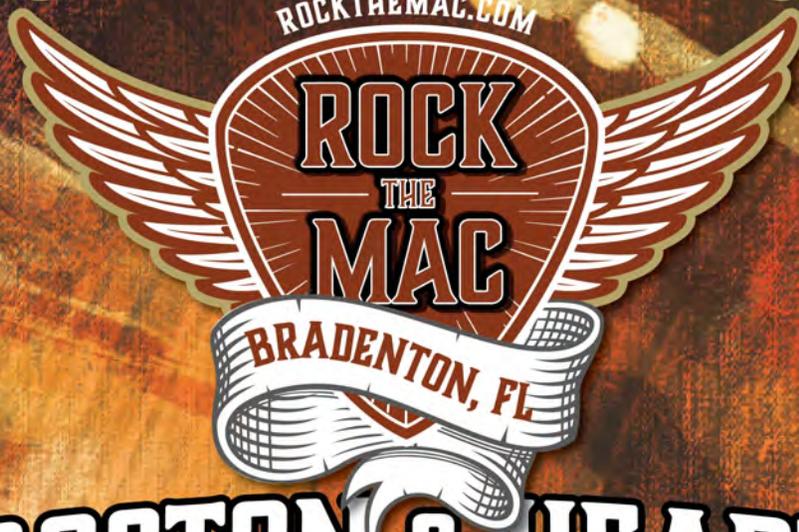


Saint Stephen's

Volume 14 • Issue One • Fall/Winter 2023



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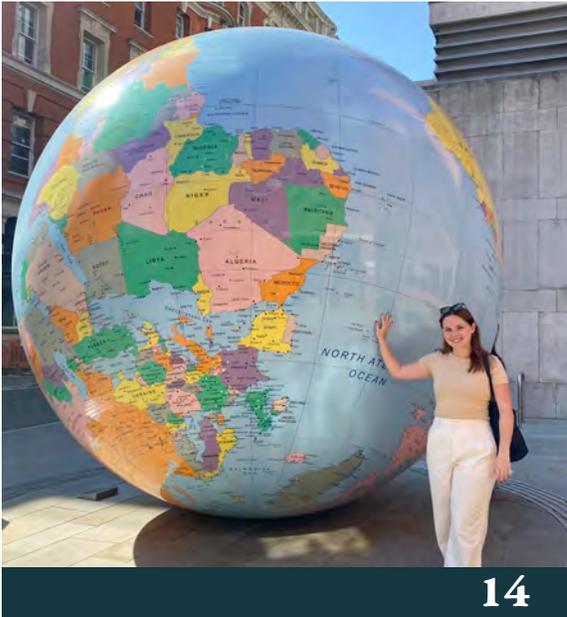
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From the Head of School's desk . . .

Since I assumed the Headship in July, I have met individually or in small groups with more than 200 members of the Saint Stephen's Community. These meetings all had the same goal: hearing folks' "Saint Stephen's stories" and understanding what makes the school special.

From these conversations, three themes emerged:

The Power of our Promise: "Every child will be known and every child will be valued" is not just a catch-phrase. Person after person has spoken to Saint Stephen's commitment to recognizing the unique qualities and needs of each student – with examples ranging from the developmentally-centered structure of our intermediate and middle schools to the work of the Center for Academic Success. One teacher summed it up well: "Like any good school, we know that we have lots of room to improve. But we never lose sight that our students are the center of everything we do."

Inspiring Excellence, Balance, and Character: This year, more than 40-percent of our students travel at least 25 minutes each way to attend Saint Stephen's. That is no short commute, but Saint Stephen's is a "destination for learning" – in part due to signature programs like IQ, marine science, our sister schools in countries ranging from Argentina to Denmark, and our equally outstanding athletics and arts programs. As one alum said with pride: "We are a little school that does an awful lot well."

A "Culture of Kindness": Lastly, the interviews have demonstrated the community's strong support for our focus on the physical and social-emotional wellness of our students and the "psychological safety" that is a prerequisite for their health. The Social Institute (thesocialinstitute.com) program, which will begin in early 2024 after comprehensive faculty training, is only part of this. So, too, is our unsurpassed campus security team and their commitment to ensuring that Saint Stephen's is a safe and welcoming place to learn. An eighth grader said it best: "We are taught at Saint Stephen's that it is important to be smart, but that it is also important to be kind. I feel like I can do both here."

These defining elements are now present in all areas of our school. From our new website landing page, to our admissions process, to our curriculum, this "story of Saint Stephen's" is being told even more deliberately . . . while continuing to shape all that we do.

So thank you to all those who have given generously of their time to meet with me. And to those with whom I have not yet had the chance to speak: I look forward to meeting you in the future.

As always, my best,





DR. JANET S. PULLEN S.T.E.A.M. CENTER

INSPIRING CREATIVITY, COLLABORATION, AND INNOVATION

As construction begins in the coming weeks, we are reminded of how far we've come and so thankful for the many donors who have allowed us to make this dream building a reality. Here's another chance for you to get involved – by participating in a unique naming opportunity!

The Collaboratory's Wall of Drawers will house robots, lab equipment, technology, art supplies and much more. Drawers are limited in number and will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis. Reserve one now in your family's name or honor and memorialize a family member, friend, or teacher.



