary skillset is the key to success in any field.”

As the College continues to emphasize the development of real-world, future-ready skills, the Center for Business and Computer Science is prepared to lead the way forward.



Examine the rapidly evolving intersection of business, artificial intelligence, data science, and math. Hone your quantitative skills, develop your talent for innovation, and cultivate an agile, entrepreneurial mindset.

Areas of Study:

Business Administration |
Computer Science | Mathematics

Global Engagement, Personal Enrichment

In just a few years since graduating from Principia College, **Marie Sherman** (C'20) and **William Johnson** (US'19, C'23) traveled far, earning international graduate degrees. Meanwhile, **Weston Williams** (C'16) dug deep—helming a radio show for opera devotees. **Logan Landry-Jennings** (C'18) is in non-profit development, fighting food insecurity, while **Hunter Hummell** (US'17, C'21) is an in-house counsel, battling corporate non-compliance.

Gathered on the Wanamaker stage, the five Principia graduates illustrated the multidimensional meaning of engagement. “What brings all of these areas together is the idea of community engagement,” said **Dr. Sally Steindorf** (US'93, C'97), director of the Center for Civic and Global Engagement.

The Center hosted the panel of young alumni to showcase paths of interest and promise to students in the Center's programs, which include economics, education, global studies, philosophy and political science. But they also represented ways in which Principia College graduates are daily engaging with their communities.

“In this Center, we seek first to understand and then to serve and heal our communities, as local and global citizens,” Steindorf proclaimed. That focus was on display through the journey of each alum on the stage, all of whom credited Principia's multidisciplinary liberal arts education with introducing them to passions they didn't know they had.

“I came to Principia to double major in business and art,” said Landry-Jennings, “but a course on race and ethnicity completely changed my life and how I saw the world. When I graduated I was inspired to go into non-profits and use my privilege to help others.”

“My path wasn't linear—I didn't know I would be working in education policy,” said Sherman, who is a policy analyst for the Ontario Ministry of Education. “But at Principia, I built this foundation of skills—my global studies major instilled the concept of being a global

citizen. It has been so crucial for how I approach everything in my life.”

Williams was a philosophy major who, like everyone on stage, found the courage and the skillset to pursue his passion through unexpected avenues. “I was able to do a wide range of things at Principia,” he says. “I had a random experience taking a class I didn't even read the syllabus for, and now it's my career as the host of a Chicago radio show!”

As current students peppered the speakers with questions, topics ranged from navigating global careers to managing discouragement in graduate school, but the guiding theme of engagement continued. “The best way to succeed not just in your professional life, but as a person,” said Williams, “is to find the best part of you and bring it out and give it to others. Because that's what's best in humanity.”



An international collection of students and alumni gathered to launch the Center for Civic and Global Engagement.



Center for Civic &
Global Engagement

Sharpen your cross-disciplinary learning, thinking, and communication skills as you prepare to make a meaningful, lifelong impact on your community, your nation, and the world.

Areas of Study:

Economics | Educational Studies |
Global Studies | Philosophy |
Political Science



Josie Ratcliffe (C'91)

If you spend over a quarter century traveling the world, you are likely to collect artifacts. Chief among them are stories. But if there is one story that sums up **Josie Ratcliffe** (C'91), it is one of global engagement.

Ratcliffe has spent more than 20 years in the Foreign Service, most recently as the Consul General at the US Consulate in Durban, South Africa. Previous postings include Iraq, Pakistan, China, and Rwanda.

She traces her commitment to global engagement all the way back to her time as a student at Principia College, where Model Illinois Government and a study abroad program to China “led me to a career in diplomacy,” she says. Visiting China the year after the Tian-a-men Square protests and the same year the Berlin Wall fell “was remarkable timing—to be out in the world as it changed in real time.”

Ratcliffe’s Foreign Service career has been burnished by her reputation for calmly managing large teams through crises, including leading embassies during political violence, pandemics, and natural disasters. She credits her commitment to preparation, confidence in her abilities, and a well-developed core as the heart of these achievements.

“Principia’s Academic Centers are really exciting and absolutely prepare students for careers like mine,” she says. “A liberal arts degree that grants someone professional fluidity, while nurturing what it means to be a happy human, is in my mind the gold standard. No matter our fields, we must all become better critical thinkers, better problem solvers; we must embrace scary things like feedback, risk, and failure.”

“The Center for Civic and Global Engagement formalizes Principia’s commitment to building communication, collaboration, and leadership skills . . . The world has need of ethical thinkers, courageous leaders, and consensus-building problem solvers, who can operate at the highest levels of industry and government.”



Dr. Cliff Ubba Kodero (C'12)

For **Dr. Cliff Ubba Kodero (C'12)**, the topic of international relations is not academic or abstract; it is intensely personal. Kodero has not only studied, taught, and written extensively about international political economy, but as a product of rural Kenya, he's lived it.

The Morgan State University political science professor describes his area of study as a practical application of narrative meaning and media. "Narrative is important because the story you tell about yourself is how you would like to be seen and heard," he says. "Meaning comes from self-actualization. It consists of the goals and missions you want to achieve in life." And he describes media as the platform for connecting individuals, groups, or constituencies.

Kodero has put this theory into practice as the writer/producer and star of *The Ubba Kodero Show* on YouTube. Episodes alternate through lectures, viewer questions, and content recaps. In the introductory video, Kodero describes the show as an effort to democratize international affairs education and infuse it with discussions of popular culture and Black diaspora. In other words, it's narrative, meaning, and media.

