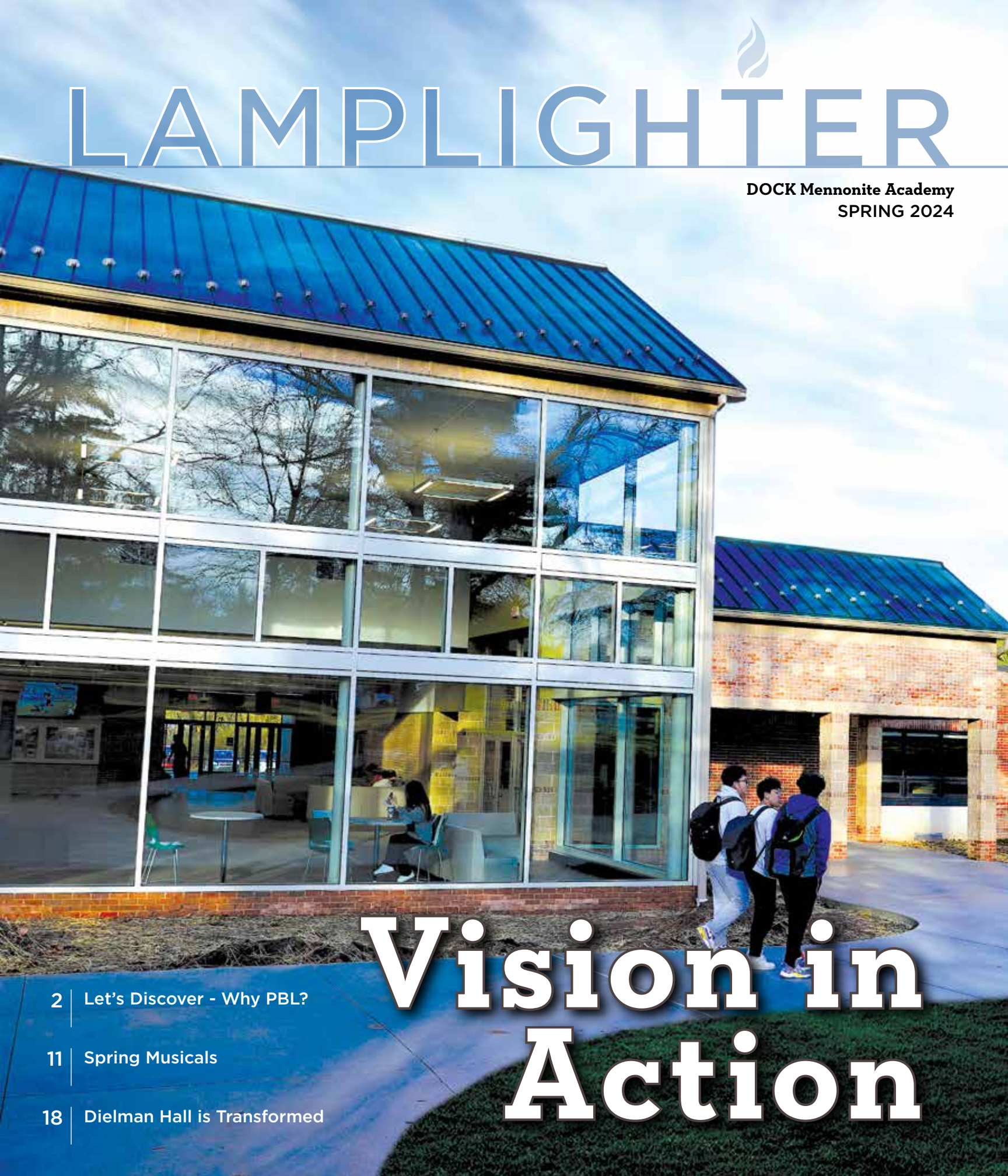
LAMPLIGHTER

DOCK Mennonite Academy
SPRING 2024



Vision in Action

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ON THE COVER: After watching the steady progress of Dielman Hall's new commons and atrium being constructed since the beginning of the school year, students were excited to gain access to the beautiful new space in March. Read more about the completion of the Dielman Hall Renovation Project on page 18.

RIGHT: Students Caleb Snedigar (Shrek) and Justine Myers (Donkey) acting in the middle school production of *Shrek Jr.* Read more about Spring Musical productions on page 11.

DOCK
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Superintendent's
MESSAGE

Guided by the Vision



The desired outcome for Dock is a graduate who understands that one's role in our community and world is to serve others.

This is where we find fulfillment in life.

This is the life Jesus modeled for us.

Our vision guides us as individuals and as communities. Without vision, we are less certain in decision-making, never clear on our destination. With a clear vision, we have a roadmap that guides us into our future. For a school, the vision statement is hopeful and inspirational, outlining the long-term aspirations and goals of the school. It reflects the school's values, mission, and the environment it hopes to create for its students. The vision statement describes where a school is going and what it will look like when it gets there.

Following a process of discernment involving multiple stakeholders, the Board of Trustees approved a new vision statement for Dock in January.

Dock Mennonite Academy will continue to be a leader in Anabaptist, Christ-centered education where every student belongs and thrives in an engaging, inspiring, and challenging environment to better serve their community and our world.

The words and phrases were each chosen to articulate and outline the path forward for Dock. Our vision statement provides the direction and accountability for the journey ahead, and the community we desire to foster at Dock. We will continue to be a leader in Mennonite education. Our school will hold to Mennonite values as outlined by Palmer Becker in his book, *Anabaptist Essentials*:

1. Jesus is the center of our faith.
2. Community is the center of our life.
3. Reconciliation is the center of our work.

We want to create a place where each student is valued and belongs at Dock, even in a world where respect of others is not always the norm. We strive to create a school setting that engages and inspires students, even through challenges that will foster growth.

The desired outcome for Dock is a graduate who understands that one's role in our community and world is to serve others. This is where we find fulfillment in life. This is the life Jesus modeled for us.

I invite you to consider how this issue of the Lamplighter gives evidence to the importance of Dock's vision statement. Project Based Learning is a learning approach in middle school that encourages students to work together in groups and take ownership of their learning. Personal Finance class challenges students to think carefully about their choices in life. Arts Day and the school musicals inspire students to explore gifts in the arts.

This issue describes how Restorative Justice in Education equips students to discover the best ways to interact with colleagues and to serve their community. New facilities provide the space for students to gather and feel a sense of belonging that strengthens social and mental health. You will read stories of alumni and students who embrace Dock's vision and represent Dock's vision in action. Many stories of our Dock community are not in this issue but equally give evidence of Dock's vision in action. We celebrate all these stories as evidence of God's presence and guidance toward our vision!



Dr. Conrad Swartzentruber, Superintendent



The PBL model provides our students with the opportunity to apply their knowledge to real world problems, answering complex questions, and creating high quality products.

(From left to right) Discover students, **Scarlett Derstine**, **Avery Goldcamp**, and **Ella Weaver**, present their PBL final product at the second quarter EXPO.

Let's Discover Why PBL?

Change can be hard, especially in education. The analogy of a hurricane is sometimes used to better understand the dissonance between education theory and reality; the surface of the hurricane is windy and stormy, representing the debates on new theories and research on best practices in education, while below on the ocean floor it remains calm, representing the school structures and systems that continue on unchanged most of the time. Some ideas make sense and are backed by research, but the challenges of changing culture are real.

