For two weeks in April, 2016 Saint Stephen’s graduate Hannah Sage had every member of the campus community sitting on the edge of their seats as we all tuned in for four nights to watch her exploits on the iconic television game show, Jeopardy!

The poised, articulate sophomore at the University of Central Florida was one of 15 qualifiers for the show’s annual College Championship Tournament. Displaying knowledge ranging from Harry Potter and pop music to the Bible and Russian culture, Sage buzzed her way past students from Stanford, Dartmouth, RIT and Oklahoma into the final round.

Although she eventually finished third, $1 behind Tufts University freshman Dhruv Gaur of Brown, Sage made her mark. She was just the ninth student from a Florida university to compete and only the third to reach the final round in the 29-year history of the nationally televised tournament.

During her years at Saint Stephen’s – she came to the school as a sixth grader – Sage was a National Merit Scholar and a member of the Academic Team. She was one of five SSES students on the six-member Manatee Scholar and a member of the Academic grader – Sage was a National Merit scholar. During her years at Saint Stephen’s, she stood on behind our spot on the stage. It would raise us up so that we all looked about the same height. Everyone I played with was taller than me, so I was up about four inches on the block.

Q: You appeared so poised and calm. Were you nervous at all?
A: I was terrified. The morning of the first taping I woke up in the hotel and said to my Mom, “What if I don’t know the answers to anything?”

Q: Did your experience with the Academic Team at SSES provide any help?
A: It definitely did. The material I learned at Saint Stephen’s and UCF were a great foundation.

Q: Is there one memory that stands out to you from the competition?
A: I guess it was making Alex cry. I don’t know why, really. After I won the semi-final game, he came over and he was crying. You probably couldn’t see that, but if you watched the next round you might remember him saying at the beginning that we were so good that it made him cry.

Q: Did you get to spend any time with him aside from the taping?
A: All the time we spent with him was on the set. We would take commercial breaks like the ones you see on TV and he’d come around, and then filmed everything on Monday and Tuesday. They shot a week’s worth of episodes in one day. I really didn’t believe it was happening the whole time I was there.

Q: Imagine it was pretty tough to know the outcome but to have to keep it secret until after the shows aired in April?
A: It was really hard. I couldn’t tell anybody. When the first episode aired, I had friends from Saint Stephen’s come to UCF and watch with me and support me and I wanted so bad to tell them I’d won, but I couldn’t say anything. My Mom came with me, so she knew, but I couldn’t say anything to my Dad when I got back. That was so hard! I tutor on campus and one of the other tutors said, “You can tell me, right?” I said, “Sorry, no.”

Q: Have you had anyone recognize you from being on the show?
A: I was on campus and a girl walked past me one day, stopped, pointed at me and said, “Oh my God!” That was definitely a little weird. I still feel weird talking about myself.

Q: Have you kept in touch with any of the other students who competed?
A: We did get to know each other. Being in the Green Room you’d play UNO, Jenga and it was really nice. We have a group text that we use. We weren’t allowed to have our phones with us so we didn’t give away anything, but after the first day when we went back to the hotel, we all friended each other on Facebook.

Q: So you won $25,000, right? Any plans for those winnings?
A: Maybe go to Disney. The rest I’ll save for medical school.

Q: Can you audition again or is that it for Jeopardy?
A: I’m not allowed to be on it again. I also can’t be on Wheel of Fortune because it’s owned by the same company.

Q: Do you have any message for all of your fans at Saint Stephen’s?
A: Thanks for watching and supporting me. It really means a lot. And thanks to all of my teachers. I couldn’t have done it without you.