

Saint Stephen's

Volume 13 • Issue Two
Spring/Summer 2023





Sydney Brown

Chase Brown

Twin brothers Sydney and Chase Brown are a step closer to their childhood dream of playing pro football. The 2018 Saint Stephen's graduates were selected in the NFL Draft, held April 27-29. Sydney, a safety, was chosen in the third round, 66th overall, by the Philadelphia Eagles. Chase, a running back, was the Cincinnati Bengals' fifth-round selection, 163rd overall. The Browns became just the sixth set of twins ever chosen in the same draft. Natives of Canada, Chase and Sydney put together star-studded careers at the University of Illinois. They were members of back-to-back state championship teams at SSES in 2016 and 2017.



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3 2023 Graduation Class

On May 20, Saint Stephen's celebrated its 48th graduating class and one of the largest in school history at 82 members. These Falcons left their mark and will matriculate to some of the finest colleges and universities in America.

8 A Love of Learning

Pedro Ramos came to the U.S. from Puerto Rico in 1988. He enrolled at Manatee High School, but after struggling mightily for just a matter of weeks he came to Saint Stephen's where he thrived and formed a special bond with a special teacher.

16 Falcons Win Big On and Off the Field

Saint Stephen's provides a blueprint proving that high-caliber academics and championship-level athletics can co-exist on the same campus – and the Falcons made that point loud and clear during the 2022-23 school year.

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Saint Stephen's Magazine

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☀ From the Head of School's desk . . .

The year was 1988 and it was my first time stepping onto the Saint Stephen's campus. Enrollment was 222 in grades K-12 and I was hired to be the Lower School Director and given the challenge to help grow an Upper School. Fast forward to 2023. Enrollment is 740 in grades PK3-12 and I now have been at Saint Stephen's for 35 years, the last 20 as Head of School. For me, those years have gone by in a flash!

I arrived in 1988 to work in trailers that seemed to be held together by duct tape. There were only a couple permanent buildings on campus. The one constant since those early days is that there have always been outstanding faculty, staff and administration who give so much of themselves each and every day. There has also always been a challenging academic curriculum that prepares students for college and a nurturing environment that allows every child to be known and valued.

As a person who likes a challenge, enjoys working collaboratively with motivated, intelligent people and always has a new idea, Saint Stephen's has been the perfect place for me to build my career. Over the past 35 years, with the help of many dedicated Board members, supportive parents, an amazing administration, faculty and staff, and thousands of curious and intelligent students, Saint Stephen's Episcopal School has grown into an internationally known college preparatory school. We continue to add new academic programs, offer a plethora of extra-curricular activities each year and hold our own on the athletic fields. Our teams and individuals win district and regional competitions and, this year, individuals and/or teams qualified and headed off to state competition nearly a dozen times! And the school continues to want to grow and change to be even better!

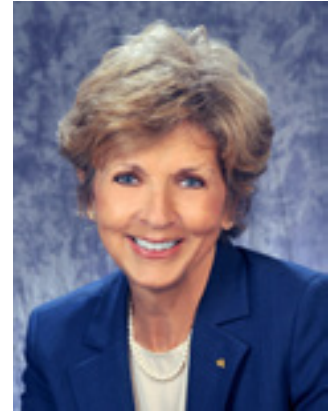
I am so proud to have been part of this story. Not many people get the opportunity to be a part of something where you can see dreams come true, and has such an impact on the lives of so many. But I have, and I am very thankful.

People have asked me, "why retire now," and I simply say, "it is just time." I have loved every minute of what has been a special "calling" in my life. I feel confident that I have left what I found in a better place and I've been inspired by everyone whose path I have crossed. With the help of many, I'm leaving the school in a healthy financial position, with a new Strategic Plan, a new Master Site Plan that includes 13 new projects, a dedicated Board of Trustees, outstanding administrators, teachers and staff, supportive parents, strong enrollment, challenging and developmentally appropriate academic programs, a growing fine arts department and successful athletic teams. In addition, every project on the Master Site Plan that I was given in 2003, except one, has been completed. That last project, the S.T.E.A.M. Center, has raised \$8.6-million as of May 22, with more funding coming in each day, thanks to the wonderful support of our school community. We are excited about the upcoming groundbreaking on Oct. 3, 2023.

I am also so pleased to have Mr. Peter Kraft come in on July 1 to begin his career at Saint Stephen's. He has an impressive resume in the independent school world and is a strong leader who is excited to become the new Head of School. I've enjoyed talking with him weekly for the past year and having him on campus for five different visits. I know he now feels very "Saint Stephenized" and is ready to join the community.

Thank you for all the kind words and beautiful ways you have said goodbye to me over the past few months. I will always care and be helpful to Saint Stephen's where I can and you will see me just being "Nani" to Annabelle, Piper and a soon-to-be Fledgling, our youngest grandchild, Betty. Saint Stephen's will always be a part of my life.

Warmly,



SAINT STEPHEN'S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL



CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2023

MAYA AKELLA
AMELIA ALBERTS
CONNOR ALBRECHT
JADE APPLE
VANESSA ARIAS
KATHERINE BARAN
ELAINA BAYARD
PARKER BEALE
ROWAN BILIK
JOHN BLALOCK
KATIE BURGESS
MIKAYLA CASAGRANDE
MADISON CASTELLUCCI
JIAKAI CHEN
EVAN CHRISTENSON
JACKSON CLARK
JULIA CRAIG
SOPHIA CRENETI
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DAVID DECANIO
BENJAMIN DEFELICE

MASON DILLINGHAM
LUKE DONLEY
SEBASTIAN EBENBICHLER-
CASANOVA
EMILY ESPOSITO
MIA FERDINAND
ALYSON FOLKENS
POLINA FOMINA
MORGAN FRANKLIN
JAMES GELVIN
AQUILES GONZALEZ
JARED GRAY
BRYCE GRIGGS
CARLY HOLST-KNUDSEN
CALEB JOHNSON
CURTIS JOHNSON
EMILY KLEIN
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RYAN LALIBERTY
AMNA LI
JIONGCHEN LI

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JACKSON NEALIS
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CAITLIN PACER
ISABELA PARKER
MARIA PETROVA
VIVIAN PHUNG
EVAN RANDLE
BELLA ROSA
COLE RYSKAMP
AMELIA SABO
RILEY SCHLICK-TRASK
DANIEL SCHNUR