From a distance, it may seem surprising to hear Kodero credit Principia, a small liberal arts college in the American Midwest, with opening his eyes to his African identity, but he does just that. "I came from Kenya," he says, "where a holistic look at a Black human being is often still viewed through a colonial lens—one of seeking permission to be heard and accepted." Principia, by contrast, "helped me understand myself," he says.

That is a central role of narrative, according to Kodero. With academic expertise in political economy, he is accustomed to extrapolating out from the individual to the societal. "Narrative is a crucial element of how we think about human society," he says. "Therefore, it must be authentic and based in truth."



What's Your Story?



The Center for Narrative, Meaning, and Media filled the Pub with stories and fun on Halloween night.

“What’s your story,” asks the sign hanging in the Principia College Concourse. Three small words that evoke a big answer. Story, of course, is a building block of identity; the foundation of culture. And story is the cornerstone of the College’s Center for Narrative, Meaning, and Media.

“The stories we tell ourselves and the stories others tell are how we make sense of the world,” says Center Director **Dr. Heidi (Denniston) Snow** (C’79). “All the departments in our Center are conscious of the storytelling around us, and we are interested in helping students understand those narratives and craft their own.”

Launching to the student body and prospective students on Halloween presented unique opportunities for the Center. To illustrate the power of narrative, the Center’s four departments—history, religion, cre-

ative writing, and digital media—each set up a table inside the Pub to engage students and passersby in their respective disciplines. From artifacts to photographs, participants were able to engage with the myth and tradition, as well as personal nostalgia and visual media of Halloween.

“It was an ongoing storytelling thing, with people building on each other’s work,” recalls Snow, and it engaged the full student body. “There were so many people there that the Pub was full,” she adds. “Even one of our visiting students threw herself in. It had a nice community feel to it.”

The Center for Narrative, Meaning, and Media’s confluence of media and the humanities comprise a wholly fresh approach to the liberal arts, one that is aligned with the College’s ongoing commitment to cultivating the skills students need for success in their careers and beyond. “Story is foundational to how we process and understand the world, events, others, and oneself,” explains **Sara (McDaniel) Wienecke** (C’09) assistant professor of English and chair of the Creative Writing Department. “It’s important for students to realize the power of nar-

rative and recognize that it matters how a narrative is informed, who is telling it, and the choices behind how it is told, so that students are equipped to use this knowledge for the betterment of our world.”

In all the Center’s majors, Snow says, “they’re learning skills they need to be successful—how to talk to people different than themselves, how to balance their time.” She continues, “They know they’ve got a skill that’s going to be sellable, regardless of their major. That’s one of the great things about our Center. It’s a very powerful connection.”



Center for Narrative,
Meaning, & Media

Explore the cross-cultural power of narrative, storytelling, and meaning in the human experience by connecting the wisdom of history, religious studies, and creative expression.

Areas of Study:

Creative Writing |
Digital Media and Journalism |
History | Religious Studies

The Art of Science



A mammoth feat: the Center for Sustainability, Ecology, and Chemistry launched with tours, games, and a little DIY.

In today's era of quantum technological advancements, where science is both blamed with ruining the planet and tasked with saving it, scientists are accustomed to tackling any challenge.

So it was with characteristic aplomb that the faculty and students in the Center for Sustainability, Ecology, and Chemistry approached the launch of their Center this fall. Center Director **Dr. Greg Bruland** (C'97) huddled with faculty to map out the objectives: showcase the promise of each discipline; engage current students, prospective stu-

dents, and the greater community . . . oh, and make it fun.

The result: as much art as science. "Each department came up with fun, hands-on activities," Bruland recounts. "You could hear the buzz and energy all the way around campus!"

The event brought a festival-like energy to campus, with students and guests sampling dry-ice ice cream (courtesy of the Chemistry Department), up-cycling old Principia

t-shirts into functional tote bags (the work and ingenuity of the Sustainability Department), and enjoying campus ecosystem tours led by **Dr. Chrissy McAllister** (C'93), professor of Biology and Natural Resources. Even the solar car RA XI made a rare appearance, offering a sneak peek into one of the College's most notable and successful programs.

The Center's launch event didn't just span the campus; it served as a demonstration of campus-wide alignment. College food service provider Fresh Ideas made cupcakes,

and the Admissions Department provided free water in aluminum bottles. "They knew better than to bring plastic bottles to a sustainability event," smiles Bruland.

While the event was a success by any metric ("we doubled the number of expected participants," says Bruland), the real win was in demonstrating the real-world appeal of the Center for Sustainability, Ecology, and Chemistry—even for the less-quantitatively inclined.



Center for Sustainability,
Ecology, & Chemistry

Immerse yourself in hands-on learning experiences like our award winning Solar Car program, campus solar array, apiculture, aquaponics, permaculture, land stewardship, and community development.

Areas of Study:

Chemistry | Ecology |
Ecosystem Management |
Sustainability

Scan to watch a webinar discussing
the College's new Academic Centers:





Dr. Godfred Fianu (C'11)

Dr. Godfred Fianu (C'11) does many things well: he's a chemistry PhD, he was a Christian Science nurse, he's fluent in four languages. But what he doesn't do is tarry or second guess. In fact, even his undergraduate studies at Principia College continue to guide his professional path some 15 years later.

