Dear Shady Side Academy Community:

A few weeks into the school year, a student in Kegan Borland’s ninth grade history class asked a seemingly innocuous question: “Is Hong Kong in Japan or in China?” Before Mr. Borland could respond, another student in the class incisively retorted, “I have a question for you – Is Pittsburgh in Japan or China?”

It was a ridiculous question, of course, and it prompted a chuckle from the rest of the class. The student who asked the second question is actually an international student from China – one of two at the Senior School this academic year. It was inconceivable to him that a peer would think that Hong Kong is in Japan.

Having lived abroad twice myself, I am well aware that international students tend to have a better understanding of the world and a better mastery of languages than American students. One of our goals at Shady Side is to expand opportunities for our students to engage and interact with the world in a meaningful way through our curriculum, extracurricular opportunities, and a wide variety of travel and exchange programs. A particular area of interest for us, as evidenced by this magazine issue, is China.

For the past two summers, Shady Side has hosted Chinese middle and high school students on campus to participate in academic and cultural programs designed by our Director of Programs David Chottiner. We are hoping to expand the summer program, both in terms of the duration and the number of students, for the summer of 2014.

In March 2013, as a follow-up to a visit to Shady Side by two administrators from Beijing School No. 4, I visited China for the first time. Although I was only in the country for four days, in Beijing and Wuhan, the trip made a significant impression on me.

In addition to being impressed with the scale, dynamism and vitality of Chinese cities, I was even more impressed with the young students I met at Beijing School No. 4 and the Wuhan Foreign Language School.

As part of an exchange program, eight middle school students from Beijing School No. 4 spent three weeks at the Shady Side Middle School in January 2014. The students were hosted by Shady Side families who have children at the Middle School studying Mandarin.

It was a tremendous learning experience for both our guests and our students. It is our hope that we will be able to reciprocate by sending students to Beijing either over the summer or for a short program during the academic year. More generally, we are hoping to forge a closer relationship with a few select schools in China.

With a more intentional focus on making Shady Side students more globally informed and aware, we are preparing students to thrive in a world that is rapidly shrinking. Down the road, I suspect that rather than asking whether Hong Kong is in China or Japan, our students will be asserting that Astana is in Kazakhstan, not Uzbekistan.

Sincerely,

Tom Cangiano
Academy President
AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

TWO TEACHERS NAMED TO ENDOURED CHAIR POSITIONS

Two teachers were named to endowed chair positions at the Academy for five-year terms, through June 2018. Middle School science teacher Matthew Brunner was named to the Howard Heinz Chair in the Sciences. Brunner has taught sixth grade earth sciences at the Middle School since 2005. He succeeds retired Senior School science teacher Bill Diehl as the Heinz Chair. Senior School history teacher Kyle Smith was named to the F. Walter Jones Jr. Chair in History. Smith has taught history at the Senior School since 2010 and was named chair of the History Department in 2012. Smith succeeds retired Senior School history teacher Bonnie McCarthy as the Jones Chair.

SENIOR CHOSEN TO PARTICIPATE IN PRINCETON SYMPOSIUM

Senior Alex Gottlieb was one of 90 high school seniors nationwide selected to participate in Princeton University's annual Creative Arts and Humanities Symposium. The program took place in September on Princeton's campus and is an occasion for talented students to get a taste of studying the creative arts and humanities at the university level. All of the expenses were covered by Princeton.

NATIONAL MERIT HONORS

Nine seniors have been named semifinalists in the 59th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. These academically talented students will continue in the competition for 8,000 National Merit Scholarships worth about $35 million that will be offered this spring. There are approximately 16,000 semifinalists nationwide. The Shady Side semifinalists are Cassie Dickson, Cameron Dively, Sara Eismont, Shaun Gohel, Hari Magge, Tevin Mickens, Hayley Wyeth, Adam Yunus and Christopher Zhang.

SPEECH & DEBATE TEAM EARS TWO NATIONAL HONORS

The Senior School Speech and Debate team, led by faculty coach Mary Krauland, earned two prestigious honors from the National Forensic League (NFL), the national honor society for speech and debate. SSA was awarded the NFL’s 2012-2013 Leading Chapter Award for the Pittsburgh district. This coveted honor, based on student participation, is the highest recognition the league can bestow. Out of more than 3,000 member schools nationwide, Shady Side is one of only 109 to receive the Leading Chapter Award. SSA also was recognized with membership in the NFL’s prestigious 100 Club for achieving more than 100 degrees last year, ranking among the top 10 percent of schools nationwide. Students and coaches earn points in the honor society based on competitions and service-related activities, then earn degrees based on the number of points.

MS TEACHER NAMED TO WALDEN AWARD COMMITTEE

Middle School English teacher Sara Kajder, Ph.D., will have a voice in honoring the nation’s best young adult literature for the next two years. Kajder was one of three classroom teachers nationwide selected to serve on the Amelia Elizabeth Walden Award Committee by the Assembly on Literature for Adolescents of the NCTE (ALAN). Kajder will serve a two-year term on the committee, helping to select the 2014 and 2015 Walden Award winners. The Amelia Elizabeth Walden Award, presented annually by ALAN, is an award in the United States for a book that exemplifies literary excellence, widespread appeal and a positive approach to life in young adult literature.

Seniors Tevin Mickens and Tarah Wright are among the more than 1,600 outstanding black American high school seniors who were named semifinalists in the 50th annual National Achievement Scholarship Program. These students will continue in the competition for approximately 800 Achievement Scholarships worth about $2.5 million to be offered this spring.
PMEA HONORS

Senior School students Kerry Broker and William Lu were selected to participate in the Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) District 1 Honors String Orchestra Festival, held in November. Broker and Lu, both freshmen, placed in the first violin section, with Lu sitting second chair and Broker sitting fourth chair. Junior Shaoyan (Sam) Li was selected to participate in the PMEA District 1 Honors Band Festival, where he played clarinet in the third section, at the festival held at Carnegie Music Hall in November. In December, three seniors were selected to perform at the PMEA District 1 Honors Jazz Festival. Hayley Wyeth achieved the second spot out of 24 altos who auditioned. Bruce Morrison played bass and Maxwell Prizant played trombone.

YOUNG PLAYWRIGHTS FESTIVAL

Junior Shea Minter's one-act play *Flicker* was selected for the City Theatre Company’s 2013 Young Playwrights Festival and was performed Oct. 5 and 6, 2013. *Flicker* was one of six winning plays chosen from more than 200 submissions. Minter developed the play as a freshman for SSA’s Original theatre works Festival in spring 2012, under the guidance of Senior School theatre teacher Dana Hardy-Bingham. *Flicker* is about a teenage girl struggling with mental illness, and how a school project changes her life and the community around her.

COHEN, HISTORY PRIZES AWARDED

Prizes were awarded at Convocation to five students for their achievements in 2012-2013. The John H. Cohen Family Award is a book prize given for general improvement in scholarship, physical vigor, citizenship and character. The winners for 2012-2013 were: current sophomore Luke Fitzgerald, junior Alison Thai and seniors Tarah Wright and Sarah Deiseroth. The Instructors’ Prize in American History is a book prize awarded to the student who, while enrolled in the U.S. History course, has completed the research paper that best displays the qualities of scholarship essential for developing competence in the study of history. The winner for 2013-2014 was current senior Zoe Schoen.
COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

HAUNTED WALK RAISES HAIRS AND $600 FOR SSA FARM

The woods and back fields of the Senior School campus came alive on Oct. 29, 2013, during the annual Torchlight Haunted Walk. Following the walk, which was “haunted” by older SSA students dressed as ghosts and goblins, Junior School families enjoyed treats by a bonfire. About 60 families participated, donating $10 per family to the SSA Farm. A total of $672 was raised. The Torchlight Haunted Walk is a Shady Side tradition begun by President Tom Cangiano’s family when they arrived on campus in 2010.

SOCIAL MEDIA & ONLINE BEHAVIOR PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

SSA offered a parent education program on social media and online behavior featuring national child development expert Dr. Leonard Sax on Dec. 2, 2013, at the Hillman Center. The program was entitled “Instagram Ate My Daughter… and My Son Won’t Stop Playing Grand Theft Auto.” The event was free and open to the public. Sax discussed what parents need to know about kids’ use of social media, smartphones and video games. Sax is the author of three best-selling books for parents: Why Gender Matters, Boys Adrift and Girls on the Edge.

STUDENTS PAINT MURAL IN SQUIRREL HILL

Freshmen Claire Holthaus and Kay Hughes helped to paint an environmentally themed mural in Squirrel Hill as part of the Pittsburgh Kids+Creativity Network’s Plants & Paints Summer Workshop. The mural featured a series of panels painted by 10 local high school students and depicted a unique answer to the question, “What would Pittsburgh’s landscapes and communities look like if they were part of a healthy, functioning ecosystem?” Kids+Creativity is a collaborative network of people, projects and organizations working at the intersection of science, technology and the arts to provide Pittsburgh children and youth with the best opportunity to learn and be creative.
STUDENT PERFORMANCES

SECOND GRADE PLAY
The second grade class performed the play European Explorers Come to the New World on Nov. 12. The play featured interviews of explorers by “The Best News Team EVER!” The humorous play had students, teachers and parents laughing as various explorers shared their experiences of traveling to North America.

KEEPER OF THE TALES
The Middle School presented the fall play Keeper of the Tales: Stories From 1001 Arabian Nights on Nov. 7-8, 2013. The Middle School cafetorium was transformed into an Arabian bazaar, where a wise old beggar told tales filled with laughter, love and life lessons. The cast included more than 25 students and was directed by Randy Broker and Jeffrey Gross.

AN ENEMY OF THE PEOPLE
The Senior School Gargoyle Society performed a modern adaptation of Henrik Ibsen’s An Enemy of the People on Nov. 1-3, 2013. The play starred junior Julian Schwartz as Dr. Thomas Stockmann and senior Elizabeth Herrington as Mayor Miranda Stockmann. The cast consisted of nearly 15 students, and was directed by Dana Hardy-Bingham.
The Shady Side Academy Middle School launched a 1:1 iPad program beginning with the sixth grade class in 2013-2014. The program will be phased into the seventh and eighth grades over the next two years. For sixth graders who matriculated from the Junior School, the program is a continuation of the 1:1 iPad program begun in fifth grade humanities classes last year.

The focus of the program is to provide tools and resources to the 21st century learner. Excellence in education requires that technology be seamlessly integrated throughout the curriculum. Increasing access to technology is essential for that future, and one of the learning tools of 21st century students is the iPad. The individual use of iPads is a way to empower students to maximize their full potential and to prepare them for college and the workplace.

“We believe that students who use a computing device in a one-to-one education environment are more organized and engaged learners, advance their knowledge and understanding of technology, and become constructors and designers of information and ideas,” said Tim Winner, SSA’s director of educational technology. “The Apple iPad is a device that makes learning more engaging and assessable.”

Each sixth grader received a school-issued iPad in early October, plus a case, charger and school-provided apps. A parent meeting was held in September to provide information, program guidelines and answer questions. Students and parents were required to review and sign the Academy’s Acceptable Use Policy and iPad program rules prior to rollout. Students kept their iPads at school during Term I and were allowed to bring them home beginning in Term II. At the end of the school year, students will turn in their iPads so they can be updated, serviced and stored safely for the summer.

Each sixth grade teacher also received an iPad as well as training and guidance from Winner and Middle School faculty member Dr. Sara Kajder, a published expert on technology in the classroom, on how to meaningfully integrate the iPads into their coursework.

“Technology immersion does not diminish the vital role of the teacher,” said Winner. “To the contrary, it transforms the teacher from a director of learning to a facilitator of learning. Effective teaching and learning with iPads integrates technology into the curriculum anytime, anyplace.”

“Our goal with the iPads is not to completely replace what we do in the traditional classroom,” said Middle School Head Amy Nixon. “We are working on a pedagogy that uses what is rich in both the print-based, traditional practice while also embracing new, multimedia and multimodal practices that will take our students and teachers in new, compelling and important directions.”
SERVICE

MIRACLE LEAGUE BASEBALL CLINIC

On Oct. 5, 2013, 21 members of the SSA community conducted a baseball clinic for special needs players from the Miracle League of Southwestern PA at the Pirates Charities Miracle League Field in Cranberry Township, Pa. The clinic was led by junior Andrew Scherbarth and members of the SSA Baseball Club, which was founded by Shady Side baseball players who hope to combine their love of the sport with community service. Scherbarth has been a consistent volunteer with the Miracle League and was the driving force behind the clinic. Participants included 14 Senior School students, one Middle School student, one Junior School student, four parents and Head Baseball Coach Bob Grandizio. There were 17 Miracle League players who participated in the clinic.

SECOND GRADE SETS FOOD DRIVE RECORD

The second grade participated in its annual community service project of collecting canned goods and toiletry items for local families in need. This year marks the 15th anniversary of the project, which provides donated items to the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood. Second graders were partnered with Junior School classrooms, where they collected items each day until Nov. 21. This year students collected a school-record 2,275 canned goods.

PRODUCE TO PEOPLE

Students in the Senior School’s Service Learning program volunteered with the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank’s Produce to People program twice this fall. Faculty advisor Michele Ament joined 14 students in September and 16 students in November to distribute fresh fruits and vegetables to hundreds of families in need.

THE “POWER OF PINK”

Sixth grader Elizabeth Grossman and alumna Rachel Tobin ’11 teamed up to create the “Power of Pink” bracelet for Breast Cancer Awareness Month. A portion of proceeds from sales of the bracelet support the Pittsburgh Race for the Cure and the fight against breast cancer. Grossman has been one of the top 25 fundraisers for Race for the Cure for the last three years. Tobin creates and sells handmade jewelry through her business, Rachel’s Cure by Design, to raise money for the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation – a business she started while a student at SSA.
NEW IDEA LAB INSPIRES JUNIOR SCHOOL STUDENTS

When the Junior School’s facility renovation schedule called for an update to the first floor computer lab, School Head Ellen McConnell decided it was time not just to refresh the equipment, but to completely rethink the way students use the space. This fall, the new Junior School “Idea Lab” was born.

“Instead of making the learning about the computers, we wanted the ideas to take center stage and allow the technology to complement those ideas,” said McConnell. “This is something very exciting and innovative in the field of instructional technology. As the name suggests, the Idea Lab is not just a place where computers are housed, but where great ideas take place.”