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BRYSON SHRIMPLIN
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ELISE SKOUMAL
CAYDEN SMITH
MATTHEW TALBOT
TATUM TELLBUESCHER
JOSEPH UZABEL
DAGNY VAN AKEN
MATTHEW VARA
SOPHIA VILLAVECES
MCKINZIE VO
TAYLOR VOGT
ASA WATKINS
SOPHIE WILLIAMS
NOLAN WINTERHALTER
MEGAN WOLFE
ZHUORAN YIN
MENG ZHAO





Our 2023 graduates were accepted/**will attend**:

Alabama	Connecticut College	Jacksonville	Northwestern	Southwestern
American	Connecticut	James Madison	Northwood	Saint Norbert
Appalachian State	University of Denver	John Carroll	Notre Dame	SCF
Arizona State	DePaul	Johnson & Wales	Nova Southeastern	Stetson
Arizona	Drexel	Kansas	Oberlin	Stony Brook
Auburn	Eckerd	Keiser	Oklahoma	Swarthmore
Belmont Abbey	Elon	Kentucky	Palm Beach Atlantic	Syracuse
Brandeis	Embry-Riddle	Lafayette	Penn State	Tampa
Brown	Emory	Lehigh	Pfeiffer	Tennessee
Bryant	Flagler	Lenoir-Rhyne	Purdue	Texas A&M
Butler	Florida Atlantic	Louisiana State	Queen's University	Texas Christian
Cal-Fullerton	Florida Gulf Coast	Loyola-Chicago	Rhodes	Texas Tech
Cal-Davis	Florida Polytechnic	Loyola-Maryland	Richmond	George Washington
Cal-Irvine	Florida Southern	Lynn	Rochester	Ohio State
Cal-San Diego	Florida State	Maryland	Rollins	Tulane
Cal-Santa Cruz	Florida	Mercer	Saint Louis	Northwestern Ohio
Catholic University	Fordham	Miami	Saint Michael's	Villanova
Central Florida	Furman	Michigan State	San Diego State	VCU
College of Charleston	George Mason	Mississippi	Seton Hall	Virginia Tech
Clark	Georgetown	Nevada-Las Vegas	Sewanee	Washington
Clemson	Georgia Tech	New College	Siena	West Florida
Coastal Carolina	Georgia	North Carolina	Skidmore	West Virginia
Colgate	High Point	North Carolina at Charlotte	South Carolina	William & Mary
Colorado	Hillsdale	North Carolina State	South Florida	Wisconsin
Colorado School of Mines	Holy Cross	North Florida	Southeastern	Worcester Polytechnic
Colorado State	Indiana	Northeastern	Southern Methodist	Xavier
Concord	Iowa		S. New Hampshire	

COLLEGE STUDENT-ATHLETES – These Class of 2023 graduates will play at the collegiate level:



Mia Ferdinand
Tennis - Belmont Abbey



Ben Long
Golf - University of Kansas



Matt Vara
Lacrosse - University of Tampa



Sophia Creneti
Lacrosse - Swarthmore



Riley Schlick-Trask
Soccer - Connecticut College



Taylor Vogt
Soccer - Florida Atlantic



Leo Li
Golf - Colgate

On Campus

JANUARY

■ A virtual tour was added to the Saint Stephen's website, allowing visitors to take a complete online walking tour of the 35-acre campus. The dynamic software has a wide variety of features, including video interfaces as you enter select spaces that allow you to meet our amazing teachers in their classrooms.



The Parents' Association drew a huge crowd by hosting its first **International Food Festival** in the Palm Courtyard. Parents with international backgrounds shared their heritage and some amazing home-cooked ethnic dishes with the campus community.

■ The first Falcon Athletic Boosters' **Family Sports Day** was a huge success. SSES varsity student-athletes ran drills and demonstrated their sports to a younger group of future stars for the Green & Gold. Raffles and food trucks added to the fun.



■ The annual "Headliners in Education" event for SSES parents was highlighted by presentations about primary and secondary education issues from current Head of School Dr. Jan Pullen and Peter Kraft, Saint Stephen's incoming leader for the 2023-24 school year.

FEBRUARY



■ Bluesman Tas Cru taught Intermediate School students a little about blues music - including an awesome harmonica jam with fifth grade math teacher Mr. Parseghian and a student. Cru's visit was arranged by Realize Bradenton and the Suncoast Blues Society.

■ **Katelynn Luke, Chloe Zhang, Jackie Rappold, Emma Rigney, and Dominic Detweiler** from the Upper School Band participated in the district Solo & Ensemble Music Performance Assessment. Each student prepared a piece of music from the approved list, performed for an adjudicator, and all received a rating of "excellent" or higher.

■ Saint Stephen's Latin brought home gold at the Latin Regional Competition at Plant High School in Tampa. The Falcons finished first in Academics, first in Advanced Certamen, and collected a host of individual first-place medals and ribbons.



■ Senior **Elaina Bayard** became the seventh Saint Stephen's student to win the top prize in the 11 years of Theater Odyssey's Ten-minute Student Playwriting Festival, earning her a \$1,000 scholarship. SSES students wrote three of the eight finalist plays that were performed at the Asolo's Cook Theatre. Bayard won with her work, "A Matter of Time." Junior **Patrick Van Eyck** and freshman **Sawyer Girgis** each won \$200 prizes. Students in grades 9-12 were invited to submit original plays and the finalists were chosen from among 40 entries. Saint Stephen's was the only area school to produce multiple finalists.

MARCH

■ The SSES Algebra Team finished third in the region out of 20 schools at a Florida Mu Alpha Theta math honors society regional competition at Middleton High School in Tampa.

■ The annual Parents' Association Spring Fling took on a new theme as the first "S.T.E.A.M. Fling," with help from community partners including Mote Marine Laboratory and the FAB Lab. In addition to the usual food and carnival games, science demonstrations took center stage.



■ A group of Saint Stephen's students spent spring break at Esbjerg International School, our sister school in Denmark. The Falcons attended classes with their Danish friends who visited us back in November and experienced Denmark Easter traditions such as egg painting and tossing down a hill, secret letters, and a mud run.

■ Handlers from the Southeastern Guide Dogs were on campus training some of their amazing pups to be service dogs that will eventually assist visually impaired high school students. They spent some time in and out of classrooms in the Upper School, and in the lunch area.

■ **Ric Russo**, assignment desk editor at WFTS ABC Action News in Tampa, visited with Mr. Hoonhout's journalism students to answer questions and discuss his experiences in nearly 40 years as a print and broadcast journalist.



■ Casts filled with Upper and Middle School actors presented six fun-filled musical performances of "Footloose" in the Falcon Playhouse during Fine Arts Week.