Following graduation, Fianu spent a gap year putting his religious studies minor into service as a Christian Science nurse. Then, straight to graduate school to pursue a PhD in reaction kinetics and organic chemistry. "My path has been pretty linear," Fianu understates.

While Fianu traces his interest in reaction kinetics back to car battery experiments in Accra, Ghana and "making interesting compounds" in Principia chemistry labs, his own nature is anything but volatile, let alone combustible.

To Fianu, chemical reactions and spiritual causation are not mutually exclusive. "I know God has a divine plan for me," he says. "I stick to that mindset of—I did not create myself, God made me."

That's not to say the plan was without its surprises. Fianu fully expected to move into a practical application of his chemistry PhD, but he stuck to his method of humbly following divine direction, or "walking through open doors" as he puts it. "If somebody had told me I'd be teaching, I'd say that's crazy," he laughs. "But I had the opportunity to be an adjunct professor for a bit, and that was the door that opened."

Today, Fianu is an assistant professor of chemistry at Moravian University, a place where his subject matter expertise and his spiritual, God-first outlook are valued. "You don't know what God has planned until you get put in the situation," he reflects. "And then you realize that it's God leading you. He has the blueprint. I just try to submit to it and keep going." That is a deeper study of cause and effect than you will find in any chemistry lab. 



The Future is Flexible

School renovations provide the perfect setting for skills-focused, future-ready academic programs

STORY BY ERIC MORSE (US'90)



The Lower School library is a space for more than reading: students congregate and collaborate on group projects.

Education, like every field, is awash in buzzwords. Some are aspirational, many are metaphorical, and a large portion refer to the physical structures that not only house, but literally shape the learning taking place: silos, barriers, etc.

But when educators at Principia School speak of removing barriers to learning, it's not a hollow buzzword; it's not even a metaphor. Already, curriculum at all School levels is integrating subject matter once considered distinct—doomed to be divided by a bell and passing period. And when students arrived this fall to kick off the 2025–26 school year, they walked into a whole new learning landscape—literally.

“Quality education can take place anywhere,” says Upper School



The Upper School's multi-use Student Commons will provide flexible gathering, meeting, and study space.

Principal **Samantha Dry**, “but when we are privileged enough to be able to create spaces that support what we want to do with education, then we’re fortunate, and we grab hold of that.”

Educational Futurism

If the purpose of education is to prepare children for the future, then models from the past are woefully insufficient. That’s why Principia’s integrated, real-world approach amounts to an educational futurism.

Grounded in Mary Kimball Morgan’s whole-person approach, with a healthy emphasis on experiential learning, Principia has long been

recognized as a forward-looking school. But in recent years, Dry and her counterparts at all School levels have been trading in static rows of desks for more flexible and dynamic learning environments.

Skills-based and scenario-based, with character as its cornerstone, education at Principia today is active, collaborative, and multi-disciplinary. Students learn on the go, in groups, and out loud. Silos are nowhere to be found. Middle schoolers demonstrate science through a final art project; lower schoolers blend biology, sustainability, entrepreneurship, and language arts while producing and selling homegrown honey through beekeepers’ veils.

“Research shows that students learn best when they are active,” says Lower School Principal

Heather Tibbetts. “When they’re sitting at a desk, in student mode, they’re passive—they’re much more likely to zone out.”

Today at Principia, students are more likely to learn through collaboration or independent trial and error than by listening to a lecture. Why? Because research shows this is precisely how students learn best.

Tibbetts goes on to explain how a more active learning disposition has long-term implications. “We were noticing that students were relying too much on asking teachers a question and then copying their answer,” she says. “That makes students who are good at copying—mimicking how someone else would solve something. But are they good thinkers? That’s really what we’re after.”



ARCHITECTURAL RENDERING

An elevated catwalk will connect classrooms and the new Student Commons.

Thinking Classrooms

“Form follows function,” says Dry. “We need the room to support the education we’re trying to create, and that education is breaking down silos.”

It’s not hard to envision the traditional educational model composed in vertical stacks, like columns in a spreadsheet: math, writing, social studies, biology, etc. It’s an inorganic structure that doesn’t translate into any real-world milieu. A CPA needs to communicate, collaborate, and present her work. A coder relies on research and critical thinking skills to translate an assignment. A chef is collaborating, communicating, and calculating—all while creating complex chemical reactions.

Dry elaborates, “We don’t want to think about education in terms of subjects. We want to think about education in terms of learning and experience. So we created spaces where learning can be flexible.”

“We’ve been studying the con-

cept of ‘thinking classrooms,’” adds Tibbetts. “So many schools are still so traditional and siloed, but at Principia—whether it’s Connected Learning in Lower School, Integrated Studies in Middle School, or CoLab in Upper School—our programs are focused on collaboration. We’re pulling that thread through all our classes.”

Flexible learning requires flexible spaces, and the School’s new classrooms are easily and infinitely reconfigurable, featuring removable and expandable walls, convertible seating, smart writing surfaces, and more. The alignment between curriculum and learning space is key throughout all levels of the School.

In Middle School, “Our learning spaces are designed to dissolve boundaries between disciplines,” Integrated Studies teacher **Mark Russo** says, “allowing students to move seamlessly from hands-on exploration to collaborative problem-solving in ways that make real-world connections come alive. These reimaged classrooms and collaboration areas not only foster integrated, experiential learning for

“The Student Commons will be a centerpiece of the A-Wing renovations, a vibrant hub where students gather, collaborate, and learn together.” – Terry Grigsby, Head of School



students but also empower faculty to co-design dynamic, future-ready learning experiences together.”

