

APPLAUSE

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School of the Arts

Graduation 2009



Graduating Class of 2009

Editor's Note



We've come to the end of another year, and it's time to say goodbye to another graduating class. This is the first year the seniors don't seem like the older kids that are graduating and going off to college, they seem like my peers and friends, and I'll be sad to see them go.

To say that it has been an incredibly hectic month would be an understatement. The annual graduation issue is written almost entirely by the senior class, and we have had essays, surveys, and congrats ads coming in like crazy! Every time I look up a staff member is standing by my computer holding out another flash drive, but despite the insanity, I have really enjoyed reading students' reflections on their years at SOA.

I'm very glad that this issue is out so that you, the reader, can feel a little closer to the parting seniors, and so that I, the editor, can breathe a sigh of relief and take a nap. But, all jokes aside, I hope you enjoy our graduation issue.

Congratulations to the class of 2009, and to everyone else have a lovely summer!

K. Chaney Long

Cover design by
David Sass
and
Sam Whitley

Applause

the official student publication

Charleston County School of the Arts

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To the class of 2009...I will always be in appreciation of your welcoming and inviting ways. You have an optimism that has enriched our school and will endure for years to come. I have most certainly enjoyed getting the opportunity to hear about the adventures you have experienced at SOA over the years. Your talents, they are vast. There is not a day that goes by without being truly amazed over your passion & skills in the arts.

I will wish you well in your pursuits, whatever they may be. Our world has now become a little richer, stronger and better place because of you.

With great hope for your happiness,
James Reinhart



Dear Class of 2009,

"Can you believe it?" Your big day is almost here. It is the day you have looked forward to for twelve years. This isn't the end but a new beginning in your life's journey. "Isn't it exciting?"

I wish you the very best of everything. Your hard work and diligence has served you well. Continue to work hard and follow your heart. Always remember to treat others as you want to be treated. Don't ever forget who you are and where you come from. Take care of your parents. Don't forget their love and guidance.

I know you will do well and are well prepared for the next chapter. As Dr. Seuss would say "Oh, the Places You Will Go". Go out and live your life to the fullest. You will be successful. Always believe in yourself.

It has been my pleasure to serve as your Assistant Principal.

Best Wishes for a wonderful future.

Dorothy Cromartie



Congratulations to the class of 2009. What an outstanding class of ladies and gentlemen! Thank you for a wonderful year. Always remember the good times you had and the friendships that were made. You have finished one part of your life's journey and will soon begin another. Follow the stars to success and never be afraid to take risks. May the very best come your way.

A. Roy Davis
Assistant Principal

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU'VE LEARNED AT SOA?

"Just be yourself, never waste time worrying about what others may think."

Michael Ancrum

"Homeschooling might not be a bad idea."

Nicholas Bates

"Worrying about fitting in is pointless at SOA."

Christopher Benson

"Not everybody is the same, don't hang out with just a certain crowd; this school is filled with cool and dependable people. And I also learned to listen to all types of music. R2D2 is awesome, check it out!"

Arthur Brown

"It's really hard to say what I've learned at SOA. I've been here since sixth grade and I have so many memories and have had so many teachers. But I have learned, 'The way to succeed in life is to pay your taxes and stop at stop signs and everything else will fall into place.'- Mr. Reese"

Maranda Caldwell

"A man with one watch knows what time it is. A man with two watches is never quite sure."

Raymond Caulder

"I've learned how to grow."

Taylor Cheney

"I've learned how to take blame, accept apologies, and work with diverse personalities."

Monique Collins

"I've learned to appreciate diversity and how to deal with a lot of crazy people."

Alecia Coutain

"Creativity and knowledge walk hand-in-hand."

Alex Danna

"You don't have to out-run the bear, just the guy next to you."

Jessica Davidson

"To always be yourself, and say exactly how you feel."

Grace Dawson Beatty

"How to think outside the box."

Marisa Dickson-Ruiz

"I've learned that procrastination does horrible things to those with anxiety and that working hard pays off."

Sarah DiMuzio

"The importance of appreciating art, and the artists themselves, in every form."

Serena Doose

"That acceptance and hard work is key."

Jamie Dukett

"I've learned that nothing comes easy. You gotta work to be on top."

Francisco Figueroa

"Find the kind of friends that tell you the truth no matter what, even if it hurts and hold on to them. Because those are the only kind of friends worth having."

Alexis Freeze

"The most important thing I've learned at School of the Arts is to always be real. If you are honest with yourself and others, you'll make a lot of good friends that in the end will be like family."

Raven Gadsen

"The most important thing I have learned at SOA is you really find out who your true friends are. After being in one place for so long you form so many different kinds of friendships, hopefully ones we will never forget."

Dana Gilmore

"The most important thing I've learned at SOA is to be yourself and to invest in a good pair of rain shoes!"

Katie Grantham

"The most important thing in high school is the friends who make coming to school everyday worthwhile."

Tara Grantham

"Karma. Karma ALWAYS comes back to you in the end. I know it sounds stupid but it's the truth."

Rachel Harris

"Puddles are deeper than they look, Teachers are everywhere, goldfish can't survive toilets."

Kellan Heatley

"I have learned who I am as a person and to always have an open mind."

Patsy Helzer

"I have learned from SOA that the only person standing in the way of your success is you."

Madison Henry

"The most important thing I have learned at SOA is to stay on top of my work."

Devon Heyward

"To take an opportunity when it is presented to you."

Preston Hogue

"The most important things that I've learned at School of the Arts are the many different types of dances."

Michael Horlback

"When you conform, you leave 'yourself' behind."

Lamar Hunter

"A quote is the first thing that comes to mind.... 'Be who you are and be that well.' I've definitely

learned not only who I am, but how to be that person and not be afraid of it."

Aubrey Isaacson

"I've learned that sometimes you have to go with what the majority wants, even if you don't agree with it."

Candice Jenkins

"My art will always help me in my future, if something doesn't work out I will always have my art to fall back on."

Charlotte Jenkins

"In the end, it all matters and it all counts. Thing such as time and how you spend it, your grades and every class you take, how hard you try, etc., it all counts. Also to appreciate your opportunity to be at a school such as SOA."

Kalyx Johnson

"I'd truly have to say, JUST BE YOURSELF!"

Caitlyn Kirkland

"Usually the process and the final product are of equal importance."

Rob Kleiman

"The most important thing that I've learned at SOA is that if you don't strive for what you want in life, you'll never get it. SOA taught me that I could achieve anything, whether it was in my major or academic classes."

Tanya Lewandowski

"You can get by without actually trying."

Tony Linog

"It's cool to be kooky as long as you are around people who can take the kooky."

Reilly Lovingood

"People are different and come from all walks of life. We vary by color and shade but we are all human and completely unique."

Kenish Magwood

"The most important thing that I've learned is that procrastination is the enemy."

Shakira Major

"I've learned how to be accepting to people who are different. It helped me to become understanding."

Quinterra Middleton

"Humor can get you anything you want in life except a woman."

Steven Moskos

"Watch out for puddles, or should I say, lakes."

Penelope Murray

"The most important thing that I've learned at SOA is to not be afraid to talk to my fellow classmates about anything because they are here to help me and are in the same boat that I am in."

Amanda Nelson

"I never knew that so many great artists could be so rude, competitive, stupid, and unaccepting, but if you don't worry about them, forget your own pretentious bull crap, and work hard you will grow as a person and an artist."

Amelia Nixon

"I learned good time management, and to not rely on others to have the same."

Joshua Norris

"That nothing comes easy to you. You have to work hard to succeed."

Sanavia Paisley

"Success doesn't come easy; you have to work at

it."

Jordan Price

"Don't take everything so seriously."

Christopher Richardson

"People are gonna talk about you until the day you die. They talked about Jesus. It's all a matter of what you answer to them."

Wilfred Rivers

"I've learned so much. I guess the most important thing would be that I've learned who I truly am."

Pepi Rodriguez

"How to work with other people. So many times we at SOA have had to put one's ego to the side and work together. That has made me a better person."

Paul Runyon

"To be yourself and not worry about what others think of you."

Katie Safford

"The most important thing I've learned at SOA is that this school is nowhere near a normal school and to take advantage of the time you spend here and make memories with the people you find here."

Ashley Sagan

"The most important thing I've learned during my time is SOA is: if you really want to accomplish something, don't give up. Go after it with everything you have. Do the best that you can, and chances are, you'll be happy with the end result."

Shanequa West

"To not conform."

Kurt Sauer

"How to be discreet."

Laura Stanger

"Don't wear flip-flops when it rains."

Brady Suit

"Never presume things about people based on superficial or material things because more than likely your presumption will be wrong."

Keturah Thomas

"To simplify an important thing I have learned at one place such as SOA is very hard. I would say if it wasn't for my school, I would not be as artistically talented in any other school."

Chrissy Thorne

"Remember who you are."

Skylar Spies

"I've really learned to appreciate other art majors."

Laura Kate Vinson

"Getting picked last on the team will stimulate your creativity; within seconds you'll start scheming your revenge."

Taylor Wentworth

"Don't judge a school by its campus."

Julia Whirley

"Knowledge of the human body and mind, and how they interact with their environment; this subject is important for any person to know."

Robert Widlowski

"The most important thing I learned was my potential to be someone great."

Charles Williams

WHAT WILL YOU MISS MOST ABOUT SOA?