■ Internationally known author **Carol McCloud**, who writes about "Bucket Filling" - a concept that leads to daily happiness and kindness to others, visited with students from Fledgling to sixth grade. They participated in songs, role playing, words of wisdom, and all pledged to be bucket fillers!

APRIL

■ Saint Stephen's celebrated Earth Day with a special Falcon Friends gathering that was highlighted by the planting of a tree near the middle school in memory of former longtime SSES Latin teacher **Linda Mishkin**, who died in February after a long battle with cancer.

■ Senior **Jackson Nealis** finished in fourth place at the U.S. History Bee nationals in Arlington, Vir. The Bee is a buzzer-based quiz tournament competition focused exclusively on American history for primary and secondary school students across the U.S.



■ The National High School Strength Coaches Association named **Erik Schulz**, SSES director of strength and conditioning, the NHSSCA's Florida Coach of the Year. Schulz is a Saint Stephen's alum, Class of 2011.

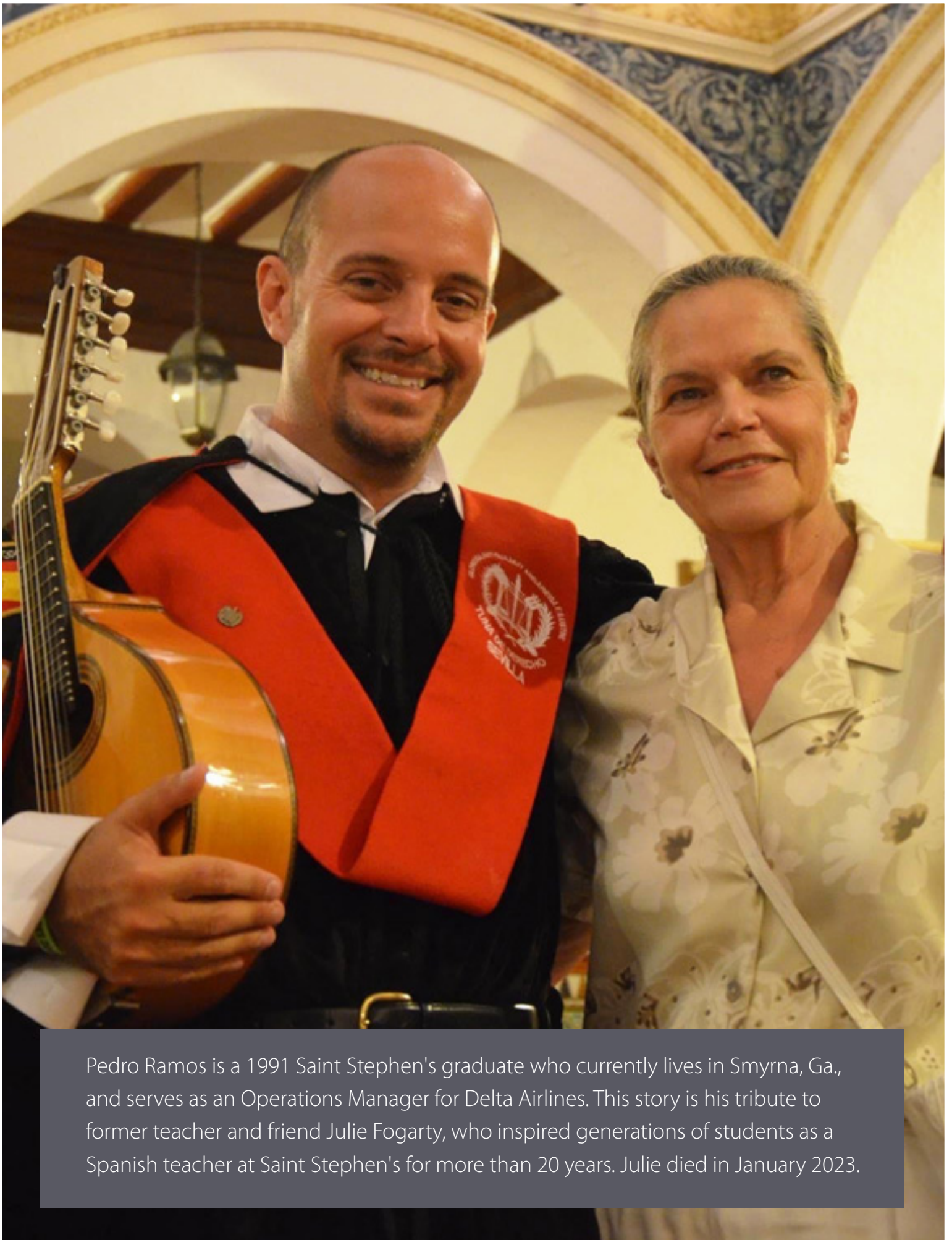
■ After helping the Falcons win a district lacrosse title in the afternoon, **Bella Rosa** (Art-Photography) and **Sophia Creneti** (Journalism) took home Golden Herald Awards on the evening of April 13. The awards, presented by Manatee Memorial Hospital, have been given annually since 1978 to outstanding Manatee County high school seniors.



■ The journey from homelessness to the NFL for twin brothers and SSES alums **Chase and Sydney Brown** was documented in a pair of inspiring short documentaries produced by the NFL Network and TSN (the Canadian version of ESPN). Production crews from both networks were on campus during the first week of April filming interviews with the Browns and others about their time at Saint Stephen's. The videos are available to view on each organization's YouTube channel.

MAY

■ **Cassidy Miller** received a 2023 Anne Frank Humanitarian Award presented by the Florida Holocaust Museum in St. Petersburg. Established in 2001, this award honors outstanding humanitarian efforts by high school juniors in public and private schools in Pinellas, Pasco, Hillsborough, Sarasota, and Manatee counties. Schools recommend students who have made a conscious decision to better the lives of other individuals or groups both inside and outside of school activities. An outstanding student, Cassidy is also active in community theater and volunteers by reading to poor and underserved children.



Pedro Ramos is a 1991 Saint Stephen's graduate who currently lives in Smyrna, Ga., and serves as an Operations Manager for Delta Airlines. This story is his tribute to former teacher and friend Julie Fogarty, who inspired generations of students as a Spanish teacher at Saint Stephen's for more than 20 years. Julie died in January 2023.

"To instill in each student a love of learning..."

- from the Saint Stephen's Mission Statement

"There's no way I am playing that type of music on that guitar," I said stubbornly to Señora Fogarty when she approached me with a six-string Spanish guitar.