And in Lower School, Teacher Leader **Rissa (Harlow) Arens** (US’91, C’95) says “the flexible indoor and outdoor learning spaces, combined with an integrated curriculum, enable teachers to create hands-on experiences, sparking curiosity and deepening critical thinking.” Arens adds, “These environments help students make authentic connections across subjects and experience learning as an interconnected journey.”

“The future of education,” says Dry, “is flexibility and adaptability.”

Where Learning and Community Unfold

With the first phase of the multi-year Upper School renovation now complete and a semester of student use in the books, the proof is in the pudding. **Alicia Sorensen**, who teaches a multidisciplinary Upper School CoLab class, described the

difference. “The new space has been transformative in the way it supports flexible and collaborative learning. I love how its design gives both teachers and students the freedom to shape the environment to fit our goals. Features like standing desks and movable furniture make it easy to shift from group collaboration to individual reflection, helping us create dynamic, student-centered learning experiences. This flexibility truly embodies future-forward learning by encouraging adaptability, creativity, and engagement.”

But the best—and the biggest—is yet to come. “Plans are being finalized for the final 50,000 square feet of the Upper School,” says Capital Projects Manager **Harry Locke**. “The design outlines a comprehensive renovation of both the lower and upper levels, including new classrooms, academic support spaces, and improved circulation throughout the building. The project modernizes building systems, upgrades life-safety and accessibility, and introduces a dedicated storm shelter, all while tying the

SHEET NO.	SHEET TITLE
A-11	LOWER FLOOR
A-12	UPPER FLOOR
A-13	ELEVATIONS
A-14	ROOF
A-15	INTERIOR
A-16	INTERIOR
A-17	INTERIOR
A-18	INTERIOR
A-19	N.I.C.
A-20	N.I.C.
A-21	FOUNDATION
A-22	UPPER LEVEL
A-23	ROOF FLOOR
A-24	N.I.C.
A-25	LOWER LEVEL
A-26	N.I.C.
A-27	LOWER FLOOR
A-28	UPPER FLOOR
A-29	N.I.C.
A-30	LOWER FLOOR
A-31	UPPER FLOOR
A-32	N.I.C.
B-11	FIRST FLOOR
B-12	SECOND FLOOR
B-13	MEZZANINE
B-14	ELEVATIONS
B-15	EXTERNAL
B-16	MEZZANINE
B-17	N.I.C.
B-18	INTERIOR
B-19	INTERIOR
B-20	CABINETS
B-21	DETAIL
B-22	FOUNDATION
B-23	MEZZANINE
B-24	ROOF FLOOR
B-25	N.I.C.
B-26	FIRST FLOOR
B-27	N.I.C.
B-28	MEZZANINE
B-29	N.I.C.
B-30	FIRST FLOOR



Hands-on lab experiences build real-world skills, with renovated spaces expanding what's possible.

renovated areas together with a consistent interior design standard established in earlier phases.”

Beyond the renovation work, the plans include a major new addition to the existing Upper School courtyard space—a three-story Student Commons which will serve as a centralized community space and be a focus point of the campus.

“The Student Commons will be a centerpiece of the A-Wing renovations, a vibrant hub where students gather, collaborate, and learn together,” says Grigsby. “It will feature seamless flow with a catwalk linking upper levels, smart and sustainable design that integrates technology and environmen-

tal responsibility, and spaces that foster interdisciplinary learning and student life.”

From 30,000 feet, Grigsby sees the renovations as student-focused and holistic. “We are equally committed to the spaces where learning and community life unfold, and our capital projects are designed with a clear purpose to support student success, replace aging spaces, stay competitive, and build for the future.”

The project has captured the support and imagination of long-time Principians. **Chris Towle** (US’86) is an alum and parent of three Principia graduates—and part of a four-generation Principia

legacy dating back to the School’s earliest days under founder Mary Kimball Morgan. “I am so impressed with the vision and dedication of the leadership team,” he says. “The Towle Family Foundation is delighted to support the evolution that will ensure Principia remains at the forefront of character education for decades to come.” It’s a collective effort that invites all to join.

“I’ve been so grateful that Principia has seen the value of future-ready education,” Dry adds, “being so adaptable and so flexible, and creating a space that can do that.”



An expanded, light-filled visual arts studio, adaptable for a range of media, will allow ideas to take shape and creativity to thrive.

"I've been grateful that Principia has seen the value of future-ready education—being so adaptable and so flexible, and creating a space that can do that."

– Samantha Dry,
Upper School
Principal

Upper School Renovations

COLAB OVERHAUL

When is a classroom not a classroom? When it is divided into a conference room, a screening room, and a maker space all at once. Seating can adjust for a lecture environment, collaborative group work, or independent study. Dry-erase surfaces allow students to interact with the room with no mess and easy cleanup, and integrated technology enables digital workspace.

STEAM, REIMAGINED

Some spaces are not like the others. Science labs, performing arts spaces, and visual arts studios are purpose-built spaces that bring their own unique requirements. Reimagined laboratories and state-of-the-art robotics and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics) facilities make space for experimentation and demonstration. The net effect will be a professional-quality environment in which to prepare for study in college and pursuit of a career.

A HOME AWAY FROM HOME

Recent dorm renovations have created an improved residential experience for all boarding students. But our international students have distinct needs throughout the school day—whether it's filling out administrative paperwork or taking extra time on an essay. The International Student Hub will house the International Student Coordinator's office and provide a relaxing atmosphere where students can relax, unwind, and get the support they need.

