You Can Always Come Home

PRESIDENT
BARTLEY P. GRIFFITH JR. ’93
The Junior School came together to celebrate the holiday season by hosting the second annual Gathering of Warmth and Light. Students led a community sing-along while support staff lit candles in the center of gymnasium floor.
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DEAR SHADY SIDE ACADEMY COMMUNITY:

As those of you who remain connected to Pittsburgh know well, our city continues to emerge as a global innovation leader across a range of industries. And I am happy to report that Shady Side continues to do its part to contribute to this momentum.

To learn more, I encourage you to visit the tremendous new Glimcher Tech & Design Hub the next time you are on the Senior School campus. While there, you may see students in the Fabrication Lab building a “living wall” of plants watered by robotic arms or designing reusable water bottles made from recycled aluminum cans. You might also observe kids developing a more sterile, sanitary ice hockey glove and engineering small solar-powered cars.

In the Glimcher’s Computer Science Wing, you may cross paths with students using a 3D resin printer to produce replicas of human joints – all so that they can better understand arthritis and a range of other mobility issues.

Should you find yourself in Pittsburgh’s East End, visit the Junior School and you might observe our youngest students participating in Artificial Intelligence for Oceans, a project challenging children to explore machine learning and its role in promoting both ethical reflection and ocean sustainability. As a fourth grader told me recently, “It’s computer science for good!”

Across the Academy, we are living our mission – learning to think expansively, act ethically and lead responsibly – and increasingly, as evidenced by the aforementioned examples, we are doing so at the intersection of technology, society and human experience.

As our lives and activities become more intertwined with technology, tomorrow’s leaders must ensure our advances result in improved quality of life and a more prosperous, equitable world – and that it all combines meaningfully with the very best traditions of the liberal arts and a continued exploration of what it means to be human.

At Shady Side, we are excited for this challenge and doing all we can to equip students to engage the daunting real-world problems that await them – leveraging for the social good a range of interdisciplinary combinations in science, engineering, ethics and the arts, just to name a few.

We look forward to sharing our continued progress in the months and years ahead. It’s such an exciting time to live and learn, and our students are eagerly preparing for the remarkable future it all signals. Thanks to all of you for your continued interest and support.

Glory to Shady Side!

Bartley P. Griffith Jr. ’93
President
Newsweek Ranks SSA Best STEM High School in Pittsburgh

In November, *Newsweek* announced its ranking of the top 5,000 STEM high schools in America for 2020, honoring excellence in science, technology, engineering and mathematics education. The national news magazine ranked Shady Side Academy as the best STEM high school in the Pittsburgh area and No. 6 in Pennsylvania. Nationally, Shady Side came in at No. 250 overall out of the 5,000 public and private schools that were recognized. Only four Pittsburgh-area high schools made the top 500. Newsweek’s Nov. 15 double issue included the top 500 STEM high schools, while the full list of 5,000 schools is available online at Newsweek.com.

**SSA was also ranked Pittsburgh’s No. 1 Private K-12 School, Private High School and STEM High School by Niche.com**

*Newsweek* partnered with STEM.org to rank America’s Best STEM High Schools. The list includes schools in every region of the country that offer skilled teachers who keep up with developments in these fields and create dynamic learning environments to engage students. The top 5,000 schools were curated from STEM.org Educational Research™ using a proprietary scoring logic that took into consideration a broad set of quantitative and qualitative data inputs collected from Q2 2015–Q3 2019. The purpose was to determine which schools best offer their students experiences in science, technology, engineering and mathematics – as defined by the Congressional Research Service – while preparing them for post-secondary outcomes. Additional factors, including affluence and median household income, were taken into consideration in compiling the rankings.

Niche.com also rates Shady Side Academy among the best STEM high schools locally and nationally in its 2020 rankings. SSA was ranked the No. 1 Best High School for STEM in the Pittsburgh area, No. 2 in Pennsylvania, and No. 160 in America. Niche ranks SSA the No. 1 Best Private High School and the No. 1 Best Private K-12 School in the Pittsburgh area, as well as the No. 1 Best Boarding High School in Pennsylvania. Niche, based in Pittsburgh, is the leading platform for finding information to choose the perfect school, college or neighborhood, providing facts, ratings and user reviews.

The Senior School recently opened two brand new STEM facilities: the 22,000-square-foot, LEED Gold McIlroy Center for Science & Innovation and the 12,000-square-foot Glimcher Tech & Design Hub. To read more about the Glimcher, see page 10.
STUDENT PERFORMANCES

Senior School Fall Play: *A Midsummer Night’s Dream – 80s Version*

The Senior School staged four performances of a 1980s themed-version of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* as its fall student drama production on Oct. 31-Nov 3. The cast and crew consisted of nearly 30 students. Faculty member Dana Hardy-Bingham directed the production.

Middle School Fall Play: *Villain School*

The Middle School presented the fall play *Villain School* for parents and guests on Nov. 8. The cast and crew included more than 20 students in grades 6-8, and was directed by English teacher Camille MacRae, and produced by music teacher Randy Broker and art teacher Stefanie Vorrasi.

Junior School Gathering of Warmth and Light

On Dec. 20, the Junior School community came together to celebrate the holiday season at A Gathering of Warmth and Light. Sitting on the floor of the gymnasium in a circle, students led a community sing-a-long by candlelight. Support staff were invited to light candles in the center of the circle.

Country Day School Holiday Show

On Dec. 19, Country Day School third grade students were the featured performers in the all-school holiday show, *Toys and Joys*, a musical drama about the gifts people share at various holidays. Students sang about holidays including All Souls’ Day, El Dia de los Reyes, Kwanzaa, Chanukah, Diwali, Christmas, Eid al-Fitr, and Chinese New Year.
Middle School Cafeteria Earns Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant Gold Designation

The Middle School cafeteria, which is run by Metz Culinary Management, recently earned the Gold level designation as a Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant. A Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurant demonstrates commitment to managing the social and environmental impacts of its operations. In earning the Gold designation, the Middle School cafeteria is acknowledged for its efforts in addressing areas such as energy efficiency, water use, healthy dining, sourcing responsibly, being active in the community and providing a workplace that fosters employee growth.

Senior School English Teacher Publishes Book of Poetry

Senior School English teacher Linda Lee McDonald published How Much the Body: Poems about Faith, a book of poetry that speaks to the contemporary struggle to hold onto faith in a turbulent world. McDonald has taught English at the Senior School since 2007 and previously served as chair of the English Department. She also has served as the advisor to SSA’s student newspaper since 2015. A former fiction instructor at the Pennsylvania Governor’s School for the Arts, McDonald has won teaching awards from the National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts and from Humanities Texas, and has to her credit publications in literary magazines and the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

National Merit Semifinalists

Four members of the class of 2020 were named semifinalists in the 65th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. These academically talented students have the opportunity to continue in the competition for 7,600 National Merit Scholarships worth more than $31 million that will be offered next spring. The SSA semifinalists are Akshay Amesur, Nicole Caputo, Arusha Nirvan and Giri Viswanathan.

Students Receive Carnegie Library Awards

At the annual Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh’s Labsy Awards, freshman Sloane Simon won first prize in the music category for her original song u got me, as well as an honorable mention for the song Flirting for Sociopaths. Senior Sanjna Narayan received an honorable mention in the 2D art & design category for her oil painting titled Constriction. Junior Qingqing Zhao won an honorable mention prize in the short prose category of the Ralph Munn Creative Writing Contest for her work Kindred Spirits. The Labsy Awards and Creative Writing teen media contest are part of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh’s Teenspace, a welcoming neighborhood space where teens can explore their interests and build their own future without pressure or expectations.
Junior School Second Grade Food Drive

The Junior School second grade collected more than 3,200 non-perishable food items in the annual Food Drive, which ran from Nov. 1-21. On Nov. 22, the class had two busloads of donations delivered to the food pantry at the First Presbyterian Church of Edgewood, in time to be distributed to needy families for Thanksgiving. The Junior School has partnered with the church on the annual food drive for more than 20 years.

Senior School Collects Holiday Gifts

The Senior School Service Learning Club collected gifts for the Holiday Project, a longstanding community project of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services. This year SSA families, faculty and staff purchased and donated gifts for 140 children ages 0-2 in the county who receive services through DHS, related to maltreatment or homelessness, making their holiday a little brighter.

Junior School Third Grade Toy Drive

As part of an annual class service project, Junior School third graders spearheaded a two-week drive, collecting hundreds of new and gently used kids’ toys and books to be donated to the Play it Forward Pittsburgh Toy Drive. The students delivered the donations to the David L. Lawrence Convention Center in downtown Pittsburgh on Dec. 12, and spent the morning volunteering with Play It Forward Pittsburgh by sorting and organizing donated items. The drive was done in conjunction with The Little Fox – Toby’s Foundation, which is run by Junior School third grade teacher Dan Stern and his wife, Katie.
Senior School Book Drive

Members of the Senior School Service Learning Club held a book drive in October, collecting more than 600 gently used books. On Nov. 2, junior Adelaide Schiller and freshman Maria Schwendeman and several faculty members distributed the books at the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank’s Produce to People event in Homewood.

Diversity Leadership Conference

Five Senior School students and three faculty members attended the National Association of Independent Schools’ (NAIS) 26th annual Student Diversity Leadership Conference and People of Color Conference in Seattle, Wash., from Dec. 4-7. This year’s conferences, which run concurrently, focused on self-reflecting, forming allies and building community. Among the 1,700 students in attendance were senior Katie Spavero and sophomores Rohan Anand, Jasmine DeBruce, Breonna Greene and Grace Greeno. The students were accompanied by faculty members Pam Boehm and Creighton Runnette, and staff member Lillian Grate.

Middle School Holiday Drive

The Middle School held a holiday drive from Dec. 10-20 to benefit children and families served by Heritage Community Initiatives in Braddock, Pa. Students were asked to donate new and gently used board games, sports equipment and winter outerwear, and collected enough goods to fill approximately 10 bags and boxes. They also raised $718 for Heritage through a dress-down day fundraiser.

Guest Speakers Address Vaping, Drugs & Alcohol

In December, the Senior School welcomed two guest speakers as part of a health and wellness series. On Dec. 9, UPMC physician Dr. Tatum Tarin spoke to students at assembly about the dangers of vaping, while senior Yiwei Wang shared the results of the chemical analysis she and her classmates did on Juul pods in their Inorganic Chemistry class last spring. On Dec. 16-17, Glenn Hall from Freedom from Chemical Dependency visited campus to speak about drug, alcohol and nicotine use and abuse. Hall spoke at assembly, met with students during lunch, visited a health class, gave an evening parent program and spoke at a faculty meeting.
SSA Hosts Educated by Design Workshop

On Dec. 2, Shady Side Academy hosted the Educated by Design PGH Meetup, a professional development workshop for PK-12 educators sponsored by Remake Learning and led by “The Tech Rabbi,” Michael Cohen. A total of 18 educators from six area schools attended the event in the Glimcher Tech & Design Hub. Attendees explored the key concepts in Cohen’s book, Educated by Design, and tapped into their own creative potential in a design challenge. Cohen, who helps schools leverage creative thinking, collaboration and technology to empower students, also worked with SSA’s full PK-12 faculty during an in-service program earlier in the day.