Project Based Learning (PBL) is a proven educational approach that can meet the needs of twenty-first century students. Author A.J. Juliani recently shared that, "studies comparing learning outcomes for students taught via project-based learning versus traditional instruction show that when implemented well, PBL increases long-term retention of content, helps students perform as well as or better than traditional learners in high-stakes tests, improves problem-solving and collaboration skills, and improves students' attitudes towards learning."







Juliani argues that we are in the midst of a "hinge" of history, similar to other revolutionary periods triggered by advances in technology like the internet, radio and television, or even the printing press... "Some hinges are undoubtedly bigger than others, and we may not know the full impact of Generative Artificial Intelligence for many years to come. But, here we are, and the perfect storm exists that is taking on a compliance-based model of education head-on. How do we respond? How do we teach and learn in a world of distraction and artificial intelligence?"

This year we celebrate five years of Project Based Learning in Dock's middle school, representing a change success story and a proactive response to the current "hinge" of history we are in. Read on to learn how and why PBL was implemented at Dock from one of the *pioneers* that made it happen. **Mrs. Claire Wanamaker** (current EC-8 Principal) was teaching middle school Math at Dock when she agreed to assist in exploring the PBL model. Not everyone is able to be an "early adopter" when it comes to change, but thanks to Mrs. Wanamaker and her colleagues, their hard work and willingness to engage in a non-traditional middle school model pioneered the path for the success that we experience today.

Project Based Learning



By **Mrs. Claire Wanamaker**
EC-8 Principal

In the Spring of 2018, Dock decided it was time to evaluate its middle school. If you ventured into the middle school wing during that time, you would see students sitting in rows and living by a 45-minute bell system. Teachers stuck to their own discipline with very little crossover or interdisciplinary work. We asked ourselves - Is this what is best for our students' academic, social, and spiritual growth?

A group of administrators and teachers were tasked with looking at best practices for a middle school model. There were visits to view various middle school models within a three hour radius and Zoom calls with middle schools on the West Coast. The group read numerous books including *Project Based Teaching* by Suzie Boss and *Setting the Standard for Project Based Learning* by John Larmer. Luckily for this committee, the Association for Middle Level Education (AMLE) held their annual conference on the East Coast that year. Then, in the Spring of 2019, the middle school teachers and students piloted a mini PBL unit. And so, the journey with PBL began.

Project Based Learning prepares students for the future. Twenty-first century students are being raised in a world full of technology and media. Students need to see the real life relevance of what they are learning. The PBL model provides our students with the opportunity to apply their knowledge to real world problems, answering complex questions and creating high quality products. Students are learning how to collaborate together and think critically. They are developing technology skills and growing in their digital literacy. There is perseverance and self-management occurring each day in the classroom.

On the first day of each quarter, *Discover* students (7th & 8th grade) are presented with a challenging problem or question, which becomes the heart of our students' projects for the quarter. Past questions have included: "How can we do our part locally to work on issues that affect our globe?", "How can we differentiate between myth and reality?", and "How can words push us apart or bring us together?" More than just *looking up facts*, these questions guide the students through their sustained inquiry. The inquiry is integrated into science, social studies, writing, Bible, and technology classes. As the students move through the quarter, they witness the authenticity of the question. There is voice and choice for the students as they dive deeper into the content and project. Working toward the public presentation, the students are engaged in a reflection process along with critiques and revisions.

At the end of each quarter, the *Discover* students invite family, friends and local community members to attend their evening EXPO event. During this time, students share their solutions to the question as well as the processes they used during their inquiry time. These solutions can come in many forms including models, talks, magazines and videos. Following each EXPO, the teachers guide the students in self reflection. The students then use this self reflection to give and receive constructive feedback from their classmates.

The PBL model engages our students in a learning that is deep and long lasting. Students are being inspired by this model of learning and are making personal connections with their own academic experiences; preparing them to apply this knowledge to new situations. With these engaged hearts and minds our students are living out the mission of Dock.













PBL Making its way to High School

AP Environmental Science Transitions to PBL Curriculum

High school science teacher, **Ms. Valerie Metzler** ('08), is another Dock early adopter of PBL. Last year, the Science Department began using a new PBL curriculum for *AP Environmental Science* called *Knowledge in Action (KIA)*. Ms. Metzler prepared well for this transition by participating in professional development, first during the summer through an AP College Board class to gain approval for the new PBL curriculum, followed by a yearlong online professional development course meant to assist teachers in the transition.

Now in the curriculum's second year, Ms. Metzler continues to appreciate the new PBL curriculum for AP Environmental Science: "One of the changes that I appreciate with the new PBL curriculum for AP Environmental Science is the more consistent focus on environmental stewardship questions like, 'how can our families, and our school, be more sustainable?'" "Something else that I appreciate about the PBL curriculum is that it applies students' knowledge to action (in fact, "knowledge in action" is the name of the curriculum KIA)."

Accounting Class Helps Yoga Studio Entrepreneur

Students in **Mr. Zach Bower's** ('02) *Foundations of Accounting* class had an exciting end to their Project Based Learning first semester, presenting to a panel of Business and Accounting experts: **Courtney May**, **Meredith King** ('18), and **Caleb Mangum**. Students worked hard in two teams preparing materials and resources to start a new yoga studio that will be a successful socially responsible business. This was not a hypothetical situation that the students were trying to figure out. An important feature of PBL is an authentic audience; in addition to the expert panel, students began this project by meeting **Tiffany Smith**, the real entrepreneur that is planning to open up a yoga studio sometime in the next couple of years.

Another important feature of PBL is including professionals and experts as resources. Students had visits from realtor **Scott Newell**, local business owner **Nate Clemmer** ('94), Zoomed with the owner of a local Yoga Studio, and even experienced yoga firsthand from teacher **Mrs. Darla Bergey** ('88). Finally, guest speakers that came to class in Quarter 1 gave more of their time and expertise to provide feedback on the students' work leading up to the final presentation; special thanks to **Isaac Martin** ('05), **Jesse Kolb** ('16), **Connor Derstine** ('19), **Mrs. Patti Baker** (Director of Finance and Operations), and **Jennifer Landis** ('01). Keep a look out for Saha Yoga Studio sometime in the near future!

At the end of the semester, students spent time doing some self-evaluating and reflecting on the projects. One student shared, "before we started I didn't know much about accounting at all, but now I can confidently say that I have a good beginner's understanding of accounting work as well as what it takes to run a business." Students were also asked to reflect on times of frustration and failure, recognizing that it's important to treat failure as expected in a growth mindset. AI researcher Eliezer Yudkowsky goes as far as saying, "If you never fail, then you aren't trying to do difficult enough things." Some students cited times of frustration in knowing how to start the project, while others reflected on struggle with team communication and expectations. This is where PBL shines and meets the needs of twenty-first century students head on.

Alongside learning business and accounting principles, many students identified important learnings related to communication, collaboration, and time management skills; all soft skills that, according to LinkedIn, are on the "Top 10 In-Demand Soft Skills for Landing a Job." Another student commented in their reflection, "I enjoyed that through this project we were able to solve real life problems for people. I also liked this PBL project because I am a very physical learner. I don't learn by sitting down and listening, I instead learn by doing."