"I will miss my wonderful teachers! Especially Ms. Olson!!"

Michael Ancrum

"The cafeteria food. Also, playing football with all the underclassmen."

Nicholas Bates

"All those who have had my back and helped me stay on track for all these years."

Christopher Benson

"Jumping over abnormal and incredibly high objects; "Senior verse" on the football field, watching Mr. Kerr get angry in band; laughing at the crazy things my friends do, and my underclassman friends, you know who you are."

Arthur Brown

"I'll miss the amazing people, the great teachers, and the atmosphere of this awesome school. I'll miss treading through water on rainy days, going down the hallways listening to the interaction in class rooms and hearing people playing in the halls. It's like no other high school and I hope it remains that way."

Maranda Caldwell

"The exciting array of smells."

Raymond Caulder

"As cliché as it may sound, the friendships I've made with students and teachers over the years are really what I'll miss the most about SOA."

Taylor Cheney

"I'll really miss all my friends and the love everyone has for the major."

Monique Collins

"The lax environment, Wiz rehearsals, driving Mr. Clark crazy, Mr. Baker's musical theatre class, passing notes to Oleta in government class, Mr. Brehm talking about Montana, Crankin' Dat Percy Boi in Pre-Cal, MR. DAVIS & MRS. CROMARTIE, Teacher Cadet '09 class (eeent!!) and BIO 2 CLASS, HAMMET/EVANOSKY 2A HEALTH CLASS!!!"

Alecia Coutain

"The Senior Thesis class by far. We have shared and grown so much as a group."

Alex Danna

"The smell... haha. And ADAM!"

Jessica Davidson

"The support system that I have had here has been an immense help through these seven years - especially from my dance thesis class."

Grace Dawson Beatty

"The originality of SOA, and how comfortable the atmosphere is, and my friends of course."

Marisa Dickson-Ruiz

"I will miss most the support system I have here in the teachers and friendships I've made and the art room, I'll miss the art room for sure."

Sarah DiMuzio

"The freedom and uniqueness of our school and the wide array of personalities that comes from having a lot of creativity in one place."

Serena Doose

"The caring and loving teachers that want students to succeed and all of the multi-talented students."

Jamie Dukett

"I'll miss the closeness and laid-back flow. A lot of the teachers had my back and everybody was cool with everybody."

Francisco Figueroa

"The thing I'll miss most about SOA is the really close relationships I've built with my teachers over the years, my talks with three special ladies will greatly be missed, Mrs. Olson, Mrs. Alvanos and Mrs. Slowinski, thank you so much for putting up with me over the years, I know it hasn't been easy. And of course Mr. Orvin, my hero. I love how no matter how low I feel you can always make my day, no matter what. And that you genuinely care, thank you."

Alexis Freeze

"I will miss the sense of community that the whole school seems to have. It doesn't matter what "circles" you hang out with, everybody knows everybody and is really close. I hope that I find that in college somehow."

Raven Gadsen

"The things I will truly miss the most about SOA are the amazing bonds you have with your teachers. I feel like these teachers have done more than just educate me, they have molded and shaped me into a young adult and have been great role models for me."

Dana Gilmore

"I will miss walking around campus and recognizing everyone's face!"

Katie Grantham

"I will miss the small aspect of SOA. I love coming to school and knowing every face I see, and the bonds I've made with my teachers."

Tara Grantham

"The campus. The mold in the ceiling, the cracks in the floor, the paintings on the walls, every little thing that made this place a fire hazard is dear to me."

Rachel Harris

"All the random things that happen every day and the crazy people who make them happen. Pranks are only excusable if they are genuinely funny and nobody gets hurt. Brehm is your friend (remember that)."

Kellan Heatley

"I will miss the tight-knit community that I have had here."

Patsy Helzer

"I will definitely miss my fellow seniors a bunch. We have all become really close this year."

Madison Henry

"I will miss all my friends the most."

Devon Heyward

"My theatre class. Hands down."

Preston Hogue

"What will I miss most about School of the Arts is how homie the school is and how everybody

knows something about somebody."

Michael Horlback

"The random things that happen everyday; Paul; My pipe cleaner glasses; Mrs. Bronk, Ms. Marshall, Dr. Price, Ms. Rogers, Mr. Murray, Mr. Kerr, Mrs. Branscome, Mrs. Colquitt."

Lamar Hunter

"Knowing everyone I see, and being able to smile at them and always get a smile back."

Aubrey Isaacson

"I will miss the social atmosphere that SOA has. I think that everybody gets along for the most part and even if they don't they are still civil with one another. I think that is a good quality that SOA has over other high schools."

Candice Jenkins

"The bond, SOA students have a bond that no other school can have. Whether it be in a class or through our major, ultimately we are all friends."

Charlotte Jenkins

"School of the Arts is always very entertaining, the people here are a riot, and I will miss that dearly."

Kalyx Johnson

"I'll miss the school, granted when I graduate the school will move but in my heart this flood prone campus is like my second home, I love this place."

Caitlyn Kirkland

"The drive back and forth. It gives me time to think. Oh, and the school's culture and commitment to using what it's got."

Rob Kleiman

"What I'll miss the most about SOA are the people. This year, I have grown especially close with some of the most caring, loving, and just all around fantastic people I have ever met. It will definitely hit me hard when I leave for college."

Tanya Lewandowski

"Double early outs."

Tony Linog

"I know it's cliched, but the old tattered, mildewed, and molded buildings...LOVE YOU BLOCK, BARRY, AND FINE ARTS!"

Reilly Lovingood

"My friends and the familiarity."

Kenish Magwood

"Ms. Olson's sarcasm."

Shakira Major

"I will miss the fact that everyone is different and the environment isn't really stressful."

Quinterra Middleton

"Singing in class, and talking with the teachers as friends."

Steven Moskos

"I will miss the uniqueness of SOA, its decrepit campus and all of my amazing friends."

Penelope Murray

"The things I will miss most about SOA are the beautiful campus and the comforting atmosphere."

Amanda Nelson

"The few people that I love and Ms. Slenk."

Amelia Nixon

"Art class."

Joshua Norris

"The friendships that I have built with both my teachers and my classmates. Class clowns Tony Linog and Francisco Figueroa!"

SaNavia Paisley

"The creativity."

Jordan Price

"My math class."

Christopher Richardson

"The fact that we're all driven by talent, and performing arts, the close-knit feel, the cracked sidewalks, and oh yeah, the lakes we have when it rains."

Wilfred Rivers

"I'm mainly going to miss my friends, the few great teachers, and all of the memories."

Pepi Rodriguez

"The community. We are such a tight-knit family. It will be hard to leave that."

Paul Runyon

"I will miss the scene of the community: how everybody knows everyone."

Katie Safford

"The thing I'll miss most about SOA is being able to walk around the campus and see a familiar face anywhere I turn. I'll miss the campus in general, the environment, the students, and the faculty."

Ashley Sagan

"People."

Kurt Sauer

"I will miss that SOA is a community like no other."

Skylar Spies

"Costume Design."

Laura Stanger

"Being around that people that share the same passions and interests as I do."

Brady Suit

"All of the wonderful people who made my 7 years here worth it: Sha-ri, Saray (The remendous Three), Raven, SaNavia, Paige, Oleta, Nicholette, Wilfred, Michael H., Te'aire, Lamar, Michael A., Akeem, Devon, Maya, Charles, Shakira, Craig, Landon, Candice, Kenish and everybody else! Special shout out to Vanessa."

Keturah Thomas

"The school is just so unique. I will miss my friends of course. Walking through the halls and knowing someone, or going to a performance and knowing the people who are so talented! It is great to have such close friends."

Chrissy Thorne

"I think I'll miss the people in my creative writing class the most. They're like my second family; I tell them everything."

Laura Kate Vinson

"The blessed gift of teachers as impatient for the end of the day and as apathetic as the students."

Taylor Wentworth

"I'll miss walking down the halls of the Fine Arts building and hearing the vocalists sing, looking at the artwork all over the wall and in the halls, and hearing music coming from the band room."

Shanequa West

"The artwork on the walls and freedom of expression."

Julia Whirley

"The campus, the encouragement I've been given, and the people I know here."

Robert Widlowski

"I will miss my SOA family the most."

Charles Williams

ANY ADVICE FOR UNDERCLASSMEN?

“Study hard!”

Michael Ancrum

“Don’t skip class to go to vicious cock fights. Somehow the administration will find out.”

Nicholas Bates

“Do your work! Your grades from freshman year will come back to haunt your GPA if you don’t.”

Grace Dawson-Beatty

“Don’t overexert yourself; enjoy your time. Those who begin many things finish very few.”

Christopher Benson

“Study hard, play hard, and enjoy it; you only do this once...I hope.”

Arthur Brown

“Listen in class and work hard. It will pay off in the future when you are applying to colleges. Live high school to the fullest you can. Take advantage of every moment and don’t hesitate to do anything. You’re only in high school once.”

Maranda Caldwell

“If you don’t feel like doing it, don’t do it.”

-Raymond Caulder

“Challenge yourself as often as possible... and buy your yearbook.”

Taylor Cheney

“Don’t procrastinate! Have fun; it goes by too quickly.”

Larissa Clarke

“My advice for underclassmen would be to work hard, dream big, and have fun.”

-Monique Collins

“Do your homework.”