Small drawers: \$20,000 | **Large drawers:** \$50,000

We welcome multi-year pledges, which means your \$4,000 gift today provides \$20,000 for this campaign when committed over five years!

Your recognition will also extend beyond the school community. The S.T.E.A.M. Center will be available to businesses and community groups that are in need of rental space to host events.

For more information, please contact Elizabeth Krupnick

Director of Development • Saint Stephen's Episcopal School • (941) 746-2121 ext. 1123 • ekrupnick@saintstephens.org

On Campus

AUGUST



☀ Five Falcons were among more than 1,000 Latin students from across the country who attended the 2023 National Junior Classical League Convention at Emory University in Atlanta. They participated in a variety of games, sports, entertainment, testing and Certamen in the spirit of friendly competition. Tenth grader Danielle Weathers earned first place in Overall Olympika and ninth grader Andrew Wenzel earned fourth place in Mythology.

SEPTEMBER



☀ We hosted our first international guest of the school year with a visit from Lucía Velarino from Barcarrota, Spain (Bradenton's sister city). The stop held special meaning for Lucía, now a university student in Spain. As a fifth/sixth grader, she took part in our virtual exchanges with her school. That exchange has continued to grow, and our Intermediate School students were excited to meet someone from the town where their current pen-pals/video buddies live.

☀ The teachers at Saint Stephen's are among the most accomplished of any school in the nation, and that was reinforced once again when Upper School teacher Patrick Whelan was recognized as Florida's 2023 History Teacher of the Year. Patrick, in his 36th year at SSES, was selected by a panel of teachers, administrators, and scholars for the honor presented annually by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History in New York.

☀ The SSES student newspaper – The Gauntlet – was named a "Distinguished Site" by School Newspapers Online (SNO). The SNO Distinguished Sites program gives news staffs six standards to help their publications excel online. As each standard is met, the site is awarded a badge. Completing every badge in one school year earns Distinguished Site recognition. The Gauntlet was one of just 72 schools nationwide to receive the award.

☀ Each year, the University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee campus hosts the area's largest 9/11 remembrance ceremony and our Lower School students are invited to play a key role in the event. Due to ongoing construction on the USF campus, the 2023 ceremony was moved to the Sarasota National Cemetery and our Falcons made it extra special by leading the crowd in the singing of "God Bless America," as well as an armed forces medley representing each branch of military service.

OCTOBER



☀ The dream that is the Saint Stephen's S.T.E.A.M. Center took a giant step toward reality on Oct. 3, when ground was broken on the site before a crowd of enthusiastic supporters. Former Head of School Dr. Janet S. Pullen, whose name will adorn the building, helped celebrate the important milestone. Construction begins in late 2023/early 2024.



☀ Peter Kraft was officially installed as the school's sixth Head of School at an investiture ceremony led by Bishop Douglas Scharf inside beautiful Christ Church on Oct. 24. The ceremony included student representatives from each academic division presenting Mr. Kraft with unique and meaningful gifts designed to inspire his tenure at SSES.

☀ Saint Stephen's students interact regularly with classrooms around the world through our Global Outreach program that links SSES with schools in more than 20 countries. Included in that group are eight "Sister Schools" who have developed special relationships, including Eisbjergus Internationale Efterskole in Denmark. Student exchanges between the schools have grown in recent years and the Danish students made their annual visit to Saint Stephen's in late October. A group of Falcons will return the visit to Denmark in early 2024.

NOVEMBER



☀ Saint Stephen's celebrated National Signing Day with four outstanding senior student-athletes who made their commitments to play collegiate sports starting in 2024. Congratulations to National Letter of Intent signees Alex Long (golf-Texas A&M), Sienna Cassella (lacrosse-Rutgers), Ashling Marshall (lacrosse-Bryant), and Cade Walters (baseball-Davis & Elkins).



☀ Former Head of School Dr. Jan Pullen received one of the highest honors given by the Florida Council of Independent Schools at its annual convention in Miami. Dr. Pullen was presented with the Edgar McCleary Service Award, recognizing her as a "teacher's teacher" for outstanding service in furthering the mission of FCIS schools.

DECEMBER



☀ For the seventh time in the past eight years, the Saint Stephen's Academic Team is the champion of the county-wide Commissioner's Academic Challenge. And for the second straight year, the SSES teams took both first and second place for the season, ahead of 14 other teams from Manatee County schools. Three Falcons also qualified among the top six individual scorers. Senior Theo Frano was the high scorer overall for the season, and junior Dylan Dam (2nd) and sophomore Pearson Walters (6th) will also represent the county at the state competition in Orlando in April.



☀ From Nov. 29-Dec. 2, Middle School Director Dr. Joel Erby, Upper School Dean of Student Life Mrs. Anna Conn, and Upper School English Teacher Mr. David Johnson brought six students - Sanjay Motwani (Class of 2024), Jeremy Stroh, Hao Li, Priscilla Webley, Ella Ziegler (Class of 2025), and Keymani Dillingham (Class of 2026) - to the NAIS People of Color Conference and Student Diversity Leadership Conference in St. Louis. This group participated in three days of intense discussions, workshops, and team building in the areas of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

Intermediate School Provides Unique Balance

It's a concept born out of opportunity.