Empowering the Next Generation: Personal Finance

By **Mr. Zach Bower**
HS Social Studies and Communications Associate

With the passage of Pennsylvania Senate Bill 843 in December, 2023, Pennsylvania has now become the 25th state to "guarantee a standalone personal finance course for high school students." Fortunately for Dock, *Personal Finance* class has already had a steady elective presence in the high school curriculum for decades (but we will keep attuned to any changes that may be needed for when the law goes into effect in the 2026-27 school year). PA House Representative Steven Malagari has connected with Dock students in the past few years, allowing Geometry students to present in his office in Lansdale and also guest speaking in Government classes. When asked about his thoughts on the new PA Personal Finance law, Rep. Malagari expressed his support and said:

> Personal finance courses provide students with valuable skills that they can use in their day-to-day lives. It's math in action—concepts that can carry from the classroom to the home. Topics such as budgeting, managing credit and evaluating cost are deeply helpful in encouraging students to build a strong financial foundation that will impact the rest of their lives. I would encourage any school with the means to do so to consider incorporating personal finance into their curriculum.

This news has caused some of us that have most recently taught *Personal Finance* to reflect on the class and the impact that it has had on our students at Dock. As a Mennonite school, we view topics in personal finance through an Anabaptist lens. **Mr. Jeff Hackman**, Social Studies Department Chair, has taught *Personal Finance* for the past five years and recently spent time reworking the curriculum to better reflect Anabaptist faith values. The new course description says:

> This course is designed to help students transition into the financial responsibilities of adulthood. Students are challenged to integrate faith values into stewardship decisions including career path, budgeting, purchasing and investing.



Mr. Hackman said he is pleased that, "students seem very motivated to become successful managing finances and taking time to connect with adults about various personal finance issues and decisions-which I intentionally try to work into assignments." When asked how the curriculum redesign impacted the class, Hackman thought about the new unit that he developed which focuses on biblical stewardship. In the new unit, "all students present a Bible study on a passage that relates to a personal finance theme." Mr. Hackman utilizes resources from *Everence*, which focus on topics related to stewardship and encourage students to include giving to others as a part of their budget planning.





Steve Schwendy from Everence



The following are quotes from the Dock Alumni Personal Finance Survey, January 2024:

- **Ben Longacre** ('22) I think that every student should take this class, and looking back it was by far the most important class that I took during my time at Dock.
- **Jessica Jushchyshyn** ('15) This course was truly helpful because no matter what career you have it is important to have a basic understanding of how to manage your finances.
- **Natalie LePera** ('14) I think this course prepared me for life the most out of any course I took at Dock.
- **Connor Derstine** ('19) *Personal Finance* was one of my favorite classes in highschool. Although I could not see it at the moment, this class helped me decide to go into the Accounting profession.
- **Samantha Osborn** ('21) I felt that *Personal Finance* class at Dock was great and honestly contributed to my understanding of adult life.
- **Hannah (Bergey) Ferrara** ('13) I am grateful I took *Personal Finance*.

Ben Moyer from Franconia Insurance and Financial Services



Mr. Marcelo Mast also taught *Personal Finance* recently and while teaching, "enjoyed the fact that what students were learning was very close and relevant to their near future." He said that one of his favorite topics to teach on was investing and he enjoyed using a stock market simulation as a teaching tool: "It was fun to hear students discuss which stocks they wanted to invest in and why." A highlight for all of the most recent *Personal Finance* teachers is incorporating regular guest speakers from the Dock community. Mr. Mast said that this was another way that we were able to incorporate Anabaptist values into the curriculum. Since most of the speakers were from Anabaptist/Mennonite background, "it was a way for students to hear about stewardship, through an Anabaptist lens."

As teachers of the class, we are already aware of the value and importance, but did you know that "research has clearly demonstrated that a personal finance course improves long-term financial decision-making"? (Next Gen Personal Finance) In January, we sent a survey to all Dock graduates from 1995-2023, asking anyone that took *Personal Finance* to respond to questions that would help us get a clearer picture of how lives have been impacted by taking the class.

Thank you to all that gave time to complete the survey! According to the results, Budgeting, Saving, Credit Cards, and Investing were considered the most beneficial topics learned. The following are examples that alumni provided of good habits or decisions made related to finances that came from something learned in *Personal Finance*:

- Keeping track of weekly and monthly costs.
- Budgeting and balancing my checkbook.
- Opening a Roth IRA and budgeting money from each paycheck for it will help me be more prepared for retirement and the future.
- We tracked our personal spending in class and I continue that habit today.
- Investing for retirement early to take advantage of compound interest.
- Concepts of budgeting and stewardship were taught and have stayed with me.
- I made sure I am aware of how much money I spend per month on gas, food, coffee, etc.





LITTLE FREE LIBRARY COMES TO DOCK

In March 2023, Dock EC8 librarian, **Mrs. Missy Camilleri** ('99) read the book *Little Libraries, Big Heroes* by Miranda Paul to kick off Read Across America Week to Dock students. The book tells the story of Todd Bol and how he started the Little Free Library (LFL) movement. There are small libraries throughout the world with the motto "Take a Book, Share a Book." Mrs. Camilleri challenged our Dock students to visit the many Little Free Libraries in our community and beyond.

Dock students **Brock** and **KJ Immel** got so excited about these libraries that they felt Dock should have a LFL of its own. They wrote letters to **Principal Wanamaker** and asked their grandfather, **Mr. Jim Henderson** if he could build it. Mrs. Camilleri promised that if they could build it, she could keep it stocked with books. The Immel family made this dream a reality with Dock's very own Little Free Library! Have fun stopping by Dock's LFL and drop off a book to share and take a new book to enjoy reading. A special thanks to **J.S. Nice Remodeling**, **Alderfer Glass**, and **Jim Henderson** for their generous donation of materials.



12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS FOOD DRIVE

On the last day of our Dock "12 Days of Christmas" Food Drive in December, Dock MS students delivered 308 pounds of food to Keystone Opportunity Center for their food pantry, with a total of 526 pounds of food provided in the month of December. Students enjoyed not only collecting food items but also helping in the food pantry itself. Thanks to all of our Dock families who donated food for our surrounding community.



GRADES 2-5 PERFORM *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*

Special thanks to **Mrs. Samantha Brannon** for directing our Grade 2-5 students in a Christian spin on *Dickens' Christmas Carol*. You could feel the energy and excitement of the students as they shared about Jesus, our greatest gift, and the true spirit of giving at Christmas.







EC8 CHRISTMAS BENEFIT CONCERT

We were extremely thankful to have a full house at Franconia Mennonite Church for our EC8 Christmas Benefit Concert. As a result of our offering and match, we raised a total of $26,134 for our school and our students. A special thanks to our Music Directors, **Dr. Matt Ramage** and **Mrs. Sam Brannon** and to all our students for a wonderful evening of music celebrating the birth of Jesus.



SOUDERTON HOLIDAY PARADE

Middle school students created an amazing float and Dock's color guard put on a wonderful performance for the Souderton Holiday Parade. A special thanks to **Mrs. Cheryl Ryder**, **Mrs. Rachel Myers**, and **Mrs. Kathy Mease** for leading this group of students. It was so fun seeing so many families and friends from our community along the route.





INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING FOR SERVICE LEARNING STUDENTS

Mrs. Rachael Grim's service learning class is learning how to knit or crochet. Their goal is to be able to make items such as hats and scarves that can be donated to nonprofits in the local community. To help them get started, members of the **Dock Woods Crochet Group** came for a visit. They shared how they got started with their group, their journey learning how to crochet, and their current projects. We are grateful to the Dock Woods group for sharing their experience and helping us get our projects started.



