



ALUMNI NEWS

MARCH 2026

at the SC Governor's School
for the Arts and Humanities

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About the Cover:

The Dance Department teamed up with the Visual Arts senior photography class to capture this BEAUTIFUL image! Our visual artists applied what they've learned about digital photography and environmental portraiture in a project highlighting our senior Dance Govies as they prepared for their annual showcase.



FROM the PRESIDENT

Dear Alumni,

Greetings from the fastest growing city in the United States AND the most creative public school in the state of South Carolina. I trust that 2026 has been as good to each of you as it has been for the Governor’s School, and that the creativity and innovation that you experienced here is still a positive force in your lives.

The 2025-2026 academic year has been one of outstanding achievement throughout the campus, and the Governor’s School continues to make headlines all over the state and nation for excellence in and out of the classroom. We were pleased to learn that the Governor’s School was again ranked by Niche as the *#1 Best High School for the Arts in South Carolina* for 2026. With an overall grade of A+, we received an A+ for academics, ranked *#2 for Best Public High School Teachers in SC*, and *#5 for Best College Prep Public High School* in South Carolina. As always, a highlight of the spring semester was the announcement of the Southeast Scholastic Art & Writing Region-at-large Awards with our Govies receiving 128 total awards including 19 Gold Keys, 45 Silver Keys, and 64 Honorable Mentions.

We opened the spring semester with the same level of energy that we saw last fall with a full schedule of performances and events in all areas. Although a brief period of inclement weather forced us to close the campus for a few days, we didn’t miss a beat and jumped right back into a full calendar of activity. As our Drama students traveled to participate in the annual National Unified Auditions in Chicago, our music students were featured performers at the SC Music Educators Conference in Columbia. The Senior Dance Showcase was a highlight of the spring semester as they collaborated with our Visual Arts students, and our Film students completed their mid-year project with a set design that would be the envy of Hollywood.

Having paused the annual *Songwriters in the Round* fundraiser on Hilton Head Island, the Governor’s School Foundation was pleased to present its return to Greenville on March 26. In partnership with the Greenville Drive, the event was held at Flour Field and was a huge success featuring several internationally acclaimed country artists including Kimberly Schlapman of the band Little Big Town, Phillip Sweet (Little Big Town), Kimberly Perry (The Band Perry), and John Morgan (songwriter for Carrie Underwood, Jason Aldean, and others). We were pleased to honor Mr. Irv Welling as the recipient of the Fred Collins Foundation Luminary Award for over 30 years of support of the Governor’s School and Governor’s School Foundation.

I’d like to offer a special “thank you” to all alumni who participated in the research and development for our new long range strategic plan. With the success of our last plan and the robust financial support that followed, I know that this plan will serve us well as we move forward into the next phase of artistic, academic, and fiscal growth for the Governor’s School. As always, I look forward to even more of you reconnecting with us and joining us for at a performance or event on the campus or throughout the state as your schedule permits. Best wishes for continued success in 2026!

Sincerely,

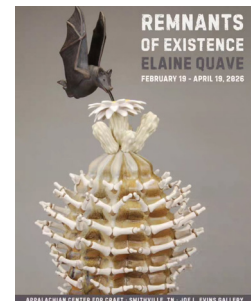
Cedric L. Adderley, DMA
President

CAMPUS NEWS



We were proud to once again partner with the South Carolina Art Education Association to host the annual Youth Art Month Exhibition on campus. The exhibition celebrated visual art education across the Upstate, showcasing outstanding work by elementary, middle, and high school students and their teachers from throughout the region. We were especially excited to see several of our own Visual Arts Govies exhibit their work in the show for the first time—an exciting milestone and a testament to their talent and dedication.

The Visual Arts faculty have been BUSY in the classroom and beyond! Several of them have work shown in current and upcoming exhibitions!



Instructor **Elaine Quave's** solo show, "Remnants of Existence" opened this week at the Appalachian Center for Craft in Cookeville, TN. The exhibition runs through April 19 in the Joe L. Evins Gallery. She also has work on display as part of "Inspired by Nature: An Exhibition of Sculptural Clay Works" at Western Wyoming Community College, which runs through March 13.

Visual Arts Department Chair **David Gerhard** was a featured artist in "The New South 7," a new exhibition at Kai Lin Art in Atlanta. The show featured work by 48 artists living across the Southeast.