At the turn of the 21st century, Saint Stephen's was moving into a new era of growth, and the building that housed the high school since 1973 had become obsolete and was finally being replaced by a brand new facility. So, what to do with that existing building?

"At the time, the Lower School was bursting and we knew we had to find a way to adjust for the growth," former Head of School Jan Pullen remembered. "As our students were moving into the new high school, we discussed a few ideas and settled on the concept that is now the Intermediate School. It was something we thought could make us stand apart from other schools and it just felt right with where the children are developmentally at that age."

The newly coined Intermediate School moved fourth and fifth grades out of the Lower School and sixth grade from the Middle School starting in 2001. The new division made sense for a variety of reasons. From a purely logistical standpoint, fourth grade is the first level in which students begin moving to classrooms with different subject teachers throughout the day. The building made that easy. It's also the year that students receive letter grades for the first time.

From a social and emotional standpoint, Pullen said the school viewed fourth graders as a bit more "sophisticated" than the rest of the Lower School students, and the sixth graders as not quite ready for the complexities of the Middle School. Putting them together with the fifth grade in this new division brought unique benefits.

According to current Intermediate School Director Andrew Hasbrouck, it has proven to be a brilliant decision. It's also a model that he has not experienced before, despite teaching and working as an administrator at every grade level, in schools throughout the U.S. and abroad.

"Without a doubt, it allows our sixth graders a chance to be themselves without the internal pressure of needing to be more grown up that sort of comes with being in middle school," he said. "Taking away that stress gives them another

year to just be comfortable with who they are, and that definitely leads to more confidence academically. And on the other end, with the fourth graders moving to classes throughout the day for the first time, it adds a new layer of responsibility, maturity and ownership of their learning."

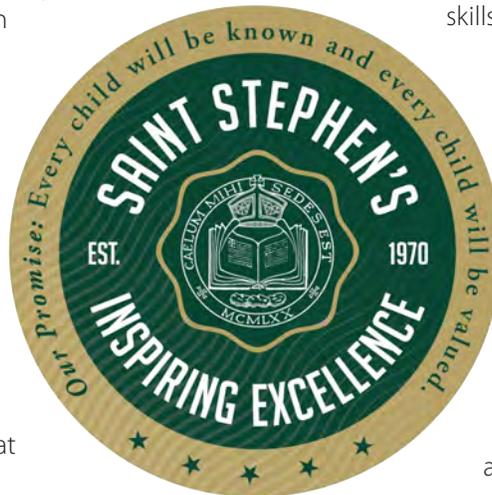
Hasbrouck also sees his division as a perfect transition at each grade level that the teachers understand and collaborate to achieve. The fourth grade faculty recognize that their students are still at an age where a nurturing approach is perhaps the most important to lead to academic growth. The scale tips toward a more academic focus in fifth grade, and sixth graders get their first taste of the rigor to come while being given a chance to experiment with different types of study skills to discover what works best for them.

Perhaps sixth grade social studies teacher Chris Valcarcel describes it best.

"The Intermediate School is a place that allows our students to continue to grow their love of learning. It's a bridge between the Lower and Middle, where students collaboratively gain skills. Each year grows in rigor, culminating in sixth grade where students apply the skills they've gained to prepare for the leap across campus," he said.

The division has also proven to be a great success in easing the transition to Saint Stephen's for new students from other schools. With sixth grade annually being one of the most common entry points to SSES, those students are instantly inserted into a leadership role in the Intermediate School, as opposed to entering as the youngest students in the Middle School. That has been a significant positive pointed out almost universally by the parents of new students.

"I tell the parents, come back and take a look two or three weeks into the school year and try to tell me who the new students are compared with those who are returning. You just can't tell the difference," Hasbrouck said. "These grade levels are my favorite to work with and the faculty are the most impressive I've been around anywhere. It's a unique culture we have in the Intermediate School and, yes, it surprises me that this isn't a model that you see more often in education."



FULL CIRCLE

As a student, **Charles Du** built a lasting bond with teacher Bernie Yanelli and an appreciation for the liberal arts. Now, Du and his SSES mentor are looking to fuse that approach with emerging AI tech in a new program at the school.

After growing up in China, Charles Du came to the United States and graduated from Saint Stephen's in 2009. As an international student, Du needed to find a host family at the start of his junior year. Until one could be found, Upper School teacher Bernie Yanelli and his wife decided to take Charles in . . . temporarily. But, according to Yanelli, "Charles was best friends with my son Luke, and he became such a joyful and integral part of our family that we asked him to stay for the next two years."

"On the day Charles graduated, he walked out our front door with his parents, turned back, and said, 'Don't worry, I'll be home for Thanksgiving and Christmas.'"

Yanelli recalls closing the door, smiling at his wife, and saying, "I guess we've adopted Charles!" Fourteen years later, Du remains a valued member of the family, even flying back from Shanghai to celebrate Yanelli's mother's 80th birthday.

Following graduation, Du earned a B.S. in economics and philosophy from Boston College and then went to work for Apple – first in Boston and later in Shanghai. He credits much of his success in both college and at Apple to the liberal arts foundation he received at Saint Stephen's.