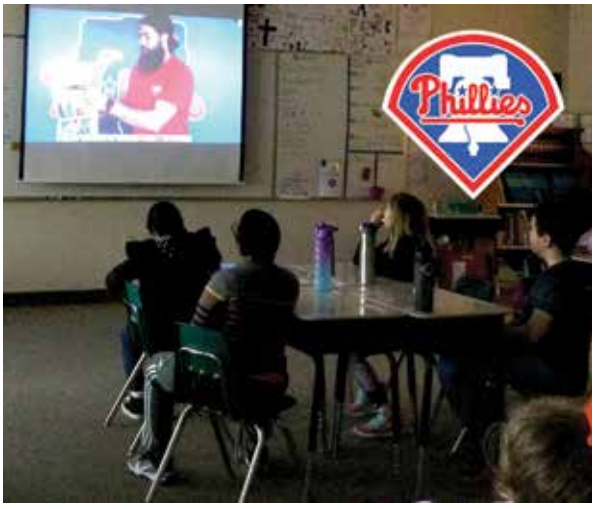




EC to Grade 8 CAMPUS HAPPENINGS

FOURTH GRADE STUDENTS READ WITH A PHILADELPHIA PHILLIE

As part of Read Across America Week in February, Dock fourth grade students were able to read a book with Philadelphia Phillie, Brandon Marsh! Fourth grade teacher, **Mrs. Nikki Rossi**, signed fourth grade classes up for the "Phanatic About Reading Program" this year through the Phillies. Students have been encouraged in a variety of ways by the Phillies organization to read throughout the school year. At the end of the year, fourth grade students will be given a certificate/voucher for a free ticket to selected Phillies games this summer.





SERVICE LEARNING COOKBOOK

Mrs. Sarah Garges' ('13) Service Learning students enjoyed compiling and creating a Dock Community 23-24 Cookbook. Their tasks include planning the contents of the cookbook, reaching out to members of the community for recipes, and creating/organizing the cookbook itself. Thanks to all that submitted recipes for this community project.

FIRST GRADE FIELD TRIP TO DAVINCI SCIENCE CENTER

In February, first grade students had an exciting day of learning at the DaVinci Science Center. They had the opportunity to explore many hands-on activities and learn a lot about STEM. Some of their favorite activities included coding a critter to tell it how to move, participating in an interactive show about solids, liquids, and gasses, building structures out of blocks, and creating paths for balls to roll on.







CROSS-CAMPUS LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

There was a lot of cross-campus service learning happening recently as MS students spent time reading, drawing, painting, dancing, singing, bowling, balancing, playing, and simply enjoying being together with Early Childhood and first grade students.

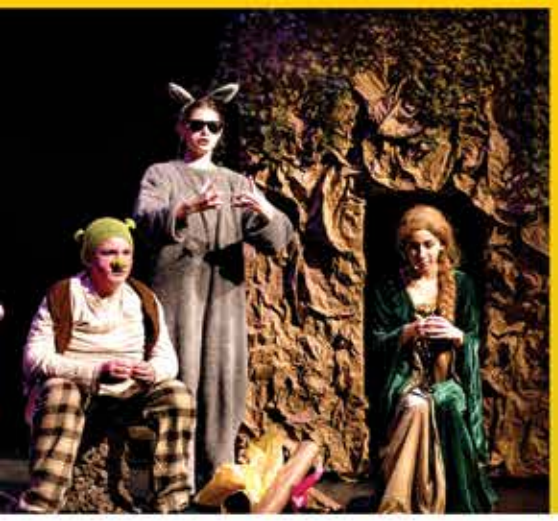


















SPRING MUSICAL PRODUCTIONS

The productions of *Shrek Jr.* (MS) and *Matilda* (HS) filled the month of March with lots of energy, laughs, and incredible entertainment. Each show drew upon robust cast and stage crews, both in talent and numbers. Congratulations to ALL of the students and adults involved in the success of both of these productions, requiring a tremendous amount of hard work and commitment. Thanks to all the teachers, directors, staff, and friends of Dock that were involved in leading, motivating, guiding, and coaching each of our students in their respective roles.











Professional Development Spotlight: RJE

Transformational. This is the word that has been used by some Dock staff to describe the impact of professional development related to **Restorative Justice in Education (RJE)**. Since fall 2020, over a dozen teachers and administrators have participated in Eastern Mennonite University's Restorative Justice in Education graduate program in online cohorts of Mennonite Schools Council (MSC) schools. After taking the course, *Trauma, Restoration, and Resilience in Educational Environments*, HS Spanish Teacher **Dr. Anabella Silvermoon** said, "This course was one of the most valuable courses I have taken in the last few years." In the online learning communities, learnings, inspiration, challenges, and ideas related to restorative justice practices are cross-pollinated across Mennonite schools, giving continuous life to the theme of last year's Mennonite Educators Conference; *Better Together*.

There is a direct connection between RJE and Anabaptist-Mennonite faith practices in our schools that seek to regularly model peacebuilding, restorative discipline, and lifestyles of nonviolence. In addition to the EMU coursework, a group of teachers and administrators recently read and discussed *The Little Book of Restorative Justice in Education*. After reading this book, HS Librarian, **Mrs. Laura Martin** ('06) shared that, "RJE encourages shifts in school climate instead of trying to change individual student behaviors," and she has already noticed this happening at Dock in the variety of ways that people and relationships are prioritized to create a positive environment. Read on for an introduction to Restorative Justice in Education concepts and practices as well as examples of how this professional development has impacted the Dock community in recent years.



(From left to right) **Mrs. Ness**, **Mrs. Price**, **Mr. Hackman**, and **Mrs. Martin** all participated in the summer book reading group that read, *The Little Book of Restorative Justice in Education.*



Mrs. Dando ('07) gave her Kindergarten class experience with a talking circle on the first day of school.

By **Andrew Zetts**
Dock Discover Middle School Teacher (2019-2022)

This story was originally presented in a longer format as a podcast, created in December 2021 as a final project for an Eastern Mennonite University RJE graduate course. Andrew is currently an Associate Pastor at Salford Mennonite Church.

Is this really working? That's a question I found myself asking more and more as I became increasingly skeptical of traditional punitive disciplinary measures. Restorative Justice in Education, or RJE, shares my doubts in traditional school discipline. RJE broadens the aperture for educators and asks them to view student misbehavior in a more holistic way. Where traditional systems of school discipline and justice ask questions like, 'How should we punish a student for an offense?,' and 'how can we remove students who cause problems in our community?', RJE asks questions like, 'what needs in a student's life are going unmet that might be influencing their behavior?,' and 'how can a student who's harmed someone else hold themselves accountable and determine how to make things right?' The former system focuses on punishment and retribution. The latter focuses on reconciliation and restoration.



Mr. Nathaniel Freed ('10) and **Mr. Andrew Zetts** at the 2022 8th Grade celebration.



Mr. King facilitated a talking circle with juniors in *Social Issues* class to help debrief from their Washington DC trip.

RJE is about creating learning environments in which educators and students share power to create and maintain equitable and just communities. **By including students, whether it's in the creation of community expectations, the resolution of conflict, or the maintenance of community norms and culture, educators can empower their students to develop the social and emotional skills to be caring and committed members of their community.** Rather than leaning on old, familiar forms of discipline, RJE offers a new way forward that can result in the greater well-being of students, families, and school staff.



Katherine Evans and Dorothy Vaandering, from *The Little Book of Restorative Justice in Education*

While RJE is not a cure-all to every problem or behavior issue in a school, it provides opportunities for reconciliation and conflict transformation that just aren't feasible or possible in traditional disciplinary systems. Much of what I've learned about RJE has come from my time as a student in Eastern Mennonite University's Restorative Justice in Education program. One of the first things I realized is that RJE is not a neat and tidy set of activities, rules, or procedures. It's its own paradigm with a unique perspective on conflict, relationships, justice, reconciliation, and more. In many ways, RJE is about learning a new way of being in the world and in the classroom.