Gone are the conventional rows of computer tables and chairs, creating a wide-open space with clean lines and bright colors. The room is filled with colorful and comfortable seating, which allows for one of the most important 21st Century skills – collaboration. Instead of desktop PCs, the lab is stocked with iPads and laptops, as well as a SMART Board. The walls are covered with white dry-erase paint, which allows for mind mapping, brainstorming, collaboration and creativity. Windows built into the walls of the lab allow teachers, students and staff passing by to peek in on what’s happening.

“Our vision for the Idea Lab is for teachers and students to think outside the box, to think beyond what is possible,” said McConnell. “Teachers sign up to use the Idea Lab, allowing for a more flexible, organic flow from the classroom to the lab and back again. Students can incorporate technology into the conventional skills of reading, writing, math, social studies, science, art and world languages.”

Teachers and students have used the Idea Lab in a number of ways this fall, including:

- Fourth graders used laptops to work on their Literature Circle projects, creating word clouds depicting the setting of their books.
- First graders used laptops in the lab to learn the library’s visual catalog.
- Fifth graders used their iPads in the lab to work on their Book Buzzes, app-based presentations of their monthly reading.
- Spanish students reviewed vocabulary words by writing memory tricks and playing hangman on the wall, while others typed and recorded Spanish tongue twisters on the laptops.

“The Idea Lab is a great environment when you have students working on different things,” said Spanish teacher Tiffanee Peterson. “They can spread out and regroup as their tasks require. The whiteboard walls are a fun, low-pressure way for them to share information and practice things.”

“The students are really responding to the Idea Lab in ways we never thought possible,” said McConnell. “Every day there are new questions, wonder statements and ideas on the walls that allow them to see what other students are thinking. It’s exciting for second graders to see what fifth graders are learning about, and vice versa.”
On Sept. 27-28, Shady Side Academy welcomed hundreds of alumni and their families back home to celebrate Homecoming 2013. Beautiful, sunny blue skies added to the excitement of the already anticipated weekend, full of reunions, athletic contests and community events.

Homecoming kicked off Friday morning during the first period of classes. Several alumni visited classrooms and had the opportunity to feel what it was like to be a student at SSA in 2013. For some alumni, it had been 50 years since they walked the halls of Rowe, and for others it was an opportunity to visit a teacher that had a profound effect on their lives. Many of the visiting alumni also attended the community assembly where this year’s alumni artist, Caroline Washburn ’08, addressed students, faculty and staff. Washburn spoke about her mentor, art teacher Cari Batcheler, and how she played a significant role in her love of art. She also shared with the audience her journey as an
For some alumni, it had been **50 years** since they walked the halls of Rowe, and for others it was an opportunity to visit a teacher that had a profound effect on their lives.
devoted and noble service to our country. His brother, Christopher W. Follansbee ’01, graciously accepted the award on behalf of Ben and his family. Follansbee expressed the impact that SSA had on Ben’s life and the appreciation his family felt from the outpouring of support from the community.

Saturday morning festivities were off to running start as alumni, students, parents and faculty participated in the Al Stewart Memorial Shady Stride. Will Stewart ’17, grandson of Al Stewart, officially started the race. Zac Prizant ’14 was the first to cross the finish line with Connor Colombo ’16 a close second.
The President’s Coffee and Campus Walking Tours were well attended by groups of alumni and families. The tours were led by current student ambassadors Shea Minter, Will Dively, Andrew Scherbarth and Amber Shergill, and provided alumni the chance to meet President Tom Cangiano before taking a walk down memory lane. As the activities throughout the day continued, many Junior School students and children of alumni enjoyed the petting zoo, balloon artist, inflatable obstacle course, music and face painting at the Kids Karnival. Alumni and their families also connected with fellow classmates and former faculty members at the Picnic Box Lunch and the Blue & Gold Alumni Faculty Tailgate.

Athletic contests were also a big attraction of the day. The girls field hockey game against Ellis resulted in a loss for SSA, but boys soccer defeated Mars, 3-1, and girls soccer defeated St. Joseph, 9-0. The day concluded with a packed house for the football game, as the team shut out Freeport, 28-0. During halftime, athletic team captains from reunion class years were recognized on the field for their leadership.

On Saturday evening, alumni gathered in various venues around Pittsburgh and on campus to reminisce and celebrate their time at SSA. Classes ending in 4s and 9s will be celebrating their reunion in 2014. The date is still to be determined.

If you are interested in helping with your class reunion, it’s not too early to contact Jamie (Brush) Scott ’98 at 412-968-3032 or jscott@shadysideacademy.org.
Above: Participants in the Al Stewart Memorial Shady Stride
Rick Siger, Branston Williams, Ed Levicoff, Jamie (Brush) Scott, Angela (Giorgianni) Adams, Andrew Ross

John Matia, Katie (Dingess) Maikish, Ben Scott, Carli Siger, Sarah Casey, Chris Shelby

Ben Kander, Alex Petraglia, Nikki Mino, Dhiren Shetty, Rachel Balog, Caroline Washburn, Jennifer Dawson
Top: Head Coach Dave Havern discusses strategy with the football team.
Class of 1948:
L to R: Bill Sander, Carl Herrmann, Bruce Hill, Jim Ecker

Class of 1953:
L to R: Bill Ames, Bruce Browne, John Flannery, David Katz, Gene Helsel, Hal Warren

Class of 1963:
First row, L to R: Tim Oppenheimer, David Hawk, Dave Hoffman, former faculty member Jim Cavalier, Pat Getty
Second row, L to R: Toby Astley, Lough Kuhn, Hans Kellner, Terry Starz, Eric Williams, Chip Abrams
Third row, L to R: Michael Chernoff, Dave Young, John Neely, Dean Wanderer, Chuck Beeghly, Wade Stoughton, Phil Lynch, Howie Foster, Ted Clarkson, Bob Volkman, Tim Stanny, Fred Mercer

Class of 1968:
First row, L to R: James Guttman, Paul Krause, Joe Safier, Peter Shefler, John Whitehill, Fred Kaplan, Chris Shelby, Doug Campbell
Second row, L to R: Ted Cmarada, Larry Gilberti, Tom Vilsack, Andy Hanson, Bill Mullins, Ed Strauss, Tom Peters

Class of 1973:
Roy Uptegraft, Doug Thompson, Eric Baiz, Byron King, Kevin Kelly, Richard Roth, Rick Pivirrotto

Class of 1978:
First row, L to R: Dan Hoover, Marcy Holquist Duff, Jim Loevner, Joe Weis, Christine Tumpson, Kerry Hannon, Bill Gurtin, Phil Paulovich
Second row, L to R: Faculty member Angela Irvine, Charlie Steitz, John Tippins, Tim Slevin, Doug Clarke, Shawn Flaherty, Eric Vey, Carl Kurlander, Andy Bennett, Marc Lhormer, T.K. Knott
Class of 1983:
First row, L to R: Barb (Pippin) Thai, Sue (Repp) Ussery, Ellen (von der Heyden) Gillespie, Mary Lee (Dickson) Citrino, Karen (Berman) Ross, Harper (Scheetz) McArthur, Katie (Hoopes) Mihm
Second row, L to R: Jen Tadler, Jeff Stone, Dan DeMarco, David Eligatior, George Childs, David Eddy, David Todd, Trip Oliver, Dean Kartsonas, Mark Raitano, Craig Stifter, Greg Rice

Class of 1988:
L to R: Angela (Bruno) Hokanson, David Weisberg, Jeff McDaniel, Jan (Cohen) Ostenholm, David Gefsky, Michael Shaughnessey, Thatcher Montgomery, Matthew Braidic, Eric Goldberg

Class of 1993:
First row, L to R: Andy Gerber, Shyam Thakkar, Jeremy Smerd, Lauren (Shuman) Floyd, April Castro, Erin (Mancuso) Smith, Bart Brush, Elisabeth (Smith) Bornstein
Second row, L to R: Alison Fragale, Rob Mullin, Candice (Berkman) Neusteen, Graham Westerberg

Class of 1998:
First row, L to R: Andrew Ross, Ari Ross, Brad Harrison, Julie (Medina) Gal-Or, Rohen Gal-Or, Faculty member Sue Whitney, Rick Siger
Second row, L to R: Damon Dlubak, David Chottiner, Bill Flannery, Eddie Watters, C.J. Sloan
Third row, L to R: Ed Levicoff, Chad Martin, David Brand, Bill Bruno, Jamie (Brush) Scott, Ben Roth

Class of 2003:
Kneeling in front, L to R: Elian Rosenfeld, Carli Siger, Max Petrunya, Molly Szramowski, Anicka Campell-Dollaghan
First row, L to R: Katie Caushaj, Kelsey Campell-Dollaghan, Zach Gumberg, Valerie Kamin, Katie (Dingess) Maikish, Lauren Fernstrom, Alexandra Stilson, Blair McGraw, Mike Schowalter, Ben Scott, Ben Portman, Christine Krauland, Patrick Sheridan, Mike Goldstein, John Mafia
Second row, L to R: Rochelle Panichelle, Colleen (Koch) Reed, Simi Singh, Josh Klein, Sarah Casey

Class of 2008:
Dhiren Shetty, Emily Harmon, Andy Weber, Tara Magge, Alex Petragnia, Vijay Kedar, Jenny Dawson, Ross Lampl, Jack Marous, Kurt Brendel, Jamie Egan, Caroline Washburn, Ben Kander, Alex Pitz, David Edwards, Ayse Baybars, Edwin Niederberger, Brendan Hannon, Andrew Klein, Hina Mahmoud
Outside the classroom, it’s almost Halloween, with the sugar-fueled merriment of trick-or-treating just days away.

Inside Mandy Fong’s eighth-grade Chinese language class at Shady Side Academy Middle School, it’s wàn sheng jié – the Mandarin phrase that literally translates into “All Saints Day.”

Her students take turns pulling plastic body parts and other creepy novelties out of a mystery jar. There’s a jack-o-lantern, fuzzy spider and ghost, as well as a bloody eyeball, a pair of lips and a severed rubber ear. What seems like a Halloween game is actually an excuse for these students to brush up on their Mandarin vocabulary at the start of their second full year of studying Chinese. A gui, they learn, is a ghost. A tang guo is a witch. A pumpkin is a wū pó.

Fong’s students repeat these phrases, practice writing them in Chinese characters and test them out in sentences with each other. There’s hardly an English word spoken in the room for the daily 50-minute class period, as Fong demands only Chinese responses from her students in a near-immersion learning experience.

“People think of Chinese as a hard language,” Fong says. “But this is my philosophy – I present it to my students as fun, and as a result they are so eager to study Chinese and they are really learning to become independent speakers.”

For more than a quarter-century, Senior School students at Shady Side have been learning to speak Mandarin and exploring Chinese culture and civilization. Now that program has expanded to the Middle School, so that Academy students have the exciting – and powerful – opportunity to study Chinese in grades 6 through 12.

“Three years ago, I set up the curriculum for sixth grade, and each year since, we’ve added a grade,” Fong says. “It’s finally complete this year through eighth grade, and we are very excited to see our students learning better and learning more when it comes to world languages.”
Shady Side continues to strengthen ties with Chinese language and culture

By Jennifer (Gross) Bails ’94

Middle School Chinese Teacher Mandy Fong
The Chinese program at Shady Side has a long and rich history, launched in 1987 by teacher Mei Wang Shao at a time when most independent schools still just offered any combination of Latin, German and one or two romance languages. Shao was an award-winning English teacher at a girls’ school in Shanghai when she applied for a one-year position as a visiting scholar to teach Chinese at the Senior School through a grant from the Benedum Foundation. She left her husband and two teenage children behind temporarily for the chance to come to Pittsburgh. A short-term position turned into an extraordinary 20-year career building Shady Side’s program for the study of Chinese language, as well as Asian history, society, literature and poetry.

At the outset, Shady Side’s Chinese program was so trailblazing that it even made headlines in the Pittsburgh Press, which reported in April 1990 that the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Pittsburgh Board of Education knew of no other high schools in southwestern Pennsylvania to offer the language.

“It’s the language of the future,” then-sophomore Eileen Faix ’92 told the paper. “A lot of business is opening up in China. If you understand the language, you have a head start.”

These words were prophetic, particularly for a high school student – and ring even truer today, as China has become a formidable global economic presence and a key player in world politics. It’s huge, it’s growing at record pace, and it’s becoming a dominant world power that all pundits agree we can ignore only at our own peril.

Preparing for a 21st-century world where China is a major cultural, economic and political force should start at a young age for American students, according to Academy President Tom Cangiano.

“China has become such a significant focus of attention for so many Americans, whether in business or education or government, that it’s vital for our students to have a better understanding of that country and its people,” Cangiano says. “It’s also just one example – and probably the most prominent example – of the ‘flat world’ as New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman describes it, where historical and geographical divisions become more and more irrelevant.”

Our increasingly “flat” world is one reason why Shady Side’s strategic vision calls for developing an international focus in its PK-12 curriculum that engages students in meaningful opportunities to develop global awareness and competency.

“All children are also different kinds of learners, so we wanted to find learning opportunities to fit those different styles. For instance, the written part of Chinese is very pictorial, which will suit our more artistic and visual learners.”

— Amy Nixon, Middle School Head

The trip comes at the perfect time after they’ve been studying Chinese for two or three years and can test their skills,” Lamb says. “Everything suddenly becomes very real. The sights, the sounds, the smells, the whole experience – it all feels different, and
you don’t know what that’s like until you can actually be there.”

Lamb is excited for the opportunity to teach his first students who will have more than two full years of Chinese under their belts from the Middle School.

Previously, Middle School students studied Latin in seventh grade and could then choose French, Spanish or Latin in eighth grade. Now, they rotate through a term each of Latin, Spanish and Chinese in sixth grade and then pick which language to pursue for the next two years.

“We wanted to give our kids more options and to have those options be meaningful and useful to them,” Middle School Head Amy Nixon says. “All children are also different kinds of learners, so we wanted to find learning opportunities to fit those different styles. For instance, the written part of Chinese is very pictorial, which will suit our more artistic and visual learners.”

In its first year, interest in the Chinese program exceeded Nixon’s wildest expectations, with more students choosing Chinese than Spanish or Latin. The balance has evened out now, but the program taught by Fong and part-time instructor Jia Li remains tremendously popular.