"But we need you for the upcoming conference . . . the Tuna needs you! You can play the guitar, and besides, this music is in your roots," insisted Señora. At that time in my life, singing in Spanish was not a problem. However, I was 15 years old and going through my punk rock phase, so anything outside of my electric guitar noise held little appeal.

Back in 1988, I shaved my head, wore combat boots, and spent my weekends slam dancing at hardcore shows. Now, I was being invited to play an ancient looking guitar, dress in a medieval outfit (replete with women's tights and a capel) and sing in Spanish. The Saint Stephen's high school group called "Tuna de San Esteban," established just one year earlier, was set to compete in the annual Florida State Spanish Conference held every spring in Orlando. The idea reeked of "un-coolness." "Let me tell you something, Pedro. There will be hundreds of girls at this conference! Girls love to be serenaded," claimed Señora confidently. Suddenly, I was interested. Señora Fogarty knew how to push the right buttons to capture my attention. After some debate over the music and guitar playing, we sat

down after school one afternoon. Señora taught me my first tuna song on the guitar: "Clavelitos." In Spain, this is the quintessential "tuna" song. Tunas, simply stated, are groups of university students in Spain desirous of travel and adventure who successfully maintain a centuries-old tradition of donning medieval dress and playing music with string instruments. This tradition has spread throughout most of Latin America, and even into other countries in Europe. I vaguely remember tunas growing up in my native Puerto Rico; they existed at the main universities on the island.

However, this was my official introduction to a world that would completely change the trajectory of my life. At first, Clavelitos seemed cheesy. It was elementary but required learning to play with my fingers rather than a guitar pick. Perhaps it was in my blood as I took to it quickly and found joy in the tradition and musicality. As "uncool" as it seemed initially, it felt natural to play the Spanish guitar. By the time spring of 1989 rolled around my six classmates and I had a solid repertoire of TWO songs and felt ready to compete. My group mates (all gringos) and I had become extremely close friends (and remain so to this day), and during the two-hour drive to Orlando the momentum was building – along

with visions of grandeur. We hoped to make Saint Stephen's proud, but who were we kidding – the promise of eager groupies was our primary motivation. Surprisingly, from the moment we stepped off the bus, many high school girls and teachers greeted us, "Are you guys going to sing again this year? Are you the Tuna guys?" Having won first place in the entertainment division the year before, a precedent had been set. As fate (and a lot of hard work) would have it, we ended up winning first place in the entertainment division for a second year in a row! What started as an invitation to join a musical group of students transformed into a passion for all things Spanish music. It was also my first understanding of intrinsic vs. extrinsic education. Señora's invitation to join the tuna stirred something inside me. I enjoyed the competitive aspect of it, but the passion



Winning the 1st place trophy in 1991 for the 4th consecutive year: (l-r) Whitney Newton '91, Jason Kaplan '91, Ryan Fogarty '91, Pedro Ramos '91 & Rob Sanford '91.

took hold and I found myself spending hours practicing my instrument after school, learning new songs, writing lyrics, and scouring my mom's old cassette tape collection looking for more music. My older sister indulged my growing interest and brought back a "bandurria" from Madrid after she spent a semester studying abroad. The bandurria is a 12-string instrument that is associated with Tunas as their main instrument. With this instrument, we upgraded the musical level and sound produced by our group. Señora's creativity, combined with her students'



2014 – Seville, Spain – Bandurrias in tune and singing for Julie Fogarty.

passion, resulted in first place in the Spanish Conference four consecutive years. During my years in Tuna de San Esteban, a seed was planted. It motivated me to study abroad in Spain and strive to make the “major leagues” of tunas. In 1993, during my junior year of college, I realized my dream while studying in Seville. I joined the tuna affiliated with the University of Seville’s school of law. Being a member of a tuna is a lifelong endeavor (like a fraternity), and in the 30 years since joining I have traveled all over the world with my Seville tuna bringing this music and tradition to countless close friends and family. My passion transferred to my mother who, while suffering from a terminal illness in 1994, asked me to take her to Spain and serenade her. She passed less than three months after that magical evening under a balcony. Members of my tuna showered her with songs and affection. Her glow, complete happiness, and twinkle in her eyes let me know that she arrived in heaven before her physical departure. My group danced with her while singing timeless songs that all of us grew up with in Puerto Rico. It was during that moment I learned the power of music, a power that transcends even a terminal illness and creates an eternal moment of happiness and connection.

As fate would have it, Señora, her two daughters Molly and Cristina, her son-in-law Louis and a plethora of grandkids met

me in Seville during spring 2014. I was there for the yearly competition with my aunt Teresa, who was terminally ill at that time. Señora and her daughters got to be judges for part of the competition and we serenaded them from under their balcony in the city. This was exactly 20 years after my mother came to Spain with me. It felt like a date with destiny; a “full circle” sort of feeling enveloped that unforgettable encounter in Spain with Señora.

Three and a half decades have passed since the day I met Señora Fogarty at Saint Stephen’s. I’m grateful for her and the chords she taught me on the guitar. During the last few years, I spent a considerable amount of quality time with her as our relationship evolved from that of a teacher-student to more like a mother-son. Almost every time we visited, a guitar was available. Inevitably, I would pick it up to sing and play for her. Sometimes she would dance with her husband Gene. Other times she would sing along with me and had a big smile. Just three days before her passing, Julie (as I came to call Señora many years prior) was so tired that she slept most of that sunny afternoon. She was no longer able to speak, and she didn’t appear to recognize anyone present. Then, as I sang those old and familiar songs to her surrounded by her family, she moved her head, eyes closed, to the rhythm of the music and mustered a smile one last time. Neither of us ever forgot the song she taught me 35 years ago.



After 35 years of extraordinary leadership, Dr. Jan Pullen will begin a new chapter in her life as she retires, but we've ensured that her legacy will always be celebrated at Saint Stephen's! Thanks to the many generous donors who supported our recent drive, the future S.T.E.A.M. Center at Saint Stephen's will be named in honor of Dr. Pullen. Her portrait, commissioned by the Board of Trustees and Parents' Association, will hang in the facility, celebrating the impact she had in growing SSES into one of the top college preparatory schools in Florida and the nation.