Mr. Moyer ('90) and students in *Leadership in Sports* with the bulletin board of class expectations they created together.

Here are just a few ways that Dock teachers and administrators have seen the impact of RJE courses in their work:



"Taking the Restorative Justice course through EMU opened my eyes and allowed me to view this topic with a greater understanding. It also provided me with the tools to help my students talk through conflicts and big emotions."
—**Ms. Megan Derstine**, *EC Teacher*

"In *Leadership in Sports* class, students and I work together to create class expectations on the first day. I notice a change in class culture as a result of creating expectations together with the students that shifts the tone of the class away from 'teacher vs. students' towards a common purpose as a group."
—**Mr. Matt Moyer** ('90), *HS Physical Education Teacher, boys soccer head coach*

"Since taking the RJE course this year, I have started using talking circles to engage students in authentic and meaningful discussions. I am looking forward to applying this RJE strategy to Dock volleyball teams that I coach."
—**Mr. Kirby King**, *HS Bible and Social Studies Teacher, boys volleyball varsity head coach and girls volleyball JV coach*

"As a principal, I have been able to use pieces from my Restorative Justice classes not only with my students but also during parent meetings. I find I use my Restorative Justice training most with students to help solve recess problems and to rebuild friendships."
—**Mrs. Claire Wanamaker**, *EC-8 Principal*



Grades 9 to 12
CAMPUS HAPPENINGS





DOCK CHAMBER CHOIR AT DOCK WOODS FOR CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Mrs. Michelle Sensenig and the Chamber Choir provided a delightful Christmas concert for residents of Dock Woods. The residents enjoyed a Christmas Carol sing-along at the end.

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

We enjoyed a wonderful evening of Christmas music from the Orchestra, Band, and Choir groups at the Christmas Concert! Special thanks to **Emily Derstine Buckley** ('15) and **Mrs. Hannah Yu** for assisting with accompaniment, and the leadership provided by directors, **Ms. Joy Yoo**, **Dr. Matthew Ramage**, and **Mrs. Michelle Sensenig**.











PASTORS' DAY

Pastors' Day is always a highlight for the Dock community. Pastors began the day with a delicious breakfast and heard first-hand from students about Dock distinctives like Mini-Term, Senior Experience, and Chapel. In Chapel, a group of pastors shared personal stories and practices related to Lent. Pastors were then invited to spend some time in classes with their students and share a table at lunch together. Thanks to all the pastors that were able to visit on this day and for all involved in making it a great day for our faculty and students.

Boys Basketball



Congratulations to head coach **Mike Fergus** and the entire Dock boys basketball program for another fantastic season. Although losing several key senior starters after last year's successful season, this year's team went undefeated in the BAL (Bicentennial Athletic League), won the BAL tournament and the 2024 2A District Championship title, and made it all the way to the State Quarterfinals for the second year in a row. (Coach Fergus was also named Courier/Times Intelligencer Coach of the Year)

Girls Basketball



All season long the girls basketball team played with high energy and chemistry, finishing with five more wins than last year. Significant numbers allowed for JV games to be played when it worked for opponents. First year head coach **Don Sobetsky** and JV coach **Mysel Gomez-Landis** ('95) did a great job at bringing this year's group together and developing each student athlete throughout the season.



Bowling

Congratulations to Junior **Zeke Longacre** for coming in third place in the BAL Bowling Individual Championships, and qualifying for regionals. In February, Zeke bowled a personal high score, 280.





MUSIC AWARD WINNERS

Congratulations to flutist Junior **Yebeen Lee** for qualifying for District and Regional Band, and Senior **Seungkyu Cho** who qualified as a Tenor 1 for Regional Chorus.



TOPICS IN STEM FIELD TRIP TO FLUXSPACE

In February, **Mr. Marcelo Mast's** Topics in STEM class traveled to Fluxspace to engage with STEM related projects in Fluxspace's beautiful makerspace lab. Makerspace labs are gathering places for students to collaborate, design, and build.



Grades 9 to 12
CAMPUS HAPPENINGS

ALC STUDENTS ATTEND LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

In December, ten Student Athletes joined Dock's Athletic Department at a Student Athlete Leadership Conference at Souderton HS. Student Athletes from over 25 schools in the area gathered to learn how to be the best leader on their teams and be the best version of themselves. Keynote Speaker Matt Griffin spoke followed by students going into breakout rooms for discussions led by Souderton's ALC members. Big thanks to Souderton's Athletic Department and ALC for all the work that went into planning and executing this great event.



GERMAN JAZZ BAND *PHOENIX* HOSTED BY DOCK



In March, the *Phoenix* Jazz Band from Germany, led by Director Frank Reichart, was hosted by members in the Dock community and performed in Chapel. For 28 years, **Rod Derstine** ('78) (former Dock Choir Director) and Frank Reichart have facilitated a hosting exchange between Dock Touring Choir and jazz band students from St. Goarshausen and surrounding community in Germany. Touring Choir students will be hosted in the St. Goarshausen community this coming June on their Europe Tour.



STUDENTS LAUNCH NEW STUDENT NEWSPAPER—PIONEER PRESS

A committed and determined small group of students has been working hard during activity periods this school year to resurrect and reimagine a student newspaper. The team of students approached this important task thoughtfully and started the process by brainstorming ideas for vision, mission statement, and asking if it made sense to continue using the name, *Dockunet* (the former student newspaper). The students settled on *Pioneer Press* for the name and officially launched the website in December.



The staff of the *Pioneer Press* enjoyed connecting with two Dock alum recently. **Hannah Landis** ('20) was the Co-Editor in Chief for Eastern Mennonite University's student newspaper, *The Weather Vane*, and shared about her experiences in that role, giving the students helpful ideas, inspiring stories, and support for the challenges that come with running a student newspaper. **Sarah Madaus** ('15) is the founder of the Temple University student magazine, *Refine*, and has spent years working in the journalism industry in NYC. Sarah's story about starting the magazine at Temple resonated with the *Pioneer Press* students, who are in many ways on a similar journey.















Arts Day 2024 The 80s

The theme for Arts Day 2024 was "The 80s," as students continued the longstanding tradition of competing in a cross-grade competition consisting of stage performances and creations in culinary, creative writing, fabric arts, photography, and visual arts. Congratulations to the **Senior Class** for taking first place overall!