“I love hearing about kids who are ordering in Chinese with their families at restaurants,” Nixon says. “They know something their parents don’t know, and that’s very empowering for middle school students. It’s also a reminder to me that 12-year-olds are enormously capable. We sometimes underestimate them, but they are like little sponges and they’re picking it up more rapidly than we imagined they would.”

The success of the Middle School Chinese program is largely due to Fong’s exuberance, creativity and tireless passion for teaching – whether it’s bringing in a jar of plastic body parts on Halloween or igniting a debate among her students about how the concept of justice applies to imperialism in Asia in the 19th century.

The Taiwan native first came to the U.S. to pursue her M.B.A. at Ohio University and later founded the All Ages Chinese School, which provided an immersion experience for children ages 2-12 who had been adopted from China. She also taught as a Chinese instructor at several Pittsburgh-area schools.

Together with world languages learning area coordinator and sixth-grade Latin teacher Kelli Wood, Fong developed the Chinese curriculum, which teaches speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. Students also explore the geography, history and customs of Chinese-speaking countries.

“We are teaching them real language that they can actually use when they leave here, not just fluff,” Wood says. “And it’s some intense learning, but they are ready for it.”

Shady Side students staying with host families in Pittsburgh’s “Sister City” of Wuhan, China, (top) visited the Great Wall of China, (middle) and The Forbidden City, (bottom)
“Chinese kept me grounded and set me apart with valuable skills. And the fact that it is offered now in the Middle School is such a unique opportunity.” — Jordan Foley ’07

Just ask U.S. Navy Second Lieutenant Jordan Foley ’07, an aspiring submarine commander who recently returned to Shady Side to speak to Lamb’s Chinese classes. Foley studied Chinese throughout his years at Shady Side, majored in Chinese at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Md., and is now pursuing a master’s degree in technology policy at MIT.

Foley told the students how his Chinese skills from Shady Side allowed him to test into higher language levels at the Naval Academy. He believes studying Chinese gave him a leg up when he successfully interviewed for a spot in the Navy’s competitive submarine program typically reserved for engineers. It also helped him land his current research job studying Chinese space systems at the federally funded MIT Lincoln Laboratory.

“I talked to a lot of hopeful doctors and biomedical engineers in [Lamb’s] class who told me honestly that they aren’t interested in taking Chinese in college,” Foley says. “I told them to stick with it. Chinese kept me grounded and set me apart with valuable skills. And the fact that it is offered now in the Middle School is such a unique opportunity.”

Even if students don’t plan on running naval operations in the Pacific one day – or never even make it to China – learning Chinese is wonderful way to keep your brain active and develop strong learning skills, according to Foley.

“I remember sitting on my couch for hours with hundreds of note cards and a dry erase board to study the Chinese characters,” Foley says. “But once I got past my second year, it became more intuitive, and it has served as a bridge for everything I’ve done since.”

Many other Shady Side alumni are putting their Chinese skills to good use – whether it’s studying hydrofracking in the Sichuan province like Becky Tisherman ’09 or researching wild monkeys in China like anthropologist Ali Krzton ’02 (both Fulbright Grant winners).

Shady Side alumnus and trustee Spencer Todd ’89 moved his family to Shanghai in 2008 for two years while overseeing the Asia-Pacific region for Thermo Fisher Scientific.

“We very much embraced the fact that our kids had a special opportunity to live in China and have full immersion in another culture,” Todd says. “There’s nothing like seeing your kid in a market negotiating the price of an egg or an Abercrombie jacket in Chinese.”

Todd’s daughter, Abby, is now in seventh grade at Shady Side and has daily independent study in Chinese because her language skills are so advanced. Her brother Jack, a fifth grader, is catching up quickly.
“The more we can internationalize the experience for our students, the more we can open people’s eyes in both directions,” Todd says.

That’s why he’s thrilled that the China-Shady Side connection is expanding beyond the walls of the classroom, helping students be even better prepared to excel and lead in our rapidly changing global society.

Last spring, Cangiano traveled to China to visit Beijing School No. 4, and representatives from this highly prestigious school have toured the Shady Side campus with an interest in deepening ties between institutions through potential student and teacher exchanges and summer academic programming.

Through this budding partnership, a contingent of eight students from Beijing No. 4 Middle School spent two weeks in January at Shady Side’s Middle School and stayed with SSA host families during their visit. The visitors attended classes and enjoyed a special Chinese New Year celebration at SSA.

There’s growing interest among Chinese educators in sending their best and brightest students to U.S. independent schools like Shady Side, according to Cangiano. “They are realizing their top students may be well-served by the American-style pedagogy that focuses on critical thinking and communications skills rather than rote memorization,” he says.

For the first time, the Senior School has two Chinese nationals enrolled for the entire academic year. “Our students here in Pittsburgh are being exposed on a daily basis to new points of view and a different cultural milieu,” Cangiano says. “This kind of interchange broadens their experience and challenges their assumptions about the world.”

Cangiano’s own assumptions were challenged during his recent trip to China when he visited the Wuhan Foreign Language School in Central China. He traveled there to explore the possibility of expanding the existing reciprocal three-week exchange program with the school.

“The kids were so dynamic and outgoing, and their English was superb. They were the kinds of children we’d love to see at Shady Side and who would thrive here,” he says.

The potential also became evident last summer, when a group of students from the middle school attached to Huazhong University of Science and Technology in Wuhan came to Shady Side for a week through the U.S.-China Education Center. They participated in a camp program led by Senior School history teacher Rachel McCool and Kyle Smith that introduced them to American politics and culture.

Due to the camp’s success, the Academy is considering extending the length of the program to several weeks to really give the students the American summer camp experience. “Rather than one cool day spent with our own students, it becomes a lifelong friendship,” Chottiner says.

Watching these relationships develop even in just a week’s time has been incredibly rewarding and character-building for Shady Side students, according to Chottiner. The Chinese and American teens shared a common language of NBA basketball and pop music. But some topics required more careful diplomacy skills.

“We had some kids teach our visitors how to play ultimate Frisbee for the first time,” he recounts. “It was a communication lesson – and a lesson in friendship and in remaining calm. That kind of experience is invaluable, and it reminds us – both children and adults – that we are all essentially similar and share the same hopes and dreams.”
During the summer of 2013, several groups of Shady Side Academy Senior School students left Pittsburgh and ventured to different parts of the world.

By Marina Samad '12

In Summer 2013, Senior School science teacher Elyse Zheng took an adventurous group of 10 students to the Peruvian Amazon for a hands-on exploration of the wonders of the rainforest and to learn about the significance of its preservation. Four students joined a Classrooms Without Borders study seminar to Berlin and Prague, where history was learned through first-hand encounters with community leaders and historical sites. Finally, the Academy’s seven Parkin Fellows traveled all over the world to lend a helping hand to those in need. All of the students were grateful for their incredible experiences abroad and looked forward to sharing their gained knowledge with fellow students and colleagues.
The students who traveled to the Amazon participated in a 10-day Ecoteach workshop. While in Peru, the students worked with professors and scientists to do field research in the rainforest canopy. They also spent time looking for dolphins, tropical birds and other wildlife; learning about the indigenous Yagua culture; discovering the plants that local cultures use in the “ethnobotanical garden;” experiencing a sacred session with a Shaman; lending a helping hand in an Amazon village by painting a school and planting a vegetable garden; exploring the canopy at the Amazon Conservatory of Tropical Studies while learning about the insect life in the rainforest; and relaxing at the Ceiba Tops resort, hanging out with a variety of monkeys and macaws.

The travelers included seniors Charles Calabrese, Chris Grubbs, Rachel Kann, Sophie Wecht, Hayley Wyeth, Aine-Marie Policastro and Olivia Stokes, along with recent graduates Sydney Mordoh ’13, Rebecca Roman ’13 and Felicia Tissenbaum ’13. Wyeth explained her newfound love of the sloth: “They are the cutest little dudes ever. They grab onto you like a baby, and their three little claws get caught on your shirt and in your hair so that they’re literally attached to you. They’re always smiling, too.” Policastro shared, “I think the most memorable event for me was letting a tarantula crawl on my leg. It was kind of terrifying but was so exciting.”

While the students took advantage of every aspect of the trip, the central focus was to learn about rainforest preservation and awareness, and what can be done on a daily basis to help preserve the delicate forests. Zheng said, “Most of the oxygen for the world comes from the rainforest, and it also does a splendid job of cleaning up our air. We just need to make sure it’s still around.”

“As we toured the property, the only thing that most of us could think about was how such a horrific plan could come out of someplace so beautiful. The irony of it all puts things into perspective.”

— Noah Sprock ’13
Noah Sprock ’13, Dani Plung ’13, junior Mara Barron and senior Josh Levy, along with History Department Chair Kyle Smith, English Department Chair Linda Joseph and world languages teacher Suzanne Belles, embarked on a 10-day study seminar with Classrooms Without Borders in Berlin and Prague. The travelers experienced first-hand the history of these ancient places, their roles in the Holocaust and their transformations into modern European centers.

While in Berlin, the group met with prominent Jewish leaders, toured several museums, and visited historical sites and memorials including the Reichstag. In Prague, the students toured the sights of the city, as well as the Holocaust-era and other historical Jewish places, such as a concentration camp.

Sprock shared extra appreciation for the Wannsee Villa in Berlin, describing it in great detail: “The villa overlooks a large body of water and is honestly one of the most beautiful houses I’ve ever seen. The Wannsee Villa is where the historic Wannsee Conference was held, the meeting in which senior Nazi officials developed the final solution for the Jews. As we toured the property, the only thing that most of us could think about was how such a horrific plan could come out of someplace so beautiful. The irony of it all puts things into perspective.”

Smith, who has been involved with Classrooms Without Borders for a couple of years now, shared an interesting perspective on the trip, stating, “The past is, literally, all around us. I believe that this type of educational experience is absolutely vital for teachers and students. Having read widely on the subject of the Holocaust and World War II, I have found that there is a limit to what one can understand about these events from a distance. Being in the places that these events occurred, and more importantly, talking with people who directly experienced them, is the best way to develop empathy and a true understanding of the past.”

The Parkin Fellowships for Global Service are awarded each year to a select group of students thanks to the generosity of Fred Parkin ’59. In summer 2013, a group of seven students completed environmental or global service projects around the world. Senior Madison Taylor served as a mentor and tutor for 40 girls at Hekima Place in Kiserian, Kenya; senior Sophie Abo traveled to an organic...
carrot farm in southern Ireland; senior Akul Mitra volunteered at an orphanage in Sing Bun, Thailand; senior Anna Malone traveled to Ladyville, Belize, to work with special needs orphans; junior Philip King coached basketball and worked with autistic children in the Galapagos; senior Rebkah Tesfamariam spent time in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, befriending high-risk children and teaching them English and math; and junior Vinay Umapathy stayed at the Kigio Wildlife Reserve in Kenya, helping its conservation effort.

Since the Parkin Fellows were so far away from home, they all had to adjust to lifestyle changes in their respective countries. King said, “the biggest lifestyle change for me was that the running water and electricity would go out periodically” Tesfamariam stated, “The biggest lifestyle difference for me was how open and friendly everyone was. It took me a week or two to realize the culture there is way more relaxed than ours.”

For Umapathy, his Parkin Fellowship helped to foster what he believed to be a very important part of doing good in the world. “My decision to attend this program was made primarily due to my heavy interest in zoology and ecology. Moreover, I have a personal belief that every habitat, human or non-human, has a significant effect on the entire planet, and by attempting to help at least one of these habitats, perhaps the world can begin to change for the better.”

Similarly, Malone had a solid idea going into her trip of what she wanted to do while abroad. She said, “I knew I wanted to work with children with special needs, and I found a program in Belize. Since this was the first time I have ever been outside of the country, I felt more comfortable staying closer to home. I picked Belize and it was probably the best decision I have ever made.”

Taylor’s trip made her realize the importance of helping others in a way that is not necessarily monetary: “I felt a little guilty coming home to my life in Pittsburgh, while I left my new friends in Kenya in their same conditions. Additional service to Hekima from the United States is limited, and the best way to help them is to make the trip to Kenya and live with the girls firsthand. Rather than donations of money, these girls need donations of time and love.”

The Parkin Fellows left their service trips with new life lessons packed in their suitcases. Taylor reflected, “I think a lot of people come into a third-world country with an ‘I can change the world’ attitude. What I learned on my Parkin is that this attitude will not get you far. In a country like Kenya, where everything is based off of set-in-stone tradition, immediate change is not possible. The best thing to do is focus on the small changes you can make. When you help an eighth grader score the game-winning goal during the weekly Sunday soccer game, that’s when you know you’ve made a difference.”

Tesfamariam agreed, saying, “This trip made me realize that volunteering doesn’t have to be out of the country and take a lot of planning, but even a spontaneous trip to the Boys & Girls Club can make a difference in a child’s life. It really makes me rethink my idea of making a difference, because it can be as simple as taking time to color with a child for half an hour or reading a book to a small group of kids.”

Malone is holding a fundraiser “to raise money for the children to have their first memorable Christmas” and is also writing them letters to help secure the friendships that she made. King reflected, “Through my trip I realized how privileged I am not only to go to SSA but to live in the United States. I realized not everyone has all the things I take for granted.”

Whether in the Amazon, Germany, Prague or Kenya, it is safe to say that the students who traveled abroad this summer had some incredible experiences. Not only did they experience new cultures, but they also gained a fresh understanding of how people in other parts of the world live and how they can make a difference. Sprock summed it up perfectly: “You can only get so much from a typical classroom setting, and that’s why trips of this nature are so important.”

“I believe that this type of educational experience is absolutely vital for teachers and students.” — Kyle Smith, Senior School history teacher
New Members of the Board of Trustees

Rob Cochran
President and CEO, #1 Cochran

Rob Cochran is president and CEO of #1 Cochran, Western Pennsylvania’s largest automotive retailer and one of the top private dealer groups in the nation. Under Cochran’s direction, the company operates 21 dealerships throughout metropolitan Pittsburgh, employs more than 750 team members and has been named one of Pittsburgh’s Top Workplaces. Cochran also serves as chairman of the Pennsylvania Automotive Association and is active on the board of directors of Family House, Cancer Caring Center, Junior Achievement and the Pittsburgh Public Theater. He is graduate of Carnegie Mellon University with dual degrees in applied mathematics and industrial management. He and his wife, Christina, have five children, Olivia ’14, Faith ’15, Eliza ’17, Will ’19 and Hugh.