Instructor **Paul Yanko** will have work in "Expanding Horizons, A Grand Strand Collection," an upcoming exhibition at the Franklin G. Burroughs-Simeon B. Chapin Art Museum in Myrtle Beach, SC. The show opens February 28 and runs through May 31.



Visual Arts senior **Brianna Hudgens** partnered with our Health Services team and **The Blood Connection** to host another successful Govie Blood Drive on campus. The Blood Connection, an independently managed nonprofit serving hospitals across North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, works to ensure healthcare providers have access to safe, reliable, and cost-effective blood supplies.

Thanks to the generosity of our Govie community, more than 30 donations were collected—each with the potential to save up to three lives. We are grateful to Brianna, The Blood Connection, and all who participated for supporting such a meaningful and life-saving effort.



In February, our SC Arts Alliance Student Ambassadors traveled to Columbia for **Arts Advocacy Day**. Serving as representatives of the SC Arts Alliance, they visited the South Carolina State House and met with members of the state legislature to champion the importance of arts education. The experience offered a firsthand look at the legislative process in action while empowering our students to advocate for the Governor's School's mission of providing South Carolina students with access to high-quality arts education.



Percussionist and Music alum **Brandon Brooks** (2011), who was in town performing with "Hell's Kitchen: The Musical," returned to campus in February, accompanied by other actors and musicians from the show (including 2014 Summer alum Astin Stewart). Brandon and crew led a conversation with Drama and Music students about career paths, college choices, and working professionally in the arts.



Our Music Govies were featured performers at the **South Carolina Music Educators Association Conference** in February! Under the direction of Music

Department Chair Lauren Vaughn, members of our woodwind studio traveled to Columbia to perform as a featured ensemble at the conference! Their performance included the world premiere of "Komorebi," composed by Govie alumnus Peyton Mann, who is currently a sophomore at USC. Adjunct clarinet instructor Karen Hill was also in attendance and conducted the Converse University clarinet choir, which included several Music alumni.

Despite February's icy conditions, our Drama seniors—accompanied by their fearless chaperones, Anne Tromsness and Connor Vetter—traveled safely to Chicago for **National Unified Auditions**.

There, they had the invaluable opportunity to share their talents with representatives from 26 college and university theatre programs. We are proud of their dedication and excited for all that lies ahead as they take this next step in their artistic journeys.



In February, we recognized **Law Enforcement Appreciation Day** during a Community Meeting by honoring our outstanding Public Safety team. At the Governor's School, creating a safe and welcoming campus is a top priority—and that commitment is made possible by the dedication of our officers. Providing 24/7 support and emergency response, they are also a steady, friendly presence, always ready to assist members of our community.

Our team of 11 Public Safety Officers were represented by Chief of Police and Director of Public Safety Robert Arnold, Police Officer Russ Capps, Officer Al Nater, and Officer Daisy Sullivan.



Visual Arts instructor **Paul Yanko** is featured in "At This Moment: Portraits of South Carolina Artists by Jerry Siegel"—a new book and exhibition at the Greenville County Museum of Art! "At This Moment" is a testament to the wealth of talent and genius that has been fostered, cultivated, and inspired by South Carolina for more than 75 years. Mr. Yanko is highlighted in this exhibition alongside artists such as Pearl Fryar, Mary Jackson, Jasper Johns, Leo Twiggs, Enid Williams and others. Work from the show is also featured in a new book published by the museum!



The Dance Department recently welcomed Banning Bouldin—dancer, choreographer, and producer—for a dynamic guest residency with the senior class. During her time on campus, she collaborated closely with students to create an original work for the upcoming Spring Dance Performance. Drawing on the group's unique energy and responses to creative prompts, the piece explores themes of falling and rebounding.

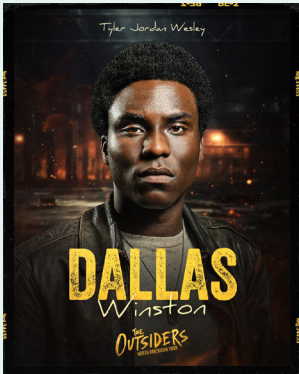
A graduate of The Juilliard School, Bouldin has performed internationally with artists and companies including Azure Barton, Cullberg Ballet, and Camille A. Brown. She is also the founder of New Dialect, named Nashville's Best New Dance Company in 2014. Currently, she serves as a research artist with the National Center for Choreography-Akron at the University of Akron, where she is exploring innovative frameworks for supporting dance through the Creative Administration Residency.