He thanks Mrs. Bolotin and Mr. Yanelli for laying the groundwork for that foundation. "Mrs. Bolotin pushed me to work collaboratively with my classmates, and also to break down barriers, use humor, and give each other mutual respect and recognition," Du said. "As for Mr. Yanelli, in his classroom I learned how to integrate knowledge across academic disciplines. I can still recall hearing about Aristotle, Adam Smith, and fiscal and monetary policy all within one lesson – and the confidence I gained from being able to make those types of connections was why I studied both economics and philosophy in college."

Even after he joined Apple, Du found that his liberal arts foundation and his deep curiosity in tech dovetailed perfectly

with the ethos that Steve Job's instituted at Apple. As a result, he quickly earned leadership roles across the company.

Several years later, while coaching high-performing teams at Apple, Du had a spark: he would create an edtech company that empowers students to become entrepreneurs – with no MBA required. "Apple," he noted, "sought tech-savvy liberal arts thinkers, but experience taught him that only the self-starters thrived."

Since making that discovery, Du has expanded his vision. He said that, with the advent of generative AI and AI-augmented

learning, students can experience every aspect of launching a company and tackling real-world challenges, but do so in an interactive classroom setting.

And he believes the best time for such hands-on learning is now. Last summer, Du left Apple and teamed up with his mentors, Yanelli and Preston Boyd, to pioneer an AI-infused musical theater camp in Shanghai. The STEAM-themed experiment proved to be a big hit with students and parents alike, so this summer, the trio plans to bring their talents back to Saint Stephen's.

Their idea is to host an AI-Entrepreneurship Camp that fuses rich interactive lessons with the ethical use of generative AI tools, current design principles, and key concepts related to economic and financial literacy. Their

goal? To provide a real-world startup simulation that allows students to unlock their inner entrepreneur, but doing so with a liberal arts twist. Lessons will be grounded in the common threads that connect great innovators from the past – Aristotle, da Vinci, Galileo, Adam Smith, Marie Curie, Picasso, and Steve Jobs.

Rising eighth graders and Upper School students will be invited to attend, and Du plans to invite students from China, as well. The tentative dates for the camp are July 5-19 and July 22-Aug. 2. Stay tuned for more details.



Alumni Event Recap '23



Connor Lynch '13 addressed the Class of 2023 at graduation on May 20 at Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall. At SSES, Connor was a member of the National Honor Society, Mu Alpha Theta, and captained the varsity golf team. He was recruited to play golf at Brown University where he studied astrophysics. During college, Connor interned at the Air Force Research Laboratory and participated in the Mars Desert Research Station project simulating life and scientific activities on Mars. Today, he is an aerospace engineer for Lockheed Martin. Connor told the graduates “visualizing your success is so important to achieving it. This includes having a plan and powering through the unknowns, while imagining how this plan might materialize. There are so many things every day that are outside your control. However, within your control is the power of persisting toward your goals. This has helped keep me focused on a long-term vision with the confidence to push through obstacles and hardships.”



On June 9, alumni gathered at the Gulf Drive Café Tiki Hut on Bradenton Beach for a touching farewell event honoring Dr. Jan Pullen on her retirement. Alumni from multiple decades came out to thank her for her tireless devotion to the students and faculty during her 35-year tenure. Dr. Pullen was celebrated by 90s alumni **Rob Sanford '91**, **Tricia McKay Powers '93**, **Kameron Partridge Hodgens '96**, and '97 classmates **Sarah Walters Burnsed** and **Ryan Billib**. Other alumni attending included **Logan Walters** and **Eric Pullen** from the class of 2000, **Kaleen Nora '04** (with mom, Joyce Nora, parent of five Falcon alumni), **Whitney Scott Morales '05**, **Stewart Moon '07**, **Sisi Zhao** and **Joshua “Josh” Breitwieser** from '09, **Jordan Sebastiano '11**, 2019 classmates and brand new college graduates **Alex Miller**, **Carter Beckstein** and **Graham Beckstein**, **Anika Kennedy '20** and **Connor Grindal '22**. Former faculty member Barbara O’Neil and many family members of our alumni guests made for a captivating evening Dr. Pullen will treasure always.



1LT Emiliano Concha-Toro '16 returned to campus in October as an Alumni Brown Bag Luncheon guest, speaking with several classes throughout the day. Emiliano commissioned as an Infantry Officer in the Army and his first duty station was Ft. Moore, Georgia, for the Infantry Basic Officer Leadership Course. While there, Emiliano attended and graduated from the extremely rigorous Ranger School. His next assignment was the 25th Infantry Division in Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, serving as a Light Infantry Platoon Leader. Today, Emiliano is an Intelligence Officer in the 3rd Infantry Regiment in Ft. Myer, Vir., the joint base where Arlington National Cemetery is located. “The Old Guard” is the oldest active-duty infantry unit in the U.S. Army, serving as the escort to the President of the United States and providing security for Washington, D.C., in a time of national emergency or civil disturbance.



