

# RG 175

Change as Opportunity



## PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH

### SHADY SIDE ACADEMY Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

July 1, 2019

# SHADY SIDE ACADEMY

## OVERVIEW

Shady Side Academy seamlessly blends a joyous, open and positive school tone and culture with exceptionally high expectations for performance and behavior. The complexity of its operations, including four campuses, a highly ambitious academic and co-curricular program, and over 1,000 students, is overlaid by operational efficiency and confident optimism about the future. Moreover, a proud history and sense of tradition are provoked by determination to innovate and associate the School with the palpable dynamism and sense of momentum in and around the city of Pittsburgh. With its major universities (Pitt, Carnegie Mellon, and Duquesne), renowned medical institutions, and expanding high-tech firms that now include major installations for Google, Uber, and Ford Motors Argo AI, Pittsburgh is a city on the move, for sure.

Long known for its sports teams, civic pride, world-class symphony orchestra, and industrial wealth, the city has recovered from its "rust belt" past and is innovating its way into the future. Excitement is everywhere.

Not surprisingly, given the energetic climate that surrounds them, Shady Side students are eager, engaging, bright, kind, and confident with adults, and the faculty are dedicated, talented and devoted to their charges; the salient quality of the School is certainly salutary relationships between students and faculty. Of nearly the same importance is the provision of a wide range of dynamic opportunities for students, especially in athletics but also in the arts, service, travel, and a wide range of eclectic clubs and activities. Shady Side Academy seeks a leader who can embrace and enhance these characteristics, including connection to the civic pride and identity of this region, while advancing the School's reputation as one of the outstanding independent schools in the country. This position demands an experienced leader with a vision for the future of primary and secondary education, including for the five- and seven-day boarding program, along with excellent managerial and communication skills.



To learn more about  
Shady Side Academy:  
[www.shadysideacademy.org](http://www.shadysideacademy.org)



## HISTORY

Shady Side Academy was founded in a one-room schoolhouse in the Shadyside section of the city of Pittsburgh. The Junior School was added in 1909, and in 1922 the Senior School, responding to the national country day school movement, was moved to a “country” locale in nearby Fox Chapel. In 1940 the School merged with The Arnold School, and in 1958 Shady Side created the first stand-alone middle school in Western Pennsylvania. The 2017 merger with Fox Chapel Country Day School gave the Academy a second elementary school campus. The School celebrated its quasiquicentennial (125<sup>th</sup>) anniversary in 2008-2009.

Tom Cangiano is departing Shady Side Academy in July of 2018 after a successful tenure of eight years as President. He leaves the School in a strong condition in every respect, poised to move forward. The interim president for the 2018-2019 school year, Amy Nixon, is the current Head of Middle School; she is a capable administrator and the School’s positive momentum will be sustained while the search for a new president is underway.

Throughout its history Shady Side Academy has been highly regarded for the excellence of its academic programs, the breadth and quality of its co- and extra-curricular opportunities, the dedication and talent of its faculty, the marvelous talent and winning manner of its students, its impressive physical facilities, and the beauty of its campuses.

The Academy boasts an extensive global network of alumni who are an important part of the Shady Side community.

## BASIC FACTS

- 4 separate campuses
- \$33 million annual budget
- \$31 million current capital campaign (on track to close in 2019-2020)
- \$60 million endowment
- Total enrollment 2017-2018: 1,035
  - Country Day School: 120
  - Junior School: 245
  - Middle School: 210
  - Senior School: 460
- 65 five- and seven-day boarders
- Students come from 9 states, 9 countries, and 53 Allegheny County ZIP codes
- 55% of students are male and 45% are female
- 28% are students of color
- 30% of students receive financial assistance
- Student-to-teacher ratio: 8:1
- Average class size: 15
- 130 faculty members; 75% hold advanced degrees
- The 125 graduates of 2017 attend 72 colleges and universities in 26 states

## MISSION and PHILOSOPHY

Shady Side Academy asserts a simple, clear and poignant **mission** that resonates powerfully with graduates and current students alike, and which is clearly evident in the tone and culture of campus life:

*Shady Side Academy's mission is to challenge students to think expansively, act ethically and lead responsibly.*

The **philosophy** of the School expands descriptively on that mission:

*Shady Side Academy is a vibrant learning community that values intellectual curiosity, personal integrity and diverse perspectives. Through a rigorous and balanced curriculum of academics, arts and athletics, our students are challenged to explore their passions and excel beyond expectations. Supported by active alumni and parents, our unique culture of faculty-student mentorship inspires students to become lifelong learners and engaged, thoughtful citizens of their communities.*

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

"Members of the Shady Side Academy acknowledge and accept five principles that serve as fundamental points of guidance for all adults and students living and working together in the School community: **Honesty, Kindness, Responsibility, Respect and Safety**. These principles guide our activities and interactions, helping us to measure not only what we attempt but also the spirit in which we do so. While these principles guide our daily interactions, they point to the larger, more encompassing ideals and behaviors of integrity, thoughtfulness and compassion."





of whom are graduates. This relatively large board functions with a strong Executive Committee of 13 members. The Board in general is deeply committed to the School, understands the proper role of governance in an independent school and is determined to ensure the success of the next President.

## FOUR CAMPUSES

While 13 years at one school might seem a long time for a student to remain in one institution, the reality is that the transitions from one campus to the next presents dynamic opportunities to students as they move from one distinct campus to the next. Students can reinvent themselves in positive ways in each new environ. New students join the group, making each class increasingly diverse in every way, and presenting every child with exciting challenges, as one proceeds toward eventual graduation.

The **Senior School** campus strikes a visitor as a New England boarding school. Georgian architecture, expansive lawns, attractive landscaping, students walking briskly from building to building as classes change – the campus is, in a word, stunning. With the Hillman Center for the Performing Arts as a regional

## ADMINISTRATION and GOVERNANCE

The four Shady Side Academy campuses are each led on a daily basis by their own Head of School. While there are distinct identities for each division (Junior School, Country Day School, Middle School and Senior School), the entire school also functions as a single entity, guided by the same mission, providing students with the opportunity to be part of the Shady Side community from prekindergarten through grade 12. The core administrative team consists of the President, Chief Financial Officer, and the Directors of Administration and Planning, Enrollment Management, and the four Heads of School.

Most of the administrative functions and leadership for the overall Academy are housed on the campus of the Senior School. While there are admission directors for the individual campuses, the Director of Enrollment Management for the entire school is located at the Senior School. The same is true for the offices of development, business, technology, and communications.

There are 30 members of the Board of Trustees, the majority of whom are current parents of the School, and many





Close to half of the students in the Middle School have come from Shady Side's **Junior School**, across the river, nestled in the Point Breeze section of Pittsburgh itself. With the city in the throes of a significant economic and cultural renaissance, this campus is caught up in the excitement of the times. Filled to enrollment capacity, the Junior School sits on seven acres of green space in the heart of the city's thriving East End, adjacent to 64-acre Frick Park. At the same time, the feel in the hallways is warm, genuine and friendly, and the faculty is ebullient and proud of the community they have built.

beacon for top-level music, theater, and dance, and the soon-to-be-opened state-of-the-art McIlroy Center for Science and Innovation, Shady Side features facilities that are contemporary and as functional as they are attractive. Among the buildings on the main campus are boys' and girls' dormitories, a dining hall, classroom buildings and, down the hill, athletic facilities that include an indoor hockey rink and fields that seem to stretch forever. Beyond the "far fields," as they are called, there is a small working farm where students grow food that will be consumed in the cafeteria and, during the productive months of the year, the School operates a community farmers' market.

Completely different in feel is the **Country Day School** campus, located in bucolic Fox Chapel, about a mile from the Senior School. Whereas the Junior School speaks directly to urban life, Country Day speaks its name – with trails and tree houses and woods to explore, beautiful grounds to appreciate, and sweeping vistas to be admired from its floor-to-ceiling windows. Smaller and more intimate than the Junior School, Country Day is reminiscent of a less hurried time in our lives, a time and place for nurture and gentle growth. The educational program is wonderfully thoughtful and when Country Day's students arrive at the Middle School, they thrive.

The nearby but separate **Middle School** campus also enjoys a majestic setting. Up a hill and at the end of a long driveway, the School building is u-shaped with the center section being a Pennsylvania stone mansion with two wings extending toward the arrival area in an almost physical embrace of the students as they come to school. It evokes Hogwarts, and is filled with ebullient sixth, seventh and eighth graders who have come both from Shady Side's two elementary campuses and from a number of other schools in the area as well. The classrooms are perfectly suited to the needs of the age group and the architectural embrace of the buildings' exterior is reflected in the warmth of the relationships inside.