The "Full STEAM Ahead" fund-raising campaign continues. To learn more and to make your gift, visit: saintstephens.org/steam



Alumni Event Recap/Spring 2023



Brisk temperatures made for festive conditions at our annual Dec. 23 Holiday Gathering at Motorworks Brewery. The wonderful turnout celebrated members of the classes of 2017 and 2012, commemorating their fifth and tenth reunions. Other alumni from a variety of years dating back to 1997 were on hand to kick off the holidays. Guests included 2017 classmates *Jerry Alex Monosiet* (and his wife, Bethany), *Indre Zalepuga*, *Daria "Dasha" Fomina*, *Trevor Donnelly*, *Beatrice Brunschwiler*, *Savannah Sundstrom*, *Jonathan Boyd*, *Alex Virgilio*, *Michael Burch*, *Henry Wallace* and *Miranda Carrassi*. Attendees from the class of '12 included *Aiste Zalepuga*, *Evan Moscoso*, *Kyle Whelan*, *Tony Mehanny* and *Lauren Johnson*. *Tim Maachi '15* attended, as did 2018 classmates *Matthew Willard* and *Victoria Arias*. *Jennifer Howard '02*, *Gavin Lee '97*, Dr. Pullen and faculty member Elisa Bolotin rounded out the group making for a most memorable evening.

The 2nd Annual Legacy Breakfast was held in the Palm Courtyard on April 21. The event recognizes alumni with children currently enrolled at Saint Stephen's. This year's legacy group includes the Hamlin family (*Grace '05*, *Curtis '02*, Margaret '33 & Catherine '37), *Paul Carlson '07* (Cooper '36 & Callie '38), *Amanda Buskirk Morris '92* (Matthew '26), *Beth Bowie Horn '98* and *Steve Horn '95* (Jack '25 & Charlie '29), *Stephanie Boothby Juengling '06* (Everett '37 is a 3rd generation Falcon, with former SSES Athletic Director *Carlos Boothby '83* his grandfather), *Angela Posani '06* (Adelynn '33), *Gris Bettle '90* (Grant '24), *Tyler Pullen '98* (Annabelle '25 & Piper '28), *Brian Turner '93* (Layla '24 & Caroline '26), *Molly Fogarty Buser '98* (Lily '27, Eva '29, Julia '32 & Sebastian '33), *J.B. Tucker '00* (John '32 & Wesley '33), *Ashley Richards Simmons '01* (Aiden '35), *Christie Eastman Craighead '04* (Madison '38), *Dalton Cross '07* (Kira '35) and Henry Vereb '28, son of *Bartholomew Vereb*

'88. Alex Conyers attended Saint Stephen's for a time and his daughters, Caylynn '28 and Isla '33, are also among our young Falcons.

The Winter Break Alumni Luncheon is always a favorite event of our faculty as the teachers love hearing how SSES students are faring beyond the gates. On Jan. 4, we welcomed back a great crew for lunch and, of course, cookie-break chocolate chip cookies for old times' sake. Served warm, they went like hotcakes! In addition to our morning panelists, alumni from colleges and universities all over the country returned to campus, including *Kassandra Haakman '20* (Yale), *Laura Perazzolo da Silveira '20* (Baylor), *Carter Beckstein '19* (Florida), *Alex Miller '19* (USF), *Abigail Gentsch '20* (University of Tampa), *Max Bonte '20* (Grinnell), *Colton Melnick '19* (Duke) and *Gaby Pung* (Johns Hopkins).



On March 29, the Alumni Office reprised Mini-Career Day. Alumni guests from different professions rotated to speak with all four Upper School classes about their careers, educational journeys and what they do “day-to-day.” **Justin Weinkle '04** spoke on finance as the Chief Financial Officer at Dynasty Financial Partners. He joined the firm in 2012 and is based in St. Petersburg where he’s responsible for all aspects of corporate financial reporting and management. Justin holds a B.S.E. in Operations Research and Financial Engineering from Princeton and an MBA from Emory.

Natalie Marciniak '13 is a Senior Marketing and Communications Manager at Phillips Connect. She earned her M.S. in Strategic Communication at Columbia, graduating magna cum laude. Natalie did her undergraduate studies at the University of Miami and graduated cum laude with a B.S. in Communications, Public Relations and Management. She also studied Business Communication at Harvard Extension School from 2017-18.

Rany Bochi '08 spoke to the students about entrepreneurial endeavors. He is the co-founder of Sunny Culture. The company makes a probiotic drink from water kefir that is now sold at Whole Foods Market and a variety of other retailers. Rany took an interest in healthy remedies after dealing with personal digestive issues for years. He enrolled at a chiropractic, holistic medical school where

he researched the connection between gut and brain health, experimented with fermenting his own probiotic-filled drink, and began consuming the concoction daily. His stomach issues went away and he and his partner started Healthy Licking Foods, LLC in 2016 with just \$500. The duo immediately began manufacturing the Sunny Culture probiotic drink.

Attorneys **Kennedy Legler '04** and former classmate **Brooke Kernan '04** presented on careers in the legal profession. Kennedy started his career at the State’s Attorney Office in Sarasota as a prosecutor in the misdemeanor division. He soon moved up into the juvenile division and eventually joined the felony division. Kennedy is now a specialty prosecutor for violent crimes. He is also the vice-chair of the 12th Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee. Kennedy is a professor at the Sarasota County Technical Institute and State College of Florida, where he teaches criminal law and criminal procedure. He holds a B.A. in communications with a minor in business law and his Juris Doctor from Stetson.

Brooke Kernan is a USF alumna with a B.A. in elementary education. She entered Stetson College of Law in fall 2009 and graduated in 2.5 years. For three years, she prosecuted misdemeanor cases in Pinellas County. She was named misdemeanor lead trial attorney and then promoted to felony. After three years, Brooke was transferred to the Manatee/Sarasota Circuit, where she worked for 13 months in Manatee before being transferred again – this time to Sarasota – for a permanent felony position. Brooke quickly became the lead prosecutor in what was to be the first human trafficking conviction won in her Circuit Court. In June 2017, she was promoted to a special prosecution position: Capital Sexual Batteries. She shifted gears in 2021 and was named Director of Courts in Sarasota, where she oversees the daily deployment of court clerks and the processing of all court records. Brooke also collaborated with Chief Judge Roberts to launch a new system for electronically filing proposed orders to quickly and accurately present court decisions.