Three Senior School Students Attend World Affairs Institute

On Nov. 13, senior Alison Linares Mendoza and juniors Nora Navid and Qingping Zhao joined Senior School history teacher Rachel McCool and science teacher Leah Powers in attending the 49th Annual World Affairs Institute for Student Leaders at the Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh. The institute, sponsored by the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh and Rotary International, engages high school student leaders in a discussion of key issues in international affairs so that they can understand and think critically about their world. The topic for this year’s institute was “What Will It Take to Achieve a Sustainable World for All?” and focused on the Sustainable Development Goals adopted by all U.N. member states in 2015.

NEW MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Shady Side Academy named three new members to the Board of Trustees for the 2019-2020 school year.

William Generett Jr. ’89 is an SSA lifer and vice president for community engagement at Duquesne University.

Pradeep Narayan is a current parent and head of business lending products at PNC Bank.

Kristin Wells is a current parent and is a partner in Reed Smith’s global corporate group in the mergers and acquisitions practice.

Pradeep Narayan
In 2018-2019, eight Senior School students participated in the junior year Science Research Seminar course, taught by Dr. Jill Schumacher. The course focuses on advancing research skills such as the reading of primary scientific literature, data analysis, scientific ethics and science communication skills. As part of the course, the students were placed in collaborating research laboratories at the University of Pittsburgh, Carnegie Mellon University, Allegheny General Hospital and the University of Virginia to complete research internships. The eight students, now seniors, presented their research and answered questions at Summer Research Symposium, held at the McIlroy Center for Science and Innovation on Sept. 25, 2019.

Presenters included:

- **Senior Olivia Rosenberg** worked with Dr. Andy VanDemark at the University of Pittsburgh, where they used a variety of techniques including X-ray crystallography to discover how proteins function at the molecular level.

- **Senior David Liang** worked with Dr. Mayank Goel at the Institute for Software Research at Carnegie Mellon University, where he worked on a project to engineer a wearable device for sensing a user's hand gestures.

- **Senior Talia Busquets** worked with Dr. Rodney Wegner and Dr. Vivek Verma in the Radiation Oncology Center at Allegheny General Hospital, analyzing a large data set of mesothelioma patients to determine the impact that adequate detection of neoplastic lymph nodes have on the survival rates.

- **Senior Sanjna Narayan** worked with Dr. Katie Lynn Wagner and Dr. Jeff Gross in the Louis J. Fox Center for Vision Restoration at the University of Pittsburgh, studying the role of the MITF transcription factor family in regulating cranial neural crest cell function during choroid fissure closure.

- **Senior Parker Maivald** worked with Dr. Wei Xiong in the Physical Metallurgy and Materials Design Laboratory at the University of Pittsburgh, investigating the properties of gallium-indium-silver metal alloys using CALPHAD (calculation of phase diagrams).

- **Senior Andrew Fergus** worked with Dr. Kevin Lee in the Department of Neuroscience at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, studying the destabilization of neurons in neurological disorders.

- **Senior Charlie Brunner** worked with Dr. Marcus Chmielus in the Department of Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science at the University of Pittsburgh, focusing on magnetic shape memory alloys used for micro-actuators and sensors.

- **Senior Maya Groff** worked with Dr. Morgan Fedorchak in the Ophthalmic Biomaterials Laboratory at the University of Pittsburgh on the development of novel biomaterials for drug delivery to the eye.
The Computer Science Wing is home to the Senior School Computer Science Department, which moved from Hunt Hall. It houses two spacious computer labs, each equipped with 16 HP Elite One computers and a 72-inch interactive SMART Board; a faculty office; and a computer lounge with five computers, two 48-inch SMART Boards and tables for students to work on group projects, meet with teachers or study.

Connecting the two wings and directly inside the facility’s exterior entrance is the SSA Café, supported and named by the SSA Parents’ Association. The café offers drinks and snacks during the school day and has quickly become a popular hangout. Large glass windows allow students sitting in the café to see what’s happening in the robotics arena and fab lab.

Jesse Robinson, director of the Glimcher Tech & Design Hub, is spearheading efforts to integrate the facility into the curriculum. He hosts a “Maker Monday” professional development series for faculty and is partnering with teachers across disciplines to brainstorm class projects – from a German class using the laser cutter to create German Christmas pyramids to a metalwork class using the 3D resin printer to create casting molds.

“Learning by doing and project-based learning are so important. You see levels of engagement from students go up as they start tinkering and making things, and there’s a bigger connection between the student and the work,” says Robinson. “The Hub really provides a space for teachers to augment their existing curriculum, giving them the ability to break the boundary of the classroom and go into this collaborative beautiful space that promotes creativity and innovation.”
Computer Science Department Chair Dawson Haytock says the new spaces are more conducive to collaborative learning. “We have an open space where students can collaborate and problem solve together – because that’s really how computer science is done. Being adjacent to the new maker space gives us a lot of possibilities for how we conduct our projects and what we do with our classes.”

The Glimcher Tech & Design Hub has opened up a world of possibilities for students to design independent study projects. Junior Eve Mango is creating an interactive living wall of plants that will use technology to monitor moisture and sunlight, with advice from vertical gardeners at Phipps Conservatory. Junior Erin Canning will be using foundry techniques and the CNC mill to fabricate reusable water bottles from recycled aluminum cans. And sophomore Angela Xue will combine woodworking, electronics and coding to create magic wands equipped with radio frequency identification (RFID) technology for a Harry Potter-themed library scavenger hunt.

“At Shady Side we have always thought of ourselves as problem-solvers, and we teach critical thinking and problem-based learning throughout our curriculum – whether it’s in math or computer science or English or history,” says Senior School Head Sophie Lau. “But this is a whole new venue for kids to solve problems and to use new tools to do that. Our hope is that the learning opportunities this new space provides will continue to build our students’ capacity to take on real-world challenges and solve real-world problems.”

“This is a game-changing space for Shady Side,” says President Bart Griffith ’93. “I can’t wait to see the creativity it inspires and the potential it unleashes in our students. Together, the Glimcher Tech & Design Hub and the McIlroy Center for Science & Innovation give us some of the most distinctive high school facilities in the region, which will prepare our students to lead and serve in an increasingly creative economy.”

Construction on the Glimcher Tech & Design Hub began in June 2018, when the Science Department vacated the space for the new McIlroy Center for Science & Innovation, and was completed in September 2019. In keeping with the Academy’s commitment to sustainability, the facility includes energy-efficient features such as LED lighting with occupancy sensors, a daylight harvesting system and water-saving plumbing fixtures. The physical transformation of the space is remarkable; what was once a dimly-lit basement housing a 1970s science lab and classrooms is now a bright and airy space brimming with modern technology.

The Glimcher Tech & Design Hub is the final phase of The Campaign for Shady Side’s science and technology initiative. It is named in memory of Nona Glimcher, mother of SSA trustee, parent and donor Robert Glimcher. Naming opportunities are still available for spaces, equipment and faculty initiatives, and fundraising is ongoing for a building endowment to support maintenance and upkeep costs in perpetuity. For more information, contact Director of Alumni & Development Dr. Allison Saras at asaras@shadysideacademy.org or 412-968-3077.
“Glory to Shady Side” was echoed throughout Homecoming and Reunion Weekend by newly installed President Bartley P. Griffith Jr. ’93. Homecoming 2019 took on a different meaning this year. Not only was this annual tradition a welcome home for all of our alumni, especially the classes ending in 4s and 9s, but it had significant meaning to SSA’s newest leader. The weekend was a reminder to the entire Shady Side community that we are all a part of the Academy’s history.

With record-breaking attendance, Homecoming and Reunion Weekend had a celebratory essence and was full of blue and gold spirit. To kick off the festivities, all four campuses held pep rallies and dress-up days to showcase school spirit. At the Senior School community assembly on Friday morning, three members of the 50th reunion class, Eric Allon ’69, David Cannon ’69 and Jeff Winokur ’69, participated in a panel discussion led by President Bart Griffith ’93. Each speaker reflected on his time at SSA and how it prepared him for life beyond high school. Following the assembly, members of the class and student leaders met for a roundtable discussion. The participants discussed their Shady Side experiences then and now, everyday challenges, favorite teachers/coaches, and who influenced them the most during their time at Shady Side. Lunch followed in McCune Dining Hall, and then the 50th reunion alumni boarded a shuttle to the Junior School. At the Junior School, the Class of 1969 attendees were welcomed by their fourth grade pen pals, who asked questions and enjoyed spending time together. After the visit to the Junior School, the alumni boarded the shuttle once again to head back to the Senior School for an interactive workshop in the new Glimcher Tech & Design Hub. Guests got a firsthand look at student projects and capabilities of this unique space.
New this year, the Alumni & Faculty Mixer was held downtown at the Heinz History Center. Alumni, faculty and guests enjoyed an evening of great food, cocktails and conversation. Director of Alumni & Development Dr. Allison Saras welcomed and introduced Griffith, who presented the annual alumni awards. The Paul R. Pigman ’52 Prize, awarded to a young alum whose activities in their daily life or profession exemplify strong character and good citizenship, was presented to Rebkah Tesfamariam ’14. The Robert E. Walker Award, presented to an alum whose sustained commitment to the Academy is consistent with the vision of Walker, the revered leader of SSA’s Alumni Office during the 1960s and 1970s, was awarded to alumna and Board of Visitors Chair Linda LaMagna ’83.
Saturday morning began with rain, but it could not dampen the spirits of runners gearing up for the annual Al Stewart Memorial Shady Stride. The Stewart family started the race, and congratulated Len Wholey ’99 as he was first to cross the finish line. Simultaneously, the Board of Visitors held its first meeting of the year in the Glimcher Tech & Design Hub. As the rain started to subside, the President’s Coffee and Conversation had to be moved from the J. Michael Grzymkowski ’90 Terrace to inside McCune Dining Hall. Griffith led the conversation and spoke about his excitement of being home in a place that has meant so much to him and his family. He provided updates on the boarding program, the new Senior School facilities, admissions and answered questions from the crowd. Immediately following, Senior School student admissions ambassadors Rose Genstein ’20, Ryan McLaughlin ’21, Nancy Wang ’21 and Whitney McVeagh ’21 led tours of the Senior School campus.

As the sun started to break through the clouds, the Kids Carnival, Blue & Gold Community Tailgate and Family Skate got underway. The carnival featured games, inflatables, a balloon artist, a face painter and a petting zoo, featuring a baby zebra. The Blue & Gold Community Tailgate was a place for alumni and families to sit down and share a meal with former classmates and faculty. Meanwhile, the Family Skate gave families the opportunity to lace up their skates and hit the ice.
Some of the biggest attractions of Homecoming weekend were the varsity athletic games. On Friday evening under the lights, boys’ soccer fell to Kiski Prep, 3-1. On Saturday morning, field hockey lost to Mt. Lebanon, 0-2, and girls’ soccer won against Freeport, 4-3. The football team defeated Fort Cherry, 20-6, with athletic team captains from the reunion classes being recognized at halftime.

Another change this year was that all class reunion celebrations were held on the Senior School campus. Under the tent on the Mary Hillman Jennings Plaza, more than 200 alumni gathered together for an all-reunion class cocktail reception. Board Chair Jon Kamin ‘91 posthumously recognized J. Keefe Ellis ’74 as trustee emeritus in gratitude for his many years of service to the Academy. After the reception ended, individual reunion classes dispersed to various locations on campus to celebrate, with the 50th reunion class welcomed into the president’s Eastover residence. An unofficial post-reunion gathering for all classes took place at the Cornerstone Bar and Restaurant in Aspinwall.