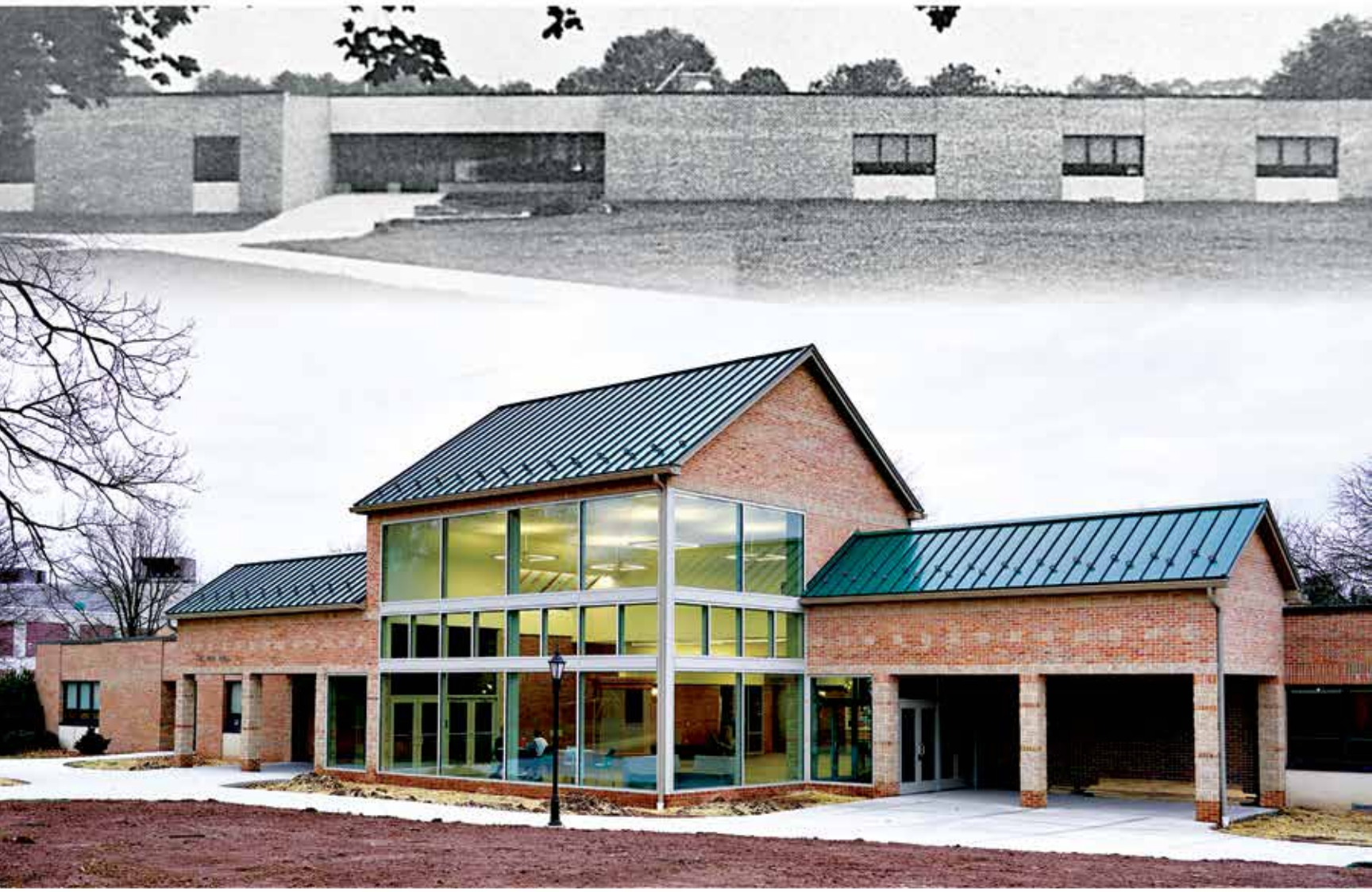
Arts Day at Dock is a day to celebrate students' God-given talents and abilities. We want to recognize and share the gifts God has given, to celebrate the arts within the Dock community, to give students the opportunity to perform on stage, and to demonstrate technical skill and creativity with excellence. Thank you to our guest judges and to all that worked hard on and off the stage to help make this day a success. Visit the Dock website for a complete list of student award winners and biographical information about our judges:

Creative Writing: **Sarah Madaus** ('15), Culinary Arts: **Emily Gordon** ('15), Fabric Arts: Sharon Swartzentruber, Photography: Al Tielemans, Visual Arts: **Matthew R. Volpe** ('01), Stage Events: **Michael Bishop** ('77), Julie Chittick, Kendra Rittenhouse.















Dielman Hall
Transformation Complete

It is not often that one gets to experience an architectural transformation as significant as what Dielman Hall has just experienced. As a master plan for the high school campus was developed and approved by Dock's Board of Trustees in 2019, Dielman Hall was identified as an area of priority for updating. Constructed in 1978 (45 years ago), "Dielman" quickly became the "heart of campus," becoming home to the Guidance Office, Science Department, and English Department for much of that time. In 2006, with the opening of Rosenberger Academic Center, the southern wing of Dielman received room renovations and upgrades, and as the Science Department transitioned to Rosenberger, Bible and Social Studies departments moved in to join English (and the Spanish Department for the last ten years). The commons area has also experienced many years of student memories and activity, with buses dropping students off in the morning and picking up in the afternoon, and during lunchtime when students would gather to spend time together. The building has served the Dock community well during the last 45 years, holding special memories for the just over four thousand students that have been enrolled during that time.

The total cost of the project is $3.1 million, and we are humbled and pleased to announce that all total funds have been raised. With eight weeks to complete the first phase of the project, demolition of the interior of Dielman Hall began immediately on the last day of the school year in June, 2023. Contractors worked diligently and were able to complete all classroom and restroom renovations by the first day of school, August 2023. Work steadily continued with the second phase of the project during this school year, which includes two porches and an expanded commons and atrium that aesthetically match the interior and exterior of Rosenberger Academic Center, and was completed in March, 2024. The final phases of the project will be completed during summer 2024, and will include new carpet in the classrooms that were renovated in 2006, and outside patio areas that were donated as the class gift from the Class of 2023.

Do you know where the name "Dielman Hall" comes from?
Taken from the October 1978 *Lamplighter*: The name "Dielman Hall" refers to a friend and spiritual brother of Christopher Dock: **Dielman Kolb** (1648-1712). Kolb was a preacher at Salford and built his house (still in existence) about a mile past Lederach (in the direction of Skippack). He is remembered as having assisted his fellow-minister, Bishop Heinrich Funk of Franconia Township, in proofreading the new German translation of the *Martyrs' Mirror* around 1748. And it was Dielman who helped persuade Christopher Dock (c.1698-1771) to write the little book, *School Management*, which has kept his name alive.





On March 22, the entire student body gathered in the new Dielman Hall atrium for a dedication ceremony. **Dr. Conrad Swartzentruber** shared with students that over forty alumni helped with the construction, many supporters of Dock donated to finance the project, and the hope is that "this can be a holy place for all students to gather, learn, and feel welcomed and respected in."

Mr. Robert Rutt, Director of Advancement, was project manager overseeing all aspects of the Dielman Hall transformation. When asked what he will remember most about the project, Mr. Rutt shared that, "One of the takeaways for me is the reward of working with a core team of professionals that are Dock alumni – **Phil Lederach** ('74), architect – **Rick Mast** ('84), site engineer - **Rich Delp** ('92), MEP engineer – **Bryce** ('83) **and Drew** ('11) **Mininger**, general contractors." Mr. Rutt also said that it was very rewarding to work with Dock alumni who serve as owners of local construction companies and their employees who graduated from Dock: "I was very impressed with everyone's commitment to meeting the critical eight week deadline for the first phase of the project. The job site was full of contractors representing various trades and everyone worked together."

The renovation and expansion work completed in this project has prepared Dielman Hall for the next 45 years, so it can continue its role as a vital part of campus. In addition to overseeing the construction aspects of the project, Mr. Rutt was also responsible for raising the $3.1 million needed for funding the work. Mr. Rutt said when he approached members of the Dock community about this project, "they were very receptive to the need to update Dielman." Mr. Rutt feels that, "the Dock community views the renovation as an investment in our young people and the future of our wider community. The conversion to energy saving LED lights, a complete sprinkler system, and other improvements are viewed as good stewardship." Dock is very grateful for a supportive community of parents, grandparents, alumni, and businesses that made this project possible.