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THESE GOVIES



Christina Brown (Music, '20) was named "Teacher of the Year" at Chapin Intermediate School! "Ms. Brown, our incredible orchestra teacher, inspires students every day through music, creativity, and dedication to her craft," says the school. "She brings passion and energy to our school and helps our students find their confidence and voice through the arts."

When **Tyler Jordan Wesley** (Drama, '21) reflects on his journey as a performer, he credits his time at the Governor's School as a pivotal step along the way. Today, that journey has taken him to stages across the country.



Tyler recently returned to Greenville as a professional actor, starring as Dallas Winston in the national tour of *The Outsiders*. Seeing a Govie alum bring such an iconic character to life on a national stage was an exciting full-circle moment for the Governor's School community.

In a recent interview with the Greenville Journal, Tyler shared more about his path—from growing up in Hopkins, South Carolina, to pursuing his passion for performance and building a career in theater.

greenvillejournal.com/arts-culture/the-outsiders-actor-got-his-start-in-church-sc-governors-school/



Robert Mason (Dance, '15) made his Broadway debut as The Magical Mister Mistoffelees in *Cats: The Jellicle Ball* at The Broadhurst Theatre in March.
Photographer - Emily Farthing Art



Marija Abney (Dance, '03), Founder and Executive Director of The Soapbox Presents was named as a recipient of the 2026 C. Virginia Fields Award. Each year, the Frederick Douglass Boulevard Alliance presents the C. Virginia Fields Awards for Leadership and Community Service, named in honor of the iconic former Borough President, whose transformational leadership led to the rezoning of Frederick Douglass Boulevard, Harlem's most vibrant residential and commercial corridor and restaurant row. The C. Virginia Fields Awards are presented to New Yorkers for their extraordinary leadership and impact in the Village of Harlem.

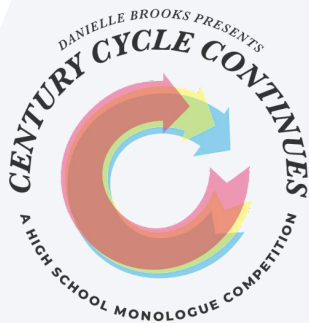


Congratulations to **Jacob Perkins** (Drama '07) on the off-Broadway production of his play *The Dinosaurs* at Playwrights Horizons in New York City, a leading incubator for new theatrical work that has produced multiple Pulitzer Prize-winning plays.

Perkins is the recipient of the 2020 Biennial Commission from Clubbed Thumb and the inaugural DVRF/O'Henry Emerging Playwright Award, and is an alumnus of Ars Nova's Play Group and SoHo Playhouse's Writer/Director Lab. In addition to his work as a playwright, he is also a clinical mental health counselor and researcher. (Image: Jacob Perkins) Read more about *The Dinosaurs*: www.playwrightshorizons.org/shows/production-history/2020s/2526/dinosaurs

Honoring the Legacy of Black American Storytelling

Danielle Brooks '07 Launches the Century Cycle Continues Monologue Competition



The power of storytelling has long been at the heart of the stage, and few traditions are as rich and influential as the legacy of Black American playwrights. This winter, that legacy took center stage at the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities through an exciting new initiative led by one of its own.

In February, Academy Award-nominated actor and Governor's School Drama alumna Danielle Brooks ('07) returned to campus to host the inaugural Century Cycle Continues Monologue Competition, a celebration of the enduring tradition of Black American storytelling. Inspired by the spirit of August Wilson's celebrated ten-play "Century Cycle," the competition invited young performers to carry that storytelling tradition forward.

The event challenged students ages 14-18 from across South Carolina to bring the words of prominent Black playwrights to life through powerful monologue performances. Participants first submitted a video of a one- to two-minute monologue. From those submissions, ten finalists were selected to perform live at the Governor's School on February 28 before an audience and a panel of industry professionals. The panel of judges included Govie alums, Brandon Michael Hall (Drama, '11) and Teyonah Parris (Drama, '05). Stacey Scott (Drama, '05) was on hand to lead finalists in warm up exercises before going on stage.

Hosted in partnership with Black Women on Broadway, the competition highlighted the power of theater as a platform for cultural storytelling and artistic expression. Finalists competed for cash prizes while demonstrating their ability to embody the voices,

histories, and perspectives captured in the works of both contemporary and classic Black playwrights.