As the sun beamed through the windows of Memorial Hall on Sunday morning, families and friends gathered to honor and remember the lives of the 19 alumni we lost in the previous year. Current parent Rabbi Aaron Bisno presided over the service. In his reflection he reminded all of us that memory inspires hope. The message was a perfect ending to a great weekend.

If you are interested in helping to coordinate a class reunion for Homecoming 2020, please contact Lisa Page at 412-447-2252 or lpage@shadysideacademy.org. We look forward to welcoming home all alumni, especially those in classes ending in 5s and 0s celebrating reunions this upcoming fall.
Reunion Class Athletic Captains

Class Reunions

50th Reunion

Class of 1969
Front Row L to R: Ed Diamond, Terry Hunt, Eric Allon, Ken Christman, Bruce Herwald

25th Reunion

Class of 1994
Front Row: Jeffrey Ladik.
Middle Row L to R: Sophie (Nassif) Elias, Jose Amayo, Andy Braham, Suneil Mandava, Avinash Linganna, Anne Gailliot, Rajiv Ahuja, Tia (Grzymkowski) Whinery, Mallary Swartz, Anuraag Sahai, Ganesh Rao, Sridhar Palanisamy
Back Row L to R: Scott Koedel, Mike Weissberg, Molly (Davis) Braver, Alok Sethi

5th Reunion

Class of 2014
Sara Eismont, Claudia Mihm, Dominique DeRubies, Rebkah Tesfamariam, Selina Yossef, Chuck Calabrese, Jarred Brevard, Amber Shergill, Chris Succop, Maggie Scott, Caroline Ellis, Frank Benckart, Will Dively, Jack Kleindl, Cam Dively, Olivia Cochran, Dennis Briggs, Ariel Raj, Aparna Annamaraju, Lindsay Myer, Katie Mino, Haley Myer, Anna Swarts, Rebecca Donahue, Doug Boyle and TJ Cleveland

SHADY SIDE ACADEMY / WINTER 2019-2020 / 17
Thanks to the foresight and generosity of alumnus Fred H. Parkin ’59, the Parkin Fellowships for Global Service Endowment Fund was established June 15, 2006. Parkin Fellowships award travel grant money each summer to assist students in completing service or environmental projects around the globe. These experiences make an impact not only through the direct service or environmental improvements that students engage in, but also through the stories students share upon their return, stories that enrich the Shady Side community while inspiring others to make a difference in the world. During summer 2019, six SSA students were awarded Parkin Fellowships. To read the Parkin Fellows travel blogs, visit www.shadysideacademy.org/parkin. Here is a glimpse into each fellow’s journey via excerpts from their individual blog posts:
Sara Burr ’21 learned the importance of hands-on learning and learning through experience while working at the Shamwari Game Reserve in South Africa.

BLOG ENTRY:
“One aspect that I did not fully appreciate before going on this Parkin Fellowship was the importance of hands-on learning and learning through experience. While it is also vital to learn about topics through books and teachers, being immersed in the topic that you have researched and learned about brings forth a completely new light. In addition to learning from the instructors and asking questions during our discussion/lecture sessions, we volunteers experienced first-hand the physical work that is required to preserve the animals and their habitat. The lessons took place in the lodging area and were taught by the reserve guides. In one session we got to learn a substantial amount about poaching, both in the entirety of Africa and specifically in South Africa. After learning about poaching, we discussed anti-poaching, learning about the tactics currently used and discussing potential methods that would be effective. In another session, we learned how the geology of South Africa affects the types of animals that are seen on the reserve. The poaching epidemic first came to my attention during my freshman year, when we were asked to write an essay on a topic concerning Africa. As I perused The New York Times articles, I saw one about a rhino that had died due to its horn being hacked off. I wrote a paper on the subject of poaching and explained why we must prevent it from happening over and over again. It baffled me that someone would kill an innocent creature for a substance (keratin) that we humans produce in our own hair and nails. The rangers on Shamwari Game Reserve talked to us about the anti-poaching units and how dangerous a job it is. Seeing the severity of this crisis in front of my eyes is something that articles and books could have never taught me.”

Selah Curran-Blakely ’21 traveled to Guatemala to educate and help spread awareness about the importance of dental hygiene, as well as volunteer at a home for the elderly.

BLOG ENTRY:
“Seeing how these kids live and function every day at school opened my eyes to the privileged conditions that I have been granted to live in. My assignment was to play games with the kids about flossing and brushing their teeth for the first part of the day. I incorporated the games into my overall lesson to make the classroom environment a fun place to learn about dental hygiene. It was very challenging for me to get the attention of and instruct these energetic children in Spanish, a challenge I was willing to accept and I’m happy that I did. For the second half of the day, my volunteering team and I completed dental exams for each student by grade. We screened them for their amount of cavities, recorded our findings so it could be communicated to their parents, and then applied fluoride to their teeth to prevent the future formation of cavities. Shortly after following this schedule on my first day at the school, I soon realized these children barely have access to dental treatment or resources at all including access to toothpaste, toothbrushes, floss or working/clean water to even brush their teeth with. It was so surprising to me that some of the kids didn’t even know what dental floss was or how to use it.”
Nicole Caputo ’20 worked with the Foundation for International Medical Relief of Children to educate young mothers in Peru about nutrition, physical and emotional well-being and how to treat minor injuries.

BLOG ENTRY:
“While in Huancayo, I traveled constantly and met so many different people: teenage mothers, sexually abused women, orphan children and teenagers. At dinner one night, another volunteer told their mother what we had been doing, to which her mother responded, “Doesn’t that make you sad? Seeing all those people?” As we talked, my friend explained how feeling bad for the people of Huancayo never crossed her mind because so many of the people we met were so happy. Yes, some people were struggling, but I was surprised at how happy many of the “underprivileged” people were. I feel that Americans are conditioned to believe that we should pity or feel bad for people who don’t have as many physical things as we do, or the most advanced technology. This idea was shattered during my time in Huancayo. Some of the people that I remember as being the happiest, most gracious and vivacious, were some of the most underprivileged people I have met. Yet, at the same time, it was clear that many of the situations had taken quite a toll on their lives. For some of the teen moms, it meant they had to grow up faster, never getting the childhood many of us have in the U.S. For some of the sexually abused mothers, it meant their self-esteem and confidence had been taken away from them. My Parkin Fellowship allowed me to have an experience of total immersion in another country, another culture, another way of life. Life in Huancayo is too diverse and complex to be put into any box or take on a label. As for the all the Peruvians I met whose lives had been hard and complicated, I saw strength and maturity in them that amazed me. I am grateful for them because they showed me the true essence of optimism; how to take horrible things life had thrown at them and change them for the better.”

Alison Linares Mendoza ’20 spent time in Madrid, Spain, working with the Altius Foundation, as well as with students ages 11-16 in Sant’Agata Feltria, Italy, whose goal was to learn English through full immersion and cultural interaction.

BLOG ENTRY:
“Because the volunteers who came were always changing, I was able to meet more new people and hear their stories. The first day, I met a mother who had brought her two daughters because she had a day off from work and decided to spend it volunteering with her family. The second day, I met an older woman who came every Wednesday and other days when there were no volunteers and help was needed. She had two other sisters, all three of them volunteered on a regular basis, and each through a different organization. Others were like Paola who as a student in college wanted to do real hours in what she might later work on, or Sergio who worked upstairs but came down whenever help was needed. What they all had in common was that they didn’t let work or school stop them from helping others. Out of their busy lives, regardless of age, they all made time to volunteer and help those in their communities in whatever way they could. Service to others shouldn’t be something we do just to get hours on a resume or qualify for a club. It should come from a genuine want to help others. No matter how busy we are now, or will be later in life, we can always find time to give something in return.”
Scout Spong '20 worked with children and spent time as part of a rural development team in Koh Chraeng, Cambodia.

BLOG ENTRY:
“Upon our arrival back on the mainland, we entered the 100 Pillar Pagoda. We sat and listened to Phya tell stories about the pagoda and the stupas, glorified graves for monks and other high power Buddhists, that had lived within the 100 Pillar Pagoda. We then entered the main temple and were in awe of the intricately painted walls and ceilings with all the stories of the Buddha. Within the same pagoda, we visited the Mekong Turtle Conservation Center. We were able to see and hold baby soft-shelled turtles and lots of other kinds of turtles. For me, it was very interesting to see how involved MTCC was with education for rural villagers. It was even more moving when an episode of Animal Planet’s “River Monsters” was played showing the importance of this endangered river turtle’s conservation. I thought it was important for the future survival of many Cambodian species to educate the rural Cambodian population about their important role in the natural environment and decrease the over-exploitation and eradication of native fauna. I also thought it was a great implementation of a sustainable environmental project that I can use as inspiration when I return home. We then cooled off in a local street stand with fresh coconut water.”

Xinrin (Nancy) Wang '21 worked at an equine therapy center for children with special needs in Cordoba, Argentina.

BLOG ENTRY:
“I worked for five weeks in a local equine therapy center just outside the city. I came with little knowledge of what I was going to experience and left with surprises, friendships and a sea of memories I will treasure all my life. The equine therapy center provided great opportunities and happiness to the children who came and attended class here, especially those who were not as fortunate physically as we are. Students came not only to learn to ride horses but also enjoyed valuable interactions with both horses and other people. The center had a history of welcoming volunteers from all over the world. I was lucky to come and become a valued member of the team. In Argentina, people work late and rest late. I normally ate dinner at 8 p.m., went to sleep after 1 a.m., and woke up around 9 a.m. Every day after lunch, I grabbed my backpack, waited at the bus station, and hopped on #25. After about an hour, at the end of a U-shape turn, when only two or three people were still on the bus, I arrived at my working place, Fundación Cordobesa de Equinoterapia. We started working around 2:30 p.m. We cleaned the living place of the horses, including both inside the stables and outside, and sometimes cleaned the leaves in the yard as well. Then we would clean the horses, put on saddles and bridles, and prepare them for the classes. Normally around 4:30 p.m., the first student would arrive. Depending on the situation of the student, I would walk closely next to the horse to prevent the rider from falling, or lead the horse, or just stand aside and assist in the class. Around 7 p.m., after the last class was finished, we returned all the horses to their place in their casual bridle and jackets, and made sure all doors were closed and all horses had water and food.”
Bart Griffith braced himself as the running back barreled toward him. It was the Shady Side Academy freshman’s first varsity football game, and young for his grade and still undersized, he had every reason to be scared of the sight of his hulking opponent. So new to football that he had struggled to put on his shoulder pads, Griffith felt the other player knock him down and drag him across the field, but he just hung on.
Griffith wasn’t sure how his teammates would react to his shaky start. He expected teasing – or worse. But to his amazement, the opposite happened inside the Shady Side locker room. The star football players welcomed him onto the team, encouraging the rookie as the season went on. Knowing he was part of a team, something bigger than himself, he didn’t walk away and quickly began to improve.

By his senior year, now 6’4”, 200 pounds and having mastered the fine points of the game, he was not just part of the team – he was the captain. Just as the upperclassmen had encouraged him, Griffith made the new rookies feel like valued teammates.

Now, 26 years later, Griffith has returned to Shady Side Academy as the president, only the second alum in the school’s history to do so. As he walks along the campus that is part of his family’s DNA, it’s been a warm homecoming to return to the school that helped shape him. He talks about the influence of Shady Side’s strong academic program and how his experience as a novice football player helped him develop a similar team approach as an administrator in several independent schools.