The annual alumni soccer gathering went off without a hitch on Dec. 26, despite a chilly backdrop. It is always a blast having former coach Marc Jones back to play. Lifelong soccer players and 2009 classmates **Donato Carrassi** and **Ryley Delgado** always elevate the game and the LaBelle clan, including former Babson collegiate athlete **Noah '19** and brother Bode '25, looked downright professional on the turf. Also back to play or cheer were **Ashleigh Rodhouse '19**, **Jerry Alex Monosiet '17**, **Jeremy Jackman '14**, **Matthew Jones '14**, **R.G. Sherrill '20**, **Jaclyn Schlossberg '20**, **Leah Schlossberg '22**, **Caroline Day '22**, **Charlie Sherrill '22**, **Alex Slowik '22**, Head Coach Blake Hoonhout and girls’ varsity soccer Head Coach Tyler Cotton.



The annual Winter Panel took place on Jan. 4 and featured alumni in college but home on winter break. All of the panelists were excited to be back on campus and recalled enjoying the panel chats as students. A big thank you to class of '19 members *Ashleigh Rodhouse* (Bentley), *Noah LaBelle* (Babson), *Jarrett Millican* (FSU) and *Sydney Knowles* (Davidson); 2020 classmates *Meg LaFollette* (Washington University in St. Louis), *Anika Kennedy* (Oberlin), Jules Pung (Washington University in St. Louis), *Alyssa Nucci* (FSU) and *Genna Nucci* (Alabama); and 2021 classmates *Emma Craig* (Miami) and *Kevin Jiang* (Swarthmore).



It is a time-honored tradition to invite a member of our alumni community to address the students at each year's Academic Banquet, an evening honoring Upper School students who've attained a weighted GPA of 3.75 or above. On April 19, *Lt. Spencer Nora '13* spoke at the gathering. Spencer attended the U.S. Naval Academy and spent several years on the USS Little Rock, where he earned his Officer of the Deck qualification. He then moved overseas to Sasebo, Japan and served as the Assistant Chief Engineer on the USS New Orleans. Spencer also earned an MBA from the University of Maryland. Today, he is a Lead Ocean Engineer in Panama City Beach where he coordinates projects for military and civilian clients.

The Senior Luncheon hosted by the Alumni Office on April 24 welcomed the class of '23 into the Alumni Association. The Intermediate School Commons looked festive decked out in green and gold and alumna *Natalie Marciniak '13* returned to campus to speak about her SSES days, the impact certain faculty members had on her growth and development, and how well-prepared she felt in college and graduate school thanks to her rigorous SSES education.



☀ A Letter From Peter Kraft:

Dear Saint Stephen's Community,

When I was appointed Saint Stephen's incoming Head of School in April 2022, I received a number of extraordinary gifts. One was the honor of leading a school with wonderful people and an impressive history. Another was having the opportunity to work closely with the Board of Trustees and getting to know the Saint Stephen's community over a 14-month span.

This "loooong runway," as one Board member teasingly called it, has enabled me to see first-hand the many things that make Saint Stephen's special. Whether it is the mid-morning cookie break or Fine Arts Week or the Green & Gold Gala or the Halloween Hootenanny or the many shows, athletics contests, and art openings that I've attended, my regular visits to Saint Stephen's affirmed what I already knew: how incredibly fortunate my wife, Kim, and I are to be part of this community.

But perhaps the greatest gift I received as incoming Head was the chance to work closely with Dr. Pullen. As someone who has spent more than 30 years in independent schools myself, I know how important strong leadership is to a school. I also value the history, traditions, and long standing connections that are essential to any school's success. That is why, in consultation with the Board, I have asked Dr. Pullen to serve as a senior advisor to the Development

office for the 2023-24 academic year. In this volunteer role, she will work with the development team and me to make sure that we get the S.T.E.A.M. Center campaign to the finish line — a fitting role for the person for whom this impressive facility will be named.

In July I will share the details of my first-year priorities. All of these priorities are grounded in three principles:

- Building deep and lasting relationships;
- Positioning Saint Stephen's for future success as one of the region's premier college preparatory independent schools;
- And making good on Saint Stephen's promise that "every child will be known and every child will be valued."

In short, my focus will be to honor what makes Saint Stephen's special . . . and to help us achieve even loftier goals. Soaring higher, after all, is what Falcons do.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to lead Saint Stephen's. Our family is blessed to be part of the SSES community.

Warmly,



First-ever State Final Four Appearance For Girls' Lacrosse

Falcons Win Big On and Off the Field

Saint Stephen's consistently defies the assumption that outstanding academics and championship-level athletics can't co-exist on the same campus – and the Falcons made that point loud and clear during the 2022-23 school year.

When the Florida High School Athletic Association announced in early May its Academic Team Champions in all classifications, Saint Stephen's ranked No. 1 overall in Class 2A. Schools are classified by student population and receive points based on the cumulative grade point averages of each team they sponsor. SSES led the way, three points in front of second-place Naples St. John Neumann and 23 points ahead of third-place Vero Beach St. Edwards. In the spring alone, Saint Stephen's had six teams rank top 10 academically in the state: baseball (1), boys lacrosse (2), boys track (2), boys weightlifting (2), girls track (5) and boys tennis (9). Boys basketball (2), boys soccer (4), girls swimming (5), boys golf (7), girls basketball (9), boys cross country (9) and girls soccer (10) rounded out programs that finished among the top 10 during the campaign.

"Our student-athletes never cease to impress and amaze me," Athletic Director Lenny Paoletti said. "They not only find a way to balance competitive sports with their rigorous academic responsibilities, but they consistently excel at both – and so many play multiple sports."

In fact, the Falcons rostered 739 student-athletes during the school year despite having only 466 students eligible in grades 6-12. Those students made up 45 teams – 23 varsity, four junior varsity, 18 middle school – and competed in more than 600 games.

Success in the classroom was matched step-for-step on the fields and courts. Of the 23 varsity teams fielded, nine won district titles and four more were runners-up. Ten middle school teams competed in the Manasota Middle School Athletic Conference, and seven won championships – boys cross country, girls cross country, flag football, boys basketball, girls basketball, tennis, and golf.

The year was filled with highlights and school firsts. In the fall, boys' golf made its third consecutive state tournament appearance and finished eighth overall. Football rebounded from a slow start to win its final five games, including a convincing 47-7 victory over Legacy Charter in the Sunshine State Athletic Conference 5A championship game in Lakeland.

Boys' basketball (21-8) was the surprise of the winter season, winning just the second district title in school history and recording the program's first-ever regional tournament win by topping Admiral Farragut in the quarterfinals. SSES also fielded competitive weightlifting teams for the first time and the girls won the district championship in their inaugural season, qualifying lifters for the regional and state tournaments. And eighth grader Jag Shepard became the first Saint Stephen's wrestler to advance to the state meet since 2019.