While August Wilson's renowned Century Cycle chronicled the African American experience across each decade of the twentieth century, the spirit of the competition reflects a powerful truth: the cycle may be complete, but the story is still being written. Through the performances of these young artists, the next generation of storytellers continues to shape and expand that narrative.

For Danielle, the event was also a meaningful homecoming. Since graduating from the Governor's School in 2007, she has built an acclaimed career across stage and screen. She is widely recognized for her breakout role as Taystee in the Netflix series *Orange Is the New Black* and her Tony Award-nominated performance in the Broadway revival of *The Color Purple*. Her growing list of accolades includes a Grammy Award, multiple Screen Actors Guild Awards, a Primetime Emmy nomination, and an Academy Award nomination.

Danielle earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Juilliard School, and her career has continued to expand across film, television, and Broadway, with recent roles including appearances in *Peacemaker* and *Instant Dream Home*.

By launching the Century Cycle Continues Monologue Competition, she is helping create new opportunities for young performers while honoring the storytellers who came before them. Her commitment to uplifting emerging talent reflects the same spirit of artistic excellence and mentorship that defines the Governor's School community.



20 QUESTIONS

WITH CHARLOTTE DUNN

1. Where were you born?

Columbia, South Carolina. However, my dad is from Vietnam, and my mom is from New York!

2. What one thing really makes your day?

Whether it's aiding a coworker, helping a friend, or making my husband laugh—knowing that I've tried to make a difference in someone's life makes my day. It's very sentimental, I know.

3. What three words would you use to describe yourself?

Classic, quiet, and composed.

4. Are you an introvert or an extrovert?

I'm a definite introvert!

5. What is your favorite movie?

It's so hard to choose just one! I'm between Hedwig and the Angry Inch and Closer. The music in the former is so iconic, and the acting in the second is so heart-wrenching.

6. What was your first job?

In the summer of 2007, I interned for the Department of Academic Research at Pearson's Boston office. I had an incredible experience living in Quincy with my aunt and uncle and working in the Back Bay during the week. I saw the many moving parts of the academic publishing industry—from inception and research to completion of product—and then watched some of the brilliant statisticians and other experts in the country see how this newly-minted curricula might help struggling school districts. It was absolutely fascinating to be a part of and witness.

7. What was your major in college?

I was an English literature major at Sewanee but took a lot of creative writing classes, building upon the technique I learned at SCGSAH with Jan Bailey and George Singleton. At Sewanee, I was fortunate enough to have Kevin Wilson as my fiction instructor. Both he and George have been huge influences on me both as a writer and a human being, and I'm lucky enough to still be in touch with them.

8. What book is on your nightstand?

There are a lot right now, and I have to include my audiobook, too! I'm currently listening to *Sheer* by Vanessa Lawrence, a novel about beauty culture in the early 2000s. I'm also working my way through *Levee* by Paul Otremba, whom I met when visiting a friend in Houston years ago. Additionally, I try to have an essay collection in my rotation, and I just started *To Save and To Destroy: Writing as an Other* by Viet Thanh Nguyen.

9. What is the "coolest" Govie experience you have ever had?

I'll try to name a few! Sledding down the hill on cafeteria

trays at Reedy River Park (now Falls Park) my junior year. Jumping up and down and screaming with Jan when I got a signed letter in the mail from Edmund White letting me know I placed in the Princeton University Poetry Contest. All the creative writing readings. Reading Plato with Mrs. Schantz and all the other seniors on one of our last nights together before graduation.

Additionally, this didn't happen at SCGSAH, but it was while I was attending the 2012 Sewanee Writers' Conference. Jill McCorkle was my manuscript reader, and she told Kevin Wilson that mine was one of the best manuscripts of the group and that he must be proud. He told her in front of me that I came to him already knowing how to write, and to write well. It was just proof of how well SCGSAH prepared me for my artistic field.

10. What's something about you that people would be surprised to know?

I played viola with my original high school orchestra (pre-SCGSAH) at Carnegie Hall.

11. What part of the driver's test are you most likely to fail?

Parallel parking! It was the only part of the test where I received a point deduction.

12. What advice would you give to a current Govie?

Take advantage of all the opportunities SCGSAH has to offer, but remember to take care of yourself, too. Treasure the friendships and memories made here; some of the best friends I have now are the ones I met during my first week of junior year. Finally, remember that talent is nothing without effort or discipline, but that practice makes progress and not necessarily perfection.

13. What was the first concert you ever went to?

Aimee Mann at the Orange Peel in Asheville.