Debbie Demchak
Board of Directors, The Pittsburgh Promise; Community Council, The Bethlehem Haven

Debbie Demchak currently serves on the board of directors for The Pittsburgh Promise, the community council of Bethlehem Haven and is a member of the women’s committee of the Carnegie Museum. She also serves on the SSA Parents’ Association. She is a graduate of Smith College with a B.A. in political science. She previously worked for JP Morgan in New York City as vice president in institutional fixed income sales, but moved to Pittsburgh in 2002 when her husband took a job with PNC. She and her husband, Bill, have three children, Tyler ’15, Jack ’18 and Sydney ’22.

Jeffrey McDaniel ’88
Executive-in-Residence, Innovation Works

Jeffrey McDaniel ’88 is an executive-in-residence at Innovation Works Inc. Innovation Works invests capital, business expertise and other resources into high-potential companies with the greatest likelihood for regional economic impact in the Pittsburgh region. He currently serves on the board of directors of the Manchester Bidwell Corporation, as well as on the boards of several local companies as part of his role at Innovation Works. A Shady Side “lifer,” McDaniel received a B.S. from the United States Naval Academy and a J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. He and his wife, Julie Goetz, have two children, Noah ’16 and Charlotte ’21.

T. Spencer Todd ’89
Vice President of Business Development and Strategy, Thermo Fisher Scientific

T. Spencer Todd ’89 is vice president of business development and strategy for Thermo Fisher Scientific. He has held numerous leadership positions in sales, operations and general management, most recently leading the Fisher Scientific Asia regions through a period of rapid growth. He currently serves on the board of directors for Littleford Day Company and is involved in several Pittsburgh charitable organizations. Todd is a Shady Side “lifer” and holds a B.A. from St. Lawrence University and an M.B.A. from the University of Chicago. He and his wife, Wendy, have two children, Abby ’19 and Jack ’21.
NEW FACULTY AND STAFF

Jose Aldrighetti joined the Middle School as a part-time Spanish teacher. Aldrighetti previously taught at Carlow University, Westmoreland Community College and Taylor Allderdice High School. He received a B.A. in Spanish from Pennsylvania State University and an M.A. in foreign language education from the University of Pittsburgh.

Wesley Ballantine joined the history faculty at the Senior School. A graduate of St. Lawrence University, where he majored in history, Ballantine came to SSA after completing his master’s degree in education at Columbia University Teachers College. He previously taught at Greenwich Country Day School.

Nicholas Hammon joined the pre-kindergarten faculty. He has worked with the Junior School After School Explorers program since 2008, and served as director of media arts at SSA Day Camp Discovery since 2009. He earned a B.A. from the University of Pittsburgh and an M.S. from Duquesne University.

Bernadette Howson joined the Alumni & Development Office as assistant director of annual giving. She holds a B.A. from St. Mary’s College and an M.S.W. from Loyola University in Chicago, with a focus on nonprofit management. She subsequently worked at the American Brain Tumor Association and the University of Pittsburgh Medical and Health Sciences Foundation.

Ashley Irwin joined the Junior School as a full-time art teacher. She previously taught art within the State College Area School District and headed many private art camps. She is a practicing artist and designer with her own line of products. She has an A.Ed. from Pennsylvania State University.

Jia Li joined the Middle School as a part-time Chinese teacher. She received her B.A. in Chinese language education from Tonghua Teachers College, her M.A. in Chinese language from Remin University, and an M.A. in education from San Francisco State University. Li has taught Chinese at the University of Pittsburgh and Robert Morris University.

Elena Marusak joined the Senior School as a French teacher. She is a graduate of Carnegie Mellon University, where she completed a practicum in Intermediate French I and explored her research interest in language acquisition and technology through her work on three online language courses.

Chana Messinger joined the Senior School mathematics faculty. She is a graduate of University of Chicago with a B.A. in mathematics. At the University of Chicago, she worked as a math tutor and virtual communications intern at Foundation Beyond Belief, a charity organization.

Tina Nussbaum Wagler joined the Academy as the director of the SSA Farms. An avid vegetable gardener, Nussbaum Wagler earned her B.A. from Goshen College. She previously taught high school biology and chemistry, and completed fieldwork in evolutionary genetics with a focus on the domestication of maize.

Pamela Onest joined the Middle School faculty as a sixth-grade English teacher. She previously taught at Winchester Thurston, as well as Friends Select School and Germantown Academy in the Philadelphia area. Onest received her B.A. in English from Franklin & Marshall College and her M.A. in English from the University of Delaware.

Dr. Scott Peterson joined the Senior School science faculty. He earned a B.S. in chemistry, an M.E. in environmental engineering and a Certificate in Advanced International Affairs from Texas A&M University. He later earned a Ph.D. from Carnegie Mellon University in engineering and public policy.

Samantha Plummer joined the Academy as service learning coordinator. Prior to SSA, she completed two terms of service with AmeriCorps. A Ph.D. candidate in sociology at the University of Pittsburgh, Plummer also has served as a teaching assistant for undergraduate courses in sociology and statistics.

Gerri Primak joined the Junior School as a pre-kindergarten teacher. A native of Pittsburgh, she previously taught in Maryland, North Carolina and Massachusetts. She has a B.A. from Pennsylvania State University and an M.Ed. from the University of Maryland.

Shannon Sculli joined the pre-kindergarten faculty. She previously taught elementary school in Fauquier County, Va., and at Carnegie Mellon University’s Cyert Center for Early Education. She has a B.S. from Duquesne University and an M.S. from Carnegie Mellon University.

Michael Solomon joined the Senior School as a history teacher. He earned a B.A. in history from Gettysburg College, and an M.A. in history from Duquesne University. Prior to Shady Side, he was an adjunct history professor at the University of Pittsburgh and Duquesne University, and taught history at the Neighborhood Academy.

David Vadnais joined the Middle School as a math teacher. He received his B.A. in mathematics from Castleton State College and his M.S. in instructional leadership from Robert Morris University. For the past nine years, he taught at The Ellis School.

Tim Winner joined the Academy as director of educational technology. He earned his B.S. from the University of Pittsburgh and his M.S. from Nova Southeastern. He began his career as a high school math and computer teacher before serving as technology director for three different school districts, including 11 years at the Baldwin-Whitehall School District.

Dr. Minhnoi Wroble joined the Senior School mathematics faculty, having previously taught statistics, research methodology, education and psychology courses at the University of Pittsburgh, Chatham University and Pennsylvania State University. She has a two bachelor’s degrees from Carnegie Mellon University, as well as a master’s degree and doctorate from the University of Pittsburgh.

Renee Zingaro joined the Athletics Department as an assistant athletic trainer. Zingaro previously worked at Seton Hill University, through Excela Health Physicians Practice. She has a B.S. from Messiah College and an M.S. from California University of Pennsylvania.
HILLMAN PERFORMING ARTS SERIES: 2014 Lineup
By Hannah Casamento / Photography provided by performers

In 2014, the Hillman Performing Arts Series continues its exciting programming with national and international acts.

The second half of the 2013-2014 season begins on Feb. 15 with Cirque Zuma Zuma, a high-energy performance that combines the mysticism of Africa with the excitement of theatrical cirque. An evening with colorfully costumed vocalists, dancers, musicians, contortionists and tumblers will be the ultimate cultural experience for the entire family.

Up next is Broadway’s Next Hit Musical on March 8, 2014. In this spontaneous performance, the cast creates an improvised musical, complete with memorable characters, witty dialogue and plot twists, all based on a song selected by the audience.

On April 5, Erth’s Dinosaur Zoo joins the Hillman to honor Earth Day. In this interactive performance, kids and adults alike will be amazed as a paleontologist introduces life-like dinosaur puppets.

The season closes with a special event – A Conversation With Michael Pollan on May 14. Local chef Bill Fuller will interview the best-selling author about his explorations of nature and culture.

When Erth’s Dinosaur Zoo graces the Richard E. Rauh stage in April, it will mark the first time that the continent of Australia has been represented in the Hillman Series. In Erth’s Dinosaur Zoo, large-scale dinosaur puppets stimulate the audience’s imagination and engage the audiences’ mind with the real science of paleontology. Children are invited not only to pet the dinosaurs, but also to help feed them. The show features a variety of dinosaurs and creatures that once roamed the southern continent of Gondwanaland. The visual experiences, consisting of giant puppetry, stilts-walkers, inflatable environments and flying creatures, are a testament of Erth’s dedication to engaging their audience. It takes a large team of illustrators, sculptors, painters, engineers, textile artists and sound designers to yield these aesthetically bold productions.

The continents of Africa, Asia, Europe and South America have been featured in past seasons of the Hillman Series, with European (Aquila theatre) and African (Cirque Zuma Zuma) returning for the 2013-2014 season as well.

HILLMAN Performing Arts Series 2013 - 2014

ALL SHOWS SATURDAYS AT 7:30 PM
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MICHAEL POLLAN

TO ORDER TICKETS: www.thehillman.org or 412-968-3040
“I wanted to explore how cinematic representations of ethnic minority people, those living on the margins, fit into the larger political context of Mao’s socialist modernization projects.”
The minute Benny Shaffer ’05 landed in China, his senses went into overdrive. The junior at Shady Side Academy took it all in – the aroma of lamb kebob barbecue wafting from street vendors’ grills, the masses of people streaming by, the flash of red and yellow neon. As he walked along the chaotic streets of Wuhan, he recognized many Mandarin characters he had been learning in Mei Wang Shao’s class, the beloved teacher who had organized the three-week exchange trip.

It was the spring of 2004, and Shaffer was excited to be in a country undergoing so many rapid transformations. He vowed to return to China and master the notoriously difficult language. “It was an awakening,” he said.

In 2005, Shaffer went on to Columbia University, majoring in East Asian languages and cultures. He spent his junior year abroad in Kunming in southwest China to sharpen his skills. He also stumbled upon a few bootleg films that changed his course of study. In his dorm room, he watched Five Golden Flowers, a romance/propaganda movie made about the Bai minority people in Dali, and a few other films made about ethnic minorities during the Maoist period.

“I felt the films gave me insights into the politics and history of the region,” he said. “I saw these films and became interested in the anthropology of media. I wanted to explore how cinematic representations of ethnic minority people, those living on the margins, fit into the larger political context of Mao’s socialist modernization projects.”

Today, the 26-year-old Shaffer is delving deeper into independent Chinese film as he earns a doctoral degree in anthropology at Harvard University. His research focuses on independent cinema, contemporary art and popular performance troupes in China.

He also makes his own films, videos and audio recordings as part of Harvard’s Sensory Ethnography Lab. The idea behind this evolving branch of anthropology is to engage and document cultures not only with words, but through the sensory dimensions of cultural experience.

Making and studying film in China seems the perfect convergence of interests for Shaffer, who grew up loving movies and being fascinated by the larger world from the vantage point of a small town in Pennsylvania.

New Wilmington, Pa., about an hour north of Pittsburgh, has less than 2,500 inhabitants. The home of Westminster College is so pastoral that Amish buggies share the roads with cars. “This harmonious co-existence of two very different cultures influenced Benny,” said Shaffer’s mother, Mary.

As a kid, he had a keen interest in other countries. By fourth grade in public school, he’d won a local geography bee and became aware that the distance around the Earth along the Equator was about 24,000 miles. A couple of years later, he was asked to write a paper on where he would go if he could travel through time. The future China scholar wrote that he would like to visit the Tang Dynasty, citing its invention of paper money and its beautiful artwork on porcelain vases. “He was always interested in becoming a traveler,” said Mary Shaffer, who found the telling memento recently.
He also was empathetic, a trait that would help him as an anthropologist living and working with groups on the margins of society. “Even as a young child, he worried about other people’s rights and their troubles and difficulties,” Mary Shaffer said. “He considered himself a lucky child and worried about other people not having these things. He was drawn to older people at our church. He was interested in their histories and stories.”

The family would go to movies frequently, and Mary would encourage Benny and his younger sister, Jackie ’07, to watch the credits afterward so they could appreciate everyone who had contributed.

Shaffer grew up playing ice hockey as the goaltender for a traveling team. During games, he befriended some players from Shady Side Academy, which had just built a new ice arena. They told him he should come to Shady Side, planting the seed for him to enroll as a boarder for high school.

“At first, I was intimidated because there were so many serious students, but then I adjusted and took advantage of the opportunity to study in a more challenging environment,” Shaffer said. “To balance academics with my hobbies, I played hockey, Ultimate Frisbee, and was a percussionist for various music ensembles. Shady Side was the perfect place for me.”

He loved life in the dorm, and he and his roommate, Senthil Selvaraj, started a juggling club, offering lessons in Chinese Yo-Yo, plate spinning and ball juggling on the quad. To their surprise, the club was a hit and took on a life of its own. Students joined with their own circus skills, such as stilt-walking, and would showcase them at the school’s performing arts events. The juggler’s club became a popular stress reliever on campus. Another interest for Shaffer was playing drums in a band called The Wakes with Chet Vincent ’03 and Mike Yarsky ’04.

Selvaraj, still a close friend, said, “Benny is one of the most sincere and genuine people that I have met. He is wonderfully friendly and has a very calming demeanor.” His senior year, Benny was the recipient of one of the Fides Awards, where seniors honor peers whom they identify as unsung heroes.

Shaffer studied Chinese for four years with Ms. Shao, sometimes cooking, sharing dinner and conversing with her on campus. Charismatic and nurturing, the retired teacher remains a mentor whom he visits when he passes through Shanghai, where she now spends half of her year.

At Columbia University, he completed his undergraduate thesis, which discussed the history of the visual anthropology program at Yunnan University, as well the rise of independent documentary production and exhibition in Yunnan. In the summer of 2008, he met Yi Sicheng, the director of Yunfest, a famous independent film festival in China. Shaffer soon was hanging out at the offices of Yunfest watching videos in their screening room. “They were young and very excited about the curatorial work they were doing,” he said of the Yunfest staff. “Their perspectives were illuminating. They introduced me to an emerging canon of Chinese independent cinema.”