Trey Cooper

“Be on top of your grades! Colleges really focus on your grades in these years, and if you want to slack off, then be my guest! Just know that you will miss out on a lot of scholarship money! The less money out of your pocket, the better.”

Alecia Coutain

“Try to make the most of everything given to you at this school whether it is performance opportunities, relationships with students and teachers, or just senior activities.”

Alex Danna

“If you don’t like your major, change it... and if you don’t like the school, get out!”

Jessica Davidson

“Go for what you want, even if it’s impossible, because you never know what will happen.”

Marisa Dickson

“My advice to the underclassman would be to make sure you take advantage of every opportunity this art school gives you.”

Sarah DiMuzio

“Don’t take SOA for granted; there aren’t many places in this world where you can paint on the walls or have impromptu jam sessions in between classes.”

Serena Doose

“Start exploring your future early. Make sure you volunteer and work in the field you think you want to be in. Do not wait until your junior year to start your future.”

Jamie Duckett

“Don’t try to grow up too fast. Everything will fly by! Soak it up and enjoy it, because senior year will come faster than you think.”

Taylor Evans

“Study!”

Jamill Fields

“If I can do it, you can do it.”

Francisco Figueroa

“Find the kind of friends that tell you the truth no matter

what, even if it hurts. Hold on to them, because those are the only kind of friends worth having.”

Alexis Freeze

“My advice for underclassmen is to study hard and to always work hard for what you want. Things you want will not just come to you. You have to make your dreams happen.”

Raven Gadsden

“Don’t rely on other people’s advice; every mistake is a lesson learned! Never regret what once made you smile.”

Dana Gilmore

“My advice for underclassmen is to do your homework and don’t slack off. You will thank yourself senior year!”

Katie Grantham

“Save slacking for after you have been accepted into college.”

Tara Grantham

“Don’t waste your time; it is precious, and it will pass by quickly.”

Rachel Harris

“Pranks are only excusable if they are genuinely funny and nobody gets hurt. Brehm is your friend. Remember that.”

Kellan Heatley

“Never doubt your talent and ability to shine.”

Patsy Heltzer

“Do not procrastinate. That is the biggest mistake you can make your senior year. Just study hard!”

Madison Henry

“Doing a stupid thing really well does not make it any less stupid.”

Lauren Hester

“My advice for the underclassmen is to turn in all of your work before you miss school for a trip!”

Devon Heyward

“My advice for the underclassmen is to do all your homework, and don’t be late for anything that is due.”

Michael Horlback

“One, puddles are cleaner than they look. Two, never conform, because this school is nothing like the others. Three, you are here to do something great for society, no matter what it is.”

Lamar Hunter

“Just have fun with it.”

Aubrey Isaacson

“My advice would be to start your college searching as early as possible, because time goes by so fast; sometimes you think you have everything together, but you soon realize that you don’t.”

Candice Jenkins

“Take SOA seriously. Just because we are an arts school doesn’t change the value of our education.”

Charlotte Jenkins

“Strive for the best, and make each day of your senior year memorable before it’s too late.”

Sha-ri Jenkins

“Make the most of your time at SOA. If you want to leave, leave. But while you’re there have as much fun as possible, and give it your all. Don’t slack on your senior year either; it counts.”

Kalyx Johnson

“Invest in a good solid pair of rain boots and stay on all your teachers’ good sides.”

Darbie Keck

“If you keep up with your homework *and* classwork, you will pass your class.”

Caitlyn Kirkland

“Pay attention to your work, don’t be late, get on the office people’s good side, and enjoy it while it lasts.”

Rob Kleiman

“If you plan to take Mr. Brehm’s Honors Economics/

Government class, you better be prepared to read. A lot. If you are planning to take Dr. Cusatis’ class, don’t get into an argument with him. You will never win. For all of the dancers: don’t be afraid to show who you truly are when you dance. Use your soul, and - most of all - your heart.”

Tanya Lewandowski

“Grin and bear it, because the end isn’t worth it.”

Tony Linog

“If you have Dr. Cusatis in your awesome years at SOA, remember: no matter what time period a book was written, there is some reference to a Bob Dylan song.”

Reilly Lovingood

“Get your work done early, and don’t worry about what others say or do. Bring your own lunch to school... trust me on that.”

Kenish Magwood

“Suck up while you can.”

Shakira Major

“The most important advice I could give to you, the lower classmen, is to find and keep a great group of friends. In order to get through school smoothly, you will need friends who will make you laugh, give you a different perspective, be honest, give you a shoulder a cry on, and push you to be your best. More than anything, you need people you know you can depend on, no matter what. Everyone will go through times where they need a friend, so my advice is to choose friends wisely and to treat them with all the love and trust you can gather. I have been lucky enough to get to know and love a great group of people, and I have never doubted that they will be there for me, for whatever and always.”

Shannon McNellis

“Always remember to stick with your studies and not slack off, because it will catch up with you.”

Quinterra Middleton

“If it makes sense, it is probably a lie.”

Steven Moskos

“Before you procrastinate (because we all know it’s inevitable) try to do at least one productive, school-related thing so you won’t hate yourself too much.”

Penelope Murray

“Don’t look forward to graduation too much or you will miss out on the fun experiences of high school.”

Andi Musslwhite

“Some advice for underclassmen is to always do the right thing and to stay together as a class no matter what. Also, I recommend keeping your friends close, but your teachers closer.”

Amanda Nelson

“Don’t go out of your way to be annoying, never betray your friends, stop wearing jeans that look like highlighters, don’t yell because you think it’s cute, don’t giggle at everything, respect your teachers, respect your major, stand up for what you believe in, clean up after yourself, read a lot, and - most of all - stop cutting the lunch line.”

Amelia Nixon

“Be nice to your teachers and get close to your guidance counselors- they have to write your recommendations for college! Also, never try to take a test for Mr. Brehm without studying for at least 5 hours!”

SaNavia Paisley

“Advice? No. High school is amazingly easy.”

Bradley Poplin

“Take PBJ Reese’s AP World class.”

Stephanie Popowski

“Stay focused, work hard, and try new things while having fun!”

Jordan Price

“Don’t drown!”

Christopher Richardson

“My advice for the underclassmen is to never fall behind on an assignment.”

Akeem Rivers

“Pay attention in class. If not, you will miss what you need to know in your higher level classes during junior and senior year. Take your SAT’s/ACT’s early! Don’t wait until

the last minute. Become best friends with your Chemistry book and Dr. Price. Get a good night’s sleep before Mr. Brehm’s class or else you’re doomed to fall asleep!”

Wilfred Rivers

“Figure out what colleges you want to apply for NOW because senior year comes a lot quicker than you think! Stay focused on your school work every year.”

Pepi Rodriguez

“Be grateful for the teachers that have guided you through your time at SOA.”

Paul Runyon

“Don’t slack off in academic classes, because when you get to senior year you will realize how dumb you were.”

Katie Safford

“It doesn’t matter if you’re just starting your freshman year or ending your junior year, you need to do all that you can to keep your grades up. You’ll thank yourself once you start applying to colleges. Oh, and invest in a good, quality pair of rain boots.”

Ashley Sagan

“Don’t let others affect who you are, and do nice things for everyone, especially those who hate you.”

Kurt Sauer

“Express yourself in all ways and don’t for a second worry about what others think.”

Charlotte Savage

“Study long and hard for Mr. Brehm’s tests.”

Nichollette Singleton

“Become best friends with the guidance counselors. Visit them at least 3 times a month; it will benefit you in the long run. Study for Mr. Brehm’s test! Be kind to the lunch ladies.”

Saray Smalls

“Just be yourself; honesty is key.”

Skylar Spies

“Always delete your text messages!”

Laura Stanger

“Don’t be scared of Mr. Brehm; he’s a nice guy.”

Brady Suit

“Stay on top of your game and don’t procrastinate. You will regret it if do.”

Kenturah Thomas

“School is one, big, babysitting place. Just think of how you would want the child you’re babysitting to act or turn out, then become that child.”

Chrissy Thorne

“Take advantage of school while it’s free. Unfortunately, a higher level education is a lot more important to a pleasant lifestyle than it should be.”

Anastasia Timina

“I’d advise underclassmen to get involved with the musical productions in high school, even if it’s just backstage. I always enjoyed working behind the scenes.”

Laura Katie Vinson

“For any creative writing majors, don’t procrastinate on thesis. Make it something that you are proud of and want to share. Don’t wait until the night before a deadline to write 10 pages.”

Samantha Watson

“Don’t focus on the bad parts of life. I know it sounds cliché, but don’t let pessimism dictate your life.”

Taylor Wentworth

“When you get into your senior year, don’t wait until the last minute to put in college applications and apply for scholarships. If you do, you’ll regret it.”

Shanequa Sanders-West

“Don’t get on Mr. P’s bad side.”

Julia Whirley

“‘Procrastination’ is an ugly word. Solitaire and Wikipedia are much more important than impending deadlines.”

Sam Whitley

“Try to prioritize; always ask yourself what is most important in your life at the time, and determine which activities, if any, can be set aside to make room for the things which are more important to you.”

Robert Widlowski

“Do your homework.”

Charles Williams

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS AFTER GRADUATION?

“My plans after graduation are to attend Jacksonville University and major in Music Business. Scholarships rock!”

Michael Ancrum

“I will attend the Citadel for the next four years, and then become an officer in the United States Marine Corps.”