He came to Shady Side after serving as assistant head of Gilman School, an all-boys independent day school in Baltimore. There he put an emphasis on welcoming and supporting new hires, something he will continue to do at Shady Side. “I’ve always had a passion and interest in the hiring process and the orientation of new people and the cultural immersion. That’s part of being a strong organization.” As a former teacher who received many honors, he knows how important it is to offer guidance and encouragement to teachers early in their career, when turnover is highest.
Returning to Shady Side has been a surreal experience. Many things are familiar — the stately buildings, the beautiful campus, the energy of the faculty and students. But other things have changed over the decades. He is heartened to see new, innovative teaching techniques, and a much more diverse student population, with 37 percent identifying as students of color. “It’s an extraordinarily and increasingly global community, with kids from 13 different states and nine different countries.”

When Griffith, his wife, Danica and their two children, Colette, 10, and Cannon, 8, moved to Pittsburgh, the new president found a very different city than the one he grew up in. “I continue to marvel at Pittsburgh’s capacity for reinvention, now a hub for innovation, research and design. All of us in the Shady Side community can help shape our city’s continued transformation.”

Griffith grew up in Squirrel Hill and then Fox Chapel, the oldest of three boys in a family that loved sports. One of his earliest memories is his first Steelers game with his grandfather. As a 5-year-old, his grandfather helped the young boy maneuver through the raucous crowd. “I can still feel his hand on the back of my neck steering me through.”

As a young boy, he sometimes went on rounds with his father, Dr. Bartley Griffith ’66, then a cardiothoracic surgeon at UPMC. Watching his father interact with worried parents and their gravely ill children made an indelible impression on him. “I was influenced by my father’s commitment to service and helping other people,” Griffith said. But while he liked his father’s bedside manner and the way he taught University of Pittsburgh medical students, he didn’t like the other side of surgery — the sight of blood.

One day, his mother, Denise, cut her finger in the kitchen. Instead of driving to the emergency room, his father stitched it up at home. Bart Jr. ran out the back door to get away from the blood, while his younger brother, Cullen, who would later become a surgeon himself, couldn’t get close enough. The middle brother, David, now an infectious disease specialist, stayed in the kitchen but at a distance, somewhere between the two extremes.

Denise said Bart Jr. was always laid back and never roughhoused with his siblings. “He was a gentle giant with his little brothers,” she said.

In sixth grade, he enrolled at Shady Side, following a tradition of his father and his grandfather, Charles Griffith ’39 (who attended The Arnold School, which merged with Shady Side Academy in 1940).

He felt small as he arrived on the first day of school. “The world of Shady Side felt unimaginably huge, with its 35-acre Middle School campus and its castle-like mansion schoolhouse. All of it was really overwhelming. But at the same time, I also felt like I was stepping into a unique kind of history. You could feel the tradition and the generational heft of the place — you were in a space with a high purpose.”

During the summers, his family stayed at a house at the Chautauqua Institution in Western New York. As a teenager, Griffith became a counselor at the camp there and had an instant rapport with the kids, who would knock at the family house and ask, “Can Bart come out and play?” his mother recalled.

In high school, he found his stride both athletically and academically. He loved to write, and his junior year creative writing teacher Dr. Sarah Eldridge, who later became head of the Senior School, helped him develop his craft with an experiment. She instructed her students to introduce themselves by their middle name, a moniker they would keep
for the entire course. Bart became Perry, and with a new name, he could see things in a new way.

“Her premise in doing so was that for a writer to see themselves and see their experience truly, they need to be able to take a half step back from themselves. We were developing observational consciousness, something I employ regularly as an educator and school leader.”

As he developed academically, he also thrived as an athlete on both the football and basketball teams. He said walking onto the football field as an inexperienced, undersized freshman revealed something about his character. “I would always go beyond my ski tips or seek out the water above my neckline.” And he would come out the other end much stronger.

In his senior year, Griffith became an editor of The Shady Side News. He was also awarded the President’s Prize.

“He was a natural leader. He always had this certain kind of gravitas,” said classmate Robert S. Mullin ’93, managing member of Penrose Advisors. “He led through example. He led by example. He showed people how to treat people by treating people well.”

His career in teaching got its spark at Shady Side, too. In the summer before his senior year in college, SSA humanities teacher Tom Johnson ’73 asked Griffith if he wanted a job teaching English to kids on the North Side as part of a summer program. Johnson, who later founded The Neighborhood Academy, told Griffith to prepare his first English lesson for the next day.

Unsure of what to do, Griffith made copies of the famous Robert Frost poem, The Road Not Taken. At the last minute, he had an inspiration. Instead of staying inside and reading the poem, he would take his kids across the street to Allegheny Commons Park to a point where the footpath divided.

The kids read the poem at the fork in the path, which kicked off a discussion about life choices.

At the end of the exercise, a boy named Ramon walked up to him and asked, “Mr. Bart, can I keep my copy of the poem?” – words that thrilled the future educator. “I was hooked,” he recalled. “I found my calling.”

“He was a natural, especially given the difference in background. There was a potential ocean of difference of experience and view of the world. None of that got in the way,” said Johnson. He continued, “I saw the seeds of the man he has become. He is grounded and generous of heart, mind and spirit.”

Though Griffith was leaning toward a career in teaching at graduation from SSA, he also entertained the idea of going into sports journalism. He was torn when he was accepted to both the Newhouse School of Communications at Syracuse University,
and Bucknell University, where he could study liberal arts. A week before he had to make a decision, he ran into former Senior School English teacher Tom Rinaldi.

Rinaldi, then an up-and-coming sports journalist who is now a famous reporter at ESPN, gave him some influential career advice. “You strike me as the kind of person who thrives in the interpersonal connections that are unique to a school environment, by the world of ideas and intellectual exchange,” he recalls Rinaldi telling him. In contrast, journalism could be a solitary profession.

So he took the right path for him – a liberal arts education at Bucknell University, where he majored in history and English, and played on the football team. He went on to earn a master’s degree in the teaching of English from Columbia University and a master’s degree in English from Middlebury College, with coursework at Lincoln College at Oxford University.

The newly minted teacher landed his first job teaching ninth grade English at The Westminster Schools, an independent school in Atlanta, Ga.

“I was learning so much from my students. We would read a Shakespeare play, and I got the opportunity to sort of sit there as the teacher and glean new insights, new meaning not only about the play, but about life, from 14- and 15-year-old kids. It was energizing and fulfilling.” He also became a varsity football and basketball coach and the girls’ lacrosse coach.

Griffith, who combined intellectual rigor with a playful side, was a beloved teacher at Westminster and won many awards. He was named a STAR Teacher by the Professional Association for Georgia Educators in 2000, received a Merrill Award for Teaching Excellence from The Westminster Schools in 2002, was named Assistant Lacrosse Coach of the Year by the Georgia High School Association in 2004, and recognized by the Stanford University Teacher Tribute Initiative for “Excellence in Teaching” in 2011. But the highlight was the students at Westminster dedicating the school’s yearbook to him in 2004.

During his 15 years at The Westminster Schools, he grew in leadership, serving as K-12 English department chair and dean of students. He also developed a program that applied learning to real-world experiences, one of his passions. From 2013 to 2015, he designed and directed Atlanta 2.0: The Urban Design Fellowship, a three-week summer program in which students evaluated a blighted area and studied the impact of land use, public space and urban design on Atlanta’s community and economy. The program won a Stephen P. Robinson Collaboration Grant from the Southern Association of Independent Schools in 2015.

That’s the kind of immersive teaching experience he values and hopes to continue at Shady Side. “We weren’t bound by the four walls of the classroom. We were out and about meeting with civic leaders. The kids presented their urban design ideas to an authentic audience.”

In 2015, Griffith was named assistant head of Gilman School, an independent K-12 day school for boys in Baltimore, overseeing academic affairs, assisting with operations and working with the senior leadership on the school’s overall mission.

He also took on a leadership role among independent schools. Griffith was a dean and faculty member of the Penn Independent School Teaching Residency, providing programmatic leadership for a collaboration between the University of Pennsylvania’s Graduate School of Education and 10 of the country’s leading independent day schools, including Gilman. The program supports early-career educators through theory and practice, enabling them to receive a master’s degree in education from Penn while completing a two-year fellowship at a partner school.

Even though he no longer presides over a single classroom, he’s still a teacher at heart. “As the president, I’m charged with inspiring learning for kids, for professionals, and assessing growth for the entire school. It’s just a larger classroom from that perspective.”

President Bart Griffith alongside his wife, Danica, and children, Cannon and Colette.
Throughout history, the first 100 days has often served as a key benchmark for new presidents. For President Bart Griffith ’93, one of his objectives for the first 100 days was to become the most visible, accessible member of the SSA community. He achieved this goal in spades, regularly visiting classrooms at all four campuses, presiding over morning drop-off, answering “Ask the Prez” questions at Senior School assembly, being “Coach for the Day” at Middle School practices, joining a Junior School recess kickball game, interacting with faculty and staff, and more – all the while chronicling his adventures on the popular @ssa_prez Instagram feed. At times he was quite literally the most visible person at SSA, rocking his trademark gold and blue tuxedo.
Shady Side Academy officially installed alumnus Bartley P. Griffith Jr. ’93 as president on Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019, in a formal ceremony attended by 500 guests in Richard E. Rauh Theater of the Hillman Center for Performing Arts on the Senior School campus.

The ceremony opened with a musical performance by the SSA Jazz Combo and an invocation by Rev. Tom Johnson ’73. Board of Trustees Chair Jon Kamin ’91 welcomed guests, Senior School teacher Sue Whitney gave remarks on behalf of the faculty, and Gilman School Headmaster Henry Smyth, under whom Griffith worked prior to SSA, read a poem. Then, students from SSA’s four campuses presented Griffith with gifts signifying their wishes for him as president, and the Senior School Chamber Choir performed. Griffith’s wife, Danica, introduced Rev. Dr. Bill Clarkson, former president of The Westminster Schools in Atlanta, who gave the installation address. Kamin gave the investiture and charge to Griffith as president, who accepted “with a full heart.” Former SSA President Peter J. Kountz gave the benediction, and guests joined in singing the alma mater to conclude the ceremony. A reception immediately followed the ceremony on the Mary Hillman Jennings Plaza.

To view videos and photos of the ceremony, or to read Griffith’s acceptance speech, visit www.shadysideacademy.org/installation.
The 14th season of the Hillman Performing Arts Series kicked off with a sold-out show in the Peter J. Kountz Black Box Theater featuring Grammy Award-winning folk artist Dom Flemons. The American songster played songs from his most recent album, Dom Flemons Presents Black Cowboys. During the two-hour performance, Flemons gave audience members a history of North Carolina pickin’ and rhythm bone playing. After the show, Flemons mingled with audience members, taking photos and enjoying conversation.

In October, mentalist Wayne Hoffman took the Richard E. Rauh Theater stage, presenting his show, Mind Candy. Hoffman read the minds of audience members, demonstrating seemingly psychic phenomena, even predicting the future. Audience members laughed out loud, watched in disbelief and left in awe.

New York-based jazz pianist Ariel Pocock continued the Black Box series in November. Her original compositions and songs, which draw inspiration from Cuban and Brazilian folk music, soothed the listening ears of audience members. She welcomed a surprise guest, guitarist Keith Ganz, to complete the evening of acoustic piano and guitar.

The Main Stage programming continued in December when we dusted off our ugly sweaters and welcomed back our first-ever return artist, Six Appeal. The a cappella vocal band filled the theater with classic holiday tunes, re-imagined only the way Six Appeal can do it. It was a fun evening for audience members of all ages.