14. What's on the top of your bucket list?

The Blue Grotto in Capri! I have only been to Capri once, and the weather and tide conditions weren't right to see the grotto. I swear I'll make it back there someday!

15. If you could invite five people, living or dead, to dinner, who would they be?

Viet Thanh Nguyen, George Saunders, bell hooks, Lorrie Moore, and Florence Welch.

16. What do you miss most about SCGSAH?

Having so much dedicated time to write and being close to dear friends.

17. What would the title of your autobiography be?

Every Day You Wake You Raise the Dead. It's a line from one my favorite poems by Danez Smith, "A Note on the Body."

18. What's your proudest accomplishment?

Graduating with my Master of Library and Information Science degree from the University of South Carolina in 2023. I did it while working in a library full-time and while my husband was earning his Master of Social Work degree!

19. What does the definition of success mean to you?

To me, success is a fine line between achieving my goals and achieving contentment. I am constantly setting the bar higher for myself, but I try to balance that perfectionist nature by remembering the progress I have already made and the things I have already accomplished.

20. How did your Governor's School experience and education impact you?

I may not have become a full-time/famous writer the way I had originally envisioned at age eighteen, but my time at the Governor's School made me a more thoughtful, intuitive, and deliberate person. I learned that the arts are what carry culture forward and what are most indicative of where we have been. My love for literature and writing carried into my love for libraries and inspired me to become a librarian, which is almost more of a calling than a career. SCGSAH instilled in me the desire to give back to my community, not out of obligation but out of genuine appreciation; it is why I am in my chosen field and why I do what I do. The Governor's School didn't just give me an excellent education; it informed and shaped me into the person I am now, over two decades after having graduated.



Charlotte Dunn is a librarian currently working in administration at the South Carolina State Library. She holds a bachelor's degree in English literature from Sewanee: The University of the South and a master's degree in library and information science from the University of South Carolina. She has been published in numerous academic and literary journals including, but not limited to, *South Carolina Libraries*, *Anthropoid*, and *Unsweetened*, and she was a 2014 nominee for Sundress Publications' Best of the Net Series.

Charlotte's interest in creative writing began at an early age. She attended Duke University's Young Writers' Camp for many years before she attended the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities' Summer Academy Program for creative writing in 2001. Before transferring to the Governor's School Residential High School program, she won numerous awards for her writing, including the Carmen Nylund Poetry Prize at Dreher High School in 2002.

While at the SCGSAH residential high school, Charlotte was the school's first student to place in the Princeton University Poetry Contest (now the Leonard L. Milburg '53 High School Poetry Prize). In 2004, she was also the school's first student to win the American Voices Award at the National Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, and she placed in the most categories for the school in the National Foundation for the Advancement for the Arts Awards (now YoungArts).

Charlotte continued writing creatively at Sewanee: The University of the South, where she earned a full scholarship to the 2006 Sewanee Writers' Workshop, the youngest person in the school's history to do so. She graduated in 2008 with her degree in English literature.

In more recent years, Charlotte fell in love with librarianship while working in public libraries in Columbia, South Carolina, and she earned her MLIS at the University of South Carolina. There, she focused her studies on equity and accessibility in libraries, especially within policy framework and library facilities. She graduated in 2023 after having been awarded the South Carolina Library Association's Diversity Scholarship the previous year.

When Charlotte is not working, she spends time with her husband, John, and their two cats, Hamlet and Chloe. You can usually find her knitting, reading, or (on occasion) even writing.



FROM THE STAGE TO THE STREETS: HOW RICHARD WILLIAMS JR. FOUND HIS TRUE VOICE



When Richard Williams Jr. graduated from the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts and Humanities in 2004 as a vocal performance major, his future seemed destined

for the stage. Trained among some of the most talented young artists in the state, he refined not only his voice but his discipline, stage presence, and confidence.

He went on to study vocal performance at the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland, pursuing a career in opera. Music shaped him. It taught him breath control, projection, storytelling, and emotional connection. But what he did not yet know was that one day, he would use those same tools in a very different arena.

Today, Richard still uses his voice every single day. He just uses it differently.

A RETURN HOME WITH PURPOSE

Thirteen years ago, Richard made a decision that would define his life's work. He returned to his hometown of Conway, South Carolina, determined to make a difference in the very community that raised him.

Horry County, where Conway is located, faces significant challenges in early childhood education. Only 27% of children enter kindergarten fully ready

to succeed. That statistic is not just a number. It represents real children, real families, and real futures hanging in the balance.