AN UNCOMMON COMMONS

"Kids need space to just be," says Dry. But the new Student Commons, with its three-story atrium and cozy furniture, will be far more than a glorified lounge. A reimagined entryway and hub for the students' day will provide increased efficiency for passing periods and space for independent study and group work. Dry envisions a combination of informal gathering areas and flexible conference and meeting spaces to augment students' academic and personal development.

Scan to learn more about
the School's renovations:



Experience a week of inspiration, discovery, and learning . . .

Summer Session 2026 June 13–21

At Summer Session, you can experience all that Principia has to offer (and the joy that comes with it)—engaging classes, inspiring conversations, meaningful connections, and even a pickleball game or two—all on the beautiful Principia College campus. Try something new or pursue lifelong passions, all while making friends and learning from distinguished faculty and experts.

Register for the full week, and better yet, join us for Principia College Reunion (June 25–28), too! Special discounts apply when attending both.



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Principians know that learning never stops. And on a Lifelong Learning trip, we take our curiosity on the road, together! Journey with like-minded learners, expert scholars, and fellow explorers who believe the best journeys are shared. Travel deeper, discover more, and uncover the unexpected with Principia.

Check out where we're headed in 2026 and 2027!

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PRINCIPIA
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Dearest Alumni and Friends!

Connection has always been at the heart of Principia, and this past year brought that fact to life in so many memorable ways. From Upper School Reunion and inspiring Principia Lifelong Learning trips to Christmas celebrations coast to coast (and online!), plus unforgettable

basketball moments in Florida and Washington, DC, every gathering was a reminder of the joy, warmth, and spirit that make Principia and Principians so special.

And the excitement continues! We can't wait to see you in 2026 for College Reunion, Summer Session, and many opportunities to reconnect on and off campus. We're already buzzing about the amazing 2027 Principia Lifelong Learning trips.

I also want to highlight our new **Alumni Referral Scholarship**. You, our cherished alumni and friends, are some of our most powerful ambassadors, and we are always grateful when you help introduce prospective families to Principia School and College. When a referred student enrolls, they will receive a \$1,000 annual scholarship for each year they are enrolled at Principia, making your recommendation

even more meaningful. If you know someone who might be a great fit, we would love to connect with them. You can find referral information at principia.edu/refer.

We look forward to seeing you in 2026!

With love,
Merrilee

Merrilee McFarland (US'99, C'03)
Senior Director, Alumni & Field Relations
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314.514.3146

Refer a student today:



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Nel Shelby (US'95)

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

A Life Shaped by Service

When asked what motivates him to make service a vocation, Bill Merritt responds with characteristic humility. "It's hard to go through life and not get interested in activities that are doing good."

William "Bill" Merritt (US'66) is the 2025 recipient of the 30th David K. Andrews Alumni Award, honoring a lifetime of devoted service, spiritual commitment, and principled leadership.

Among his many notable contributions is one many Principia alumni and Christian Scientists know firsthand. As a co-founder of The Campership Fund for Christian Scientists, Bill helped enable thousands of young people to attend Christian Science camps and participate in formative programs.

The Campership Fund was founded in Atlanta in 1992 by Bill, along with Don Wallingford and Clifton Irby, both Journal-listed practitioners. Initially created to support Sunday School students in Atlanta, the Fund steadily expanded its reach—first across Georgia, then to Florida, the southeastern states, the entire

country, and ultimately to Christian Scientists around the world.

Bill traces his lifelong dedication to service back further, to a pivotal moment at Principia Upper School. Just 24 hours after being admitted, he boarded a plane for Missouri to attend sports camp to play football. Within a couple weeks, an unexpected opening on the student council presented itself. "It was very fortuitous," Bill recalls. "Joining the student council had a profound impact. I saw how I could use my voice to make a positive change." Working closely with Head of School Eric Bole, Bill discovered the power of service-driven leadership, an experience that opened doors to a lifetime of civic and institutional engagement.

After graduating from Princeton University, Bill went on to build an impressive professional life, co-founding Merritt Watson, LLP and later helping establish Georgia's first minority-owned bank, an institution that remains in operation today. He also participated in the Judge Advocate Program for two summers at Quantico, Virginia,

serving as a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Marine Corps.

In parallel with his professional and alumni leadership, Bill has devoted himself to the Cause of Christian Science, a commitment that initially drew him to Principia as a teenager. A longtime member of First Church of Christ, Scientist, Atlanta, he has served in numerous roles, including First Reader and board member. Additionally, he completed a three-year term on the Principia Board of Trustees and served on the Board of CedarS Camps.

Service has long been central to Bill's life, a commitment he shares with his wife, Laurie. Together, they have coached children's basketball for more than a decade and welcomed children into their home through a family visitation program in Georgia.

Whether expanding access to transformative experiences or quietly supporting individuals in need, Bill continues to live by a simple measure of impact. "I always want to feel that anything I've been involved in is better off as a result of my participation."

From left: Amy (Merritt) Swick, Bill Merritt Jr. (US'66), Virginia Swick, Laurie Merritt, Charlette Swick, Billy Merritt (US'95)

Class Notes

C'60

For several years, a group of Buck and Rackham West alums—**Al Stoneman** (C'60) (Cathedral City), **John Scheldrup** (C'60) (Solana Beach), **Phil Present** (C'60) (West Los Angeles), **Keith Welputt** (C'61) (Newport Beach), **Rick Stoneman** (C'62) (Irvine), **Bob Dudley** (C'63) (Laguna Hills), and **Ted Kibby** (US'59, C'63) (San Clemente)—has kept the camaraderie going with lunches in Orange County, good conversation, and an occasional movie.