Homecoming '23 was a Friday night lights extravaganza under the alumni tent as the Falcon football team defeated Canterbury School from Fort Myers, 32-8. Joining veteran coaches on the field was new assistant coach and former Falcon player **Tyler Burnham '17**. Other former SSES alumni athletes back cheering on the team were **Darrin "DJ" Simone '14** and his brother, **Thomas "Tommy" Simone '15**. Newlywed **Dr. Samira Hassan '09** introduced her husband Sean to her old school, accompanied by her former classmate **Sisi Zhao '09**. Back from Colorado and a practicing podiatric surgeon in town, **Dr. Danielle Mustico '10** caught up with **Joseph Schneider DPT**, who also practices in the Bradenton area. Alumnae and current SSES parents **Amanda Morris '92** and **Molly Fogarty Buser '98** were on hand and thoroughly enjoyed reliving their Falcon days and traditions through their children's experiences.



International journalist **Elizabeth Djinis '10** visited two of Mr. Blake Hoonhout's journalism classes on Dec. 1. Her talks were jam-packed with information and writing tips for the students. She discussed her journey and experiences writing for newspapers (Tampa Bay Times/Sarasota Herald-Tribune), and the road to becoming a successful and prolific free-lance writer. A Duke alumna who majored in Classics and Classical Languages, Literature and Linguistics, Elizabeth's articles have been featured in Smithsonian Magazine, The New York Times, National Geographic, Teen Vogue, Glamour and U.S. News and World Report.

HALLOWEEN COMES UP QUICK!



Halloween goody packets landed in the college mailboxes of Saint Stephen's youngest alumni, the Class of 2023, just in time to deliver sweets and treats before the spooky holiday. This tradition is a marvelous way to let SSES graduates know they are truly missed in the hallways and classrooms, and serves as an invitation to return to campus for the annual Alumni Soccer Game on Dec. 26, 2023 and the College-Age Alumni Winter Break Luncheon on Jan. 4, 2024.

Class of 2019 Update

"I think Saint Stephen's did a great job to prepare me for both college and my professional career. I found that I consistently had an advantage in college in terms of writing ability and that I was able to keep up in the mathematics courses for my degree pretty easily. In my professional career, I've noticed that I have an advantage in public speaking and presenting that I attribute to what I learned at Saint Stephen's."

– 2019 graduate **Sydney Knowles**



During the summer of 2023, in keeping with a Florida Council of Independent Schools' mandate that member schools take stock of the success of their alumni, the Saint Stephen's Alumni Office created and disseminated a survey to the class of 2019. The purpose of the survey was to determine how many members of the class completed higher education within four years or less after high school graduation, as well as to elicit alumni opinions on the effectiveness of the school's college preparatory curriculum related to their higher education experiences. Alumni input in these areas is deemed essential to the process of continuous improvement at Saint Stephen's. The bulk of the class was slated to graduate from college in 2023, however, the pandemic in 2020 impacted campus life, studies, and upended usual timelines for graduation for some.

The SSES Class of 2019 included 71 graduates. As of August 2023, 58 of those students had been accounted for in terms of their current status. To date, 44 class members (61-percent of the class) graduated from college in or before 2023. Four alumni graduated in just three years. Their alma maters include the University of South Florida (an honors college graduate now pursuing a master's in Health Administration at USF); an alumna earning a bachelor's in Health Management & Business Analytics from the University of Miami; an alumnus of Florida State now serving as a communications intern with the Tampa Bay Rays; and a second FSU graduate who is now a Program Manager/Producer Associate at Gallagher Affinity in Sarasota, Fla.

A few more highlights:

- A graduate of the University of Chicago with a B.A. in economics and a minor in romance languages and Italian literature has accepted a job as an associate at Sotheby's in New York City.
- A USF graduate with a bachelor's in mechanical engineering worked at NASA on the Orion Project and is now an Integration and Ground Operations Engineer at ASRC Federal at Kennedy Space Center.
- An alumnus of Wake Forest with a B.S. in mathematical economics has enrolled at DePaul Law School.
- A Duke alumna with dual majors in mathematics and computer science is a trader at Citadel Securities.
- A Northwestern alumnus in economics and computer science is pursuing a master's at Northwestern and is the CTO at Global Research & Consulting Group, Evanston, Ill.
- A Vanderbilt grad – B.E. civil engineering – is now a transportation analyst with Kittelson & Associates in Orlando.
- A University of Washington graduate in physics is enrolled at Cal Tech.
- An alumna of Notre Dame with a bachelor's in business analytics has accepted a job as an E&J Gallo Winery Sales Leadership Development Program Sales Consultant for Johnson Brothers in Indianapolis.
- A magna cum laude graduate of Davidson College now works as a software engineer at NVIDIA.
- An alumna of Bucknell with a bachelor's in biochemistry is now pursuing her Ph.D. in the Biochemistry of Health and Disease program at Drexel.
- A magna cum laude graduate of Bentley University in Massachusetts has accepted a position at Ernst & Young as an Enterprise Risk Consultant after interning at the company as an undergrad.

Six members of the Class of 2019 are known to have transferred from their original college destination. Among them are a former USF student who is now attending the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, a transfer from UMass to NYU, a transfer from Notre Dame to Miami, and an alumnus who left FSU for Boston College. There are 10 alumni who are known to still be pursuing their degrees. They attend Florida Atlantic, Marquette, State College of Florida, Unity College, Auburn, USF, the U.S.M.A. and Tulane.