Nicholas Bates

“I will be completing my Undergraduate degree in Athletic Training at the College of Charleston. I hope to later attend medical school.”

Grace Dawson-Beatty

“I want to continue my music, become a computer engineer, and enjoy life.”

Christopher Benson

“I plan to go to college, and then maybe join the Marines after getting my degree.”

Arthur Brown

“My plans are to go to college and receive my Undergraduate’s degree in Business Administration. I want to hopefully open up some sort of business one day; I don’t know what kind of business that will be yet. I hope to become a successful person and make a good living. Hopefully, I will travel the world and see new and exotic places. Some things don’t always work out as planned, so we will see what the future has in store for me.”

Miranda Caldwell

“Do what we try to do every night, Pinkie: try to take over the world.”

Raymond Caulder

“I plan to have a beautiful summer, and in the fall, attend the University of South Carolina as a Journalism major.”

Taylor Cheney

“I plan on having fun this summer and then going to Clemson in the fall for Environmental and Natural Resources.”

Larissa Clarke

“I’m going to Wofford College to major in English. After that, we’ll see how it rolls out.”

Monique Collins

“Play music.”

Trey Cooper

“I plan on working two jobs and having fun during the summer, going to Queens University and hopefully becoming a successful orthodontist... or maybe a nurse!”

Alecia Coutain

“I am hoping to continue dancing in college and to get my BFA, as well as minoring in either Physical Therapy or Sports Medicine.”

AlexaDanna

“First, party! Second, go to Bonaroo and enjoy the summer! Then, go to college.”

Jessica Davison

“New York City!”

-Marisa Dickson

“After graduation, I plan on traveling for the summer and attending the College of Charleston in the fall. I’ll try on a bunch of different majors, but I will definitely minor in Art.”

Sarah DiMuzio

I plan to stock up on sleep, make as much money as possible during the summer, go to Furman to potentially major in Environmental Studies, and keep playing music.

Serena Doose

“I plan on attending Converse College in Spartanburg to major in Psychology and minor in Special Education (Emotional Disabilities). I want to work with children and their families as a child life specialist.”

Jamie Duckett

“I plan to go to college and then maybe medical school. After that, I plan on getting married and having a family.”

Taylor Evans

“I plan on going to Winthrop University to obtain my Bachelor’s degree in Early Childhood Education. Then, I plan on teaching kindergarten for about four years while I go to school for my Master’s degree. I later hope to receive

my Ph.D.”

Jamill Fields

“I plan to go to college away from home, so I can be independent. Maybe I’ll learn how to cook and wash my clothes. Or maybe I’ll just get a girlfriend.”

Francisco Figueroa

“Next year, I’ll be in the Pre-pharmacy program at TTC working on my prerequisites for pharmacy school and once I have taken all of my prerequisite classes, I will attend the College of Pharmacy downtown to obtain my Doctorate.”

Alexis Freeze

“My plans after graduation are to attend Winthrop University, where I will major in English with a concentration in Education. My dream is to teach in middle or high school and maybe even college. I will also continue to write and publish many things.”

Raven Gadsden

“After graduation, I will be going to TTC for two years and hopefully transferring into a different college and getting a well-paying job.”

Dana Gilmore

“After graduation, I plan to attend the University of South Carolina with a major in Nursing.”

Katie Grantham

“I will attend University of South Carolina with a major in Nursing. I plan to work in labor and delivery. I will later go back and get my practitioner license.”

Tara Grantham

“I will become famous and live vicariously off of others; it’s the American way.”

Rachel Harris

“I plan to attend Clemson, then ICAR, and then participate in an internship or job.”

Kellan Heatley

“I am majoring in Nursing at Francis Marion University. After that, hopefully, I will be a RS and specialize in surgery.”

Patsy Heltzer

“I plan to go to USC Columbia as a Biology major and move on to Dental School. I’m going to minor in Dance!

Madison Henry

Attend College of Charleston, either get my M.F.A. or my M.Ed., travel as much as I can before I have to be part of the real world, and mostly keep writing.

Lauren Hester

“My plans after graduation are to work, take some trips, and prepare for college in the fall!”

Devon Heyward

“If I don’t go back to Kazakhstan, then I’ll work all summer to save up for college! Then, I’ll be off to Emory!”

Preston Hogue

“My plan after graduation is to attend Bethune Cookman University in the fall of 2009.”

Michael Horlback

“I plan to go to Wofford College, eat some great food, meet people, stay with Sha-ri, go to medical school, and maybe even become a Pediatric Neurosurgeon who can play the drums, piano, bass, and oboe.”

Lamar Hunter

“I’m going to Coastal Carolina University to study Exercise and Sport Science, and later go into Physical Therapy. I also want to write another book. My mind is always changing, but I always plan on being happy.”

Aubrey Isaacson

“I plan to attend Brenau University and major in Fashion Design. My ultimate goal is to become a fashion designer and launch my clothing line nation-wide.”

Candice Jenkins

“I plan to attend Clemson University through the Bridge Program, where I will major in Secondary Education: Mathematics. I hope to get a Master’s in Middle Grades Education.”

Charlotte Jenkins

“I plan on attending college, and then going to medical school to become a pharmacist.”

Sha-ri Jenkins

“I’m going to be a freshman in the College of Pharmacy program at USC-Columbia. After I graduate and land a sweet job, I plan on living my life spontaneously and traveling all over the world. Hopefully, I will be in a relationship with someone in the NFL or NBA, because they rock.”

Kalyx Johnson

“I’m going to the Honors College at College of Charleston where I hope to major in Marine Biology.”

Darbie Keck

“I plan to go to Trident Tech then transfer to CofC or MUSC for Prenatal Nursing.

Caitlyn Kirkland

“I plan on relaxing, heading into the wild for awhile, and then going to college at American University in Washington, DC.”

Rob Kleiman

“Most likely, I’ll end up at University of South Carolina. I’m not saying that this is entirely a bad thing, but it wasn’t my first choice.”

Tanya Lewandowski

“I plan to go to USC and complete the next level of the vicious cycle.”

Tony Linog

“I want to go to college, get married, have kids, go back to school, become a doctor, and go by Dr. CousCous and have a chain-smoker voice, Dawling.”

Reilly Lovingood

“I plan to work, hang out, and get ready for that big move to college.”

Kenish Magwood

“I’m attending Queens University of Charlotte this fall.”

Shakira Major

Next year, I will be going to Clemson. I am going to become a teacher, so I would like to major in Elementary Education and Special Education.

Shannon McNellis

“I’m not quite sure where life is going to take me, but I do have a basic skeleton. First, I plan to attend Queens University and study Biology, then maybe I will study abroad.”

Quinterra Middleton

“Dinner.”

Steven Moskos

“Right after graduating I’ll probably scream with joy (or tears?). A few months after, I plan to major in Psychology at some sort of college.”

Penelope Murray

“I plan to enjoy the summer and then attend Clemson University in the fall.”

Andi Musslwhite

“After graduation, I will attend the College of Charleston, majoring in Education and minoring in Dance. I will continue with my passion for dance and help out in the community as much as I can.”

Amanda Nelson

“Immediately after graduation, I will most likely go home and throw away/burn most of the material I’ve accumulated this year (minus some music, English notes, and all of Brehm’s stuff). A few years after graduation, I hope I will have been successful in college, and hopefully, I will be on the road to a successful career. I hope to be lucky enough to be happy. Later in life, I’m going to live in an igloo in Antarctica and in the purple house on George St. with Madison Magill and 800 cats.”

Amelia Nixon

“I plan to get on with my life!”

Joshua Norris

“I plan on attending Wofford College and later becoming a pediatrician.”

SaNavia Paisley

“I’m going to Middle Tennessee State University to study Recording.”

Bradley Poplin

“I will be attending the George Washington University.”

Stephanie Popowski

“I plan to learn everything I can and live life to the fullest.”

Jordan Price

“I plan to hopefully travel.”

Christopher Richardson

“I want to enjoy summer, continue working to earn more money for school, pack my whole life inside suitcases, and head off to Clark Atlanta University where I’ll major in Mass Media Arts focusing on Radio Broadcast and minor in Marketing Analysis to obtain my Bachelor’s degree.”

Wilfred Rivers

“For a year or two, I will go to Trident Tech, and then, I will transfer to USC to continue my studies in Criminal Justice Computer Forensics.”

Pepi Rodriguez

“My plans are to study music. It is my passion and something I really want to pursue.”

Paul Runyon

“I plan to go to college at Mercer for Engineering.”

Katie Safford

“After I graduate, I plan to keep working and to begin college in the fall.”

Ashley Sagan

“I want to go backpacking around the world and then college.”

Kurt Sauer

“I’m going to the Fashion Institute of Technology in NYC.”

Charlotte Savage

“After graduation, I plan to attend USC Columbia.”

Nichollette Singleton

“In the fall of 2009, I will be attending Queens University of Charlotte (go Royals!). While there, I will major in Biology. After receiving my degree, I hope to become a student at MUSC to be a pediatrician.”

Saray Smalls

“I plan to have a crazy summer... then to attend Winthrop as an Interior Design major.”

Skylar Spies

“After graduation, I’m going to party all night long, go to the beach all day long, hang out with my friends, and avoid trouble until I go to Winthrop University to major in Jewelry and Metals.”

Laura Stanger

“I plan on making the most of my summer here in Charleston. Then, I’ll go to college and get my degree in Engineering.”