US'77

Upper School '77 classmates **Marti Jo (Sellers) Bicknese**, **Merry Ella (Munnecke) Iglesias**, and **Joan (Snyder) Fernandez** (also C'81) reunited in April to celebrate the launch of Joan's historical fiction novel, *Saving Vincent: A Novel of Jo van Gogh*. The book tells the forgotten

true story of Jo—the woman who saved her brother-in-law Vincent's art from obscurity. Joan devoted seven years to researching and writing this compelling narrative, supported by close, enduring friendships that began at Principia Preschool!



C'83

Timathea "Timi" (Shays) Workman (C'83) fulfilled her dream of taking a group of friends on a cruise of the Nile River on a dahabeya (a traditional Egyptian boat) to visit her favorite places. In early October 2025, Timi

led a tour of Egypt that included the Principians pictured below: **Gavin MacKenzie** (US'16), **Karen (Parsons) Fiddler** (C'83), **Timi (Shays) Workman** (C'83), **Cindy (Reeves) Banks** (C'83), **Jamie (Williams) Sloan** (C'84), **Jayme (Walker) Holcomb** (C'83), **Audrey (Whitfield) MacKenzie** (C'82), and **Richard Crandell** (C'82).

The group was grateful to Timi for sharing such experiences as riding camels at the Great Pyramids of Giza, bargaining for spices in a Nubian village at Aswan, and hot-air ballooning from the Valley of the Queens to Luxor.



Weddings

C'63

Bonny "Barry" (Sanders) Gaver (C'63) married **John Frederick Gaver** on September 24 in the charming Epping Forest Chapel in the community where Bonny grew up near Annapolis, MD. Bonny and John met in Jacksonville, FL and will continue to live there. John works as an academic consultant for American Council for Construction Education, and Bonny expects to continue her writing career. Her third collection of poems, *Seasons of Light*, was published last year and is available on Amazon under her former name. Among Bonny's fond memories of Principia is time spent working in the Writer's Cabin on the bluffs of the Principia College campus.



Susan (Stone) Pinson (C'83) shared that sometimes Principians meet in the most unexpected places. That was the case on a Colorado hiking trail in May 2025, when one group of four Principia hikers traveled down the trail just as another group of three Principia hikers ascended. The woods quickly filled with laughter, shared stories, and the joy of unexpected Principia connections.



*An unexpected gathering of Principia hikers. **From left:** Kent Pinson (C'76), Susan (Stone) Pinson (C'83), Rusty Rohde (C'83), Elizabeth (MacLachlan) Bear (C'86), Dave Bear (C'85), Tom Clayton (US'78, C'83), and Wendy (Kreutz) Clayton (C'83)*

US'86

In July 2025, **Dana Woodall** (US'86) reached the top of the second-highest mountain in the continental U.S. It took the hiker several weeks of preparation and training, a few nights of acclimatization, and generous help from fellow hikers along the

way. Dana says the adventure turned out to be one of the most emotional experiences of his life and credits **Mike Griswold** (US'80) for providing the inspiration for the trip.



US'87

Five members of the Upper School Class of 1987 are currently working in various roles at Adventure Unlimited. At this year's All-Staff meeting, they paused for a photo (from left): **Joshua Sprague** (US'87, C'91), **Heidi (Shays) Heinbaugh** (US'87), **Stephanie (Riedel) Johnson** (C'93), **David Bailey** (US'87), **Jon Sherwood** (US'87, C'91).



PRINCIPIA  COLLEGE

HOKA Is Here!

Hear from the passionate runner and visionary entrepreneur behind one of the world's most recognizable and successful running shoe brands.

Join us for a fireside chat with Co-Founder of HOKA, Jean Luc-Diard.

Thursday, March 5 | 7:30 p.m.
Principia College

Join us live or
watch the recording.



Class Notes

Principia Abroad Revisited... 52 Years Later

Thanks to the 2024 Principia College 50th Reunion for the Classes of 1974 & 1975, several alumni from the 1973 Principia England Abroad reconnected and decided to recreate the adventure! All agreed that the original abroad, led by the warm-hearted and intellectually inspiring **Dr. Tom Hillman**, was profoundly formative. His program for education majors opened doors to the wider world, blending classroom learning in London with homestays and hands-on teaching in their neighborhood schools. Along the way, he sparked curiosity through trips to theaters, operas, museums, cathedrals, and weekend field trips to historic sites, instilling a love of discovery and independence that shaped lives for decades. He also facilitated a European continent travel extension from Paris to Rome after the formal program ended.

Fast forward to 2025: **Dawn (Gangwisch) Cheyrouze** (C'75), now a longtime resident of France, invited **Carrie Hollenberg** (C'75), **Nancy Tankersley** (C'75), **Cy Crandell** (US'70, C'74), **Larry Whitmore** (C'74), **Marcia (Schaberg) Hufstader** (C'75), **Lee (Mayer) Kendrick** (US'70, C'74) and her husband, John Kendrick, to rediscover France after 52 years. After months of planning, the group landed in Chaville in September for two weeks of adventure—one week near Paris and one in the Périgord region. Their planning not only resulted in a rich time together, but also heightened the admiration for the detailed and thoughtful planning that Dr. Hillman had done so well.