The Hillman Performing Arts Series continues in February with the amazing Tami Lee Hughes, followed by the Celtic band Blackwater in March and the Bindlestiff Family Cirkus in April. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.thehillman.org.
Girls Field Hockey – WPIAL CHAMPIONS
by Zoe Conomikes ’20

The field hockey team entered the 2019 season as defending WPIAL champions. Led by Head Coach Betsy Gorse, the team ended the regular season with an overall record of 13-3, a section record of 8-0, and the No. 1 seed heading into playoffs. The team’s success was rooted in passion and motivation on every part of the field. Captains Zoe Conomikes, Bella Faiello and Annabel Kuhn helped lead the team to the WPIAL finals, where they defeated Ellis to win the championship for the second year in a row. The team qualified for PIAAs but lost in double OT in the first round. The girls will be back next season looking for their third consecutive WPIAL title.

Girls Soccer – WPIAL CHAMPIONS
by Molly Skvorak ’20

The girls soccer team had another amazing season, finishing the year as section champions, WPIAL champions and PIAA runners-up. Led by Head Coach Mary Lynch and captains Callie Davis, Nina Singh and Molly Skvorak, the team had a strong work ethic, resulting in a 20-2 overall record. Some highlights of the season include defeating Fox Chapel, reclaiming the WPIAL title against rival Greensburg Central Catholic and making it to Hershey for the PIAA tournament. Lynch was named the 2019 United Soccer Coaches East Regional Coach of the Year and the Pennsylvania Soccer Coaches Association Coach of the Year for private/parochial schools. The returning players are looking forward to bringing home the WPIAL and PIAA titles next season.
Boys Golf
by Patrick Walsh '20

The boys golf team had a great season under Head Coach Mark Hessler, finishing with a regular-season record of 13-1, winning the section title and finishing third in the WPIAL Team Championship. Juniors Adam Lauer and Charles Troutman, senior Brice Delaney and sophomore Wes Warden qualified for the WPIAL Individual Championship, with Lauer and Troutman placing third and eighth, respectively, to advance to the PIAA West Regional, where they placed ninth and 18th. Lauer moved on to the PIAA Individual Championship, where he shot 142 in 36 holes to finish tied for fifth. The team has a strong core of returning players and looks forward to another successful season next year.

Boys Cross Country
by Aniket Kumta '20

Led by Head Coach Paul Ejzak '89 and captains Aniket Kumta and Alex Reuter, the boys cross country team had a great season, finishing with an overall 8-3 record. The team had several new runners join this year, largely contributing to its success. The team finished 10th at the WPIALs, unfortunately missing the cut to qualify for the PIAA meet. However, two individual runners qualified for PIAAs, junior Adam Lauer and senior Cam Casey. Although Casey was unable to race, Lauer ran for the second year in a row with a time of 17:40, placing 47th. The boys are prepared to have another successful season next year with tremendous potential from the group of returning runners.

Girls Golf
by Charlotte Repp '20 and Adeline Todd '20

The 2019 season provided some tough competition for the girls golf team. Under the leadership of co-captains Charlotte Repp and Adeline Todd, and Head Coach Gene Deal, the team finished the season with a 3-7 record. While the team did not qualify for WPIALs, Repp traveled to compete in the WPIAL individual tournament, but was eliminated in the first round. The team looks forward to a strong core of young players returning next year.
Girls Cross Country
by Juliana Bem ’20

The girls cross country team had a successful season, finishing 9-2 under Head Coach Sue Whitney. With half of the team being comprised of new runners, it was a hard-fought, but successful season. Every girl ran her hardest, remaining dedicated to making the environment positive and welcoming. The team finished in eighth place at the WPIAL Championship meet. SSA will only lose one senior next season. Therefore, with a strong returning squad, the 2020 season looks promising.

Boys Soccer
by George Grune ’20

The SSA boys soccer team had another successful season. Led by Head Coach Ed Ellsworth, captain George Grune and seniors Jack Uhlman and Jack Naughton, the team finished the regular season with a record of 11-2-1, and ready to make a deep playoff run as a No. 4 seed. The boys finished third in the WPIAL after a tough loss to the eventual WPIAL and state champion Quaker Valley in the semifinals. The team qualified for the PIAA tournament but lost in the first round. With a small number of seniors, a number of younger players step up to fill crucial roles. Sophomore Sam Farner led the team with 26 goals, while sophomore Joe Anania led the team with 16 assists. The seniors closed their four years with two WPIAL titles, one runner-up title and a third-place finish. The team has a promising future and will continue to hold championship expectations.
Girls Tennis
by Elle Santora ’20

The girls varsity tennis team had a strong 2019 season, led by Head Coach Jeff Miller and captains Elle Santora, Avery Guyaux and Elizabeth Curley. The team finished the regular season with a record of 13-5, and advanced to the quarterfinals of the WPIAL team tournament before falling to Upper St. Clair. The No. 1 singles player, Santora, was a semifinalist the section and qualified for the WPIAL singles tournament. Santora and Renee Long teamed up to represent SSA in doubles competition, winning the section title after defeating Fox Chapel’s double team in a third set tiebreak for the win. Santora and Long advanced to WPIALs and placed third, solidifying a spot at the PIAAs in Hershey, where they fell to the No. 1 seed in the first round. Overall, the 2019 team will be remembered for the hard work and sportsmanship shown by every member. The returning players are looking forward to a solid season in 2020.

Football
by Mason Tomlin ’20

The 2019 football season was a year of tests. There were tests of physical and mental strength, as well as tests of the strength of camaraderie. Starting the season strong with a record of 3-1, the team was forced to forfeit the fifth game due to injuries. The loss didn’t stifle the team’s spirit, though. Led by Head Coach Chuck DiNardo ’00 and seniors Jack Calihan, Eddie Faulkner, Alex Ludwick, Tanner Thomas and Mason Tomlin, the team fought back and clinched a playoff spot after what many deemed the end of the season. As all good things do, the season came to an end in the first round of the WPIAL playoffs in a hard-fought game against Washington. The majority of the roster, including 10 underclassmen players, returns next year to finish what the team started.

Lacrosse Players Sign With Colleges

Two seniors signed National Letters of Intent (NLIs) to play NCAA Division I men’s lacrosse in college on the Nov. 13 national signing day. Goalie Michael DiMarsico signed with Johns Hopkins University, while midfielder Jack Naughton signed with the College of the Holy Cross. The players were joined by their families as well as Head Coach Cam Thompson, teachers and friends at a signing ceremony in the College Counseling Office.
 DOCUMENTING LIFE AROUND THE GLOBE, FROM PENGUINS TO POLITICS

BY CRISTINA ROUVALIS / PHOTOGRAPHY PROVIDED BY LLOYD FALES ’84
For a month, Fales also captured the work of penguin scientists studying this population and others on the Ross Sea. At the end of each day, the documentary filmmaker would haul his equipment back to camp climbing into his tent, utterly exhausted. The challenging adventure paid off.

Return to Penguin City, an award-winning documentary funded by the National Science Foundation, aired on Animal Planet and was distributed in DVD form to middle school classrooms across the country.

That is just one of the many documentaries Fales created before landing his most recent job as an executive producer for Peacock Productions, a division of NBC News. The Emmy award-winning production company creates nonfiction series and specials for networks such as Discovery Channel, National Geographic, Sundance, MSNBC and Oxygen, as well as streaming services such as Netflix.

In one sense, sleeping in a tent in Antarctica prepared him for a different kind of extreme: the rough-and-tumble world of politics, where he has overseen episodes of MSNBC’s Headliners series on Democratic presidential candidates Pete Buttigieg and Beto O’Rourke, former First Lady Michelle Obama and NBA superstar LeBron James. The specials are hosted and narrated by MSNBC/NBC News correspondents such as Lester Holt, Katy Tur, Jacob Soboroff and others. Fales works in the media hub of 30 Rockefeller Center in Manhattan, where he occasionally finds himself sharing elevators with Saturday Night Live cast members and other celebrities.

Riding the current popularity of true-crime documentaries and podcasts, Fales has also shaped numerous stories that examine the darkest side of human nature. He has overseen several series for Investigation Discovery including Deadline Crime with Tamron Hall and, most recently, Keith Morrison Investigates: A Fatal Confession and Oxygen’s The Disappearance of Crystal Rogers.

As executive producer, he works with producers to craft story treatments, plan shoots and interviews, and then revise scripts and cuts to sharpen story arcs. In the ultra-competitive space of true crime stories, he’s on the lookout for stories and reads headlines and reaches out to police sources to see if they are willing to talk about their cases.

“There’s been so much viewer interest in this genre. In addition to the traditional murder mysteries, we try to highlight issues like domestic violence or sex trafficking or wrongful imprisonment to shed light on those problems,” said Fales.
For example, on an episode of Deadline: Crime with Tamron Hall called “The Death Chat Room,” his team told the tragic story of a college student who killed herself after being egged on by a sinister man posing online as a sympathetic woman.

Bryan Cole, a fellow filmmaker who started SweetSpot Pictures with Fales in the early 2000s and then continued it on his own, said he is not surprised that Fales landed such a prestigious job. “He is a storyteller. With every one of his stories, there is a bit of intrigue, a deep understanding of what compels an audience to feel connected,” Cole said. “He brings people in with his writing, his shooting, the type of characters he interviews. He’s a complete filmmaker.”

Fales grew up in a New York City suburb, the son of a filmmaker and public television executive, Danforth Fales, who started out in the 1960s working for Bob Drew and Jim Lipscomb, two pioneers of American documentary filmmaking. His father began as a sound recordist and producer on films that covered a range of subjects from ballet dancers to boxers, to test pilots and the New York City Bomb Squad.

“I was lucky to have grown up seeing his enthusiasm for film and hearing his wild stories,” Fales said of his father. “He showed me that filmmaking and television were possible career paths.”

“I never pushed Lloyd into the business,” Dan Fales said. He didn’t have to. Even as a boy, Fales would make his own films in the backyard using Super 8 film and then the first consumer camcorders, a new piece of technology that would help revolutionize documentary filmmaking at the time.

The family moved to Pittsburgh after Dan landed a job as vice president at WQED. Lloyd started his first year at Shady Side Academy as a sixth grader in 1977. In high school, he befriended David Catlin ’84, who was a gifted actor. “Catlin brimmed with creative superpowers that inspired me and others,” Fales said of Catlin, who would go on to co-found the Lookingglass Theatre Company in Chicago and teach at Northwestern University.

For an independent project in their senior year English class, Catlin and Fales wrote a script about four teenage boys who went through a tumultuous period when the brother of one of them gets killed during the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut in 1983. The script, which won an award from the English Department, was turned into a movie with Fales behind the camera, Catlin directing, and three other friends acting – Rick Munroe ’84, Larry Resick ’84 and Huw Pierce ’84.

In 1984, Fales started film school at Ithaca College and shared the same dream as most of his classmates – to become a Hollywood director. “We ended up making these mostly terrible student films, but we learned a lot.”

But it was a documentary class that made everything click for Fales. Like his father, he found his passion in telling nonfiction stories. After graduation, he was mesmerized watching Errol Morris’ Thin Blue Line, the 1988 true-crime documentary about Randall Dale Adams, a man sentenced to death for a murder he did not commit.
Fales was devoted to his craft, but it was tough to break into the brutally competitive industry. Five years out of film school, Fales was hustling for associate producer gigs, the stepping stone to becoming a producer. In 1993, he and his father were walking around New York City when Dan Fales called his old pal and colleague, Jim Lipscomb, a documentary filmmaker whose work has aired on National Geographic, Discovery and PBS.