For Richard, that number became a calling.

LENDING HIS VOICE TO EARLY EDUCATION

As Director of Education for United Way of Horry County, Richard now leads initiatives aimed at improving kindergarten readiness and strengthening families from birth.

Under his leadership, the organization has expanded programs such as:

- The Basics Learning Network, equipping parents of children ages 0-4 with simple, research-based tools to build brain development at home
- Heggerty Phonemic Awareness implementation in child care centers to strengthen early literacy skills
- Triple P Parenting programs to empower families with practical parenting strategies
- Community-wide volunteer efforts that bring reading, mentorship, and resources directly into schools

His work connects nonprofits, schools, churches, volunteers, and civic organizations around one central mission: ensuring that every child in Horry County has a fair start in school and in life.

The training he received in vocal performance—clarity, storytelling, emotional connection—now fuels his ability to communicate vision, inspire donors, mobilize volunteers, and advocate for children.

He may not stand under opera house lights anymore, but he still commands rooms. He still tells stories.

He still moves audiences. Only now, the audience is his community.

A PASTOR WITH A COMMUNITY VISION

In addition to his work at United Way, Richard serves as Senior Pastor of Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church.

Under his leadership, the church strives to be what he calls a "R.E.A.L. Church":

RELEVANT

EFFECTIVE

ALIVE

LINKED TO THE COMMUNITY

Mt. Vernon is not just a Sunday gathering place. It is a beacon of hope. The church partners with schools, supports missions locally and abroad, provides grief support and recovery ministries, and actively engages in community transformation efforts.

Richard believes the church must extend beyond the pulpit and into the public square. His ministry philosophy is simple: faith must show up in action.

A DIFFERENT STAGE, A GREATER IMPACT

The arts taught Richard how to use his voice. Life taught him where to use it.

Today, whether he is preaching on Sunday morning, presenting data to school leaders, speaking on radio, or encouraging a room full of parents, he is still performing in the highest sense of the word. He is communicating truth. He is moving hearts. He is shaping futures.

The path from opera to nonprofit leadership may not have been predictable, but it is deeply aligned. The discipline of the arts, the courage of performance, and the power of voice have all found their fullest expression in service.

For Richard Williams Jr., the stage never disappeared. It just became bigger.

And now, his greatest performance is helping change the trajectory of an entire community.



OUTREACH

The Office of Outreach recently began a partnership with Call Me MiSTER at Clemson University, engaging pre-service teachers in professional learning opportunities in the arts as well as peer-to-peer workshops and creativity classroom kits which will provide materials to include lesson plans, supporting lesson materials and arts enhancement tools for their future classrooms.

Thanks to this partnership, these pre-service teachers will engage in training that will focus on classroom lesson planning and strategies in standards-based dance, drama, music, visual arts and arts integration to enhance their future students' classroom experience. These opportunities will extend to exposing these MiSTERS to arts organizations and programming opportunities as well as grant opportunities around the state. MiSTERS will have the opportunity to continue their engagement with our Outreach Office post-graduation if they so choose.

Our office continues to be a resource to educators, students and learning communities across South Carolina. We are so pleased to add Call Me MiSTER into our supported population, and we look forward to similar opportunities in the future.

GIVING BACK: *WHERE PASSION meets PURPOSE*



The Governor's School is a truly special place. It is a vibrant, collaborative artistic community—one that is wholly accepting and encourages independence in young, aspiring creatives and entrepreneurs. It holds deep personal meaning for me as well: my husband proposed to me on campus in 2007, and we even hosted our rehearsal dinner there in 2008.

I am incredibly grateful for my time at the Governor's School. For me, it provided clarity about what I wanted to pursue before I ever set foot on a college campus. Because of that experience, I was able to move forward with purpose and intention, without spending time searching for direction.

After graduating from the Governor's School in 2003, I attended the University of Georgia on a Vocal Performance scholarship. While there, I expanded my studies to include a major in Risk Management and Insurance and a minor in Music Business. I knew early on that I wanted to work on the business side of music—supporting and advocating for creatives.

I was also honored to receive a scholarship from the Terry College of Business, made possible by Opry member Whisperin' Bill Anderson, who had strong ties to South Carolina. During my junior year, while interning at Sony/ATV Music

Publishing in Nashville, Bill invited me to the Grand Ole Opry. That summer, I fell in love with both the music industry and the Nashville community, and I knew I wanted to build my life there supporting artists.