Although China has often been represented as an enormous, monolithic culture, the documentaries Shaffer watched from the Yunfest archive painted a more complicated and diverse
A picture of daily life in their communities. In his undergraduate thesis, Shaffer became interested in the notion of “vanishing cultures,” as anthropologists in Yunnan used the term to describe the impact of tourism on communities of ethnic minorities. It seemed to parallel anthropological movements in early 20th-century North America, which sought to document and preserve indigenous cultures that were seen as vanishing. His thesis tried to grapple with the question of why anthropologists analyzed changing cultural practices as though they were no longer living and belonged in a museum. “I find it problematic to say that someone’s culture is vanishing or dying when it actually might just be changing into something else,” he argued. “I wanted to see where the agency of people living in these communities fit in.”

After graduating from Columbia in 2009, he returned to China on a prestigious Fulbright Research Fellowship, studying community-based video projects in rural Yunnan Province. In these programs, cultural heritage organizations trained villagers to use handheld video cameras to capture the rhythms of daily life in their communities.

It was on this trip to China in 2009 that he encountered another distinct community – the performers at The Kingdom of the Little People in Kunming. The little people gave theatrical performances at the park for tourists. During breaks, Shaffer would get to know them and learn about their backgrounds and experiences. They, in turn, were fascinated by the young man from America who spoke Chinese so well.

For part of three summers, he hung out with them, watching TV, playing cards and learning about their lives. “On one level, they were being exploited and being put on display,” Shaffer said. “But it was complicated, because the performers would struggle and fail to find work elsewhere, and these jobs at the theme park gave them a bit of security, even if they received very low wages.”

After Shaffer gained their trust, the performers allowed him to make a video about their lives. In one scene, he shows two little people cleaning vegetables. Other times, the camera follows them inside their cramped dorm rooms or on stage during a fantastical performance. The tempo of his video is deliberately slow, capturing their feelings of isolation and the monotony of their daily routines.

He let the subjects watch his video. “Most found it boring. Some found it funny. Some found it moving. There was a range of reactions,” said Shaffer, who plans to visit them on return trips.

Not every filmmaker or researcher finds lasting friendship during the process of doing fieldwork. But Selvaraj said, “Benny’s warmth, I’m sure, helped him form immediate bonds with many individuals. He makes friends quickly, which is not always easy in a foreign country.”

After his Fulbright year, Shaffer remained in China and became a translator and editor for LEAP, the international art magazine of contemporary China in Beijing. While working at the magazine, he wrote stories about independent cinema and film schools – articles that were translated into Chinese.

In 2011, he enrolled at Harvard. After two years of coursework, he is a teaching assistant with a demanding workload, but he also finds time to play drums in a band called Silkies, who will be performing this March at a radio station’s showcase in Austin, Texas, during South by Southwest.

Recently, he organized a traveling exhibition of films from Yunfest, which brought several new and innovative cinematic works to academic institutions in the U.S. Although Yunfest was canceled this year, due to complications with local authorities in China, Shaffer helped bring the festival’s head curator and two filmmakers from China to Harvard, as well as to UnionDocs in Brooklyn, N.Y.

When talking about the recent Yunfest programs in the U.S., Shaffer said, “The organizers of Yunfest work to curate a program that showcases innovative cinematic approaches, not just films about relevant social issues in China. They create an open platform for people to engage with larger questions about how cinematic tools are used to express the filmmaker’s vision of the world, as it is, or as it can be imagined.”

In graduate school, Shaffer teaches and does research in Cambridge during the school year and returns to China during the summers to do his fieldwork. Of conducting his interviews in Chinese, he said, “I am fluent now, but I see learning Chinese as a lifelong project. I keep learning new idioms and expressions.”

Flying between the two countries, he experiences culture shock – but usually on the return trip home, especially when he goes from a country of 1.3 billion back to his tiny hometown to visit his parents and his sister.

He has started two new anthropological projects, one in each country. In China he works with traveling performers, some of them tightrope walkers of Uyghur ethnicity, a Muslim minority group who live on the far northwestern edge of China. He’s also studying Uyghur language, which is closer to Turkish than Chinese. Closer to home, he is working on a project in Braddock, Pa., which is a portrait recorded on 16mm film about how people relate to landscape in a once booming steel town.

Whether he’s working on projects in the Mon Valley or in the hinterlands of China, anthropology both expands his world and makes it seem more connected. “With anthropology, you get to spend extended periods of time with people,” he said.

“You think of things from the perspective of others, and get a sense of what they value and what they care about. They’re often the same things we care about – having a stable job, having a partner of some kind, having friends and community and good food. There is so much overlap.”
Every semester, Omar Matadar ’00 stands at the lectern and speaks in flawless Arabic to the new crop of students at the Qasid Arabic Institute in Jordan. He greets diplomats, journalists and many other Westerners who have traveled here to immerse themselves in a language that is soaring in popularity.

A few minutes into his speech, he switches from Arabic to American English. He watches the students’ eyes widen in surprise as they realize he is not from the Middle East. “I bet you didn’t expect an accent like this to come from this beard,” said Matadar, an Indian-American who blends in well with the Jordanian crowds.

As the director of the Qasid Arabic Institute, Matadar switches effortlessly from Arabic to English, from Middle Eastern to Western customs. His job is to develop teaching strategies and shape the curriculum for the institute, which specializes in Arabic language studies.

Matadar, a Pittsburgh native who has lived in Jordan for the past eight years, is also the liaison and first point of administrative contact for 150 to 200 students, many of whom are American or European.

Matadar, after all, knows what it is like to get off the plane in Amman. He knows how daunting it is for a Westerner to learn Arabic, a language with its own script and regional dialects. He knows the culture shock of living in a country where water is rationed, bureaucracy is often glacially slow, and dress and social customs are starkly different than those in Western culture.

From 2004 to 2006, he studied at the Qasid Institute and remembers the puzzled stares he drew back home when he told people he was journeying to Jordan to study Arabic. “Jordan? Where’s Jordan?” They would say. “Why do you want to go to Jordan? Isn’t it dangerous over there?” His students have dealt with the same incredulous looks.

From this unconventional path, Matadar forged a distinguished career. He was such a standout student that he was hired as part of the institute’s administration and serves on the board. “I can say, without qualification, he is far and away the most beloved director the staff has ever had,” said the school’s founder, Mohamed Marei. “He is liked and respected, not because he is a pushover, but because he is fair. He has created a culture that many Jordanians simply don’t find in other companies – very progressive and family-friendly.”

His command of the language often astounds his colleagues, many of whom are native speakers who hold doctorates in Arabic linguistics.

“When I have a conversation with Omar, he will quote to...
me some Arab proverb I am not familiar with,” Marei said. “And I grew up in a household where Arabic was spoken. Here is an American-born kid of Indian ethnicity telling me Arab proverbs, and it is always appropriate. You don’t often come across someone who has gotten beyond using it in a thoughtful, communicative way to being almost poetic.”

Mastering a foreign language – let alone Arabic – wasn’t on Matadar’s radar growing up. He aspired to more conventional professions such as lawyer and doctor.

The second son of parents who emigrated from India, Matadar was born in Morgantown, W.Va., but lived in Fox Chapel and Nevillewood outside Pittsburgh as a child. His father, Akbar, said his son was an especially big-hearted boy, who even at the age of 4 would help a frail, elderly person out of a car and perform other kind deeds. As Matadar grew older, he would be the one inquiring about people’s health, offering rides to friends. “He was always caring about other people’s needs first,” Akbar said. “He put human values over material ones.”

Matadar attended Shady Side Academy starting in first grade and boarded there during high school. He was member of the lacrosse team, president of his freshman class and the lead in the school musical, Little Shop of Horrors. He also served as the Shady Side Academy Class of 2000 representative to the office of Allegheny County Executive Jim Roddey.

He developed an interest in philosophy, thanks to the engaging teaching style of Dr. John Sutula. “The personal attention he gave to his students was remarkable,” Matadar said. “He would make an appointment with students, walk around campus and talk to them as part of the final exam. He was an amazing man.” Matadar would remember the importance of that connection with his teacher years later when he became an instructor of Arabic.

Upon graduating from Shady Side Academy, Matadar attended George Washington University, majoring in art history and philosophy. The seed that Dr. Sutula planted in high school only deepened there. “Plato and Socrates and the big questions appealed to me,” he said. “Philosophy, more so than other majors, was a place I could grow as a person.”

In time, studying Arabic would serve the same purpose, allowing him to grow as his knowledge of the language and culture deepened. But his first Arabic class was an afterthought, just something to fulfill a curriculum requirement. As a college freshman, he signed up for Spanish, the language he had studied at Shady Side. But the section was full. He scanned the course offerings. There was an Arabic class. Why not? he thought.

He didn’t take to Arabic right away and even fell behind in his studies that first year. But his professor must have seen something in him. She recommended that he attend an intensive summer program in Arabic at Middlebury College in Vermont. He excelled. The spark was ignited.

Matadar threw himself into the challenge of learning a language that is so labor-intensive that one government report showed it takes 2,000 to 2,200 contact hours to achieve fluency, compared to 1,000 to 1,200 for Spanish. The thrill of discovering Arabic gave Matadar a deeper appreciation of other languages. In fact, he started to learn some of the Urdu his parents spoke at home.

After graduating from college, he advanced his studies by becoming a student at the Qasid Institute. His older brother, Faisal ’97, was in Jordan as a teacher at Qasid. So it seemed like a good destination. People looked at him strangely. Why Arabic? His father nudged him about his plans to go to law school – a plan he kept deferring.

The baffled looks from peers were hard to take sometimes. “It seemed strange,” Matadar said. “It was not in line with what my friends were doing.”

But he had the drive to master both formal Arabic and the many regional dialects. To learn a new language as an adult, a person has to be willing to go out on the streets and risk making errors. “One of the things that put Omar in an elite class of language learners is that he realized from day one that learning the language is learning the culture,” Marei said. “He...
A
fter completing the program at Qasid in 2006, he took it upon himself to dive into an even deeper knowledge of Arabic. He spent a year in the United Arab Emirates, studying classical literature and poetry one-on-one with a scholar. Teacher and pupil would meet for 10 to 12 hours a day, reading and discussing great works written in standard Arabic, not the dialect Matadar had been exposed to on the streets of Jordan. “It was a real period of growth,” he said. “When I came back to Jordan, they really saw a change.”

Equipped with enhanced language skills, in January 2007 he joined the staff of the Qasid Institute as part of the Student Services Department. In August of that year, he was made managing director of the institute until he was promoted to director in September 2008.

Even as a top administrator, he tries to do some teaching. He also gives students advice and encouragement as they deal with the culture shock to changes such as weekly water rations. “They get frustrated by the fact that they are frustrated,” he said. “They thought they would be able to handle it better than they are handling it. I tell the students that it is all part of the experience. I still have culture shock to this day.”

Omar with wife, Meher Shaikh and son, Mohammed.

Matadar also has sought out Fulbright Scholars whose language training has been cut short by the unrest in neighboring Syria, Yemen and Egypt. After their language programs were cancelled, they received invitations from Matadar to study at the Qasid Institute. “He took a leadership role,” Marei said. “He made sure there was a safe space for them academically, and they had counseling available once they arrived in Jordan.”

If Jordan is a safe haven for western scholars in the Middle East, it also has been a safe place for Matadar, his wife (a native of Pakistan) and their two-year-old son, Mohammed.

“It is funny, Jordan is one of the safest countries I have ever lived in,” Matadar said. “My wife and I go out all hours of the night, and we don't feel unsafe.”

For all his scholarly qualities – Marei affectionately calls him an Arabic geek – Matadar also has a clever wit. “If he ever decides that education professional services are not for him, he could have an alternate career as a comedian,” Marei said. “He is hilarious. There is a lightness about him. You know the layover test – who would you want to be stuck in an airport with during a layover – Omar would be at the top of my list.”

Though he misses his family in the United States, Matadar is comfortable in Jordan and has regular contact with his brother, who lives in Northern Virginia and teaches Arabic through Qasid’s online program.

Mastering a second language and living in a new culture has even added new dimensions to Matadar’s personality. “My wife says I become a different person when I speak Arabic – open, louder, more outgoing.”

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FIELD HOCKEY – WPIAL CHAMPIONS

By Gigi Ruppel ’14

For the third year in a row, the field hockey team was crowned WPIAL champions, finishing the regular season 9-8-2. The team pulled off a 2-1 overtime victory against Winchester Thurston to clinch the WPIAL title, but fell short in the PIAA playoffs to Forbes Road, losing 5-1. Coach Erin Weir and the team finished the season with their heads high and hopes of another WPIAL title next year.

GIRLS SOCCER – WPIAL CHAMPIONS

By Olivia Cochran ’14

The girls soccer team compiled an overall record of 21-4, only falling to Class AAA Fox Chapel and section rival Greensburg Central Catholic. Led by captains Olivia Cochran and Maggie Scott and senior Zoe Schoen, highlights of the season included winning the Ambridge Labor Day Tournament for the fourth year in a row, beating Deer Lakes 5-0 at the new Highmark Stadium, and two big wins over Springdale. Under first-year head coach Mary Lynch, the team captured the WPIAL Class A Championship, defeating two-time defending WPIAL and PIAA champion Greensburg Central Catholic, 4-2. It marked the second WPIAL title for the SSA program, which earned its first crown in 2010.
GIRLS TENNIS
By Liza Plakseychuk ’14
The girls tennis team had another undefeated regular season, going 14-0 under the coaching of Tom Mercer and Rachel McCool. Sophomore Ananya Dua placed second in section singles to qualify for the WPIAL singles tournament. The duos of Amanda Murphy and Liza Plakseychuk, and Madison Mordoh and Devin Gramley, placed second and third in section doubles, moving them on to the WPIAL doubles tournament. The team earned a WPIAL runner-up finish, falling to North Allegheny 4-1 in the finals, then advanced to the PIAA quarterfinals before falling to Metachacton 3-2. It was a great season and the team is looking forward to next year.

FOOTBALL
By Dennis Briggs ’14
The football team had a great year, finishing the regular season with an 8-2 overall record and a 7-1 conference mark. Heading the standout team were senior captains Dennis Briggs, Jarred Brevard, Chuck Calabrese and Tyrel Hill. Under the leadership of 10th year Head Coach Dave Havern, SSA clinched a playoff spot for the fifth year in a row. The boys closed out the season with a loss in the first round of the WPIAL Class AA Championship.

GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY
By Rebkah Tesfamariam ’14
Ten seniors led the girls cross country team with different levels of experience but the same dedication. Under the direction of coaches Sue Whitney and Heidi Wall, the team finished the season 6-2 and placed eighth out of 21 teams at the WPIAL Championships with 209 points. The top individual finishers were freshman Lindsey Stauber, who earned 24th place (21:48), and sophomore Emily Natoli, who earned 26th place (21:49). The large team and returning underclassmen will surely continue the success next year.
boys briefs

BOYS GOLF
By Patrick Bush ’15
The boys golf team was a young team, consisting of only sophomore and junior players, but they played consistently, finishing the season 7-6. Coached by Brett Bergman ’05, the team showed the discipline and skill needed to succeed. Showing a promising future, sophomore Jack Katarincic shot an 87 to place 20th overall at the PIAA Class AAA West Regional Championship. The young squad will continue to improve and is looking forward to next season.

GIRLS GOLF
By Angela Fazio ’15
The 2013 girls golf team went 8-2 for the season, with both losses against rival Penn Trafford. Freshman Casey Morrow placed eighth at the WPIAL Championship with a score of 84. With the help and support of coach Helene Gosse and assistant coach Keagan Boriand, the team grew and achieved a goal of consistently shooting under 200 strokes in competitive matches and qualifying for WPIALs. The 2013 team had no seniors, and the returning girls are looking forward to a competitive 2014 season.

BOYS CROSS COUNTRY
By Max and Zac Prizant ’14
For the third straight year, the boys cross country team claimed the title of section champions. Under the guidance of coaches Paul Ejzak and Tom Colt, the team also went undefeated in the regular season. The varsity squad, consisting of senior co-captains Max Prizant and Zac Prizant, senior Adam D’Angelo, junior Harper Dowd, sophomore Connor Colombo and freshman Gannon Leech, showed great leadership and perseverance. Season highlights included Leech and Colombo medaling at the Altoona Invitational and the team finishing fifth at the WPIAL Championships. Leech and Colombo both qualified for the PIAA Championships, with Leech placing 60th out of 224 runners (17:55), and Colombo placing 81st (18:09).

2013 FALL ATHLETIC RECORDS

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BOYS SOCCER
By Evan Brazinski ’14
The boys soccer team enjoyed tremendous success this season. Led by coaches James Meara and Graeme Dunlap, the team showed resilience following a loss to West Allegheny at the Ambridge Tournament, going on to win 11 straight section games to capture the first section title since moving up to the AA division. Some season highlights included sweeps of section rivals Knoch and Mars, a first since 2010, and an overtime win at Highlands. The team closed out the 2013 season with a 3-2 overtime loss on penalty kicks to South Park in the WPIAL consolation game. SSA finished the season with a 14-5-0 overall record, and an 11-1-0 section record.
**FALL DOWNTOWN LUNCH**

The Fall Downtown Lunch was held Nov. 20, 2013, at the Allegheny HYP Club in Downtown Pittsburgh. The featured speakers were Dave Fawcett ’76 and Bruce Stanley, two lawyers who fought a 14-year battle to bring the most powerful coal baron to justice. Their fight led them all the way to a dramatic decision by the U.S. Supreme Court. The book, *The Price of Justice: A True Story of Greed and Corruption*, written by Laurence Leamer, was based on the trials and tribulations of these two men. The luncheon was filled with entertaining stories and a lengthy Q&A session.

![Left to right: Brendan McLaughlin ’86, Dave Fawcett ’76, Heather Rattner, Jane Grasso, Steve Davis ’79, Steve Cohen ’79](image1)

![Left to right: Bruce Stanley, Tom Cangiano and Dave Fawcett ’76](image2)

![Left to right: Stewart West ’05, Jay Mangold ’06 and Jim Ambrose ’05](image3)

**REUNITING ON THE ICE AND THE COURT**

The Thanksgiving holiday weekend is the perfect time of year for the annual alumni hockey match and basketball game. On Friday, Nov. 29, 2013, more than 15 alumni hit the ice for a friendly competition at the Roy McKnight Hockey Center. The following day, 10 alumni enjoyed playing hoops at Mellon Gym. Both events had a great turnout, and participants enjoyed having a cheering section of family and friends to show support. Thank you to everyone who participated.

![Hockey alums hit the ice](image4)

Visit shadysideacademy.org/alumni to check out the 2014 alumni regional events schedule!
FALL TRAVELS

Shady Side Academy, along with Board of Visitors member Ryan Ruskin ’86, coordinated a baseball outing for alumni at Down the Line Rooftop at Wrigley Field, Chicago, on Sept. 24, 2013, to watch the Pittsburgh Pirates take on the Chicago Cubs. Alumni had the opportunity to mingle with one another while they watched the Pirates bring home a win. The event was well attended with 20 people supporting SSA and the Buccos.

HARPIST COURTNEY HERSHEY BRESS ’92 PERFORMS AT THE HILLMAN CENTER

Courtney Hershey Bress ’92, a Grammy-nominated classical harpist, returned to SSA to perform with fellow harpist Kathleen Bride in “Duo Classique” on Sept. 5, 2013, at the Hillman Center.

Bress has been the principal harp for the Colorado Symphony Orchestra since 2001 and also has performed with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Civic Orchestra of Chicago, United States Army Field Band, American Harp Society and World Harp Congress. She was nominated for a Grammy Award in 2005 for her performance of George Crumb’s chamber work Ancient Voices of Children. In addition to her private teaching studio, Bress gives master classes throughout the United States and is an adjunct professor of harp at Metropolitan State College of Denver.

On Nov. 6, the Alumni & Development Office traveled to Washington, D.C., where Board of Visitors member John Duff ’59 and his wife, Viki, hosted an alumni gathering at The Metropolitan Club. More than the 50 alums enjoyed food and drinks as they mingled and reminisced with each other, President Tom Cangiano and the SSA staff.

In December, the Alumni & Development team, with the help of Eric Allon ’69, hosted the Boston alumni event at the Downtown Harvard Club. President Cangiano mingled with more than 25 alums and provided an update on happenings around campus, while fielding questions from the group.
Included in this section are news items received through Nov. 1, 2013.

1940
Ben Dangerfield writes: “All is same here. My granddaughter and great grandsons, 5 and 6, are living with us. Is there anyone from 1940 reading this?”

1945
Jack Smiley notes: “Living our retirement years in Princeton, and loving every minute of it – concerts, plays, lectures, classes to audit, sports and volunteer work in the church and community.”

1948
Donald Moore writes: “I was all ready for our 65th reunion, until I broke a hip. See you at the 70th!”

1950
Jack McElravey reports: “We had dinner with Ann and Jim Roush in Geneva, Ill., in late March.”

John Harper reports: “I am retired and living in London, England, with Audrey, my wife of 55 years. We have five granddaughters, two are fluent in Mandarin and living in Hong Kong, and two are here in London and fluent in French.”

1951
On the weekend of July 6-7, Shady Side Academy joined the Western Pennsylvania community in celebrating the life and legacy of David McCullough. The two-time Pulitzer Prize-winning author and historian returned to his hometown to have the 16th Street Bridge renamed in his honor on his 80th birthday. On Saturday, McCullough brought more than 30 family and friends to the Senior School campus to show them his alma mater. On Sunday, July 7, which was proclaimed to be “David McCullough Day,” Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald presided over festivities including the bridge re-dedication ceremony, public birthday celebration and ticketed lecture. Rainy weather forced the re-dedication indoors to the Heinz History Center, although McCullough and his family were able to visit the newly named David McCullough Bridge and pose for photos earlier in the day.

Photo courtesy of Allegheny County - Margaret Stanley, Photographer

1946
Dr. Edward Jew participated in the Multiple Sclerosis Society’s “Escape to the Lake,” June 8-9, 2013. Jew was the oldest rider in the bike race at age 84. The race is a two-day, 150-mile race from Pittsburgh to Conneaut, Ohio. Jew is a retired surgeon from Pittsburgh who returned to the event after bilateral total knee joint replacements at age 80. The Conneaut Courier printed a feature story about Jew, who also rode in the Pedal Pittsburgh event in August 2013. “I did the 62-mile course and I must admit that it was a rather daunting effort for my 84-year-old body. There were too many stops and starts in obeying the traffic signals and stop signs along the route. That drains one’s energy supply with the frequent partial dismounts, at least 100 for the 272 street turns listed on the course directions.” Jew and his wife, Rosemarie, have been married 60 years.
1955

Jerry Fincke writes: “Larry Niemann told me that I was too old to continue practicing law. So I retired and opened a cigar emporium in Monroe, N.Y.”

1957

Judith Thistle, wife of Johnson Thistle writes: “We built and launched the Bonnie Lass, a 16-foot lapstrake (think Viking boat construction) sailboat. It was completed in September 2013. We invariably returned from the workshop in a happy frame of mind.”

1959

Mike Lieberman writes: “Texas Review Press has just released my new book of poems, Bonfire of the Verities. These are poems of late middle age/early old age that reflect our struggles with doubt, faith, remembrance, loss, love and what truths can be wrested from a lifetime of living and what must be discarded. Two of my favorite poems are ‘Notes Towards a Theology of Doubt’ and ‘The Color of God’s Eyes.’ My wife Susan likes ‘Remembering My Mother.’ The title poem deals with truths, both earned and received, that I feel I must now jettison. Stay tuned: it seems somewhere along the line I have morphed into a fiction writer as well. In 2014 I have two new novels coming out, The Lobsterman’s Daughter and The Women of Harvard Square, A Novel in Short Stories.”

Charles Taylor Jr. writes: “Being a Civil War buff, I love Shepherdstown, W.Va., which is five minutes from the Antietam National Battlefield.”

1962

Alan Stuckeman and his wife, Linda, recently moved to Greenbriar Cove, an adult community in Ooltewah, Tenn., just north of Chattanooga.

Tom Celli writes: “My daughter, Delta Ellis ’90, vice president at JP Morgan Chase, has just finished 12th in the Women’s National Sporting Clays Championship. My son Michelangelo ’91 has accepted an invitation to be on the board of directors at WQED and has three businesses booming, including work in Bulgaria. Jeannie continues as a world historical archive researcher and a world class lineage expert, helping others ‘find their story’ as she believes the greatest gift is to document and record personal and national history.’ Jeannie continues to work on her second book, an examination of 1776 Colonial America Revolutionary war and its impact, and with it the ties that bind.”

1964

John Wolf writes: “I just had dinner with Frank Osborn and Ted Parrack in Connecticut. It was great to catch up. Our 2014 reunion is just around the corner.”

1966

Bill Hughes reports that he, Rich Lamagna and Paul Zugates attended the alumni reception held at the Metropolitan Club in Washington, D.C., in November. “The D.C. regional alumni receptions have grown; participants enjoy seeing classmates and also learning about the diverse careers and important work that SSA alums are performing across the national capital region,” said Hughes. Lamagna’s cyber security consultancy is thriving. His son recently graduated from Georgetown University and his daughter is a middle school student. When not enjoying time with his two grandchildren, Zugates continues in his architecture practice, splitting time between offices in Arlington, Va., and New York City. Hughes reports that his post-retirement child minding career is also keeping him busy.

1968

Paul Krause writes: “Members of the Class of 1968 celebrated their 45th reunion at the Fox Chapel Golf Club on Oct. 25, sharing poignant collective memories of high school days and of what all agreed were the meaningful, productive paths traveled by our friends. In a number of moving public speeches (Thank you Mr. Fleming?) and in private conversations, we exchanged stories informed by humor and pride, some loss, but mostly by a sense of good will and humility for having had the privilege of learning from each other and, above all, from the wise and gifted teachers of Rowe Hall. We left with promises to meet again on the occasion of our 50th reunion, and to drag more classmates back into the fold. Extraordinary thanks go out to Doug Campbell, who opened his home to all, and to John Whitehill, who masterminded the events of the weekend.”

Doug Campbell writes: “Once they tell you who they are, seeing your classmates again after 45 years makes for a great weekend. Well over a dozen members of the Class of 1968 got together for several events during Homecoming and simply picked up where they left off, there having been a stronger bond formed among us than we ever realized. Bob Grandizio, who arrived at the Senior School the same year we did, joined us Friday night for a reception at my home, looking good; Barack Obama sent a member of his Cabinet; and two classmates joined us by Skype during the dinner on Saturday, one from Islamabad. Mr. Gregory, in particular, was remembered fondly. When John Whitehill gets us back together for the 50th, we will appear to the seniors then as the members of the Class of 1918 did to us at Homecoming in 1967. Don’t miss it. We’ll have a race!”

Entangled by assisting with disaster responses in Pakistan, Joe Tritschler used video conferencing to beam into the 45th reunion of the Class of 1968. Two weeks later, he was joined in Islamabad by Christie Vilsack, wife of Tom Vilsack, who also works for U.S. Agency for International Development. He now proudly sports his SSA cap as official headgear within the embassy compound.

1969

After working last year as a visiting professional fellow at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, Bob Allen spent six months at home in New York City and is now headed to the University of Tsukuba, Japan, where he will be a visiting foreign research scholar.
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Questions? Contact Director of Alumni Relations Jamie (Brush) Scott ’98 at 412-968-3032 or jscott@shadysideacademy.org

1976

Attorney David Fawcett is one of the subjects of a new non-fiction book, The Price of Justice: A True Story of Greed and Corruption, by New York Times bestselling author Laurence Leamer. Fawcett is a partner in Reed Smith’s Commercial Litigation Group with extensive trial experience representing individuals and companies. One of his cases, Caperton v. A.T. Massey, was heard by the U.S. Supreme Court and resulted in a landmark decision creating a constitutional right to recuse a judge in certain circumstance involving exceptional campaign contributions. Fawcett and his colleague Bruce Stanley were the featured speakers at the SSA Fall Downtown Luncheon on Nov. 20, 2013.

Barha Anne Fisher writes: “Sorry about the Pirates! Andy Rosencrans, Dink (Lisa) Austin and I religiously texted during all of the games. I was sorry to see it end! My husband Danny and I were hoping it would end up being the A’s and the Pirates so that we could see them play out here on the West Coast. We went to the Steelers-Raiders game Oct. 27, 2013. It was great to see fellow Pittsburgh fans!”