**Eastover House, Residence of the President**

## CHALLENGES and OPPORTUNITIES

There are a number of challenges confronting Shady Side Academy over the next several years. These challenges, however, also represent the opportunities for leadership for the next President. These challenges include, in no particular order of priority, the following:

- The ongoing task of unifying the four separate campuses, emphasizing their distinct identities while, at the same time, strengthening the power and identity of the overall Shady Side Academy “brand.”
- Successful completion of the integration of Fox Chapel Country Day School into Shady Side Academy, while also capitalizing on the Country Day School’s unique appeal and qualities, and leveraging its location to attract new families from neighboring communities.
- Overseeing the evolution of the new McIlroy Center for Science and Innovation into a highly respected paragon of STEM education and innovation that advances the overall academic excellence and reputation of the entire Academy.
- Development and implementation of plans for the major renovation and upgrade of athletic facilities on the Senior School campus.
- Development of a more cohesive curricular philosophy and blueprint that embraces the entire developmental and grade expanse of the School, prekindergarten through 12.
- There has been relatively high turnover of faculty and administrators in recent years; restoration of greater stability to the faculty and administration is a priority.
- Firm connection of the identity and trajectory of Shady Side Academy with the emerging dynamism and appeal of the city of Pittsburgh, and development of programs that take the students and opportunities of the School more richly into that urban environment.
- Advancing the fundraising capacity of the Academy, including development of more effective stewardship of donors, expansion of the “Blue and Gold” annual fund, and firmer philanthropic connection of alumni to the needs and future of the School.



- Expanded and more competitive enrollment of the School, including new ideas and methods for marketing, and a particular focus on seven-day boarding.
- Expanded diversity of the campus in every respect, including the faculty and administration, along with courageous embrace of the hard work required to do that work well, with an eye to balancing inclusion and preservation of the historically special student experience at the School.
- Careful and innovative thinking and leadership in regard to the future fiscal health of the institution, especially in terms of the balance among tuition dollars, endowment fundraising and income, and other development initiatives.
- Visionary and principled leadership that establishes the clear identity and value proposition of a Shady Side Academy education, as well as the underlying principles that will shape the planning, programs and leadership of the trustees, administration and faculty.



## THE CANDIDATE

The successful candidate for the Presidency of Shady Side Academy will likely exhibit the following characteristics, qualities and experience:

- An advanced degree, together with deep passion for learning and education;
- A successful record of accomplishment in previous positions;
- Demonstrated skill and talent in the management of highly complex organizations;
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills;
- Desire to commit to the Greater Pittsburgh area, and to become a part of, and to associate the School with, its renaissance and emerging dynamism;
- Inspirational vision in regard to the future of primary and secondary education in the United States, and both the skill and the will to work effectively with boards, administrators and trustees in pursuit of that vision;



- Demonstrated ability as an effective hirer and developer of faculty and administrative talent;
- Financial acumen;
- Willingness and skill to lead and shape ongoing fundraising efforts, and the ability to organize and inspire strong fundraising leadership and teams;
- Willingness and skill to lead and shape ongoing marketing endeavors of the School, including leadership and strategies for enrollment and communications;
- Approachability and outstanding “people skills;”
- Ability to discern and preserve the essential elements of the Shady Side experience while courageously advancing the program and curriculum as necessary to sustain the excellence and leadership of the School in its market;
- Desire to be a visible presence on all four campuses, as well as in the boarding community, and to model leadership for the broad Academy community, along with the ability to do that efficiently and to delegate tasks and roles as needed and appropriate.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Shady Side Academy has retained the search firm Resource Group 175 to support its search for its next President. If you wish to submit your own application materials or nominate a candidate, please send a **cover letter, resume and writing sample** in a single PDF to **both**:

Robert P. Henderson, Jr.  
<mailto:rhenderson@rg175.org> and

Thomas C. Hudnut  
<mailto:tom@tomhudnut.com>

Applications and nominations will be treated with confidence.

**Application Deadline: July 15, 2018**

## NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

*Shady Side Academy is an equal-opportunity employer and strongly encourages individuals of all backgrounds and cultures to consider this important leadership position. The School's policies rest on inclusivity including but not limited to, diversity in nationality, ethnicity, race, religion, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, ability and economic status.*