The spring season brought another historic campaign when girls' lacrosse ran off 17 consecutive wins to open the season and advanced to the state's Final Four for the first time. Senior Bella Rosa was one of 12 female student-athletes named to the Florida Dairy Farmers Academic All-State Team. The boys' tennis doubles team of Max Pettingell and Ricardo Perazzolo won their way to a berth in the state finals before falling just short, and the track and field team qualified 12 student-athletes for the state meet in Jacksonville. That equaled the school record set in 2017 for the highest number of qualifiers from SSES. Freshman Keymani Dillingham then made SSES history by registering top-five finishes in three events: shot put (2nd), 400-meter hurdles (4th) and 100-meter hurdles (5th). She was joined in the top 10 by discus thrower Caleb Johnson (6th), long jumper Braden Mohr (8th) and javelin thrower Evan Brown (9th).



First-ever Regional Tournament Win for Boys' Varsity Basketball



Keymani Dillingham

District Champions

- Football (SSAC 5A)
- Girls Weightlifting – Traditional & Olympic
- Boys Basketball
- Boys Soccer
- Girls Soccer
- Boys Tennis
- Girls Tennis
- Girls Lacrosse
- Boys Golf

District Runners-up

- Girls Golf
- Boys Weightlifting
- Boys Track
- Boys Lacrosse

Regional Qualifiers

- Football (SSAC 5A)
- Boys Golf
- Girls Golf
- Boys Cross Country
- Boys Swimming
- Girls Swimming
- Wrestling
- Girls Basketball
- Boys Basketball
- Boys Soccer
- Girls Soccer
- Girls Weightlifting
- Boys Weightlifting
- Girls Lacrosse
- Boys Lacrosse
- Boys Tennis
- Girls Tennis
- Boys Track & Field
- Girls Track & Field

Regional Champions

- Football (SSAC 5A)
- Boys Golf
- Girls Lacrosse

State Appearances (team or Individual)

- Football (SSAC 5A)
- Boys Golf
- Boys Swimming
- Girls Weightlifting
- Wrestling
- Boys Tennis singles/doubles
- Girls Tennis doubles
- Boys Weightlifting
- Girls Lacrosse
- Girls Track & Field
- Boys Track & Field

Alumni Class Notes

2000s

Samuel Petlock '00

had a marvelous surprise for his birthday this spring when his girlfriend, Lainie Nakai, invited former SSES classmates **John Stevely, Eric Pullen, Logan Walters, Suzanne Seagle**



Moody, and her husband **Will Moody '99** out to beautiful Palm Springs to celebrate the occasion.

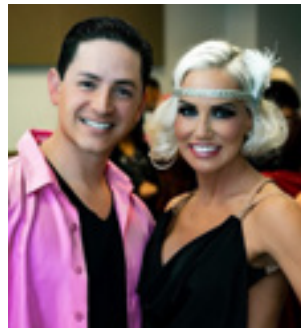
Ashley Mayo McIntyre '01

graduated with her Masters in Clinical Nutrition from Sonoran University of Health Sciences in December 2022. She is pursuing her Certified Nutrition Specialist license and has opened her own holistic nutrition practice called The Elevated Plate.



Perry Swenson Livonius '01

former LPGA golfer, participated in Dancing with the Stars 2023 in Charlotte, N.C. The charity event raised more than \$1-million for breast cancer. When Perry signed the contract committing to personally raise a minimum of \$30,000 and dance in front of 1,200 people, she had no idea of the enormous support she'd receive. She ultimately raised an astounding \$150,000 on her own.



Congratulations to **Professor N.**

Bryant Kirkland '03 on his promotion to Associate Professor with tenure at the UCLA Department of Classics. Bryant joined the department in 2017 and his research interests lie in Greek literature, more recently centered on the intersections of ancient historiography, ancient literary criticism and ancient reception studies.



Best wishes to **Andy Menard '03** and Stacy Moss on the April 3, 2023 birth of their son, Logan James Rauch.

William Kring, Ph.D. '07 is Executive Director and a Senior Researcher at Boston University's Global Development Policy Center. He holds a B.A. (magna cum laude) and a master's degree from BU in International Relations and Affairs, and was a member of the men's tennis team. He earned a master's degree in political

science at Brown University in 2015 and was later awarded his Ph.D. at Brown in Political Science and International Political Economy. Bill lives in Massachusetts with his wife and daughter.

Alec Spycher '08 lives in New York and works as the general manager of the Hudson Yards Equinox Fitness Club. Alec holds a B.S. from Bentley University, where he was the men's varsity tennis captain. Alec married Kelly Fleszar in September 2018.

Alex Brown '08 founded Recover Hospitality to promote wellness and connection during travel, in part by identifying hotel and restaurant environments supportive of mental health and wellness. He recently announced a new collaboration with one of the world's leaders in wellness retreats: Canyon Ranch. In addition to other amenities, when booking a stay through Recover Hospitality's travel agency CXN, Canyon Ranch guests can benefit from a complimentary wellness coach for daily check-ins to assist in achieving wellness goals. Alex graduated magna cum laude from Rollins College and holds a master's in social work from Boston College.

Chen yi "Charles" Du '09

has left Apple after working for the company for nine years. He lives in Shanghai where he's starting a company to bring cutting-edge technologies into the liberal arts curriculum, enabling students to make stronger intellectual connections across academic disciplines. Charles visited and spoke with Mr. Bernie Yanelli's classes this spring while visiting the States.



2010s



Amy Ivin '10 married Ryan Hogan on Dec. 4, 2022, at Bean Point on Anna Maria Island. Amy says, "It was the PERFECT day with all of our friends, family and, of course, our dog in attendance!" Her sister, **Melissa Ivin McClelland '08**, served as matron of honor and her mother, Mrs. Sallie Ivin, was a beloved faculty member and administrator at SSES for more than 20 years.

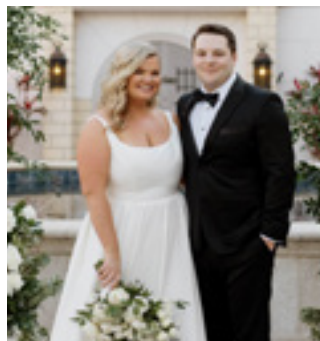
James Kernan '10 serves as Head of Footwear and Director of Operations at MSCHF. MSCHF is an art collective located in Brooklyn, N.Y. His responsibilities include building MSCHF sneaker business, as well as overseeing product development, manufacturing, and operations for all physical goods. James also owns a third-party logistics company which helps e-commerce brands fulfill and ship online orders around the world.