Doug Mancosh reports: “My wife Kathy and I have joined the empty nest crowd when our second daughter, Kate, left for Furman University in August. Our first daughter, Megan, finishes at Wake Forest this year in accounting. Since life is changing so much, we have relocated to the Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., area, where I opened a winter office in Jupiter to run our fiberon composite decking business. This is a strange new chapter, but I am sure many of my classmates have cleared the path. I look forward to seeing any old friends from Shady Side who travel to this area. Please contact us and celebrate our good memories at Shady Side. Best wishes to all of you.”

1978

Kirby Krieger showed his artwork at The Design Center at Penhollows in Pittsburgh. The show, titled Modern Still-Lifes: Photographic Thoughts on Passing Hours, ran Nov. 9-30, 2013. Krieger attended Yale University and earned his Master of Fine Arts degree from the New York Academy of Art. He also served as the artist-in-residence at Maryland Hall for the Arts. His photographs have been accepted in several local and national juried shows, including the Three Rivers Arts Festival (2011), Pennsylvania’s “Art of the State” (2012) and the MFA Gallery (2011, 2012 and 2013).

1980

Jeff Pollock spoke to SSA Senior School students and faculty about the importance of donating blood, sharing his own experience that saved his life. He encouraged students to donate at the
John Baglier Memorial Blood Drive held in November on the Senior School campus.


Jonathan Herndon writes, “I have worked for Harvard Management Company, the investment company responsible for managing the Harvard Endowment for the past 14 years. I have had multiple roles within the company and for the past five years have been a portfolio manager within the natural resources group. My wife and I have three boys, Bradley, 8, Wyatt, 6, and Ethan, 3, and they keep us very active. We have lived outside Boston in a town called Franklin since 2002.”

Lisa Levine is a New York state-licensed acupuncturist and the owner of a holistic healing center in Brooklyn, called Maha Rose. The business offers acupuncture, holistic healing services, drop-in classes, community events and workshops to nourish the body, mind and spirit.

Dan Schreiber notes: “Finally, at age 50, my kids are out of diapers! Sydney, 5, Samantha and Alexandra, 3, are doing great. Whoever said children keep you young was lying! But it’s all good.”

Matte Braidic writes: “For the past two years, I have been working on a photo project called ‘Faceburgh.’ Currently, I have 23,000 candid sidewalk portraits in my archives. In September 2013, I had an exhibition of my work where I chose 35 faces to hang on the wall. More than 400 people came to opening night. Faceburgh is easy to find on Google.”

Chip Mosle, a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Air Force, spoke to seniors in Kyle Smith’s History of American Foreign Relations class at SSA on Nov. 6, 2013. Mosle spoke about his 22-year career in

1980

Catherine Vodrey married Stephen Huba on May 18, 2013, in East Liverpool, Ohio. She writes: “How cool that Steve and I were surrounded by so many SSA folks on our wedding day. Among them were senior Lillian Klein (my daughter and maid of honor); Henry Klein ‘11 (my son and the gentleman who escorted me down the aisle); Sarah Vodrey ’78, William Vodrey ’83, Julia Vodrey Hendrickson ’04, Valerie Vodrey Hendrickson ’07, Hilary Harley Spector ’82 and Gary Middleton. We incorporated an antique family wedding veil into the ceremony during a blessing. Two dozen-plus brides in my family have worn it. The first of these was Mary Mulligan, who married my great-great-something uncle Robert Stockton Green in 1857. Green was later the 27th governor of New Jersey.”

1988

Stephe Lesoon Bernacki writes, “I am currently living in Fox Chapel in the home where I grew up. I am married to Tony Bernacki, a wonderful, funny and outgoing Central Catholic graduate. We met at a Halloween party where he was dressed up as an old lady (I know!). I have two beautiful stepdaughters, Nicole, 29, and Rachel, 27, and Tony and I have two daughters, Samantha Jo, 16, and Olivia Grace, 14. Samantha plays lacrosse and field hockey at Fox Chapel. She is great friends with Sam Kintner’s daughter, Sarah. Olivia plays lacrosse and is the soccer goalkeeper for Dorseville Middle School. Turns out she is friends with George Stewart’s daughter, Caroline. I went to Allegheny College after SSA, then on to Ohio Northern University Law School. After 15 years in private practice at a commercial litigation firm, I was invited to serve as deputy law clerk in the chambers of the Honorable Bernard L. McGinley in the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania. I thoroughly enjoy writing legal opinions which accompany and support the court’s decisions.”
the military, as well as a variety of career options in the foreign relations and national security fields. He explained the different elements of national security and the role and structure of the National Security Council. Mosle then engaged the students in a discussion about recent events related to national security and foreign policy.

Mosle spent much of his military career at the USAF Test Pilot School at Edwards Air Force Base in California, working as a flight test engineer, staff officer and analyst, and as the program director of the F-35 program. He recently returned to school and is attending the U.S. Army War College.

Michael Weisberg writes, “I was living in Washington, D.C., for many years and met my wife Liz Goldberg (originally from Upper St. Clair) at a Steelers party. The two of us dated, got married and had our son, Will, who is now 3 years old. In March 2012, we made the decision to move back to Pittsburgh to raise a family, and we now reside in Squirrel Hill. I work for Pella Corporation and have been with the business for more than 10 years, so if anyone is in need of windows or doors, please reach out to me. My wife is an attorney at Morgan Lewis. Please keep in touch.”

Mary Hinchliffe married Ardell Moree on Sept. 29, 2012. He has a 10-year-old son, Sabastion. They reside in Morgantown, W.Va.

Josh Swedarsky and his wife, Aviva, welcomed a son, Zachary Michael, on June 4, 2013. Zachary joins older sisters, Hannah, 4, and Kayla, 3. The Swedarskys moved from Manhattan to Pittsburgh in April 2013. Josh is working at Federated Investors as a data officer, and the family resides in Squirrel Hill.

Jamie Brush married James M. Scott III on July 6, 2013. The ceremony was held at the Shadyside Presbyterian Church with a reception following at the Pittsburgh Field Club. Other Shady Side alumni in attendance were: David Griffith, Ari Ross, Mary McKinney Borntraeger, Sean Gray ’97, Stephanie Halpern ’97, Annie (Mulock) Westbrook ’96, Mollie (Hanna) Lang ’99, Brian Gumberg ’01, Mike Casey ’01, Michael Gleason ’02, Henry Watson ’02, David Kassling ’02, Angela DiGioia ’02, Bennett Smith ’02, Bradley Cohen ’93, Chris Williams ’93, Josh Nanci ’91, Steve Leone ’95, Freddy Caminos ’95, Mike Casey ’70, Jim McCague ’61, George Milligan ’61, father of the groom Jim Scott ’60 and groomsman and brother of the bride Bart Brush ’93.

On June 15, 2013, John Karger married Sarah Ashley Cigana. In attendance were Matthew Cianflone ’01 and Ben Antin.

Ali Krzton, a 2006 graduate of Dartmouth College and a Ph.D. candidate in anthropology at Texas A&M University, won a 2013-2014 Fulbright Grant to conduct research on the golden snub-nosed
monkey in China. She is spending the year studying social cohesion in a wild group of the monkeys in the Sichuan Province, in cooperation with the Beijing-based Institute of Zoology, Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Aly Shogan received her M.D./M.B.A. from Penn and started a residency in internal medicine in June.

2004

Jordan Marks was hired as the head varsity basketball coach at Sto-Rox High School, McKees Rocks, Pa. He most recently served as Pitt basketball’s video coordinator.

2005

Drew Elovitz lives in Manhattan and is the social media editor at Teen Vogue. She recently spoke at Teen Vogue’s annual conference, Fashion University, which was attended by a select group of students from 27 countries around the world. Her current intern is Jamie Kurke ’11.

2006

Anastasia Rygle notes: “After finishing my M.A. at the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, I am living in Manhattan and organizing an Andy Warhol exhibition with Queens Museum curator and fellow SSA alumna Larissa Harris. The exhibition, ‘Andy Warhol’s 13 Most Wanted Men and the 1964 NY World’s Fair,’ will open at the Queens Museum in April 2014 and travel to the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh in September 2014.”

2008

Nia Phillips earned an M.S. in journalism with a concentration in broadcast journalism from Columbia University in May 2013, where she was part of its centennial class. She is currently living and working in New York City.

2009

Recent Columbia University graduate Tim Giel was signed as a free agent pitcher by the New York Yankees in June 2013. Giel’s Columbia career culminated with his most impressive season. The right-hander threw 64.2 innings, posting a 3.20 ERA and 3-3 record. He also recorded 51 strikeouts, three complete games and two shutouts. Over the course of his career, Giel posted a 10-9 record and a 4.03 ERA in 190 innings.

Eddie Sheerer submitted an architectural rendering of an outdoor sculpture gallery and event venue for the Akron Art Museum, Akron, Ohio. The rendering was on exhibit through Feb. 2, 2014. Sheerer is currently a senior at Kent State, majoring in architecture.

Becky Tisherman who graduated in May from Connecticut College with a major in environmental studies and a double minor in mathematics and Chinese, won a 2013-2014 Fulbright Grant to study how hydraulic fracturing or “fracking,” is conducted in the Sichuan province of China, primarily focusing on how water is used and disposed of in the process. Fracking is a new process in China and the shale there is different than that found in the United States.

2010

Katie Brill, a student at the University of Michigan, was accepted into the U.S. State Department’s Critical Language Scholarship Program in China last
summer, where she studied intensive Chinese. Brill was one of approximately 610 U.S. undergraduate and graduate students who received a scholarship from the CLS Program in 2013.

Brian Gross and Jon Halpern have launched a company called Athletetrax that provides cloud-based team management tools for high school and college athletic departments, as well as club teams. The technology helps with scheduling, communications, tracking workouts and academic commitments, and fundraising. They are now part of the current class of companies at the startup accelerator AlphaLab.

2012

Ben Hartz was named a Louisville Slugger Division I Freshman All-American for the University of Buffalo baseball team. Over 18 appearances and 40.1 innings pitched, Hartz earned six wins and a save while holding opponents to a .236 batting average. His 2.01 ERA for the season was the eighth lowest in the history of the program.

2008

Katie Miller and Jordan Foley ’07 were engaged in Vienna, Austria, in June 2013. Miller is a 2012 magna cum laude graduate of American University, and Foley is a 2012 graduate of distinction, top 10 in his class, from the United States Naval Academy. They were residing in Vienna until the end of September, when they returned to Boston, where Foley is attending graduate school at MIT.

2003


Jenna Hebert, a sophomore at the University of Pennsylvania and member of the women’s rowing team, qualified for the Under-23 World Championships as a member of the Vespers Boat Club lightweight quadruple sculls in June 2013. She is the first Penn rower to qualify for the Under-23 Worlds since 2010.

2013

Dani Plung writes: “I started regularly contributing as a blogger for New Voices Magazine, a national publication. My first article was published Oct. 31, 2013. If you want to check it out: http://newvoices.org/2013/10/31/finding-permanence-in-a-sukkah/”

2003

Ryan Bartley and Alyssa Sharp were married April 27, 2013, at The Athenaeum in Columbus, Ohio. Among their wedding guests were (left to right): John Matia, Max Petrunya, Brian Golden, Kevin Rich ’04 and groomsman Jason Zoeller. Bartley, a graduate of Ohio State University, is on the HRIS team at Abercrombie & Fitch. He and Alyssa reside in Dublin, Ohio.
The Academy expresses its deepest sympathy to the families of the following Shady Side Academy alumni and friends. Although we are unable to include remembrances of all, we sincerely value the special involvement in and contributions to the Shady Side Academy community during their lives. The following listings include all information received by Nov. 1, 2013.

**ROBERT D. AUHAMMER ’38**
Robert Deane Aufhammer passed away Aug. 16, 2010. He graduated from Duke University with a degree in economics, then earned an M.B.A. from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. His career began as a development engineer at the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., and he then worked in life insurance sales with the Penn Mutual Co. Aufhammer was the long-time owner of Helmick Bond & Insurance, a property/casualty agency in Pasadena, Calif. He is survived by four children, 13 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

**HENRY H. HUNTER ’40**
Henry H. Hunter, age 91, passed away July 18, 2013. During World War II, he served two tours as a marine in the Pacific, including the capture and defense of Guadalcanal and the Philippines. Following the war, he graduated from the journalism school at the University of Missouri. After working in public relations for Ross Roy and Grant Advertising, he joined Olin in New York in 1954 as publicity manager and became vice president for public relations in 1965. He is survived by his wife, Henry Hunter Jr. and Alison Potter; three stepchildren; and 11 grandchildren.

**WILLIAM JASPER ’43**
Dr. William Jasper passed away Aug. 7, 2011. During World War II, he served in the Navy V-12 College Training Program at Bucknell University, Bainbridge Naval Training Center, and obtained his D.D.S. from the University of Pittsburgh School of Dentistry in 1949. Following 20 years of active service, he retired in 1966 with the rank of commander. He then taught in the field of public health dentistry, in the U.S. and in Israel, retiring from teaching in 1980. He is survived by his wife, Reatha Jasper, daughter, Doreen Berger, son, Dr. Warren Jasper, and four grandchildren.

**MICHAEL G. TURNER ’43**
Michael Griswold Turner passed away July 12, 2012. Griswold served on the U.S.S. Randolph aircraft carrier during World War II and was a graduate of Princeton University. He worked for some of the world’s best-known advertising agencies, including Benton & Bowles and Ogilvy & Mather. He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth Tufel Turner, six children, 13 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

**THOMAS M. MABON ’44**
Thomas “Tim” McCance Mabon, 86, passed away Aug. 9, 2013. He served in the U.S. Army and graduated from Princeton University in 1948. His entire career was with the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway (Frisco Railway). He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Joan Ingwersen Mabon; four daughters, Mary Mabon Colonna, Margaret Mabon Hall, Nancy Mabon Hill and Janet Mabon Spiers; nine grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. He was predeceased by his daughter, Elizabeth, in 2012.

**PASQUALE NAVARRO ’44**
Pasquale “Pat” Navarro passed away Aug. 9, 2013. He attended Carnegie Tech, now Carnegie Mellon University, and served in the Army during World War II. In 1950 he graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point as a second lieutenant with a bachelor’s degree in military engineering. He then served as company commander of an armored cavalry unit in Regensburg, Germany, for three years. Upon his return to Pittsburgh, he joined the family-owned and operated general contracting firm Navarro Corp., becoming president and general manager in 1961. He is survived by his children, Dominic Navarro II, Mary Navarro, Patricia Navarro and Pasquale Navarro Jr.; two grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. He was preceded in death by his wife of 59 years, Marie Delli Gatti Navarro.