Lipscomb mentioned that he happened to be looking for an associate producer for his latest project, a National Geographic film about the historic flood that was building in the Midwest. Soon after, Fales joined the team in Saint Genevieve, Mo., where the residents were desperately filling sandbags, trying in vain to hold back the cresting Mississippi River. The documentary was a formative experience for Fales as he helped capture the anguish of people as they watched the levees break and their world wash away.

As he had done for Dan Fales in the 1960s, Jim Lipscomb mentored Lloyd, sometimes allowing him to step behind the camera to interview the distraught residents. After one shoot, Lipscomb took the rookie aside and gave him some great advice on interviewing. “The person you’re talking to might pause after saying something, but don’t jump in too soon with your next question. You don’t want to cut them off and miss something great. Don’t be afraid to let there be a moment of silence.”

The documentary, called Can’t Drown This Town, also touched on environmental issues, such as the desire of many residents to rebuild their homes on flood-prone land, an increasingly complicated question as climate change accelerates.

Climate change also was a central theme in his penguin documentary.

As script writer, Fales didn’t sugarcoat the opening. “There’s no doubt about it,” stated the first line of the 2008 National Science Foundation-funded DVD. “The greenhouse gases we’ve been sending into our atmosphere are warming the Earth and transforming our planet.”

Fales’ sense of adventure was also evident on a shoot he and Bryan Cole did for Search for the First Dog, a 2003 National Geographic film about the origins and evolution of dogs. The film sent Fales to Israel and India, and onto Australia and the highlands of New Guinea where he met up with Cole to look for the country’s legendary singing dog, a primitive, dingo-like canid hardly ever seen in the wild. Fales, Cole and a local biologist traveled to a small and remote village where a local clan agreed to guide them up the mountain to look for the dogs.

Near the top, the group set up camp, and everything was going well – until another tribe carrying machetes barged into the campsite. An argument ensued. The mountain was disputed territory and the rival clan was angry at the presence of Cole and Fales who they accused of being gold prospectors. Their denials didn’t convince them otherwise, but tempers eventually died down, and the filmmakers, having recorded audio of what their guides believed was the howling song of a singing dog in the distance, went to bed without incident.

But the next day, as Fales was filming a hillside, Cole looked back. Flames were shooting up from the ground behind them. The rival tribe was sending a clear message: get off the land.

Cole kept telling Fales, “Uh, Lloyd, we really should go.” “One minute,” Fales said, as he finished the shot.

That dedication is one of the reasons he was hired at NBC in 2008 and has continued to excel as an executive producer. His father, now retired from the business, looks forward to his son’s future projects, whether they be political profiles, true-crime dramas or another kind of science docu-series “Lloyd has a great sense of story,” his father said. “That’s what it takes to build a film.”

Fales lives in a suburb of New York with his wife and three kids. He hopes that someday one of his children will discover the same passion for recounting real-life stories just as he did from his own father.
The weekly editorial staff meeting at U.S. News & World Report takes place each Tuesday morning in a conference room overlooking the cobblestone streets of Georgetown in Washington, D.C.

On the walls hang historic, framed covers of the 86-year-old news weekly, including the debut issue of U.S. News from 1933 (the magazine was merged with sister publication World Report in 1948).
Kimberly Castro, who was announced as *U.S. News*’ first female editor and chief content officer in August, after working her way up the masthead since joining the magazine 11 years ago, is the first one in the room.

Soon more than a dozen colleagues file in, including the managing editors of education, health, money, travel and cars, and everyone takes their seats at a long, rectangular conference table.

Castro chooses a seat in the middle of the table, not the head. She opens the meeting by turning the spotlight on Managing Editor of Education Anita Narayan, asking her if she’d like to share her team’s latest achievement, the ranking of 1,500 institutions of higher learning across 81 countries.

Next, Castro introduces a guest speaker, a software developer who is there to explain the new data tools the tech team is rolling out to help writers better understand and engage with readers, including insights on where readers click in stories on their website, which currently rakes in 40 million visitors per month.

While her managing editors pepper the software guy with questions, Castro leans back in her chair with a serene smile. The purpose of this meeting is to help bridge the tech and editorial sides of the publication, to break down silos and get colleagues collaborating in ways that will better serve readers.

Given the hearty back-and-forth that’s occurring, Castro senses she can hang back and refrain from dominating the conversation.

Watching her lead the editorial meeting, one is reminded of Aaron Sorkin’s screenplay for *Steve Jobs*, in which Jobs explains his leadership style to Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak.

“I play the orchestra.”

That was Jobs’ gift, his ability to bring diverse people together. He knew how to marshal others’ talents to accomplish his vision.

Castro possesses a similar gift, says former editor Brian Kelly, now *U.S. News*’ editorial director and executive vice president. “She built a team of loyal, smart people around her, including hundreds of freelancers covering everything from cures for cancer to the best blue-chip stocks.”

Her team, says Castro, is “smarter than I am, by design. I rely on them.”

Castro has learned how to delegate since her first journalism “job,” putting together the *Castro Press* at age 9. According to Castro’s sister, April Castro ’93, a dentist in the nearby Washington suburb of Bethesda, Md., the *Castro Press* chronicled their childhood exploits in McKeesport, mostly the hijinks of the family cats, Muffin and Sunshine.

“She built a team of loyal, smart people around her, including hundreds of freelancers covering everything from cures for cancer to the best blue-chip stocks.”

– Brian Kelly, *U.S. News & World Report* Editorial Director and Executive Vice President
For the latter, a comedy with a jazz score by Cy Coleman, she played a leading role, a Hollywood siren whose torrid seduction number, “Lost and Found,” stole the first act. “Way out of character,” stresses Castro, who says she prefers to be an ensemble member, not a soloist.

That’s how she sees her role at U.S. News, as “an operations person, in the background, ensuring that we hit our revenue and traffic goals.” Forget making the rounds of the Sunday talk shows like other Beltway journalists. “The dog and pony show is not me.”

That doesn’t surprise Shady Side choir director Dr. Dan Brill, who worked closely with Castro in the chamber choir and jazz ensemble and recalls her “extraordinary work ethic and body of work.” Castro was “hungry to do everything, and she was always stretching, whether to play that character in City of Angels or to do heavy-duty jazz.”

Castro admits she wasn’t focused academically in high school, but after college at George Washington University, where she majored in philosophy (a decision influenced by many philosophical discussions with Dr. John Sutula as they paced the quad), she “buckled down” in graduate school at New York University, where she earned a master’s degree in publishing and studied digital media.

This past October, she was honored with the 2019 NYU School of Professional Studies Bart Lawson Distinguished Alumna Award.

Castro was in the middle of graduate school in 2007 when the first iPhone was released. She remembers thinking that the device would “dramatically change the way people tell stories and consume content.” That’s when she saw an opening with digital media. “We’re going to have to find ways to tell great stories and shrink them down to these devices, modernizing the art of storytelling.”

After graduate school, she stayed in New York, writing and performing poetry and working as an editor at ratings agency Standard & Poor’s, covering the technology sector. She caught the eye of U.S. News, which was just beginning to reinvent itself as a digital publisher in ways that its biggest competitors (Time, Newsweek) were not.

With her mix of native tech knowledge and traditional journalism skills, Castro became invaluable to the company, “a bridge to the future,” says Kelly, helping to manage the “huge transition” out of print and toward a new and profitable model of online journalism – a mix of news, consumer advice and the rankings for which U.S. News is now famous.

During that transition, “we never lost sight of the value of journalism,” Kelly

“Kim is such a respected leader at U.S. News... She has her hands in everything from content strategy and business development to editorial improvements and progress on the technology team, and she leads by example.”

– Liz Opsitnik, U.S. News & World Report Executive Editor of Consumer Advice
insists. “Fact checkers, copy editors – Kim rebuilt that system when we went digital.”

Under Castro’s leadership, the consumer advice team – which covers education, health and money – produced hundreds of stories per month and content for more than 30 products, including Best Colleges, considered the gold standard for rankings in the United States.

Her Shady Side Academy education helped her manage such a large and diverse portfolio. “I’ve always been highly organized, since childhood, and Shady Side really cultivated that in me.”

When the offer to become editor arrived, it came with a bottle of Jameson Irish Whiskey, courtesy of old-school journalist Kelly, and an airplane hangar-sized office, and seemed to surprise no one – except perhaps Castro.

“You should say ‘hell yes!’” Kelly recalls telling her. “She’s wonderfully talented but has a great sense of humility.”

Journalism is a mercurial business, and it’s unusual to see a journalist stay at the same publication for as long as Castro has. At U.S. News, that loyalty goes both ways, she says.

“This is a family-oriented company. When my daughter Sydney got a terrible staph infection at age 1-1/2 and was in Children’s Hospital for a month, it was the worst time of our lives” for Castro and husband Josh Tyler, a director of pharmacy at a pharmacy startup in Northern Virginia. “My bosses were empathetic. They said, ‘don’t worry about work. Family comes first.’ This is why I’m so loyal.”

Besides, she adds, “Pittsburghers stick with their roots, stay loyal.”

Castro is proud of the workplace culture at U.S. News and continually strives to make it better. She recently created a Women in the Workplace initiative, which offers one-to-one mentoring and skills training in areas such as public speaking.

“Many young women here see Kim as someone they want to be,” says Kelly.

Innovation is what drives her as editor. “The future is continually innovating the newsroom, so our editorial teams are digitally savvy. Seventy percent of our audience uses mobile over desktop – and growing. We need to go where audiences are.”

That means exploring new technologies such as virtual reality and personalization, using data to offer personalized story recommendations and products.

“If we’re helping people, we must make sure we are offering what they need. That’s what data does for us. Helping people solve problems is why we come to work every day.”
Harvest Happy Hour

Local Pittsburgh alumni, faculty and faculty emeriti gathered on Thursday, Nov. 21, at Penn Brewery for a Harvest Happy Hour to kick off the holiday season. It was a nice opportunity for alumni to gather with current and former faculty members and discuss the latest happenings at SSA.

Alumni Lacrosse and Hockey Games

The annual alumni athletic events over Thanksgiving weekend were held on Friday, Nov. 29, and Saturday, Nov. 30. Ice hockey alumni geared up on Friday for their game in the Roy McKnight Hockey Center. On Saturday, lacrosse alumni gathered on McKelvy Field to play. The final scores of both games didn’t matter, as the alumni had the opportunity to have some friendly competition and relive their glory days at SSA.
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For more information on planned giving options, visit plannedgiving.shadysideacademy.org or contact Dr. Allison Saras at 412-968-3077.

Coming to a city near you!

The SSA Alumni Office is hitting the road!
Please save the date and join us at the upcoming Alumni Gatherings to meet President Bart Griffith ’93.

**Wednesday, February 19**
Los Angeles, Calif.

**Thursday, February 20**
Palo Alto, Calif.

**Tuesday, March 3**
New York, N.Y.

**Thursday, April 2**
Washington D.C.

More detailed information coming soon!
Questions? Contact Lisa Page at 412-447-2252

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BLUE & GOLD FUND
Included in this section are news items received through Nov. 1, 2019.

1944
Murray Egan fractured his hip and was very sorry to miss the 75th class reunion, especially since it was his son David Egan’s 45th reunion as well.

1959
Mark Aronson writes: “I was sorry to have to miss our Class of 1959 60th reunion dinner, but recovering from my second total hip replacement has been taking longer than I had anticipated and I could not be there.”