Like students again, they bunked together, navigated trains and metros, and explored Versailles, Notre Dame, the Arc de Triomphe, Monet's gardens at Giverny, and the Musée d'Orsay. Then came Part Two: piling into a rental car (with Cy at the wheel), they headed to Sarlat, living in a centuries-old farmhouse. Highlights included medieval towns, castles, and caves—plus the awe-inspiring prehistoric art of Lascaux and a 138-foot descent into a chasm of stalactites and stalagmites. Learning mode: fully activated!

Gratitude all around to Dawn for orchestrating the trip, to Dr. Hillman for his vision and care during the original abroad, and to Principia for making such programs—and reunions—possible. The group hopes to share more adventures soon and sends a warm hello to all fellow travelers from that unforgettable 1973 experience.



From left: Cy Crandell (US'70, C'74), Carrie Hollenberg (C'75), Dawn (Gangwisch) Cheyrouze (C'75), Marcia (Schaberg) Hufstader (C'75), Nancy Tankersley (C'75), Lee (Mayer) Kendrick (US'70, C'74), John Kendrick



From left: Carrie Hollenberg (C'75), Nancy Tankersley (C'75), Cy Crandell (US'70, C'74), Dawn (Gangwisch) Cheyrouze (C'75), Lee (Mayer) Kendrick (US'70, C'74), Marcia (Schaberg) Hufstader (C'75)



Members of the 1973 Principia College England Abroad.

A Chorus Reunited

Upper School Chorus alumni gathered to recreate their iconic album cover 50 years later—same spot, same spirit, and plenty of harmony as they celebrated their wonderful musical tour adventures!



In 1975, the Upper School Chorus Tour took 30+ Principia students by bus across Georgia and Florida for performances in nine cities. This album was created shortly afterward and shared with alumni and friends. The chorus was directed by Jack Eyerly (FS'48).



Back row from left: Christie Fullgraf (US'75), Marcia (Satterwhite) Belforte (US'76, C'80), Lance Thornton (US'75, C'79), Eric Larmer (US'76, C'80), Sue (Volentine) Rupp (US'75, C'79), Jim Laughlin (US'76)

Middle row from left: Donna (Campbell) West (US'75, C'79), Barry Peck (US'75, C'79), Teresa Newton-Terres (US'75, C'85)

Front row from left: Laura (Foskett) Foskett-Ely (US'75, C'79), Daniel Cawfield (US'76), Christy (Boemer) Johnson (US'76)

Make an Estate Gift That Shapes Students for Generations

Every planned gift is an act of faith in Principia's future. By naming Principia as a beneficiary in your will, trust, or retirement account, you help ensure that the values that shaped your own life continue to uplift students for generations to come.

Your gift plants a seed today that will bless students you may never meet—but whose lives will be forever changed because of your vision.



Take the next step.

Scan the QR code or visit principiagiving.org/beneficiary to learn more about including Principia as part of your estate plan.

We're here to support you.

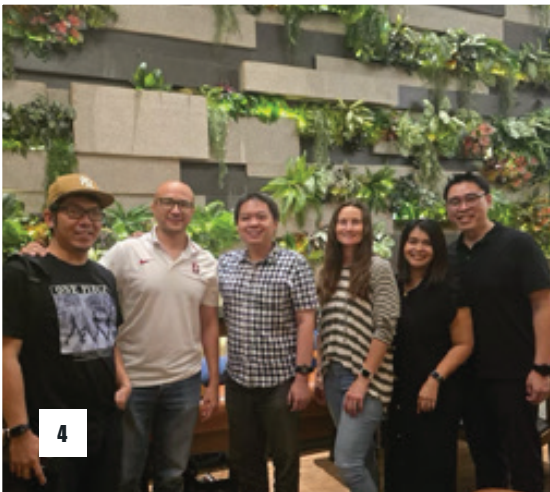
To explore how your legacy can bless future Principians, contact **Tucker Fendon (C'05), Major Gift and Planned Giving Officer**, at 314.514.3119 or tucker.fendon@principia.edu.