Fall Sports Recap

Saint Stephen's football built on the momentum of its 2022 Sunshine State Athletic Association 5A championship and ran all the way back to the title game in Lakeland before falling short of repeating, losing the crown to Mount Dora Christian Academy.

The Falcons rode a five-game winning streak at the end of last season to the championship and picked up where they left off in 2023. During an 8-3 season, SSES flexed its muscle thanks to a stout defense that surrendered just 12 points per game. Senior linebacker Ivan Tulupov led the way, averaging just under 10 tackles per game and collecting 5.5 sacks and 26 tackles for loss. Fellow senior Jacob Clulow provided the pressure with a team-leading 12 sacks and 23 quarterback hurries.

On offense, Evan Brown continued to be a standout. The senior quarterback accounted for 2,616 total yards (1,515 rushing and 1,101 passing) and 28 touchdowns (19 on the ground). Junior running back Cam Brewer added nearly 700 yards running and receiving, and senior Caleb Bosek was the top pass catcher, with 20 receptions for 430 yards and four scores.

Brown, Clulow, and Tulupov capped off their seasons with invitations to compete in the Gatlinburg (Tenn.) All-American Bowl, Dec. 14-16. The bowl bills itself as the premier post-season opportunity for private school football players from across the country.

Boys golf continued its run of dominance, winning district and regional titles, and advancing to the state championship tournament for the eighth time in 10 years. The Falcons breezed through regular-season play and the district tournament, then won a hard-fought Region 3 tournament in which just seven strokes separated the top four teams. At state, SSES placed 14th in the 16-team field and was paced by freshman Chase Nicks, who shot a two-day 152 and finished in a three-way tie individually for 19th overall. Junior Tiffanie Tran qualified as an individual for the girls' state tournament and finished tied for 64th.

Girls swimming placed second at the 14-team district meet, equaling the highest finish in school history and five Falcons ultimately advanced to the state championships. Freshman Blair Wootson, who broke three school records in his second season on campus, and the 200-freestyle relay team of Camryn Sanders, Layla Turner, Piper Pullen and Danielle Weathers qualified for the FHSAA meet, but did not advance past the preliminary round.



ATHLETICS HALL OF FAME INDUCTS THREE

The Saint Stephen's Athletics Hall of Fame welcomes three new members this year with the additions of alumni **MaryAnn Rompf (2017)** and twin brothers **Chase and Sydney Brown (2018)** – a trio of student-athletes who are among the most decorated ever at SSES.

MaryAnn was a three-year varsity tennis performer for the Falcons, leading Saint Stephen's to multiple district and regional titles, as well as a 2017 state semi-final appearance. She was named the Sarasota Herald-Tribune All-Area Player of the Year as a senior and went on to a highly successful collegiate career.

MaryAnn starred in both singles and doubles, first at the University of Wisconsin and then at Furman University, and finished her career as a graduate student at Vanderbilt University. As a sophomore at Wisconsin, MaryAnn posted a 22-10 singles record, including going 8-2 in Big Ten conference play. After transferring to Furman, she helped that program reach its best-ever national ranking (No. 23) as a senior during the 2020-21 season when she went 18-9 in singles and 20-5 in doubles. MaryAnn used a fifth year of eligibility given to student-athletes due to the COVID-19 pandemic and helped Vanderbilt advance to the Sweet 16 of the 2022 NCAA Tournament.

A consummate scholar-athlete, MaryAnn was a four-year member of the ITA All-Academic Team and was awarded Furman's Outstanding Student in Accounting Award at graduation. She is now a CPA, working for Ernst & Young in Tennessee.



MaryAnn Rompf



The Browns led Saint Stephen's to a combined record of 22-1 and back-to-back independent state football championships in 2016 and 2017 – the first in school history. The brothers then went on to record-setting careers at the University of Illinois.

After transferring from Western Michigan University following his freshman season, Chase played in 30 games for the Illini and finished with more than 3,000 rushing yards and 18 touchdowns. He capped his career as a senior by starting all 12 games and setting a new Illinois record by running for more than 100 yards in 10 consecutive games. Chase also became just the third player in school history to gain 1,000 rushing yards in back-to-back seasons. Those feats got him named a second team AP All-American and a finalist for the Doak Walker Award, given to the nation's top running back.

Sydney was a four-year starter at safety for Illinois and a team captain as a senior. As a sophomore, he tied for the team lead with three interceptions, including a spectacular performance against Michigan State that included 13 tackles and a pair of interceptions, including one that he returned 76 yards for a touchdown. The following season, Sydney led the Illini in total tackles (81) and solo stops (50). Among his senior season accolades in 2022 were first team All-Big Ten and USA Today second team All-American honors, highlighted by a game against Northwestern when Sydney collected two interceptions – one returned 39 yards for a score – and a 53-yard fumble return TD.

Last April, the Browns became just the sixth set of twins ever selected in the National Football League Draft. Sydney is a rookie starter in the defensive secondary for the Philadelphia Eagles and Chase plays running back and special teams with the Cincinnati Bengals.

Chase Brown



Sydney Brown

Saint Stephen's alumni are eligible for consideration for the Athletics Hall of Fame five years or more after graduation.