1961
Jim Hackett writes: “I went to the Final Four in Minneapolis last April.”

1966
Casey Wolff and six friends walked toward the Woodstock music festival in New York in August 1969. Unlike many thousands of people who claimed to have been at Woodstock, Casey was really there.

1968
S. John Whitehall attended Thanksgiving in Tucson, Ariz., where he celebrated the first birthday of his grandchild, the 34th birthday of his daughter and his 10th wedding anniversary.

Chris Abernethy ’66 writes: “After 50 years, the secret is finally revealed! The genesis for the iconic Abbey Road album was an homage to another boy band, The Abernethy Brothers. Those British lads got their idea from this family photo that shows, from the left, myself, Mike Abernethy ’70, Charles Abernethy ’61 and Sam Abernethy ’76. It was the Beatles’ idea to use a crosswalk, and they discarded the whole ‘jazz hands’ thing. This photo was taken in September 2019 at Edgewood Golf Club at the Abernethy Cup, named after the brothers’ aunt, Betty Abernethy. Each year four teams of Pittsburgh-area women golfers devote a day to competition and fellowship. Betty was quite the prodigy, winning tournaments against much older competition from age 12 on. She was Pennsylvania State Amateur Champion in the late 30s and again in the early 40s. Although she died in 2004, the tournament that she created has been contested for more than 20 years, and her memory and legacy live on. Regrettably her golf genes seem to have bypassed her nephews, but we are even par at the buffet.”
1969

Eric Allon of Bernkopf Goodman LLP has been selected to the 2019 Edition of Massachusetts Super Lawyers, his 14th consecutive year with this recognition. Each year, no more than 5% of the lawyers in Massachusetts selected by the research team at Super Lawyers receive this honor. Allon has more than 25 years of experience in real estate and business law with particular emphasis on commercial leasing, acquisitions, management and sale of properties, brokerage contracts, residential and commercial development and financing transactions, including extensive experience in loan workouts.

Andrew ‘Andy’ Wiegand writes: “I retired in July 2017 after 40 years in pastoral ministry. I am enjoying more time to visit my six children and six grandchildren, to pursue charitable and missions interests, and to engage in less formal teaching and ministry.”

1970

Eric Epstein writes: “I have been trying to locate some old friends and roommates. I tried for years and just found Frank Rial’s obituary. Anyone know where Greg Riley is these days? I retired last weekend and fully intend to spend the rest of my life riding my bicycle as often and as far as possible. Forty years running my own shop was enough. If you want to, feel free to contact me at spamcatcher162@gmail.com”

1978

The Junior School became a movie set for Dear Zoe, an independent feature film adapted from the award-winning novel by local author Philip Beard that is being filmed in Pittsburgh. Marc Lhormer co-wrote the screenplay, and he and his wife, Brenda, are co-producing the film through their production company, Zin Haze Productions. Marc is a lifer, who attended SSA from grades K-12, so the Nov. 16 shoot brought him back to his own elementary school days at the Junior School. The film is tentatively slated for a 2020 release.

1983

The Executive Council of the Episcopal Church USA recently confirmed the appointment of William Vodrey to the Court of Review. The court is composed of three bishops, three priests and seven laypeople, and is the last court of appeals for ecclesiastical trials of priests and deacons nationally. The court is rarely summoned, but when it is, it sits in panels of five. Since 2001, Vodrey has served as a magistrate of the Cleveland Municipal Court.

1986/1987

Brendan McLaughlin ’86, Tom Worrall ’87, Jake Ploeger ’87 and Peter Wymard ’87 spent a day at PNC Park with former Senior School faculty member Mary Krualand to celebrate her retirement.
1986
Michele Lieber, president of BluePoint DC, a boutique government relations, public affairs and crisis management practice, was named to the board of the Washington Literacy Center for the 2019-2021 term. Lieber is a government relations attorney with 25 years of expertise in the financial and auto industries and has served as an adjunct professor at Georgetown University School of Business. She is a member of Shady Side Academy’s Board of Visitors.

1995
Pittsburgh Police Zone 5 commander Jason Lando and his grandfather, Moe, shared their firsthand experience of the Tree of Life shooting and their struggle to heal in a powerful Washington Post story on Oct. 26 marking the one-year anniversary of the tragedy. Visit washingtonpost.com to read the article.

1996
Kim Castro was named the first female editor and chief content officer of U.S. News & World Report in August 2019. Read more in the alumni profile on Castro on page 38, written by classmate Geoffrey Melada.

Geoffrey Melada has been promoted to associate vice president for communications at Hillel International.

1997
Michelle Jo Semins, Andy Hawk, and big brother Alex welcomed Madeline Sophia to their family on Oct. 22, 2019.

1998
Dr. Sarath Malepati made a deal with famed entrepreneur and investor Kevin O’Leary on the hit television show Shark Tank on ABC. Dr. Malepati’s product, EZC Pak, is a physician-formulated immune support pack composed of echinacea, zinc, and vitamin C designed to eradicate the problem of antibiotic overuse in colds and flu. Dr. Malepati negotiated a $125,000 investment for a 5% stake in his award-winning brand.

1990
Alex Moser, director of marketing at Seven Springs, was a guest host of KDKA’s Pittsburgh Today Live on Aug. 13, 2019.

2000
2003
John Edwards returned to the Senior School to speak at an all-school assembly on Nov. 25, in honor of Computer Science Education Week. Edwards, who is a cybersecurity and technology consultant in New York City, spoke to students about his journey to becoming a consultant and his passion for the work. The focus of his Mobile First presentation for students was the mobile app, TikTok. The social media video app is used for creating and sharing short lip-sync, comedy and talent videos. Edwards examined why the mobile app is so addicting and spoke about the major data privacy and U.S. military and government concerns. Following assembly, Edwards met with students in the Glimcher Tech & Design Hub’s computer lounge for a Q&A session.

2003
Dr. Christine M. Krauland married Dr. Derek Mariscal on Sept. 1, 2019, in Pittsburgh. Shady Side alumni in attendance included groomsman Rick Krauland ’99, Jackie Donahue Gillespie, Leslie Markel, Simi Singh Beck, Lauren Strelec, Mike Goldstein and Kathleen Donahue Wallach ’06. Also in attendance were SSA parents, Mary Ellen Costa, Amy Minter, Cheryl Moore and Fran Donahue, former SSA School Heads Sarah Eldridge and Jill Kaechele, and former faculty member and mother-of-the-bride Mary Krauland.

2006
Camille Woods and her husband, Lance Woods, moved to the San Francisco Bay Area from Pittsburgh in November 2017. Camille currently works as a staff attorney at the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, and Lance is in-house counsel for Tesla.

2010
Frankie Costa was one of three Pittsburgh-born Harvard Business School students who arranged a trip to Pittsburgh last spring for a group of Harvard Business School students. Frankie co-wrote an article for NEXTpittsburgh.com on Oct. 22 about how the vibrant city blew them away.

2007
Father D.J. Egan was ordained a priest in the Catholic Diocese of Pittsburgh on June 29, at St. Paul Cathedral, Oakland. He celebrated his first mass at St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Glenshaw, on June 30, with Bishop David A. Zubik in attendance. Also in attendance were Jesse Ament (left) and Adam Roskowski, along with Adam’s son, Theodore.

2010
Pooja Tripathi and Dionne van den Berg, who together lead the female-driven film production company Fountain Avenue Productions, spent Oct. 4 at the Senior School. They were guests at community assembly, where they spoke about their careers and then screened the trailer and first episode of Amsterdam Ave. for the student body. After assembly, Tripathi and van den Berg were guests in the film class, Modern Narratives, and had lunch with students in the WSSA Film Club.
Jonathan Halpern was named one of Pittsburgh Business Times’ 30 Under 30 for 2019. Those on the list exemplify the creativity, passion and perseverance that have come to characterize Western Pennsylvania’s new economy. Jonathan is the co-founder of Pineapple Payments, a fast-growing fintech startup that he founded in 2016 with partner Brian Shanahan. This is Halpern’s second startup. He started his first business, AthleteTrax, during his sophomore year of college. AthleteTrax, a payments-focused software platform serving sports facilities, leagues, teams and camps, was purchased by Pineapple Payments in 2018.

Erin Caplan is part of the inaugural class of the Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship program at Duquesne University. The highly competitive program prepares recent graduates and career changers with strong STEM backgrounds to teach in high-need secondary schools. Erin is a graduate of Franklin & Marshall College and the University of Pittsburgh.

Jane Sheerer is participating in the MS Run the US, an annual 3,260 mile relay run across America dedicated to raising awareness and funds to support multiple sclerosis (MS) research, while also aiding those living with disability due to MS. The Relay begins each year mid-April in Santa Monica, Calif., and finishes mid-August in New York, N.Y. Jane will run 162 miles in six days, across the state of Nebraska, in honor of her sister, Madi Sheerer ’11. All runners must raise $10,000 to participate. For more information and to make a donation, visit msrunthe.org/campaigns/janesheerer/

Jacob Horne presented his thesis, Do Behavioral and Cognitive Biases Have Greater Impact on More Educated Investors: An Empirical and Experimental Analysis of the Behavioral Aspects of Investment Decision-Making for Investment Professionals and Students in June 2019 at the Canadian Economic Conference in Banff, sponsored by the Bank of Canada. His was one of only 10 undergraduate papers selected from among university students who study in Canada or are Canadian citizens. He is a 2019 first class honors graduate, joint honors in economics and finance from McGill University, and is currently studying for his M.S. of finance at The London School of Economics and Political Science, London, England.

Louis Berry was the featured speaker at the Senior School athletics awards assembly in November. An All-American defensive back who helped Mount Union’s football team to two NCAA titles, he spoke about his time at SSA and college, advising students to stay humble and remain confident. Berry is pictured with Middle School faculty member Betsy Gorse and Athletic Director Gene Deal.
For the 12th year in a row, Senior School music teacher Stan Nevola offered Sunday evening jam sessions this past summer. Many alumni came back to play alongside current SSA students. Pictured are Nevola, Chris Ferree ’17, Ashwin Dhawan ’18 and Anna Rosengart ’17. Others who attended throughout the summer were Bruce Morrison ’14 and Eric Wolf ’18.

Clayton Krol was one of 16 members of the High Point University men’s lacrosse team to be named to the Academic All-Southern Conference team. To be eligible, student-athletes must carry at least a 3.3 cumulative GPA at the conclusion of the spring semester and compete in at least one-half of their teams’ competitions. High Point’s Division 1 men’s lacrosse team finished the 2019 season ranked No. 16. Clayton is studying pre-med and had a great year on and off the field.

Zac Coughlin launched zacssweetshop.com and is accepting online orders. As the website notes: “Zac’s Sweet Shop puts a modern spin on America’s favorite desserts and is the perfect one-stop shop for awe-inspiring, personalized and over-the-top desserts with a flavor for everyone. Every sweet is hand-dipped in decadent, gourmet chocolate and finished with Zac’s iconic drizzle.” The Sweet Shop launched after Zac completed a successful crowdfunding campaign on GoFundMe.com.

GET CONNECTED!
Access the brand-new, more user-friendly SSA Alumni Network website and mobile app!

You can now easily find alumni in your area, access directory information and network with classmates.

For more information, visit www.shadysideacademy.org/alumni and go to “Stay Connected” in the gray section menu.
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. These listings include all information received by Nov. 1, 2019.