Brady Suit

“I am going to Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, GA.”

Kenturah Thomas

“I want to follow in the footsteps of my art teacher, Ben Moore. I plan to get an art degree and become a high school art teacher.”

Chrissy Thorne

“I am going to attend College of Charleston in the fall with a major in Visual Arts and a minor in Neuroscience. As soon as I graduate I plan on traveling for about three years after which I will attempt to become an artist professionally. If all else fails, I’m going to grad school.”

Anastasia Timina

“I plan to attend the University of South Carolina and major in Biology.”

Laura Katie Vinson

“I will be attending the University of South Carolina in the fall.”

Samantha Watson

“Graduating? I just came here because the mental institution stuffed me in the wrong mailbox.”

Taylor Wentworth

“After I graduate, I plan to attend Averett University and attain a Bachelor’s degree in English. I may go on to graduate school, but my goal is to become a novelist and write books.”

Shanequa Sanders-West

“I plan to attend the College of Charleston.”

Julia Whirley

“I want to go to work during the summer, and then head off to college. I want to just enjoy doing things away from home for once.”

Sam Whitley

“I plan to have a great summer then enroll at College of Charleston as a Music major. I also plan to be a working musician in some form.”

Robert Widlowski

“I am going to relax until I take that trip to Washington D.C.: my new home.”

Charles Williams

WHAT WAS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE MOMENT AT SOA?

“My most memorable moment has to be The Wiz! Yellow-Brick-Roaders hold it down for life!”

Michael Ancrum

“When I was talking trash to Raymond, because he was stealing my girl. Raymond threw a Sobe bottle at my head, so I stabbed him with my pencil in the thigh. Then, I slapped him in the face a few times, throwing in some backhands. Then, he roundhouse-kicked me in the ribs, and I blacked out instantly. It was awesome!”

Nicholas Bates

“I will remember touching Mrs. Bunch’s thermostat, then her yelling at everyone else even though I was the culprit of the situation. Sorry Mrs. Bunch!”

Grace Dawson-Beatty

“There are too many to choose from; everyday at SOA was something new.”

Christopher Benson

“When Nick was talking trash to Raymond because he stole his girl, but Raymond thought he was a “player.” So, Raymond throws a glass bottle at Nick which hits him in the head. Meanwhile, I’m just enjoying the brawl. Nick then stabs Raymond in the thigh with a pencil on his way to the ground. Blood was everywhere... good times.”

Arthur Brown

“My most memorable moment at SOA was in orchestra in 7th grade. We went outside between the black box and the band room and hooked up a blow up swimming pool to Mrs. Johnson’s green van. We swam for all of orchestra class, but I was the only one to forget my swimsuit. So, I stuck my feet in.”

Maranda Caldwell

“When Nick was talking smack to me because I’m such a player. I threw a Sobe bottle at his forehead. As he fell, he stabbed my thigh with a pencil, severing my artery. As I lay there, he backhanded me in the face repeatedly. A player can’t just take that, so I did a dragon flip roundhouse kick to his temple. It was awesome.”

Raymond Caulder

“My most memorable moment was in junior year, when Mr. Percy insisted on shaving vs. Joe Theismann’s tragic football injury. Wait, who’s Joe Theismann?”

Taylor Cheney

“I will remember auditioning for The Wiz and getting all of the dance steps wrong.”

Monique Collins

“I will remember the first time I played at Jump, Jive, and Wail.”

Trey Cooper

“Gosh, there are so many! But everyday in Mr. Eake’s vocal class was a good day, because so many things happened in that class!”

Alecia Coutain

“Freshman year I was given a pas de deux with Matt and I remember feeling like ‘this is high school at SOA.’”

Alexandra Danna

“Meeting Laura Stanger was a very interesting, memorable event.”

Jessica Davidson

“The very first day of school in 6th grade. I had no clue what was ahead of me. I raised my hand to ask if I had no clue go by fast. Now I’m a senior!”

Marisa Dickson

“Memorable moments of SOA include coffee in the art room with Jessika, the colorful fire lab in chemistry, watching friends, and senior theses.”

Sarah DiMuzio

“I remember eating lunch outside in spite of freezing weather to avoid eating in the cafeteria, making Flute Day shirts in the hallway, building human pyramids, singing the Chemistry video song, sprinting through downpours, and making clover chains on beautiful days.”

Serena Doose

“Playing ‘Caccia and Chorale’ in band my junior year. I could feel the music’s feelings as I played. At the end, I cried because of the emotional impact the song had on me. Mr. Kerr looked at me and started crying too. I will leave the SOA band with the legacy of the flute player who cried during band festival.”

Jamie Duckett

“All of the vocal trips were amazing and they are the most memorable things. I will never forget them, especially this past All-State. The trips brought us so much closer together and they were also fun.”

Taylor Evans

“My most memorable moment was probably when we had down time in wind ensemble and made human pyramids.”

Jamill Fields

“I’ll remember the water fight at the end of 11th grade. I nailed Diedra Buck twice with water balloons. I’ll remember senior year, because it seemed like the class, as a whole, got closer.”

Francisco Figueroa

“I am really lucky to have a great group of friends who make everyday memorable, but by far, my senior year has been the most memorable.”

Alexis Freeze

“My most memorable moment at School of the Arts would have to be Senior Spirit Week! It was the most fun I’ve had with everyone at school! But, really everyday is memorable. Someone is always doing

something funny!”

Raven Gadsden

“My most memorable moment was in 8th grade when Mrs. Johnson’s air conditioner broke and no one could fix it. We protested by bringing a blow up pool and having a pool party in the parking lot behind the vocal room!”

Katie Grantham

“My most memorable moments include my discrete math class, prom, junior ring ceremony, and senior thesis.”

Tara Grantham

“I remember when that kid from visual arts fell asleep while sitting on a stool and ended up falling off.”

Rachel Harris

“There isn’t one moment. Funny things happen every day. I’ve had good times.”

Kellan Heatley

“I remember the moment right after my solo senior thesis piece, when the audience was standing and clapping at what I had accomplished. At that moment, I knew that my work had paid off.”

Patsy Heltzer

“My most memorable moment would definitely have to be the senior dancers reenacting ‘The Wiz’ backstage at the Hannahan Performance! So funny...”

Madison Henry

“The Lake Logan Creative Writing retreat during Junior year.”

Lauren Hester

“My most memorable moment at SOA was in 9th grade when we did the singing test in vocal.”

Devon Heyward

“I don’t have a specific moment as much as I do a process. Creating my senior thesis group piece with Stephanie, Robert, and Jordan Price! It was a growing process in many respects. My relationships with my group members grew as we were getting together every possible moment of the week. My compassion for the homeless increased exponentially. I also grew as an actor, being forced to play so many roles that were so different from what I was used to! Thanks Mrs. Link and Team Talent!”

Preston Hogue

“My most memorable moment at School of the Arts was at our dance performance backstage: the Old, New, Borrowed and Blue performance. “

Michael Horlback

“That time when that thing happened and you were laughing so hard you were crying, or when you almost cried tears of joy. Good times.”

Lamar Hunter

“I can’t pick one memory, not because nothing was memorable, but everything will be one great memory all together.”

Aubrey Isaacson

“It is really hard to narrow it down to just one moment. But I guess my most memorable moment would be going out into the audience after the last night of ‘The Wiz.’ It was so exciting, because a little girl came up to me and hugged me and I felt like a Disney princess.”

Candice Jenkins

“Taylor Evans and I would always make a trip to the snack machines every day at the end of Ms. Marine’s P.E. Class. One day as we were walking, Taylor’s skirt kept getting caught by the wind and her sleeve then began to fall down. This was just the start of the ongoing inside joke between Taylor and me of her wardrobe malfunctions.”

Charlotte Jenkins

“When Kenturah, Elisa, Donte, and I threw a surprise party for Ms. Benson, but she was stuck in New York. So the plan was to wait for Ms. Benson and save the cake until she came back but unfortunately it did not happen like that. The more we waited on Ms. Benson the more cake we ate. Eventually, when she finally arrived back to school there was only a little piece left. Sorry Ms. Benson.”

Sha-Ri Jenkins

“I don’t have any particular moments that stick out to me, but senior year was a year to remember. That’s one of the biggest memories that will stay with me forever. All the time spent with my friends and the people in my grade are full of memories and I’ll miss them all. June 6th and the week prior to that day will be one of the happiest times of my life, and that will stick me as well.”

Kalix Johnson

“In 9th grade, there was a gas leak across the street. When they announced it, Mr. Murray jumped on the desk with a lighter, threatened to burn the building down, & yelled, ‘If I go to Hell, I’m taking you all with me!’”

Darbie Keck

“I think my most memorable moment would be what happened just now in class! We went outside to watch an alternative assessment dance, and Jerry decided to do one too. So as he’s dancing (with SPIRIT FINGERS) he kicks Bradley’s phone, picks up Bradley, spins him around, comes up to Mrs. Olson, takes the lei off his neck, puts it on her, and Kurt (who was passing) yelled, ‘JERRY JUST LEI-D MRS. OLSON!’”

Caitlyn Kirkland

“It’s hard to choose, but the Chill, Grill, Chills are definitely in the top five.”

Rob Kleiman

“This whole year has been the most memorable year for me. I’ve grown so much closer with my thesis class than I would have ever imagined. They are all like a family to me. My thesis performances have all been especially memorable to me. Being up on that stage dancing my heart out, surrounded by friends and family, was an emotional, and (at times) unexplainable feeling. I wouldn’t trade it for the world.”