My Epiphany

By **Ruth Michel** ('20)
This story was originally presented in Chapel

***Ruth Michel** ('20) is currently a senior at Roberts Wesley University in Rochester, New York, studying music education. In addition to finishing her student teaching this spring, Ruth has been busy conducting her college's opera production and applying for graduate programs in choral conducting. In March, Ruth participated in the Undergraduate Conducting Masterclass for the American Choral Directors Association Eastern Region Conference in Providence, RI.*

Ruth shared the following story to students in January, 2024 during the Epiphany Chapel - when recent graduates return to share new learnings and wisdom.





Dock choir director, **Mrs. Michelle Sensenig** and **Miguel Santiago** ('20) were able to visit with Ruth and watch her conduct in the Undergraduate Conducting Masterclass in Providence, RI.

I am excited to share with you some of the major epiphanies I experienced after entering college and pursuing a career. My family has a musical background and I have dreamt of being a music teacher for as long as I can remember. Music was ever present in my life and it gave me a sense of purpose and hope like nothing else did. For a long time however, I was extremely unsure of my capabilities of taking music to the next level and pursuing it as a career.

During my senior year at Dock, I was deeply involved in music, both in and outside of school. But things came to a screeching halt when I developed vocal nodules in the fall. After a complete vocal rest for three months, I was told surgery would be needed that could possibly change my voice forever. It was very emotionally and spiritually difficult for me at the time, and set me back in many ways. Fortunately, the vocal rest paid off and the surgery was not needed. However, just as healing was almost complete, the COVID pandemic struck and everything was shut down.

For so long I had such a clear path of what God wanted me to do. For the first time though, there was complete uncertainty. All the time spent sitting at home and not knowing what to do next instilled a great fear in me.



I was terrified to enroll into a university in the fall to pursue a music education degree. I felt unqualified and incapable of doing so, but something told me to do it anyway. I got accepted into Roberts Wesleyan University and decided that I would attend in the fall. My freshman and sophomore years in college brought a plethora of challenges and the exact things I was afraid would happen began to happen.

My classes were not going well, causing me to fall behind, my voice was taking an extremely long time to progress in opera lessons, and I was beginning to seriously doubt that I would ever actually become a teacher. However, something told me to keep on going, and eventually I was able to make it through the first two years of college. Things were beginning to finally feel better until the summer came and my professor asked me to student conduct one of the choirs at college. I did not in any sense feel capable of this, or feel ready to conduct my own choir. However, yet again, something in me told me to just do it. I agreed to the position, and while it was very difficult at first, being immersed head first into teaching was the best thing that ever happened to me.

> I had the epiphany that in every single moment of my life where I felt afraid or unqualified, God was working. I realized that if you are scared to do something, instead of letting the fear completely stop you, you should just do it scared.

Each week there was lesson planning and conducting the choir with another student conductor while our professor would watch us each day. At the end of each lesson, we would debrief and receive feedback about how to be more effective in the next rehearsal with my professor's close eye and attention to detail.

My teaching and conducting skills began to advance rapidly. As time went on, I conducted three concerts, excelled in conducting lessons, and reached a point where there was a comfort in leading a rehearsal for any beginner or intermediate choir. I was stunned to see these results, and I had the epiphany that in every single moment of my life where I felt afraid or unqualified, God was working. I realized that if you are scared to do something, instead of letting the fear completely stop you, you should just do it scared. Do it afraid, do it anyway, and just see what happens, because if it's in God's plan for you, it will absolutely work out. He will take your fear, and He will turn it into courage.

I also learned that if you are called to do something, but you feel unqualified, you need to trust the call over your qualifications and believe that if God specifically called you to do it, He will qualify you for it in His perfect timing. My senior year has been full of blessings I could never have imagined, and I'm so grateful that I chose to trust God so that He could bring me here. None of these opportunities came because of me or anything that I did, but because God was working in my life.

ALUMNI NEWS



ALUMNI NOTES

At its heart, the *Lamplighter* is about connection. Connecting Dock family, alumni, and community members to what is currently happening at Dock and also with each other.

Send in your news if you have any that you would like to share!

Share with us at lamplighter@dock.org

1983

Glenn D. Hatfield passed away on February 2, 2024.

1986

Erica (Frederick) Smith passed away on February 28, 2024.

2000

David Landis, President/Founder of Village to Village Trails, completed designing the new "Blue Ridge Hills and Hollows" bikepacking route outside of Harrisonburg, Virginia. In March, David also completed a 550-mile bike trip from Turkey to Iraq. (Photo)

2001

On January 12, **Elisabeth** (**Clemmer**) and Jesse Correll welcomed Evangeline Ruth.

2005

Jeff H. Hackman was hired as the Dock JV volleyball coach for the 2024 season.

2006

On March 26, Bri and **Gregory Folgia** welcomed Scottie Francis.

2007

Dr. Benjamin Bergey, Eastern Mennonite University assistant professor of music, was named a 2024 "40 under 40" honoree by Yamaha Music USA. The annual awards recognize educators who "are making a difference in growing and strengthening their music programs."

2008/2011

On December 27, **Kristen (Kauffman)** ('11) and **Nathaniel Weaver** ('08) welcomed Henry Wendell.

2009

On February 19, **Dana and Alyssa (Benner) Halteman** welcomed Karis Jade. (Photo)

On March 29, **Kate (Swartley)** and Michael Little welcomed Kaiden David.

2010

On March 21, Brooke and **Josh Detweiler** welcomed Lily Ember.

On February 17, Natalie and **Randall Grasse** welcomed Josiah Stephen.

2011

Thomas Natalini has accepted a call to serve as Pastor of St. David's Lutheran Church in Philadelphia, PA. Thomas has also started a new, semi-virtual gathering called "Mindfulness + Church" which will bring together ideas and practices from mindfulness and Christian traditions. (Photo)

Rachel Ryder married Eric Murr on February 2. (Photo)

2012

On December 19, **Abigail** (**Clemens**) and Austin Marzullo welcomed Alice Rose.

On December 26, **Julia** (**Alderfer**) and Steve Nelson welcomed Lydia Rae.

On February 28, **Caila** (**Paquin**) and Ethan May welcomed Eleanor Jo.

Tyler N. Hoover passed away on November 16, 2023.

2013

Graham Truscott has accepted a call to serve as Pastor of Conyngham United Methodist Church, located outside of Hazleton, PA.

2014

On December 18, **Abigail** (**Anderson**) and Gary Sefah welcomed Jacob Kwadwo Nhyira Samuel.

On February 15, **Raychel** (**Bair**) and Paul Brady welcomed Charlotte Reece.

2016

Cole Rupert married Alyssa Mulherin on December 9.

2017

Celena Derstine married Drew Bryant on March 31.

2018

Austin Kratz was elected to the Pennsylvania High School Track and Field Hall of Fame. This is the first time a Dock alum has received this honor. (Photo)

2019

Alexa Kennel is a Sustainability and Environmental Specialist for AmeriCorps, and has been assisting in the development of a wildlife sanctuary in Goshen, Indiana. The sanctuary will help grow the bee and butterfly populations, which have been declining in recent years. (Photo)

Carolina Fraser was selected to be a 2024 Nature's Best Photography Youth Ambassador. (Photo)



David Landis '00



Rachel Ryder '11



Dana and Alyssa (Benner) Halteman '09



Austin Kratz '18



Alexa Kennel '19



Thomas Natalini '11



Carolina Fraser '19



It's not every day that you bump into a classmate on the top of a mountain in the middle of Alaska! **Colin Hunsberger** ('10) and **Forrest Musselman** ('09) live close to each other in Alaska and enjoyed a surprise meetup as they happened to be hiking the same mountain on the same day in March.