A few days after graduating from college—where I had the unforgettable honor of performing the National Anthem at Sanford Stadium—and after getting engaged at the Governor's School, my (future) husband and I packed up a Penske truck and moved to Nashville. I began my career at a business management firm, working with a major country artist - paying their bills, budgeting, prepping their tax returns, risk managing, quarterbacking big picture planning such as investment planning, tax planning and estate planning, offering input on record deals, pub deals, sponsorship agreements, tour deals, etc.

I spent eight years at that firm, eventually leading a team of six and working with some of the largest artists in the world. In 2014, I got the itch to start my own business management firm. So, in 2015, my partners and I launched our own firm, Farris, Self & Moore, LLC (FSM), with the goal of providing a more personalized, boutique approach to business management and financial planning for artists and songwriters. Today, we serve over 100 clients with a team of 35.

I feel incredibly fortunate to do work that never feels like work. It is both my passion and my calling. I love helping clients achieve their financial goals and build sustainable futures, and I thrive in the fast-paced environment of touring, planning, and team-building.

When I reflect on how I found a career that so seamlessly blends my interests, I always come back to the Governor's School. The independence it fostered was foundational. We were expected to take ownership of our work—no one was checking to make sure we practiced or completed assignments. We were there because of our commitment to our craft, and we took that responsibility seriously. That experience instilled a level of discipline and focus that has stayed with me throughout my career.

Because of the impact the school had on my life, I chose to name a practice room in the new music building a few years ago. I was later honored to join the Foundation Board, which I enthusiastically accepted. Staying connected to the school energizes me, and I am grateful for the opportunity to support its mission. This year, I have helped coordinate some of my own client's performances for the Songwriters Night at the Greenville Drive in support of the Foundation, and I am excited to support the addition of new Music Business classes in the coming year.

I remain involved with the Governor's School because of the meaningful role it has played in shaping my career and the lifelong friendships I formed there. We are incredibly fortunate to have such a unique institution in South Carolina, and I look forward to seeing its continued growth and impact on future generations of artists.

STEPHANIE MUNDY SELF

Vocal Performance, 2003 graduate

Dear SCGSAH alumni,

Each year, the South Carolina General Assembly provides alumni with the opportunity to express our gratitude for the support they provide to SCGSAH and to share the many accomplishments and successes of alumni. Students in South Carolina are provided with the rare opportunity to pursue a well-rounded arts education at SCGSAH because of the financial support and legislative work of the South Carolina General Assembly and Governor Henry McMaster. SCGSAH is funded through the legislative process, which begins with the Education Subcommittees of the South Carolina House of Representatives Ways and Means Committee and the South Carolina Senate Finance Committee.

I urge each of you to contact your local representatives and remind them of SCGSAH's many accomplishments:

- Nationally recognized as one of the top high schools in the U.S. for academic measures by U.S. News and World Report, The Washington Post, The Daily Beast, and Niche.com.
- SAT, ACT, and AP scores place SCGSAH significantly above state and national averages for their respective measures.
- In 2025, the Governor's School had a 100% graduation rate, with 89 of 102 seniors applying successfully to a college, university, technical school, or professional dance program. The remaining 13 students took a gap year or were undecided at the time of graduation.

Many of us have established careers, busy schedules, and personal and professional obligations. Many of you are pursuing college or advanced degrees, thriving professionally, or maintaining families. However, we should all take a brief moment to contact our local representatives to give young South Carolinians the same opportunities that we had. Let's join together as alumni to thank our elected officials, including state representatives, state senators, and the Governor, for their past, ongoing, and future support of the Governor's School.

There are several easy ways to reach out to our elected leaders. First, a personal contact is always best. If you personally know a member of the General Assembly, and can take time to speak with them, please do so. When I engaged in advocacy at SCGSAH, my state representative, former Representative Walton J. McLeod of Newberry County, ended up becoming one of my personal mentors. Although he is now retired from public service, he continues to remain a personal friend and one of my biggest supporters in the legal profession. Additionally, a written note is the next best option, as it helps to provide an ongoing reminder of the importance of SCGSAH. As a high school student, Representative McLeod obtained and read my letter to him about the importance of funding the Governor's School. Finally, an e-mail is an efficient way to contact elected officials. To find your local representatives within the General Assembly, visit www.scstatehouse.gov/legislatorssearch.php and click on your local representatives' names for full contact information. Contact information for the Governor's Office may be found at www.governor.sc.gov.