Tanya Lewandowski

“Tying my shoe in the first grade.”

Tony Linog

“Making a little film we call ‘The Creepy Chair!’”

Reilly Lovingood

“My most memorable moment at SOA was going to Barrier Island.”

Kenish Magwood

“My most memorable moment was our eighth grade trip to Sea World with Devon and Landon.”

Shakira Major

“There have been so many moments that I will not forget. If I had to choose one, I would say uploading our Senior Theses in Creative Writing. It was amazing watching the different emotions of a person finishing the writing they have worked on for so long and hard. I loved the feeling of everyone being together, jumping up and down and screaming as we were all there for each other finishing a huge accomplishment that we helped each other achieve.”

Shannon McNeillis

“My most memorable moment at SOA would be the entire Wiz experience because it gave me a chance to meet and connect with people that I probably wouldn’t see on a daily basis. In the end, we all got so close. It was hard to see it end.”

Quinterra Middleton

“In H French III with Mrs. Kovatcheva, we had to write, memorize, and present a poem in French. On the day of the presentations, the first person started to recite their poem, and I started fake crying and ran out of the room with a box of tissues. Coming in after about half a minute, I found that two other people, from seeing me, started crying. Mrs. Kovatcheva canceled the recitations because it clearly put too much stress on us. The funny thing was that I had both written and memorized my poem; it was about Macbeth, and it rhymed.”

Steven Moskoff

“There was never a moment at SOA that wasn’t memorable. All of the convocations, rainy days, funny class stories, old buildings and trailers, and many more things made every day an interesting day at SOA.”

Penelope Murray

“Singing Karaoke in the bar on the cello choir trip freshman year! ‘Ice, ice baby.’”

Andi Mussilwhite

“The most memorable moment at SOA for me was the first day of high school, when we could eat our lunches outside, and do whatever we pleased! Freedom! Another memorable moment was at the 8th grade graduation in the Black Box. There was a slide show of pictures from 6th to 8th grade, including the Washington D.C. and Barrier Island pictures.”

Amanda Nelson

“There are too many. I won’t even try to cheat myself to pick the best one.”

Amelia Nixon

“My 18th birthday/senior graduation party. The night of Saturday, April 18th is one I, and hopefully some of you, will remember forever.”

Joshua Norris

“Rock the SAT!” songs in Mrs. Marshall’s class, and prom on the boat last year, which caused a brouhaha (rock the SAT)! Also, Dr. Cusatis always saying, “Hey chum!”

SaNavia Paisley

“I will remember interrupting Ms. Olson’s class with Jerry, and freshmen year.”

Bradley Poplin

“RIP MIDS.”

Stephanie Popowski

“My most memorable moment was Junior Prom, because it was truly an amusing experience.”

Jordan Price

“When Mr. Murray asked our class, ‘What if humans were a little bit smaller and hawks were a bit bigger...would we still be here today?’”

Christopher Richardson

“My most memorable moment is Ms. Olson class and my crazy behind Visual Art class.”

Akeem Rivers

“There have been so many memorable moments. One of the most memorable moments would have to be when Charlotte Savage and I were introducing ourselves to everyone at the beginning of sophomore year. We were going around asking for high fives and when we introduced ourselves to Taylor Wentworth, he screamed and ran behind a tree.”

Pepi Rodriguez

“The 8th grade trip to Washington, D.C.! In my room with Jamill, Akeem, and Keith, Keith decided to complain about having to sleep in a chair, so the situation got a little confrontational, and before you know it I was holding a scolding iron to his face threatening to burn him, and he insisted on calling the cops, and I replied “I ain’t scared of the police, I’ll burn them too.”

Wilfred Rivers

“The first day I walked into SOA in sixth grade.”

Paul Runyon

“There are so many memorable moments I can’t think of one.”

Katie Safford

“My most memorable moment at SOA would have to be when I was in middle school and it had rained so much one day that we literally had a lake in the back of the school, and the upperclassmen went canoeing in it. I remember thinking to myself ‘that’s really sad, but only at SOA would something like this happen.’”

Ashley Sagan

“Mr. Reese.”

Kurt Sauer

“There are too many to name just one.”

Charlotte Savage

“The most memorable moment at SOA was backstage at the Old, New, Borrowed, and Blue performance.”

Nicollette Singleton

“In 10th grade, Mrs. Myers, our principal at the time, made an announcement: “Attention students, I have a very important announcement Taylor Evans has lost her book bag. It contains a textbook, a graphing calculator, and 2 binders. It was last seen in the high school vocal room. If found, return it to me” It was LOLROTF funny!”

Saray Smalls

“My most memorable moment was when I heard the final date for graduation.”

Skylar Spies

“My most memorable moments would get me in trouble if I listed them here, but I don’t think I could ever forget when someone canoed through Lake SOA or when Dana walked through the ditch & the water came up to her neck!”

Laura Stanger

“Breaking my leg in P.E.”

Brady Suit

“Now that I actually have to think about it I really don’t know... plus there are so many that I could name right now. I know it probably included my partners in crime Saray and Sha-ri, never a dull moment there.”

Kenturah Thomas

“I remember it all.”

Chrissy Thorne

“The first four-day week of school, during my Sophomore year, was disastrous. Everyday something awful happened: Patrick got locked in a cabinet, Katie got stabbed in the head, Taylor got a concussion, and the fire alarm went off for an hour.”

Anastasia Timina

“One of the most memorable things was watching the final performance of Big River from backstage. It was amazing to see all the effort and talent of the students combine to make such a great show.”

Laura Katie Vinson

“The Creative Writing field trip to Savannah.”

Samantha Watson

“The day when Mr. Murray taught me that the best way to life a long and healthy lifestyle is to breathe.”

Taylor Wentworth

“When my sister passed away and I came back to school a week later, everyone in the senior Creative Writing class joined together and gave me a teddy bear and a notebook full of personal letters to help me be strong. I will always remember that.”

Shanqua Sanders-West

“The time people kayaked across the lake in the parking lot.”

Julia Whirley

“Everyone running outside and screaming their heads off because exactly three snowflakes had fallen from the sky.”

Sam Whitley

“There are too many great moments for me to pick only one.”

Robert Widlowski

“My most memorable moment at SOA was being a Crow for the Wiz and looking like a fat, pregnant bird.”

Charles Williams

Kurt Sauer

Theatre



'The best story I can summon to attempt to depict SOA's true identity comes from an encounter with none other than...

Mr. Davis. A friend-- who we will leave nameless --and I had grown bored during some downtime in a particular elective (that just happens to involve computers and their technicalities) and hatched a scheme to skip off to the art room for some good, clean, class time Frisbee. Well, where we were, was wrong, what we were doin' was wrong, and when we were there, we shouldn't have been. Fortunately, our school's fool proof trouble detector fired up and locked in on us and in slightly over half an hour or so, Mr. Davis popped the fun balloon with his classic, "What are you boys doin' in here?" I attempted to conceal the disk behind my back, but it was too late. He had taken my game disk. We were facing a lot of trouble there, so we had to think quickly. I started off with some casual greetings, trying to buy us some excuse time. Just as I had

about used my last stall, my friend saved us. He busted out his newest painting and presented it to Mr. Davis, just as he was about to bring up the Frisbee. Lucky for us, Mr. Davis's strong passion for the arts and his intuitive ability to notice brilliance took over and he immediately forgot the Frisbee. Then the three of us discussed creative thinking, flaws among our society, and I believe Mr. Davis brought up pie. At the end of our heated conversation, I put on my best sad face and made a final plea for my Frisbee. Mr. Davis laughed and said, "Oh I'll give you your Frisbee but only because if I took it, you'd find a way to get it back. If I give it to you, I know you'll lose it on a building or to a tree, so it's really a better punishment." We had been graced once again my Mr. Davis's unsurpassable compassion for his students. Maybe we were in the wrong, being out of class and all, or maybe the system was wrong for putting us in class. Regardless, Mr. Davis's ability to see into his students and put himself in our shoes increased my already high respect and admiration for him in ways nothing else could do. That's S.O.A. And Since then, we have never skipped out to play Frisbee.....during computer tech.

Alexandra Danna

Dance



I believe that many adults look back on their middle and high school lives and do not think much of it, but I do not think that I will

feel the same way. The past seven years have been an emotional, intellectual, and social rollercoaster. School of the Arts took me in as an awkward sixth grader that did not have a clue what to expect and molded me into an individual with ambition and goals. It was at SOA where I realized my aspirations. It is in college, though, that I will begin to embark upon those dreams, but I believe I have already started to here at SOA. This is a school where individuality is nurtured and developed, and where

different is okay. While any middle or high school student faces hardship and "angst," I have encountered far better experiences that outweigh the bad. Whether it was watching in shock as Mr. Anderson chucked a trash can across the room at Madison, getting to cover Mr. Baker's trailer in skies and flowers, skeptically watching Grace sticking gum to a desk in Ms. Marshall's room, or seeing my classmates in Senior Thesis push the envelope in a piece to make a point, my time spent at School of the Arts will never be forgotten. Of all the classes I have taken in my years at SOA, Senior Thesis will by far have had the greatest impact on me. We have shared so much with one another, forming bonds like that of a family. We have put ourselves on the line and stretched each other to the limits. Each of my classmates has surprised, impressed, and most of all inspired me not only as a dancer and student, but also as a person.