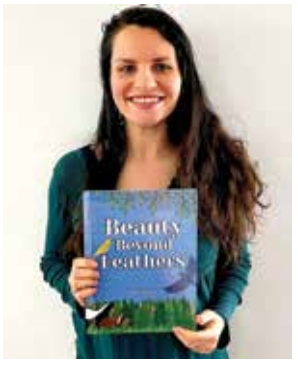
Alumni Authors Make Their Debut



Lynelle Leinbach ('12) published *Soundwaves Between Us*, based on interviews that Lynelle conducted with her grandmother, Nancy Minninger, during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Lynelle is proud that she was able to complete the project even though it took her longer than she anticipated. Lynelle shared, "I think it is very cool how this type of book facilitates connections between generations—we have young members of our family enjoying the book and finding themselves in the family tree at the end."



Abigail (Bergey) Bankert ('14) authored and illustrated a children's book titled, *Beauty Beyond Feathers*. Abigail said she loved having a goal to work towards, and enjoyed the process of creating a children's book with a positive message that she dedicated to her daughter, Della. Abigail shared, "I am proud of the time and energy that I poured into figuring out each step, and that this teaching tool can now be shared with Della and anyone else who would like to read."





Ashley Mellinger ('19) published *Heartache on the Play Stage*, a novel that she began writing when she was in the eighth grade at Dock, and continued to work on through high school and in college while attending Eastern Mennonite University. Ashley shared recently in an article published by EMU, "I promised my 14-year-old self that I would get it published one day. I've been working on it for eight to nine years, and I promised myself it was going to be worthwhile."

THE VAULT

The Vault will share out special photos of captured moments that are preserved in the Dock Archives.

1989, LAWN AND GARDEN CLASS

Jina (Leatherman) **Reinford** ('89), class Treasurer, recalled some memories related to this photo.

This photo is of our *Lawn and Garden* class installing a brick sidewalk in front of Detweiler House. **Mr. Roland Yoder** taught this class and was diligent about keeping the grounds around the school looking good. As he taught students how to care for the gardens, he would help us identify plants, trees and shrubs, teaching us how to care for them and when to trim or prune. We all need a little pruning at times. Some students enjoyed *Lawn and Garden* class so much that they found a way to take it three or four times. From left to right in the photo, **Jeff Comeaux**, **Brian Derstine**, **Jeff Reinford**, **Mr. Roland Yoder**, **Jina** (Leatherman) **Reinford**, and **Keith Reim** (all students from **class of '89**).



Learning for Lives of Purpose

Interviews with Dock alumni, asking them to reflect on the Dock tagline, Learning for Lives of Purpose.

Brad McCarty, Class of 1989



Brad attended Messiah College, earning a degree in health and physical education. The 2023 season was Brad's 14th season (15th year) as head coach of the Messiah men's soccer team. Under Brad's leadership, the men's soccer team has won five NCAA Division III National Championships and an overall record of 266 wins, 19 losses, and 18 ties (.908 winning percentage). Before coming back to the Messiah men's soccer program as an assistant in 2001, he served as head men's soccer coach at Hesston College (1994-1999), head women's soccer coach at Erskine College (2000), and the Messiah men's junior varsity coach (1993).

What does it mean to you to live a life of purpose?
To live a life of purpose is significant and has a tremendous impact on not only what we do but why we do it. If we see our lives through a biblical worldview lens, then it's clear we are called to glorify God in all that we say and do. As heirs of the kingdom, we have the opportunity to have a positive influence on those around us and to point them to the gospel. We each get to do that in a unique setting depending on our gifts and passions.

In the Messiah men's soccer program, we talk a lot about identity. We know scriptures tell us we are God's children, but we often experience amnesia, and we forget who we are and whose we are. Our sense of worth instead comes from how good we can play a sport, or how many wins we can get as a coach, or how much money we make from a sales job.

There are two problems when we attach our identity to success. First, when we don't have a starting role, or don't win a championship, or don't experience success then we can become miserable. Second, if we do end up as a starter, win a national championship, or experience success, then the joy we feel only lasts for a short period of time.

When our identity is in Christ, then we know who we are, and we know where we belong. I believe we are called to be excellent in whatever vocation we choose. When we live a life of purpose then we have the freedom to risk our heart and use our God-given gifts to pursue excellence.

In what ways did Dock prepare you to live a life of purpose?
When I reflect on my time at Dock, I think about the way in which the school balanced the development of me as an individual with the development of the community as a whole. There were individual teachers and coaches who cared about me as a person. They wanted me to grow and develop spiritually, academically, and athletically. In addition, Dock did a great job of showing me the importance of community, and how we have been called to be interdependent.

> There were individual teachers and coaches (at Dock) who cared about me as a person. They wanted me to grow and develop spiritually, academically, and athletically.

In order to live a life of purpose, I believe it is helpful to have people in your life that model that well. When I was at Dock my soccer coach was **Roger Mast** and he loved the Lord, loved teaching, loved coaching, and loved soccer. It was Roger who encouraged me to consider attending Messiah, and it was Roger who inspired me to pursue a vocation of coaching in a Christian environment. Dock has had a tremendous lineage of teachers over the years, who invest in their students and model living a life of purpose.



Brad with his wife, Jodi, and children Madison, Morgan, Ian, and Finnley.

DOCK
MENNONITE ACADEMY

EARLY CHILDHOOD TO GRADE EIGHT
420 Godshall Road
Souderton, PA 18964
215.723.1196

GRADES NINE TO TWELVE
1000 Forty Foot Road
Lansdale, PA 19446
215.362.2675

WWW.DOCK.ORG

Dock Mennonite Academy inspires and equips each student to serve with a global perspective by integrating faith, academic excellence and life-enriching opportunities in a Christ-centered community.

UPCOMING EVENTS

EC to Grade 8 Calendar

MAY 2024

May 6-10	Spring Book Fair
May 10	Spring Showcase; Elementary Spring Concert; EC-Grade 8 Admissions Open House
May 17	Early Dismissal; Country Fair and Auction
May 20	Middle School Spring Concert
May 23	EC Spring Program
May 27	Memorial Day, **No School**
May 30	Middle School EXPO Night; 8th Grade Celebration

June 2024

June 7	Last Day of School; Early Dismissal

Grades 9 to 12 Calendar

May 2024

May 10	Early Dismissal
May 11	Jr. and Sr. Banquet
May 17	Country Fair and Auction
May 22	Spring Concert
May 24	All-School Social
May 27	Memorial Day, **No School**
May 28	Senior Recital
May 30	Spring Athletic Awards Night

June 2024

June 3-5	Senior Presentations
June 6	Early Dismissal
June 7	Last Day of School; Early Dismissal; Baccalaureate
June 8	69th Annual High School Commencement





COUNTRY FAIR AND AUCTION

FRIDAY, MAY 17, 2024

Our 63rd Annual Country Fair and Auction is almost here! We look forward to seeing you at the EC-8 campus for great food and entertainment for the whole family. We are thrilled to once again offer delicious BBQ Chicken meals and Strawberry Pies at the Drive Thru at Franconia Mennonite Church from 4-6:30pm. Scan the QR code to access the online auction.