May 2026

GOW AT A GLANCE

A Monthly News Snapshot from The Gow School



PROM 2026

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- A Message from Associate Head of School, Luke Salerno
- Gow Takes the Spotlight on Daytime Buffalo
- Campus News
  - Gow Prom
  - Students visit Rich Products
- Alumni Spotlight
  - Ben Parker '95

Gow Alumni Spotlight

BEN PARKER '95



From hockey rinks and study halls at The Gow School to managing an elite private golf course on Long Island, Ben Parker has built a life fueled by determination and resilience.

Discover how the lessons Ben learned at Gow helped shape his career, his family life, and the dream he once fought so hard to achieve.

The Gow School

A New Look. The Same Mission.

For nearly 100 years, The Gow School has empowered students to discover their strengths and achieve success. As we approach our Centennial, we are proud to introduce a refreshed brand identity that better reflects who we are today and where we are headed tomorrow.

Developed in partnership with Generation Branding & Communications and shaped by the voices of our students, families, faculty, trustees, and alumni, Gow's new look is a clearer expression of our mission and impact.

While our look has evolved, our purpose remains the same: Every student deserves an education built for how they learn.

SAVE THE DATE

May 21	Athletic Awards and Honors Convocation Senior Dinner - The Columns
May 22	Commencement
June 30-August 3	Gow School Summer Program
August 29	New Student Orientation
August 31	First Day of Classes
October 1-3	Centennial Celebration
October 4-12	Fall Break

End of Year Message from Associate Head of School

Luke Salerno



As I reflect on the close of this remarkable 99th year of The Gow School, I'm filled with gratitude for the growth, resilience, and joy that defined our campus community. This year brought meaningful progress across academics, literacy, and personal development thanks to the dedication of our students, families, faculty, and staff.

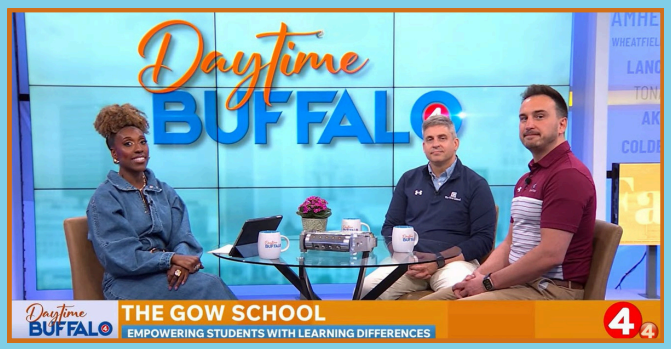
This year also brought several transformative academically focused initiatives. The Orton Study Commons underwent thoughtful renovation and reimagining, while Howard Hall opened this spring, providing inviting academic spaces for focused work and reflective reading. Our new Saturday academic experiences were an overwhelming success, offering opportunities for academic enrichment, community engagement, and exposure to career pathways.

Our new winter academic schedule introduced intentional pacing and individualized support, enabling students to engage deeply with challenging material while maintaining balance and well-being. This restructuring resulted in stronger retention of concepts, improved classroom participation, and renewed motivation. We also launched our new postgraduate program in partnership with Villa Maria College, providing a bridge-year focused on literacy development, executive function supports, and college-readiness experiences. Early outcomes already demonstrate increased self-efficacy and clearer pathways to post-secondary success.

Most notably, this year highlighted exceptional growth in our students' academic and literacy skills. Across reading, decoding, and language comprehension, students approached texts with greater confidence and curiosity. These outcomes reflect the power of a community that believes in every learner and supports them with high expectations and unwavering encouragement.

Looking ahead to summer, I encourage our students to continue reading and practicing their Reconstructive Language phonics and roots cards. A few pages a day, a few minutes of targeted phonics work, and continued curiosity will help sustain and accelerate growth as we return in the fall.

With gratitude for a highly successful year and excitement for what comes next, I want to thank everyone who helped make this year so bright. I am inspired by our students' resilience, uplifted by their progress, and grateful for a community that continually champions learning, growth, and one another. Go Ravens!



Luke Salerno, Associate Head of School, and Jeff Poblocki, Director of Technology, on Buffalo's Channel 4

Gow Takes the Spotlight on Channel 4's Daytime Buffalo

The Gow School recently took to the airwaves as Director of Technology Jeff Poblocki and Associate Head of School Luke Salerno were featured on Daytime Buffalo on Channel 4, highlighting what makes Gow such a unique and impactful place to learn.

During the segment, Poblocki and Salerno shared insights into the school's approach to education, emphasizing both its strong foundation and forward-thinking programs. A key focus was Gow's upcoming Centennial celebration, marking 100 years of empowering students who learn differently—a milestone that reflects both tradition and continued growth.

The feature also spotlighted one of Gow's most innovative offerings: its student-led CNC Robotics program and their recent championship win. This hands-on initiative exemplifies the school's commitment to blending academic rigor with real-world application, giving students opportunities to build skills in technology, problem-solving, and collaboration.

Most importantly, the interview captured the spirit of The Gow School—an environment where students are supported, challenged, and encouraged to succeed. The Channel 4 appearance served as a proud moment for the Gow community and a meaningful opportunity to share its mission with a broader audience.

Be sure to check out the full segment on The Gow School Facebook Page or YouTube channel.