Rachel Harris

Strings



School of the Arts has always had a sort of pizzazz about it. The students, the curriculum, heck, even the teachers are different from

any other school I've been to. At other schools they teach you the same thing and expect you to make it interesting yourself. Here everyone chips in their own unique personality to make this place what it is.

This school is a place of solace. It is a place to vent. There is rarely a dull moment here. If you look, there is always something going on. I guess that's why I've always liked being here with these people, who as you go along, help you in hard times and embrace you in joyous times.

Bottom line is, I've never seen a school like this and I probably never will again. However, if the students and teachers treat it right, hopefully it will grow even more. When I come back to SOA, I hope to see that happen.

Robert Kleiman

Theatre



The theatre program here is awesome. It has been one of the single most challenging and rewarding things that I have ever put

myself through. Granted, each major has its great qualities but I can not imagine attending SOA in any other fashion. In the theatre department I have turned

mistresses into monsters, served a dragon as a bureaucrat, written innumerable essays, owned General Motors during its golden age, explored homelessness, and done pulls ups on the bar whenever it has been set high. What can I say except: wow? I can sigh with relief that the craziness can stop, but I do not fret. I don't fret because throughout all of these years I have been in good company. Trust me, my fellow theatre majors understand the "toil and sweat" that our diplomas represent. I love you guys. And I can truly say.... SOA all the way!!

Charlotte Jenkins

Piano



Ms. Jane Marshall has most definitely had the largest impact on me at School of the Arts as a teacher. I remember being afraid

to go into her class because I was so self-conscious of my writing. I wrote for her to see if maybe my writing would be decent enough for her Honors English III class, before I made my decision. Entering her class junior year, she didn't just give me red marks on my paper and a failing grade like many past teachers. She gave me criticisms and compliments on parts of my writing.

Besides the occasional "see me" on my paper, I began to improve. What made the difference was her noticing that I needed help and she could help me. This year I have her for Teacher Cadet, and through all the off-topic moments our class has had she still loves us. She always takes into consideration how much I want to be a teacher and how important the class is to me so she makes sure to give plenty of feedback and help when I need it. She has been the most helpful teacher in anything I need help with. From English papers, college letters of recommendation, and even lesson plans, Ms. Marshall has been there. "Woe be unto me," had I of not taken her class, and I'm so thankful that I did.



Joshua Norris

You have grown into a young man that far exceeds any hopes or aspirations we had for you, and we love you tremendously and unconditionally.
Melinda S. Norris



Lauren Hester

Congratulations on your graduation. We have always been proud of the way you have excelled in everything you do.
We love you very much,
Gramps and Gran Gran



Raymond Caulder

We are very proud of you!
Remember to whom you belong.
Love always,
Dad & Mom



Reilly Lovingood

To my most wonderful gift in life- I congratulate you on a job well done. May you continue on a road of great success. Know when to have fun, but know when to study.
May Irish Eyes always shine upon you!
I love you more,
Mom



Aubrey Isaacson

I'm such a baby 'cause the dolphins make me cry. Oh there's nothing I can do, I only wanna be with you.
Love,
Katie



"And Aubrey was her name, A not so ordinary girl or name."
You'll always be extraordinary to us!
Love,
Mom, Dad, and Will



Marisa Dickson

From then to now... you've always been dancing in one way or another. Keep on dancing through life and never forget how much fun it is.



Sarah DiMuzio

Sarah,
SOA highlighted your courage, artistic spirit and strength of character. We know there are more great things to come!
With love,
Dad and Marcy



Taylor Wentworth

"Pull the strings"



Rachel Harris

You light up our lives with your artistic flair and compassionate spirit.

Congratulations on your graduation!

Love,
Daddy, Mommy, and Arthur



Katie Vinson

We are so proud of what you have accomplished. We know God has a wonderful future in store for you.

Love,
Mom, Dad, Andrew and Amy.



Taylor Dudley

Congratulations! We are so proud of you and love you very much.

-Mom, Dad and Sam



Shannon McNellis

Shannon, the secret of apples whispers from its core. Yours is gentle and beautiful (with a great smile and really long hair :-)). We are so proud of you! Congratulations, salutatorian! The world will be a better place as you teach our next generation.

Love,
Dad and Mom



Julia Whirley

Dearest Julia Emma: Independent musical euphonium player, lover of sweat-gilded galloping. May your dreams forever ride on as you graduate from SOA. From stick horse, to YCMA Daycare pony, to Elite Equines, to Rolex. May you follow your dreams forever down that path.

Love you,
Mom, Dad, Rebekah, Rachel



Madison Henry

Go confidently towards your dreams. Grab your STAR with courage, let it take you there and live the life you have always imagined.

Love,
Mom, Dad and Sissy



Catie Donnelly

Two jewels who have both learned "to be good without enchantment." Each one is adorable—but only one is graduating this year! We love you and are so proud of you, Catie, our jewel!

Love,
Mom, Dad, Michelle, and David (and Jewel and Tucker)



SaNavia Paisley

Congratulations to our shining STAR. Life is what you do with time, and all the goodness and grace inside of you. We are so proud of you. Make a beautiful life... the kind of life that God would want you to have.

We love you,
Mommie, Tisha, Tina and Tashana



Steven Moskos

Steven, you've always had your own way of looking at the world. We can't wait to see what you accomplish. We love you and are very proud of you.

Mom and Dad

Tara and Katie Grantham

Congratulations,

I'm very proud of you, and I hope you enjoy South Carolina. Just remember, UNC is the real Carolina!

Love you!

Avery

You have grown into very poised and talented young ladies. During a time of life that has many opportunities to get side tracked you have kept your focus on goals that will assure you more fulfillment and happiness in your future. Keeping God in your lives has and will continue to give you a sure foundation to build your lives. Keep your eyes on the goals you have already marched boldly toward. Keep growing and learning all that you can. Keep a place for all that is important in life. Thank you for being the wonderful daughters you have been. I pray for you each day.

- Jim

Congratulations! We consider it a blessing to have been able to watch you two grow from babies to lovely young women...Thanks for all the babysitting!

The Riddles

We are so proud of you girls, but Katelin is distraught because you will be gamecocks!

Love,

Jeff, Kathy, Katelin, Keira

Congrats! I'm so proud of the woman you have become. Please continue to lean on God and trust His plans.

(Phil 4:6-7)

Love,

Tracy

To my little sisters: I am happy to call you my sister's but truly blessed to call you my friends. Welcome to the SOA Alumni club! - Your Sissy

Remember God holds you on the palm of His hand. We're blessed to know you, and we love you. -Lynn, Bryan, Maggie and Wesley!

I really enjoyed the short time we had together in violin lessons. You always had such great attitudes, even when I made you do things you hated :) Best to you as you pursue bigger and better things!

Erika Blanco

Tara, So proud of you and Katie! Thanking God for my DOUBLE blessings and wish I there to share this special time!

Love, Grandma Wilma

Katie, Congratulations and best wishes to you and Tara! God gave me DOUBLE blessings and DOUBLE fun memories!

Love,

Grandma Wilma

Tara- you are beautiful inside and out. Your smile is contagious!

I love you,

mom

Katie- the way you shine from the inside out, makes people around you know how much you care. You are a true beauty.

I love you,

mom





Kimberly Jenkins

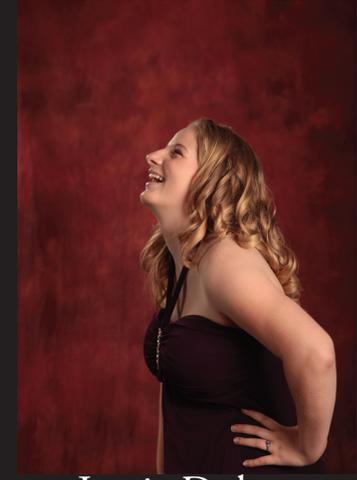
Congratulations to a wonderful, terrific and intelligent daughter who knows the value of a good education. Continue to soar towards your dream with passion, fortitude, and determination. Opportunities abound...just take advantage of them. Make a difference!

We love you!
Mom & Family



Serena Doose

From Beanie Baby Fan and Baby-Sitter Book Reader to Bearer of Harmonic Messages, it has been a joy to watch you grow to maturity. May your journey as an adult continue to be one of growth and harmony. Congratulations to Serena from all the Doose Family!



Jamie Dukett

Jamie, keep that smile. We are so PROUD of YOU! Hold your head high and always remember we LOVE you! You are the best. Congratulations!



Wilfred Rivers

Wilfred

I wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors. Always keep your faith, knowledge, and above all, your handsome personality.

Love, Granny Gwen

Wilfred

Good luck in your future endeavors. We are all so proud of you!

Love, Auntie Margarita, Uncle Dennis, Miles, & D.C.

Wilfred Rivers

Every challenge, an opportunity.

Every dream, a possibility.

Wishing you pride in your accomplishment and continued success in your future.

We've known you for many, many years and we've seen you grow into a young adult who has set examples for others.

Keep up the good work Graduate!

Congrats, your barbers for life

Blades Professional Barbering...2xposed

Who Would've Thought

Who would've thought a child so sweet

Always clean, always so neat.

Who wouldn't thought this boy to a man

Grew up and does the best he can.