Even if you no longer reside in South Carolina, you can still be an advocate for the Governor's School. If your parents or friends still live in South Carolina, encourage them to use the above information to contact their local representatives to stress the importance of the Governor's School. In addition, you can still contact the elected representatives from where you previously resided. In doing so, you can emphasize that you are a former constituent from their district and a proud alumnus and product of the Governor's School. Finally, you can always contact the Governor's Office to stress your relationships to South Carolina and how the Governor's School has impacted you. Advocacy has no borders, and it does not stop merely because you are away.

In closing, SCGSAH is a jewel in South Carolina's education system, and it continues to be among the handful of public, residential high schools in our country. I appreciate your help thanking those responsible for giving young South Carolinians an opportunity to thrive in the arts and to pursue their passions.



Very truly yours,

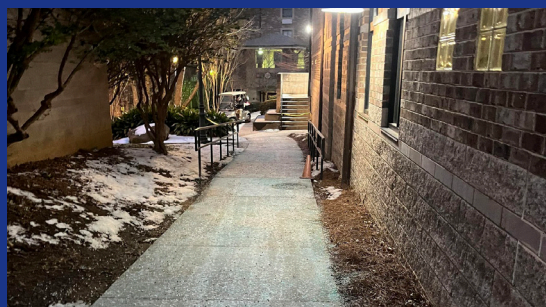
Christian ("Josh") Myers

Cello Performance, Class of 2011

Alumni Advisory Council Chair

WINTER WEATHER 2026

Greenville was hit by back-to-back winter storms during the last week of January and early February 2026. This brought significant snow of over 6 inches to the Upstate, along with sleet, and freezing rain, resulting in hazardous travel conditions, power outages, and dangerous black ice. The school's Facilities team spread a total of 11 TONS of salt all over campus during the inclement weather!



ADMISSIONS UPDATE

April 1st is THE big day for SCGSAH Admissions. On that day, decisions will be sent to students concerning their acceptance for our Residential High School program and our Summer Programs. Young people across the state will receive life-changing news as they begin their Govie odyssey. With a graduating senior class of 116, we will be looking at welcoming a large incoming cohort of sophomores and juniors to begin their journey as a part of the Govie legacy.

As always, please remember that you are among our biggest recruiters. Sharing your experiences, testimonials, and success stories help young people and their parents realize how the South Carolina Governor's School for the Arts & Humanities prepares you for your life beyond high school. Thank you for representing us in your daily life!



Kip Altman
Director of Admissions

GOVIE MENTORSHIP PROGRAM COMING SOON!

The Alumni Office and Alumni Advisory Council are excited to share that we're building something new – a Govie Mentorship Program!

While the program is still under construction, the vision is clear: to create meaningful connections between alumni and students – and among alumni themselves. This initiative will offer opportunities to:

- Share your experiences and advice
- Support current students or fellow alumni
- Grow your own professional network
- Stay meaningfully connected to the Govie community

So many of you have said, "I'd love to give back," or "I wish I had someone to guide me when I was starting out." This program is being designed with that spirit in mind. Whether you're a recent graduate or well into your career, your perspective matters – and sharing your experiences could make a lasting impact.

The first step is simple: make sure your 360Alumni profile is complete and up to date. Keeping your profile current helps us better understand your interests, career path, and how you might like to be involved once the mentorship program officially launches. It also ensures you'll be among the first we reach out to as opportunities become available.

We can't wait to see this program take shape – and we're excited about your involvement!

Get started here: <https://scgsah.360alumni.com>

Announcing: Govie Give Day '26

save the date!

May 22, 2026

This year's **Govie Give Day** will be May 22, which is also Graduation Day for the Class of 2026. As a new class of Govies enter their next chapter, alumni everywhere are invited to reflect on the excitement, pride, and memories of your own graduation!

Now in its second year, **Govie Give Day** is the Governor's School Foundation's annual day of giving as it brings our community together for a day focused on supporting the extraordinary students and programs that make the Governor's School so special.

Be ready to make a gift of any size on May 22 to celebrate the next generation of Govies and help ensure future students experience the same life-changing opportunities you all remember.

Be on the lookout for more info!



Learn More About the Foundation's Work!
View our Annual Report by scanning the QR code or go to flow.page/AnnualReport to learn more.



864-282-1570

jared.martin@gsafoundation.net

www.scgsah.org/give



ALUMNI NEWS

MARCH 2026

at the SC Governor's School
for the Arts and Humanities



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