Janelle Coutts '04 was awarded NASA's Exceptional Achievement Medal in August for "exceptional work devising innovative methods for safe use in NASA thrusters." In October, she was promoted to Analytical Laboratories Branch Technical Lead at NASA, coming to the position after having been named Lead of NE-L3 in August 2021. Janelle works at NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Orlando.



Alexandra "Ali" Schulman '09 is the Principal Technical Program Manager at Zwift in London. She was the project manager on the company's newest release called Zwift Play, the innovation created for every level of bike rider to enhance indoor bike riding and training. A rider controls the Zwift smart trainer entirely from the handlebars, in similar fashion to using a video game controller. Ali has a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from the University of Edinburgh and a master's in chemical and environmental engineering.



Kennedy Legler '04 was appointed by Governor Ron DeSantis in October to serve as a Sarasota County Court Judge for the Twelfth Judicial Circuit. Kennedy has served as an Assistant State Attorney for the Twelfth Judicial Circuit since 2011. He earned his bachelor's degree and his J.D. at Stetson University. The Honorable Kennedy B. Legler's Investiture Ceremony was held on December 15, 2023.

Brittany Skoda '05 and Jason Tolkin welcomed Tucker Skoda Tolkin on July 14. The family lives in San Francisco, where Brittany is the Global Head of Software Banking at Morgan Stanley. Brittany is an alumna of Georgetown University, where she earned a B.S. in Accounting & Finance and played on the NCAA Division I Women's Golf Team.

Congratulations to **Marc Hartmann '08** and his wife Taryn on the birth of their first child, daughter Sloan Anna Hartmann, born on June 20.

Brooke Tharpe '09 is now board certified in Criminal Trial Law by the Florida Bar's Board of Legal Specialization & Education. The certification identifies her as "a lawyer with special knowledge, skills and proficiencies, as well as a reputation for professionalism and ethics." Brooke has a J.D. from FSU. She serves as the Assistant Public Defender in the Ninth Judicial Circuit Court in Orlando.

Samira Hassan '09 married Sean Aldrich on May 20, in Saint Petersburg. Samira holds a B.A. in behavioral biology and Spanish and an M.H.S. in biochemistry, molecular biology and reproductive and cancer biology from Johns Hopkins. She earned her M.D. at the UCF. **Brooke Tharpe '09** and **Sisi Zhao '09** were among Samira's bridesmaids.



Aaron Jacobson '08 made an SSES student very happy with the kind donation of his time and talent to the 2023 Parents' Association Green & Gold Gala auction. His donation consisted of a behind-the-scenes experience at the iHeart media studios in the St. Pete-Clearwater area. The winning student was invited on-set for a live broadcast of The Pat and Aaron Show and received a personal studio tour.

2010s

Dr. Jennifer "Jenny" Boothby '10 was invited to Seoul, Korea in September by the Korea Research Institute of Chemical Technology. She spoke about bioinspired smart materials and their application in a session at the Korea-U.S. Advanced Industry and Technology Cooperation Forum. The conference promotes research and business collaboration between the U.S. and Korea. In addition, Jenny was interviewed by the Wall Street Journal for her work with the University of Miami on materials to help restore coral reefs. She works at the John's Hopkins Applied Physics Lab in Maryland.



Cameron Allen '10 was named to the 2024 Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch list of honorees in August. Cameron works for Berlin Patten Ebling, PLLC, where he is a real estate attorney. This recognition is given to attorneys relatively early in their careers for exhibiting outstanding professional excellence in private practice. Cameron earned his J.D. cum laude at the University of Florida.



Dr. Danielle Mustico '10 has joined Cortez Foot & Ankle Specialists in Bradenton. She holds a B.S. in Applied Psychology & Kinesiology from the University of Florida and earned her doctorate at Rosalind Franklin University's Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine in Chicago. She was named chief resident in Podiatric/Foot & Ankle Surgery during her residency at Denver Health and Hospital Authority.

It is with great sadness that we share news of the passing of **Kurt E. Smolker '11** on August 29. Kurt spent many happy years at Saint Stephen's and was a Forever Falcon. He came to SSES in Kindergarten and his brother, Harry, is also an alumnus in the class of 2005. The school sends its deepest sympathies to all who knew Kurt.

Molly Martell '11, Ph.D. started a job at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore in a tenure-track position. She is an Assistant Professor of Anatomy in the Physical Therapy Department in the School of Pharmacy and Health Profession. Molly earned her doctorate in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Florida.



Jillian Kernan '11 married Erik Rodriguez in Coral Gables, Fla. on March 31. Erik is a police officer in Miami Dade County and a former collegiate baseball player. Jillian is a registered dietitian working primarily on eating disorders and fitness nutrition. She majored in Health Science and Exercise Physiology at the University of Miami and earned a second bachelor's degree and a master's degree in Dietetics and Nutrition from FIU.

Joining the roster of married alumni are **Jennifer Sundstrom '13** and **William de Quant '13**, who began dating at SSES in 2012. They were married on July 8, at Jennifer's family home in Sweden. The wedding guests hailed from all over the world, with 16 nationalities represented.



Shubham Mathur '13 is an Aquarist at Roger Williams University in Bristol, R.I. He works with the Aquaculture and Aquarium Science lab focusing on ornamental species such as clownfish and Tasha gobies. He also works with the Audubon Society of Rhode Island Nature Center and Aquarium. Shubham holds a B.A. in Marine Science and Biology from the University of Miami and later earned an M.A. in Aquaculture at Miami's Rosentiel School of Marine, Atmospheric and Earth Science.