Former 2013 classmates **Emily Gessner** and **Mark Austin Jolly** have joined the ranks of married alumni. The couple was married on Oct. 21, 2022. Emily holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Florida Gulf Coast University and a master's in forensic psychology from Nova Southeastern University. Austin is an alumnus of Florida Gulf Coast University's college of business.

Delia Revard '14 was featured in the fall 2022 edition of The Santa Fe Opera Magazine's "Apprentice Update." After graduating from Florida State University with a B.A. in Theatre, Delia accepted a position as the Touch-up Painter/Scenic Art Apprentice at the Santa Fe Opera. At her contract's conclusion, she moved to NYC to work as a scenic art apprentice at the Juilliard School. Delia returned to Santa Fe for three more summers, freelancing in New York for the rest of the year and working her way up to staff scenic artist. After the 2021 season, she accepted the scenic charge position at Daedalus Design & Production in Brooklyn.



Savannah Glasgow '14 married Joshua Plafker on Feb. 25, 2023, at The Bishop Museum of Science & Nature in Bradenton. Savannah is a Communications Director in the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington, D.C. for Florida Representative Vern Buchanan. She majored in political science and government at Florida State University.



Megan Carr '14 is pursuing her Ph.D. in biological and agricultural engineering at North Carolina State. She holds an M.S. from N.C. State in those same disciplines and earned her bachelor's in environmental engineering at the University of Florida.

Justin Gregorius '14 is the CEO at Pine Street Labs in San Francisco. The company builds products to help developers use blockchains. Justin attended Boston College, where he majored in history and philosophy. He founded and was the president of the BC Cryptocurrency Club, as well as the president of the Phi Alpha Theta History Honors Society.

Jane Lindsay '15 has joined the London office of Airbus as a communications advisor. She and her team focus on strategy and mergers and acquisitions for the UK and EU. Jane graduated from the University of St. Andrews with a B.A. in International Relations and also holds an M.A. in Strategic Communications from The London School of Economics.

Paige Lindsay '15 is engaged to Thomas Kirby of Gunterville, Ala. She is a Professional Technical Recruiter for Brooksource in their Birmingham office. Paige is a Wake Forest University alumna where she majored in psychology.

Tobin "Toby" Howell '15 is host of the Morning Brew Daily, a daily talk show that covers the latest news on business, the economy, and more. Previously, Toby served as a writer for The Morning Brew, an email newsletter based out of New



York. Ever the creative, Toby also launched "The Game" this year, a weekly email newsletter that provides an entertaining rundown of the past week of news in a clever "winners and losers" format.

Anna Boyd '15 was promoted to a Director in Energy and Natural Resources within FTI Consulting. Anna graduated cum laude from Georgetown University's Walsh School of Foreign Service with a Bachelor of Science in Global Business and minors in Spanish and Chinese. She also earned an Honors Certificate in International Business Diplomacy for her graduate-level studies in the field and is a Fulbright Scholar alumna.

Kudos to Nicole Johnston '15 on her acceptance to Harvard Business School as a member of the class of 2025. Nicole graduated from Cornell University with a B.A. in Applied Economics and Management and is an investment banking associate at SVB Securities in New York.

Sophia Bernet '16 is a Senior Consultant at OmniHub in Olympia, Wash. Sophie graduated from the University of Colorado in 2020 with a B.B.A. in Accounting and Finance and was a member of the University's equestrian team from 2016-19.

On Feb. 1, 2023, **Letherio Jones, Jr. '17** reached a longtime goal by completing Officer Candidate School in the United States Army, where he was a distinguished physical fitness graduate. Letherio graduated from Sewanee University in 2021 with a B.A. in politics.



Khashayar "Khash" Eshaghi

'17 graduated from the University of Sciences in Philadelphia with a bachelor's degree in neuroscience. After a gap year, he applied to medical schools and was accepted to the University of Pennsylvania's Perelman School of Medicine. Khash will attend Penn this fall, but says he still cherishes his SSES high school years. "I was truly inspired to pursue a career in medicine by my science teacher and math teachers, including Ms. Klein, Ms. Conn and Mr. Carlson. Back in 2017, I was awarded the science book award and I received a copy of the Gray's Anatomy book which officially marked my introduction to the world of medicine."



Daniel Eisenman '17 enrolled at Fairfield University in Connecticut after graduation, but transferred in fall 2018 to Boston University to study accounting. He is local once again and working as an International Tax Analyst for Feld Entertainment.

LeNae Jones '18 has landed her first job as an Internal Auditor 1 at Truist Bank after earning her M.S. in Management at Wake Forest University. She is a Furman University alumna and received her B.S. in Health Sciences.



Congratulations to **Hannah Arendt '18** on her December graduation from Texas Christian University and her passing the NCLEX exam to become a licensed B.S. R.N. Hannah is thrilled to commence work at Children's Health in Dallas, where she'll work in the pediatric ICU.

Gabrielle "Gaby" Pung '18

visited campus for the 2023 winter break alumni luncheon after her Johns Hopkins University graduation in December 2022. Gaby earned a B.S. in electrical engineering and her special interests include signal processing and software engineering.



Kendall Miller '19 and the University of Richmond Spiders won the Patriot League Women's Golf Championship this spring. The team finished the 54-hole event 16 shots ahead of defending champion Boston University. The Spiders recorded the lowest tournament score in program history, matched the lowest round in program history and set Patriot League Championship records for lowest single-round score, lowest tournament score, and largest margin of victory. Kendall graduated from Richmond in May with a degree in business administration and will join Protiviti in Dallas as an internal audit and financial advisory consultant.

James Class '19 is a new Auburn University alumnus. Jim graduated in May with a B.S. in marketing and is an incoming business development consultant at Oracle.

Ashleigh Rodhouse '19 graduated magna cum laude from Bentley University in May. An accounting major with a minor in law, Ashleigh will join Ernst & Young as an enterprise risk consultant after interning with the firm during college.

2020s

Caitlin Mulqueen '20 is off to work for ESPN this summer as an Editorial Graphics Production Intern in Bristol, Conn. She attends the University of Tennessee, where she is studying English and journalism.

Former Saint Stephen's 2021 classmates and teammates **Ross Springstead** and **Alex Talbot** cheered on **Peter Balos** (Ursinus College) at the annual spring break college baseball tournament in Orlando.





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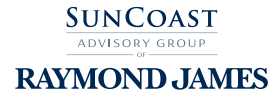
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