Alumni Spotlight:

Ben Parker '95



Ben Parker with wife Margaret and their children

For many students, finding the right school can change the course of their lives. For Ben Parker '95, that journey led him to The Gow School, a place that challenged him, supported him, and ultimately helped shape the resilience and independence that would guide both his personal life and professional success. What began as a hesitant transition during high school became the foundation for a career spent pursuing excellence in the competitive world of golf course management.

Before arriving at Gow, Ben attended public School through 9th grade. Like many families searching for the right educational fit, his mother was determined to find a program that supported his needs through high school. Ben first entered Gow through the school's summer program, where Ben tested the waters before making a full commitment. Ben championed his family to try one more year at public high school which he did, but it was very clear at the end he needed Gow to continue high school. Ben arrived for his 10th Grade year at Gow, ready for a fresh start.

Looking back, he laughs remembering what that transition felt like.

"Walking into Gow felt like what most people experience their first year of college," he shared. "It was a big adjustment, but it taught me independence."

Ben seemed to have a knack at advocating for himself. Passionate about playing hockey, he was allowed to leave campus to practice and compete with a team in Orchard Park. That balance of accountability, structure, and trust became a defining part of his Gow experience.

Sports played a major role in Ben's life during his years at Gow. In addition to hockey, he played lacrosse under coach Dan Kelley and fondly remembers the camaraderie of ski club trips, packing up the trailer and heading to the slopes with classmates and faculty. Yet beyond athletics, it was the relationships he built that left the deepest impact. Teachers and mentors including Dan Kelley, Adam Steinberg, Tom Giallanza, and Dale Hazen became important influences during a critical time in his life. Ben credits Gow with teaching him far more than academics. He learned time management, how to navigate difficult situations, and perhaps most importantly, how to rely on himself.

"Even though I hated study hall and being proctored at the time," he admitted, "I realized later that the structure and study habits were exactly what I needed."

One lesson in particular stayed with him long after graduation.

"I learned that when I fall on my face, at least I can get back up on my own."

After leaving Gow, Ben pursued a lifelong passion for golf. Having worked at golf courses throughout his teenage years, he knew he wanted to build a career in the industry. He attended Southern Illinois University, one of the few schools at the time offering a bachelor's degree in Golf Course Turf Management.

Valhalla GOLF CLUB



SAHALEE COUNTRY CLUB

Determined to work at premier golf courses, Ben began building his career across the country. His early stops included Sahalee in Seattle, WA, before moving to the renowned Valhalla Golf Club in Louisville, KY, where he served as Assistant Superintendent for when the course hosted the 2000 PGA Championship.

Still, Ben had his sights set on returning to the East Coast — another goal he pursued with the persistence Gow had helped instill in him. Eventually, opportunity came calling from a family on Long Island developing a private/personal golf course and estate. Ben accepted the role and has now spent the past 20 years overseeing operations there, building both a career and a life he is proud of.

Today, Ben lives in Old Westbury, NY with his wife Margaret and their two children. His daughter is preparing to attend the College of Charleston, while his son is a freshman in high school. And while he may no longer lace up his own skates regularly, hockey remains central to his life as he now coaches his son's hockey team. Outside of work, he enjoys spending time on the water boating with his family.

For Ben, Gow was more than a school — it was the foundation that helped him discover resilience, confidence, and purpose.

His advice to today's young Gow students reflects the same determination that shaped his own story:
"Stay with it. Give it a chance. It will pay off in the end. You will be a better person when you leave Gow. I started kicking and screaming, but here I am now, living my dream."

A Night to Remember: GOW PROM 2026



On Friday, May 2, students from The Gow School enjoyed an unforgettable evening at prom, held at The Bank in East Aurora. The event brought together students and faculty for a night filled with celebration, laughter, and lasting memories. Students arrived dressed elegantly in tuxedos and gowns, many completing their formal looks with corsages and boutonnieres as they stepped into the Hollywood-themed venue.

The evening featured a delicious steak dinner, plenty of dancing, and opportunities for students to relax and enjoy time with friends outside of the classroom setting. One of the highlights of the night was seeing Mr. Munro step behind the bar to create and serve mocktails for students, adding a fun and personal touch that brought even more energy and connection to the celebration.

A heartfelt thank you goes out to the faculty and staff whose time and dedication helped make the evening possible, as well as to the families who supported students in preparing for such a memorable occasion. It was truly a night to remember for everyone in attendance.

Thank you for coming!

A sincere thank you to all of the Gow community members who joined us last month for the local Gow community gathering. Held at 42 North Brewing Company, the event provided a warm and relaxed opportunity for families, alumni, trustees, and friends of Gow to come together and connect.

Guests enjoyed a beautiful spring afternoon outdoors filled with great conversation, delicious food, and a strong sense of community. We are grateful to everyone who took the time to attend and help make the gathering such an enjoyable and meaningful event.



Farewell to our fellow Govians

Michael F. Dorris
February 28, 2026

The Gow community mourns the passing of Michael F. Dorris, Class of 1958, who passed away on February 28, 2026, while living in Chili, NY. Michael is remembered fondly by his family, friends, classmates, and all who knew him through Gow.

He is survived by his wife, Sharon, who shared that one of Michael's final wishes was for the two of them to attend Gow's Centennial Celebration together later this year.

His presence will be deeply missed by his loved ones and the Gow community.

If you would like to honor a departed Govian, please contact development@gow.org