ALUMNI MOMENTS

Snapshots of Celebration and Connection





6A



6B



7



8



9



10

1. During their fall character trips, Upper School sophomores and seniors connected with Principia alumni to swap stories, memories, and meaningful Principia moments. At this table, Katie Penfield (US'16, C'20), Mackenzie McCarty (US'19), and Ned McCarty (HON'23) visited with a group of sophomores who, along with the rest of their classmates, spent a week exploring Boston's rich history and learning about the life of Mary Baker Eddy and the early roots of the Christian Science movement.
2. Several members of Principia's Alumni Association Board returned to campus for the 2025 Upper School Reunion. And just in case their school spirit needed a boost, the Principia Panther brought plenty of energy and gold & blue pride to the festivities.
3. Christmas with Principia brought together more than 250 Seattle-area Principia alumni, families, and friends for a festive evening at the Woodland Park Zoo. Principia alumni Molly Glascock (US'11, C'15) (second from right), Zeya Kyaw (US'14, C'18) (third from right), and Jordan Anderson (US'11, C'15) (second from left) enjoy celebrating alongside family and friends.
4. Principia Middle School Admissions Director Melissa (Konetchy) Schuette (US'98, C'02) traveled to Indonesia on a recruiting trip, and while there, gathered with local Principia alumni for dinner. Pictured from left: Anthony Wirahadi (C'11), Feli Zuhendri (C'07), Ferdi Surya (C'11), Melissa Schuette, Steven Wongkar (C'05) and his wife.
5. The 2025 Upper School Reunion banquet included a special surprise when members of the Classes of 1985 and 1986 were joined by a solo reunioner from the Upper School Class of 1955, Sandy (Orr) Charles (US'55, C'59)! During her 35+ year teaching career at Principia School, Sandy Charles oversaw countless spring musicals, water ballets, dance shows, and other Upper School productions.
- 6A/6B. This fall's College Gold & Blue Weekend brought current and former Panthers together for special alumni gatherings (and some fun and friendly alumni activity). Baseball and women's volleyball were two of the teams hosting alumni events. Once a Panther, always a Panther.
6. During Christmas break, Principia College's women's basketball team traveled to Washington, DC, for a tournament. While there, they also attended and participated in the local Christmas Sing hosted by the Principia Club of VA/MD/DC.
8. Principians from near and far gathered in Fort Myers, FL in December to cheer on the Upper School boys' basketball team at the City of Palms Classic Basketball Tournament. The excitement was high as the team notched wins against top-ranked opponents and finished third overall.
9. 2025 David K. Andrews Distinguished Alumni Award recipient Bill Merritt Jr. (US'66) was joined by longtime Principia friend and classmate Lance Flynn (US'66), who came to celebrate Bill at the award presentation. Read more about Bill on p. 45.
10. Principia alumni and friends recently sailed along the stunning Dalmatian Coast during a 10-day Principia Lifelong Learning expedition through Croatia, exploring ancient ruins, iconic architecture, and historical landmarks.

Join us for an unforgettable weekend.



PRINCIPIA COLLEGE

Reunion

JUNE 25–28, 2026 | 50TH REUNIONERS ARRIVE JUNE 24

Come home to celebrate, reconnect, and make new memories with Principia College classmates and friends from across the decades!

WHO'S CELEBRATING?

10th: 2016, 2017

15th: 2011, 2012

20th: 2006, 2007

25th: 2001, 2002

30th: 1996, 1997

35th: 1991, 1992

40th: 1986, 1987

45th: 1981, 1982

50th: 1976, 1977

55th: 1971, 1972

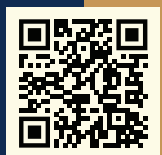
60th: 1966, 1967

65th: 1961, 1962

70th: 1956, 1957

Affinity Reunion:

Classes of 1974, 1975



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principia.edu/reunion

Make the most of your time on campus! Come early for Summer Session, stay for Reunion, and enjoy savings on both events.

Lovingly Remembered

Loraine (Shaw) Van Valkenburgh (US'41)

Martin "Marty" E. Arden Jr. (C'47)

Glenn J. Schreyer (US'48)

Diane (Dickson) Hawes (US'49)

Lindy "Lindie" (Lindstrom) Banks (US'50)

Ruth (Posgate) Levey (C'50)

Nancy (Siebens) Binz (US'51)

Jeannette "Jeanne" (Hodge) Price (JC'51)

Kathleen "Kathy" (Watts) Moulton (C'52)

Robert Duvall (US'49, C'53)

Alice (Forn) Goodsell (C'53)

Dawn (Leonard) Larmer (US'49, C'53)
Former Chairman of the Board and CEO

Suzanne "Sue" (Hersch) Hanley (US'55)

William "Bill" H. Truitt (C'57)
Former Head of School

Judith "Judy" Beals (C'59)

Heidy (Stauder) Boyman (C'59)
Former First Lady

E. "Yvonne" (McHugo) Mochel (US'55, C'59)

Linda (Young) Wilson (C'62)

Janet (Phillips) Bartell (C'63)

Millicent "Millie" (Burnap) Burns (US'63)

Theo F. Fullerton (C'63)

Carolyn (Mainard) Manes (C'66)

Marjorie L. Beecher (C'67)

Bonnie Jo (Rous) Phillips (C'67)

Patricia (Singletary) Bayless (C'68)

Daniel "Dan" M. Camp (US'65, C'69)

Eric W. Mack (US'65, C'69)
Former Faculty/Staff

Theodore "Ted" W. Hufstader (C'71)

Philip (Martin) Matricardi (US'67, C'71)

Becky (Beasley) James (US'72)

Alan R. Willis (C'73)

Deborah "Debi" (Farnsworth) Nagle (C'74)

Anita (Noll) Knight (C'75)

David W. Seward (US'71, C'75)

Princita A. Whitehead (C'75)

Warren H. Davis Jr. (C'76)

Jennifer (Hoffman) Essen (C'76)

Gene "Blair" B. Smith (C'77)
Former Faculty/Staff

Douglas "Doug" R. Campbell (US'79)

Susan "Sue" (Ferguson) Palmer (C'79)
Former First Lady

Peter Ross (C'79)

Gregory "Greg" R. Kuhn (US'80, C'84)
Current Faculty/Staff

Bret Douglas Rush (C'85)

Naomi K. Geddes (US'04)

John Kreutzberg (HON'06)

Martha Stitzel (HON'13)
Former Faculty/Staff

Former Faculty/Staff:

George R. Denninger

Richard C. Johnson

Shirley J. (Clark) Jones (FS'00)

E. "Peter" P. Larmer

Rumbsy "Trey" R. McCartt III (FS'01)

Alfred B. Parker

Lee Reese (FS'00)





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