**DON B. BLENKO ’46**
Don Balman Blenko passed away May 20, 2013. He was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Amherst College and earned his J.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. He served in the U.S. Navy Reserve following law school, and later held positions at Morgan Lewis and Bockius, Philco-Ford and Arco Chemical. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Kitty; his children, David Blenko, Thomas Blenko, Dr. Katherine Blenko, Don Blenko Jr. and James Blenko; and numerous grandchildren.

**SAMUEL B. ARONSON ’47**
Samuel “Sam” Byron Aronson passed away July 7, 2013, at the age of 84. He studied philosophy at Yale University, politics at Oxford University and medicine at the University of Pittsburgh. After medical school, he served in the public health service at the National Institutes of Health before moving west to complete a residency in ophthalmology. Following time in San Jose, Calif., and a fellowship year in Paris, he established a clinical research laboratory at San Francisco General Hospital. He is survived by his wife of 54 years, Mary Ann, and two daughters, Louise and Margot.

**STEPHEN L. COHEN ’47**
Stephen L. Cohen passed away July 15, 2013. He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Edith Cohen; son Michael Cohen; two daughters, Susan and Lisa; and two grandchildren.

**WILLIAM H. OVERLY ’47**
William “Bill” Overly passed away Aug. 2, 2013. He was a graduate of Yale University and the former owner of the Pittsburgh Envelope Company. He was a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps in the Korean War. He was preceded in death by his wife, Gladys Overly, and son, William A. Overly. He is survived by his daughters, Linda Kellner and Betsy Rea; seven grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.
JOHN E. BROWNELL JR. ’50
John E. Brownell Jr., age 80, passed away Aug. 25, 2013. Brownell was a graduate of Williams College, and after serving two years in the U.S. Air Force, he earned an M.B.A. from Harvard Business School. His career included many years with PPG Industries, where he was a vice president of marketing and sales of the fiber glass division and later of corporate purchasing. “Brownell will always be known as one of Shady Side’s most loyal and dedicated alumni, serving as a trustee, lead volunteer, outstanding class agent, and generous supporter as a Founders Society Lifetime Member,” said Academy President Tom Cangiano. Over the last 30 years, he remained very involved on the SSA board, most recently serving as a member of the Community Life Committee and advising on the Strategic Vision, and serving as chair of the board from 1992-1995. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Nancy Gemmill Brownell; a son, Jeffrey Brownell; a daughter, Leslie Timmons; and three grandchildren.

EDWARD C. HILGER JR. ’51
Edward Charles Hilger Jr. passed away June 1, 2013. He earned his Bachelor of Science, Master of Science and Doctor of Dental Science degrees from the University of Pittsburgh. He served in the U.S. Navy dental corps as a lieutenant and, upon leaving the Navy in 1962, established a dental practice in Fox Chapel, where he practiced for 36 years. He is survived by his wife of 57 years, Suzanne; his children, Dr. Jeffrey Hilger ’78, Ann Van Zant ’80 and Steven E. Hilger ’85; and three grandchildren.

CHARLES H. MUSE ’54
Charles Howard Muse passed away May 30, 2013. He was a graduate of Pennsylvania State University and worked his entire career for his family company, Crown Coal & Coke Co. In 1967, he was one of the original investors who brought the Penguins to Pittsburgh, and was a passionate Penguins fan throughout his life. He is survived by his wife, Karen Andersen Muse; three children, Amy Lang, Charles Muse III and James Muse; nine grandchildren; three stepchildren; and six step-grandchildren.

ARTHUR H. FORBES JR. ’55
Arthur Henry “Mike” Forbes Jr., 75, passed away May 19, 2013. He was a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh and a geologist with more than 50 years of experience in the oil and gas industry. He was founder and chairman of Turn Oil Inc., and served three terms as chairman of the board of the Pennsylvania Oil and Gas Association and one term as regional vice president of the Independent Petroleum Association of America. Surviving are his wife, Marcia (Lang) Forbes; three sons, Daniel Forbes ’79, Douglas Forbes and Dickson “Deke” Forbes; and two grandchildren, Camryn Forbes ’17 and Allyson Forbes ’20.

JOHN C. FERGUSON JR. ’56
John C. Ferguson Jr., age 75, passed away Oct. 7, 2013. He was a graduate of the University of Virginia and worked as a business technical analyst at Highmark Blue Cross, retiring after 42 years of service. He served Mt. Lebanon, Pa., as the treasurer for 28 years. He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Carol (Skarada) Ferguson; four children, Elizabeth, Courtney, John, and Andrew; and eight grandchildren.

CYDRA VAUX: JUNIOR SCHOOL ART TEACHER
Shady Side Academy Junior School art teacher Cydra Vaux passed away July 13, 2013, at the age of 51.

Vaux grew up in Murrysville, Pa., graduating from Franklin Regional High School and Seton Hill University, where she majored in theater. She earned her certification as an art teacher from Seton Hill in the mid-1990s and taught at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts for three years. She joined the Junior School faculty in 2001 and taught art part-time to students in grades 3-5 until her death.

Despite struggling with illness for several years, she was known for her sunny disposition, free spirit, loving nature, humor and warm smile. “Cydra’s passion for art and for teaching art was reflected in the way she interacted with her students. She helped to fuel imaginations and inspired them to create,” said Academy President Tom Cangiano.

In remembrance of Vaux, Junior School faculty wrote positive memories on colored strips of paper, which were formed into a rainbow paper chain and hung in the gymnasium entrance for the first assembly of the 2013-2014 academic year. After the assembly, McConnell spoke with students to remember Vaux. “We spoke about how sad we were that Ms. Vaux had died, but how lucky we were to have all of the color, art and joy that she brought into our lives,” said McConnell. The Junior School also changed the name of the annual Winter Festival for the Arts to the Cydra Vaux Celebration of the Arts, and expanded the event to include both performing and visual arts. Some of Vaux’s own art was on display at the December 2013 event, and the student body performed “You Are My Sunshine,” one of Vaux’s favorite songs.

“Cydra had the amazing ability to bring many different kinds of art into the lives of Shady Side Academy students for 13 years,” said McConnell. “We will miss her dearly.”

Vaux was also an accomplished sculptor. She was a member of the Society of Sculptors and the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh and had her work exhibited by the Brooklyn Museum of Art, American Jewish Museum, Three Rivers Arts Festival, Manchester Craftsmen’s Guild and numerous galleries in Pittsburgh. On her website, womansculpture.com, Vaux describes her personal and artistic journey, and showcases her work throughout the years.

She is survived by her husband, Charles Bonner; their son, Cavan; mother, Verna Robinson; father, Walter Vaux; brother, Gregson Vaux; and nephews, Rohan and Thoren Vaux.
in memoriam

CHARLES S. SUTHERLAND ’56
Charles Sidney Sutherland, age 74, passed away July 21, 2013. He was a graduate of Cornell University. Following his career with Mellon Bank and Winters Bank, he was a certified financial planner at Prudential, National City Securities and American Express. He served his country for 20 years in the Navy and Naval Reserves. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Joyce; two daughters, Karen MacLean and Jennifer Howell; a son, Jim Sutherland; and five grandchildren.

JOHN H. HILL ’58
John Howard Hill passed away Aug. 10, 2013. He was a graduate of Yale University in 1962 and Yale Law School in 1965. After 25 years with Reed, Smith, Shaw and McClay, he resigned his partnership to work as a specialist in labor law with the firm of Jackson Lewis until his retirement in 2006. He is survived by his lifetime partner, William Shanley; a brother; and numerous nieces and nephews.

WILLIAM M. WYCOFF ’59
William M. Wycoff, 72, passed away Oct. 22, 2013. Wycoff graduated from Cornell University where he earned a degree in government in 1963. He received a law degree from Northwestern University in 1966 and joined Thorp Reed. Wycoff was largely a corporate defense attorney, litigating cases for MetLife, Mellon Bank and other large companies. He served on the board at Pressley Ridge and was president and a director of the Children’s Home of Pittsburgh. He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Debby Wycoff; a daughter, Ann Wheaton; a son, Pieter; and four grandchildren.

REN M. SUTHERLAND ’63
Ren M. Sutherland passed away Oct. 5, 2012. He was a graduate of Miami University, and enjoyed a successful career in advertising and sales, retiring 10 years ago from Koppers Industries. He was the husband of the late Marcia Sutherland and is survived by his daughter, Melinda Berdyck, and three grandchildren.

BURNETT GRAHAM BARTLEY III ’68
Burnett G. “Biff” Bartley III passed away Oct. 14, 2013, at the age of 63. He graduated from Middlebury College in 1972. He began his business career with United States Steel Corp., and later became a part of a management group that purchased the American Steel and Wire Co. in Cleveland. Following his time in Ohio, he became president of Ameritex Inc. in Irving, Texas. He is survived by his wife of 38 years, Patti (Fendrich) Bartley, and his daughters, Kristen and Brittany.

HERMAN KAMIN JR. ’68
Herman “Chip” Kamin Jr. passed away April 29, 2013. He graduated from Case Western Reserve University in 1972 with a bachelor’s degree in physics. Upon graduation, he joined Kamin Realty, a company started by his father. In 1987, Kamin completed the first successful ascent of a major Himalayan Peak by a team from the Explorer’s Club of Pittsburgh, the only successful expedition from the U.S. that spring. He is survived by his wife, Eleanor “Robin” Buchen Kamin, and children, Jason Kamin and Bryan Kamin.

JEFFREY M. MINDLIN ’72
Jeffrey Mindlin passed away May 26, 2013. He was a graduate of Denison University and the University of Delaware Law School. He worked for many years at The Mindlin Company as a scrap metal broker and more recently at TMC Holdings, Inc. He is survived by his children, Sam, Luke ’05 and Casey ’06 Mindlin.

ALEX SEED ’98
Aled Edward Seed passed away Oct. 28, 2013. He was the son of Sally and Lanny Seed; brother of Andrea (Doug) Spear; and grandson of Bibe (late Norman) Schlesigner and the late Martin and Eleanor Seed.

FAMILY & FRIENDS
Usman Ahmad, father of Leena Ahmad Matthew ’97 and Adam Ahmad ’00
Jacob Cappa, brother of Senior School faculty member John Cappa
Victor Colangelo, father of Senior School faculty member Cari Batchelor
Jack Doherty, former Middle School faculty member
Joan Elliott, former Middle School faculty member, mother of Penny Elliott ’88 and Jen Elliott ’91
Bill Endres, former Senior School faculty member
Suzanne Follansbee, mother of William Follansbee ’65; grandmother of Elizabeth Henderson ’97, Matt Henderson ’96, Taylor Phillips ’06, Charles Phillips ’08, Chris Follandbee ’01 and the late Benjamin Follansbee ’99
Mary Jane Grefenstette, mother of Ed Grefenstette ’85, former member of the Board of Trustees
George J. Magovern, M.D., father of George Magovern ’70, James Magovern ’72 (deceased), Susan Magovern ’76, Fran (Magovern) O’Connor ’79, Ann Magovern ’86; grandfather of Patrick Scott ’06, Charlie Magovern ’07, Brendan Scott ’09, Peter Scott ’11, Molly Magovern ’12, Maggie Scott ’14, Matt O’Connor ’14 and Tom O’Connor ’16 (deceased)
Kazuyo “Kay” Martin, former Middle and Senior School food service employee
James Niebel, husband of former SSA bookkeeper, Ella Niebel; father-in-law of Fred Taverner ’68
Judith Shenkan, wife of Jack Shenkan ’54; mother of Stephen Shenkan ’77, Andrew Shenkan ’80 and Jack Shenkan Jr. ’85
Sam Prizant, father of Tracy Prizant Levy ’84, vice chair for development, Board of Trustees
Charles Weiss, father of Junior School Library Assistant Mary Aiken; father-in-law of Senior School faculty member Scott Aiken ’79; and grandfather of Isabel Aiken ’13, Maggie Aiken ’16 and Jillian Aiken ’19

56 / WINTER 2013-2014 / SHADY SIDE ACADEMY
ROOTED IN SSA HISTORY:
The Red Coat Band

The Junior School gymnasium rustles with the sounds of students finding their assigned seats, the shuffling sheets of music and the casual toot on a clarinet. As instrumental music teacher Ruth Ann Modic raises her arms, the group of students, adorned in bright red vests, grows immediately silent. With the next movement, instruments are raised, and a symphony of musical sound fills the air.

The Junior School Instrumental Ensemble, made up of 30+ fifth graders, performs at school assemblies, concerts and events. The dedicated students practice several times a week during instrumental music class, where they learn to play a woodwind, brass or percussion instrument beginning in the fourth grade. All students are required to take instrumental music, allowing them to experience, if even for a short time, the dedication that it takes to learn an instrument, and the joy it can bring to those who are listening.

The band has a long history at the Junior School. Paula Thomas created the “Red Coat Band,” along with a Junior School barbershop quartet, in 1949. Thomas was the first woman in the state of Pennsylvania to earn a teaching certificate in music education, according to her family. Thomas came to the Junior School a few times a week, directing children as young as age 4 on a variety of instruments. The band performed annually at Mellon Park, Three Rivers Stadium and Junior School graduation. For their performances, the all-boy band was provided with 100% wool red blazers. No one is quite sure why the blazers were red, as opposed to the SSA colors of blue and gold.

Thomas directed the band from 1949 to 1990, when Modic joined the faculty. Modic was provided with the red blazers, which, while beautiful, were hot and didn’t fit the students by the spring of the school year. In 1997, the Parents’ Association had a meeting to discuss replacing the blazers, and the idea of using vests was considered. While Modic lobbied for blue and gold vests, she was vetoed, and the students returned to the stage with new red vests, which they wear to this day.

There has been much discussion on why the red coats were selected in the first place. Was it a salute to the SSA’s merger in 1940 with the Arnold School, whose school colors were red and white? Was it just Thomas’ personal preference? If you have any information on the Junior School Red Coat Band, contact Lindsay Kovach at lkovach@shadysideacademy.org.