KENNETH C. HEALD ’41
Kenneth C. “Buck” Heald passed away Sept. 21, 2013. He served in the U.S. Navy in World War II and graduated from Colorado School of Mines in 1947. He was a petroleum engineer and mining consultant. He was preceded in death by his wife, Jesse, and son, Kenneth (Casey) Conrad III. He is survived by three sons, Jeffrey Heald (Michael Zerbach), Charles Heald (Mary Gilkison), William Heald (Danielle Rigby), and one granddaughter.

ARTHUR W. GITTINS ’42
Arthur William Gittins passed away May 8, 2019. He attended Williams College prior to World War II, served in the U.S. Army, returned and graduated from Yale University in 1950, earning his M.B.A. from Case Western Reserve University. Prominent in the iron and steel business, he moved to Hudson, Quebec, Canada, in 1977, and became a dual citizen in 2013. He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Becky; children, Amy (Robert) Blair, Ann (Bill) Krull, Bill (Kristen) Gittins and Tim (Sheila) Gittins; 11 grandchildren; and 5 great-grandchildren.

WALTER J. BLENKO ’44
Walter J. Blenko passed away Aug. 11, 2019. Blenko was a member of the U.S. Army during World War II and awarded a Combat Infantryman Badge and Bronze Star. He was a graduate of Carnegie Institute of Technology and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law. He spent his law career at Eckert Seams Cherin & Mellott as a partner and later became counsel to the firm. He was admitted to practice in the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, the Supreme Court of the United States, the Court of Customs and Patent Appeals and the International Trade Commission. Following retirement from law, he owned and operated the family business, Blenko Glass Company. He was predeceased by his first wife, Joy Kinneman. He is survived by his children, John (Cheryl) Blenko and Andrew (Patricia) Blenko; wife, Patti Matty; three grandchildren; four stepchildren; and six step-grandchildren.

WILLIAM A. STITT ’48
William A. Stitt passed away May 22, 2019. He attended the University of Pittsburgh and served in the U.S. Army Counterintelligence Corps during the Korean War. He is survived by his wife, Priscilla; sons, David (Bernadette) Stitt and Billy Stitt; seven grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

RICHARD S. CUDA ’50
Richard Sebastian Cuda passed away Oct. 10, 2019. He graduated from the University of Pittsburgh and Harvard Business School, and served in the U.S. Army. He worked for General Electric prior to owning Blake Equipment, Yankee Equipment and S&C Cattle. He was predeceased by his wife, Ellie Cuda. He is survived by his children, Corinne Cuda (Warren Ingersoll), Fred (Eileen) Cuda and Beth (Todd) Baker, and nine grandchildren.

DR. FRASER LEWIS ’52
Dr. Fraser Lewis passed away April 26, 2018. He graduated from Princeton University and Temple University’s School of Medicine. He specialized in obstetrics and gynecology and delivered many babies throughout this 25-year medical career in Princeton, N.J. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Maxine Allman Lewis; four sons, Jeffrey Lewis, Dr. Stephen (Beth) Lewis, David (Susan) Lewis and Christopher (Pamela) Lewis; and three grandchildren.

REV. JOHN DENNIS ’55
The Reverend John Dennis passed away Sept. 4, 2019. He was a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary, serving as senior pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of St. Louis for many years. In 1978, he relocated his family to South Africa, where he contributed to the Sullivan Principles, which directed economic pressure on South Africa to help end apartheid, and was detained in Algoa Park Prison. He also led peacemaking trips to the Middle East, Northern Ireland and “Iron Curtain”-era USSR. He was predeceased by his wife of 52 years, Nancy Schumacher. He is survived by sons, Michael (Allison) Dennis and Andrew (Rebecca) Dennis, and four grandchildren.

JAMES STINTSON ’55
James Stinton passed away Dec. 10, 2016. He was survived by his wife of 52 years, Sue Stinson, two children and one grandchild.

JAMES HUGGINS ’62
James Huggins passed away Oct. 7, 2019. He earned his B.S. from Denison University and an M.B.A. from Northwestern University, and worked as a business executive for various companies throughout Europe and the U.S. He was preceded in death by a daughter, Jeanne Huggins. He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Barbara Ilse Huggins; children, Matthew (Jennifer) Huggins, Lena Huggins, Jeffery (Deborah) Huggins; and three grandchildren.
A. STEVEN WALLECK ’62
Albert Steven Walleck passed away Sept. 5, 2019. He was a graduate of Harvard University and Harvard Business School. He spent most of his career as a director at McKinsey & Co. consulting firm. In the later years of his professional life, he became CEO of several companies across a variety of industries, before finally becoming an independent consultant. He is survived by his four children, Andrew, Catherine, Oliver and Christopher; two grandchildren; and his former wife, Sarah.

JOHN B. BLAKELY JR. ’66
John B. Blakely Jr. passed away Dec. 2, 2017. He attended Slippery Rock University and Grove City College, and served in the U.S. Army Reserve for six years. He spent his career as an elementary school counselor at Rockwood Elementary, Rockwood, Pa. He is survived by his siblings, William (Nancy) Blakely and Melissa (Thomas) Weber, and nieces and nephews.

JAMES G. SUCCOP ’75
James G. Succop passed away May 6, 2019. He was employed by American Roller Bearing, Pittsburgh. He was predeceased by his brother, Carl J.D. Succop ’70. He is survived by his wife, Carole Froehlich Succop; children, Christie (Mike) Eckert, Chad Succop and Kellie (Adam) Guzik; two grandchildren; and brothers, Lawrence Succop ’62, J. William (Nancy) Succop ’65, David (Robyn) Succop ’63 and Benjamin (Sara Lou) Succop ’79.

JOHN KIM ’81
John Kim passed away Jan. 21, 2019. Born in Taegu City, South Korea, he spent his career at NorthStar Realty Finance in New York City. He was proceeded in death by his father, Scott Kim. He is survived by his mother, Katheryn Kilja Kim, daughter, Olivia Kim, and brothers, Jay Kim ’83 and Michael Kim ’88.

JOAN M. ROONEY CLANCY ’87
Joan M. Rooney Clancy passed away Oct. 1, 2019. She graduated from John Carroll University, Duquesne University and Framingham State University. She was a teacher at St. Bernadette’s Parochial School. She is survived by her husband, Christopher Clancy, and children, Shane Clancy, Jacob Clancy and Michaela Clancy.

GAVIN MCCOLLM ’98
Gavin McCollom passed away Aug. 16, 2019. He is survived by his parents, Dr. George and Janice McCollum, and siblings, Kathleen, William and Maurita McCollum.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS
Dr. John Ammer, father of Joy (Ammer) Irwin ’85

Virginia Bash, mother of Metz Culinary Management employees Cindy Wise and Tracy Yanko

Louise Bingham, mother-in-law of Senior School faculty member Dana Hardy-Bingham and grandmother of Jack Bingham ’26

Doris Bunker, mother of Cheryl Little, member of the Board of Trustees and former head of the Junior School, and grandmother of Justin Little ’92 and Brandon Little ’93

Cathy Coleman, mother of Sean Coleman ’78

Therese Costa, former Senior School library assistant, 1979-2019, and mother of Dr. Ralph Costa ’78, Therese (Costa) Fisher ’80 and Paul Costa ’86

Dr. Paula Gilchrist, mother of Lauren Gilchrist ’03 and Bethany Gilchrist ’04

Arthur C. Harbison, father of Senior School After-Hours Nurse Amy Gray, and grandfather of Zachary Gray ’06 and Bryson Gray ’18

Benjamin Harvey Green, father of Director of Equity, Inclusion and Community Relations Lillian Grate, and grandfather of Terrance Grate ’24

Sandra Hammon, mother of Junior School faculty member and Residential Life staff member Nick Hammon

Virginia Lee Heinz Leslie, mother of Craig Leslie ’87

Eugene F. Maloney, father of Bridget (Maloney) Pastore ’97 and Michael Maloney ’92

Helen Mathieson, mother of Peter Mathieson ’79 and Andy Mathieson ’74, grandmother of Dan Mathieson ’12, Mike Mathieson ’13 and Jack Mathieson ’16

Donald Morcone, father-in-law of Athletic Director Gene Deal, and grandfather of Dave Deal ’01, Brian Deal ’04 and Jason Deal ’09

Jesse J. Medina, father of Mail Courier Mark Medina, and grandfather of Julie (Medina) Gal-Or ’98, Sarah (Medina) Steimer ’02, and Kim Medina ’04

Mark L. Robinson, father of Senior School Director of Global and Off-Campus Programs Jessica Parker

Cecilia Szymkiewicz, mother of Groundskeeper Tom Szymkiewicz

Judith Turben Walrath, mother of Director of Enrollment Management Katie (Hoopes) Mihm ’83, Pamela Hoopes ’85 and Jamie Hoopes ’89, grandmother of Claudia Mihm ’14 and Henry Mihm ’16

Max A. Wymard, brother of Anne (Wymard) Starz ’95

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Robert F. Kaelin
MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER/ADMINISTRATOR, 1960-1998

Faculty emeritus Robert F. (Bob) Kaelin passed away Oct. 12, 2019, at the age of 86. Kaelin personified discipline, hard work and integrity, carrying that philosophy with him to his profession as an English and Latin teacher and assistant headmaster at Shady Side Academy Middle School. He took great pride in teaching and firmly instilling those core tenets of a hard work ethic, perseverance and a “Do It Because It Is Right” principle to middle school students. As anyone who knew him can attest, Kaelin said what he meant and meant what he said. And though his students may not have known his personality beyond the stern “Mr. Kaelin,” his personal character also showed compassion, spirituality and thoughtfulness, including a surprisingly irreverent sense of humor. He was predeceased by his wife of 51 years, Bernadette, and is survived by two daughters, Mary Ellen (Mark) Lederer ’82 and Roseanne (Richard ’81) Kaelin Easler ’84, as well as four grandchildren.
When Shady Side celebrated the installation of President Bartley P. Griffith Jr. ’93 on Oct. 10, 2019, the Academy welcomed only the second alum in the history of the school to take on the role of president. But this Bart Griffith wasn’t the first Bart Griffith to walk the halls of Rowe or lead the football team onto McKelvy Field. Before Bart Jr. came his father, Dr. Bartley P. Griffith Sr., who graduated in 1966. And before that was the first SSA graduate in the Griffith family, Charles “Chuck” Griffith, class of 1939. Chuck was a graduate of The Arnold School (the current location of the Junior School), which officially merged with Shady Side in 1940. Therefore, as The Arnold School ceased to exist after 1940, all Arnold School alumni officially became graduates of Shady Side.

The education from Shady Side formed strong roots in the family tree. Chuck went on to found the Mid-East Oil Company in 1961. Bart Sr. continues to heal the sick as a world-class surgeon, educator, scientist, inventor and entrepreneur. And, now, Bart Jr. extends the family legacy of success and service – while remaining true to the blue and gold.

THREE GENERATIONS OF Griffith Grads

THANK YOU TO OUR ALUMNI that took the time to send feedback regarding the summer issue’s From the Archives in Shady Side Academy Magazine. Your knowledge and willingness to share the history of computers at SSA is much appreciated. The feedback has been stored in the Academy archives for generations to come.

FUN FACT

The first alumnus that served as president of Shady Side was George L. Follansbee ’30, who served in the role from 1953-1965. Follansbee spent his summers in at the Chautauqua Institution in Chautauqua, N.Y. In the morning, Follansbee would often look across his back patio, where he would be greeted by the friendly, young man who summered next door. That young man and neighbor was Bart Griffith Jr.
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