Qing "Sunny" Jin '13 continues her rise at Amazon in Seattle, Wash. with her promotion to Senior Technical Program Manager. Sunny has been with the company for 4 ½ years and is a magna cum laude graduate of Rice University where she majored in mathematical economics. Sunny married Brian Tong in July in a ceremony at a winery in Seattle.



Michelle Yan '16 is in her first year at the University of Pennsylvania's Wharton School, pursuing her MBA as a Moelis Fellow. Moelis Fellows are counted among the most promising leaders, minds, and innovators who recently graduated from colleges and universities around the globe. Michelle's team placed first in The Wharton School's Jay H. Baker Retailing Center 2023 Ideathon in September. Michelle holds a BA in history and Hispanic studies from Columbia University and works in marketing and sales at McKinsey where her focus is on GTM/commercial applications of AI.

Kyle Koughan '16 graduated cum laude from the University of Florida with a B.S. in Civil Engineering. He is a Civil Structural Engineer in West Palm Beach at Jezerinac Group, PLLC. Kyle designs structures to code, conducts structural inspections to confirm design intent in the field, and routinely coordinates with architects, contractors and other building design consultants.

Jay Manson '13 is the Assistant Food and Beverage Operations Manager at The Ritz Carlton Members Beach Club in Sarasota. He previously worked at Art Ovation Hotel in downtown Sarasota as a food and beverage supervisor. Jay is a graduate of Flagler College, where he majored in sports management.

MaryAnn Rompf '17 and her mother Mary won the 2023 USTA National Mother/Daughter Grass Court Championships at Longwood Crickett Club in Chestnut Hill, Mass. in August. The duo won this event, and the championship gold ball, back in 2013 when MaryAnn was just 14. They won again in 2015 while MaryAnn attended SSES. The pair ranked #1 in the country at that time.



Sarah Glaser '18 earned a master's degree, with honors, in Campaigns, Elections & Democracy from Royal Holloway, University of London. Sarah was selected as a Fulbright Scholar after graduating Phi Beta Kappa from USF with bachelor's degrees in political science and public health. She is now enrolled at the London School of Economics, pursuing a MSc in Comparative Politics.

Robert Smith '18 is pursuing his Ph.D. in Physics at the University of Colorado and is currently working as a condensed matter research assistant. Robert earned his B.S. in Physics and Mathematics at UCF. Joining him in Boulder is alumna Alyson Folkens '23, who just embarked on her studies pursuing a degree in Astrophysics in fall 2023.

Mark Gharby '19 is an Integration and Ground Operations Engineer at ASRC Federal, working at Kennedy Space Center in Orlando. The company provides solutions for more than 30 defense and civilian federal government agencies, supporting a wide-range of critical missions from space exploration to cyber defense. Mark graduated from USF with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering.

John Whelan '19 graduated from USF with a B.S. in Health Sciences. As a senior, John and his three teammates won USF's first annual CLARION Competition with their concept involving AI-enhanced multi-provider clinic visits. John and the team flew to the University of Minnesota to compete against teams from across the country at the Clarion National Case Competition. They won second place and were awarded the "Most Innovative Award." John was recognized with the "Best Presenter Award" for his explanation of how to finance multidisciplinary visits through a value-based payment model.



2020s



Tyler Kadivar '22, at Rice University pursuing a degree in Astrophysics, interned at The Bishop Museum of Science and Nature Planetarium in the summer of 2023. Tyler worked on a variety of projects including creating closed captions for the museum's playback shows and developing live show programming.

Former the Gauntlet editor-in-chief **Jackson Nealis '23** is continuing his passion for journalism as he studies international affairs at Georgetown. He was selected as a global elections contributor at "The Caravel," the student-run international affairs newspaper, where he analyzes international elections and 2024 presidential candidate visits to campus.

GIVING FOR 2022-2023

At Saint Stephen's Episcopal School, a deep generosity of spirit has sustained us from our earliest beginnings and enriches us to this day. We have a long tradition of counting on our community, including current families, alumni and alumni families, grandparents, and friends. During the 2022-23 school year, supporters donated more than \$163,000 toward the Annual Fund and \$128,000 helped grow our endowment. The Green & Gold Gala raised \$408,000, with a S.T.E.A.M. Center paddle raise surpassing \$200,000! The push to fund the S.T.E.A.M. Center was front and center as we raised \$4.55-million, putting us a big step closer to making this dream building a reality.

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Over the course of Saint Stephen's history, there are donors and donations that can only be described as attaining the highest level of distinction. The Saint Stephen's Distinguished Service Circle recognizes this ultimate level of philanthropy and stewardship based on longevity and loyalty, as well as the making of transformational gifts that have profoundly impacted our school and community. This list includes donors with cumulative lifetime giving exceeding \$500,000.

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FALCON FEATURES

The Intersection of AI, Entrepreneurship, + Liberal Arts

Mr. Bernie Yarelli
SSES Alumnus Charles Du '09

January 18, 2024
7-8:30 p.m.
Upper School Commons





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