Who would've thought after years of stress

Would lead into a future of much success.

Many have thought, we always knew

We tried to instill it, as you grew.

We are so proud of you Wilfred!

Love, Mom, Dad and KJ

Wilfred

Congratulations to a wonderful grandson. May God continue to bless you!

I'm so proud of you Wilfred!

Lots of love and luck

Granny

Wilfred

Always remember that greatness is not where we stand, but in what direction we are moving. We must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against

it. Congratulations and continue your quest to achieve greatness.

Uncle Leonard and Family



Lauren Hester

Congratulations, Lauren! I'm so proud of you.

I love you!

Mom

"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams..."

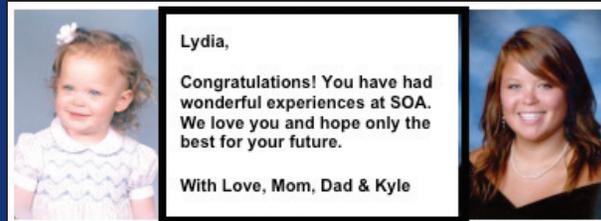


Dana Gilmore

Way to go Dana! We are so proud of you and wish you much success at TTC.

Love,

Mom, Dad, and Family



Lydia,

Congratulations! You have had wonderful experiences at SOA. We love you and hope only the best for your future.

With Love, Mom, Dad & Kyle

Taylor Ashley Evans

Taylor,

Although you are sad to leave this school that you love, you never have to leave your memories. SOA will forever be a part of your life.

We are so proud of you and the person you've become. The house will not be the same while you're at college next year. We will miss the beautiful music you play on the piano, the pictures you take and fill up our computer with and the sound of you and your sisters talking in your bedroom. But most of all we will miss seeing your sweet face each and everyday. We love you so much and are blessed to have you for our daughter.

Alexis Freeze

Alexis Eve,

I am very proud of you and your accomplishments in graduating from a top academic school.

Now save the planet!

Love,

Uncle Jimmie

Laura Stanger

Laura,

May you continue to travel with God in your life's journey that He would guide you to greatness.

Give Him the Glory!

Love, Mom

Amanda Nelson

Dance



Well, I guess I should start with my life as a 6th grader at SOA in 2002. This year was filled with drama all over the place! It was probably because we didn't really know each other too well and didn't know which

buttons to or not to push on each other. Everyone had their own clique. I had Ms. Boyd for math. While in her class sometimes she would yell, sometimes you would get frustrated and sometimes you would hear the ice cream truck go by. In 7th grade, there was the oh so fun trip to Barrier Island. We were able to bond as a class much more and talk with some classmates we usually did not see in classes. However, the best part of that year was the relaxation portion of Ms. Lovelace's class. Boy, could you come out happy and relaxed after her class, especially if you had her right after recess and lunch, like me. 8th grade was the best! The teachers were amazing and we, as a class, had a lot of fun. We went to Washington D.C. and learned a lot about our history and teachers. Next... 9th grade. Talk about FREEDOM and the feeling of authority to the middle schoolers. Cliques begin to be removed due to the mixtures of levels of classes and free lunch periods to roam around the beautiful campus. Mr. Orvin's

class is one that no one will forget...EVER! What is time? Why? Why not? 10th grade was the year where we had to get serious and down to business, where school work was concerned. With Ms. Bunch's Algebra 2 lessons, Mr. P.'s awesomely fun French III class, Ms. Colquitt's Biology class, AP World with Reese (Biscuits and Babies), and Bronk's ridiculous, but necessary, crack down on SAT and college work. Big thanks to Bronk, even though the class was ridiculous! Then, one day in 11th grade, a little quiet girl sat in to watch our dance class. It was a German exchange student who wanted to be in the dance major, but didn't have any experience at dance. We clung together at the hip. At first it was me teaching her dance moves, but turned into a friendship that will last a lifetime. No one will forget Charlotte's year and impact on SOA. What's left but this year...12th grade: The best year of my life. This year, the cliques disappeared and our class united to scream out "'09" anytime someone even mentioned the word "senior." We recognized that we have to grow up because, this is it! After this, we're out of here. We also recognized the importance of friendship and dependence. I loved every moment at SOA, even if I hated it at the moment. Every moment has made me the person that I am today and I have no regrets. I love you SOA and will remember you for a lifetime, plus.

Farewell from Ms. Pam

Applause would like say best wishes to Ms. Pam Whitley, a dear friend to us all and a first-rate teacher. Thank you to Ms. Pam for submitting this letter to Applause.

Goodbye Yellow Brick Road...(great name for a song)...How appropriate that is for my goodbye "note" to all of you here at SOA. The kids that know me...know me as Ms. Pam, Brianna Murray's assistant. Some of you may know me by knocking you upside the head with candy at lunch outside T-25, also known as the resource trailer, learning cottage, or the "hut". Yep, that was me. I enjoyed watching you go for the candy like you have never had any in your life. It was great fun! I have been so impressed with the students at this school that it just blows me away! It takes a special teen to put aside stuff that teenagers do, because you are so involved with school and your majors, there leaves little time for any thing else. Talk about building character! One day (trust me) you will look back and appreciate all the hard work you have put into your education. The talent at SOA is unreal! Talent is a God given thing (or Buddha, or whoever, or whatever

Supreme Being or alien being, you may or may not believe in). I remember my first walk down the hall in the fine arts building. I walked in the door and there to my right was piano music playing. I peeked in the window and saw this lovely young lady playing with all her heart and soul. Further down the hall I hear more music... a little more tempo. Was that a sax I just heard? Drum roll, please! Then I hear what I think is a clarinet. Whoa...sounds as if Kenny G. is... No can't be. I didn't think he was in town, but I swear I heard him, I promise. A few more steps and I come upon several pieces of art. Gee, these must have been done by professional artists for all to see. But, wait...NO Way!! These were done by seventh graders? I looked closer...YES WAY!! Cool! Then I turn the corner. Sounds of heaven and Fitz. Violins, violas, cellos...beautiful! It's gonna be really hard to leave this school. I was looking so forward to working with Dr. Price next year! Hang in there, girl! It'll be okay. There are so many of you that I will sorely miss. Dr. Cusatis, I will miss you because that gives me one less person to pick on. Someone please keep an

Aubrey Issacson

Creative Writing



It's impossible to explain what I've been taught at SOA in one essay. There isn't a single subject or idea that

I've had taught to me in a classroom that I'll carry throughout my life-- Geometry? Maybe. Iambic pentameter? Sure. Stoichiometry? Well, we'll see. The only thing that I'm absolutely sure about that I've learned here is what it means to be a family. Of course I've learned from my parents and siblings what a caring family should be, but SOA has given it an entirely new meaning. It's a type of love that can't be understood unless you experience it firsthand. It's seeing the same people on a day-to-day basis and being okay with it. It's holding the door for someone you don't know, but smiling and saying 'hi' just the same. It's caring for a group of people, not because you have to, not because it's the right thing to do, but because you connect with them and want to stay that close with them. When I talk to friends that go to other high schools, I hear these insanely

dramatic stories over ridiculous things, about how so-and-so hates this person, and how that guy beat up so-and-so for whatever reason. Those things come as such a shock for me, not because I've been sheltered or anything, but I have to stop and realize, "Wait... people at other schools don't love each other the way we do?" Someone asked me the other day if I was ready to leave. I decided that yes, I'm definitely ready to leave high school, but I'm not ready to leave SOA. I can't lie to anyone-- I'm scared of going to college, mostly due to the fact that there won't be the closeness I've had for the past seven years here. There won't be Lamar to sit next to me in English and giggle at everything. There won't be Mr. Davis to wave at me every morning and afternoon in the parking lot. There's too much to miss. Receiving a SOA education has been an honor; not only for the teachers and the subject matter, but because I'm proud that I've been accepted somewhere in a way that most people won't ever get to know. I've been taught what it feels like to have all of the support, respect, and love you could ask for.

eye on him for me. I'm afraid that with him being the workaholic that he is, intervention may become a necessary thing. Mrs. Hutchinson and Mrs. Bright (you, not Mike's mother) have been my roomies for these last two years and for three women to share the same small sardine can for any bit of time without bloodshed is a pretty good thing. I truly felt that we had already known each other and it was not like we had just met. We just clicked. Love you two and will always be there for you if you ever need me! Just call! The kids that have been involved with these two are blessed for knowing them and working with them. I will sadly miss all their students and I care about every one of them. To all the other students in student in student land..."HOLLA".... YOU'RE GREAT!! I have enjoyed working with those teachers that I worked with and those I did not, but got to know. Kudos to Mrs. Bronk. You all really have a tough job and you certainly don't get enough credit for the hard work and the time you spend on your job, which does not end at 3:30, as some may think. I only wish the best for you in the coming years and your new campus.

Ms. Gail, Ms. Sylvia, Ms. Debbie, Ms. Mullins (Betty Boop), Nurse Huff...you girls ROCK and this school could not make it without you!! Mr. Reinhart and Ms. Cromartie had some big shoes to fill and have done a great job in doing just that. Mr. Davis...You are "The Ace". Mr. Dawson, you always made my day! You are a special man. Keep prayin' for me. You know I need it. To the rest of the faculty and staff that make SOA what it is I say, "Bravo, job well done". Finally, to you Brianna. Words will never be able to express how much I will miss you and care about you. I have known you since you were that cute little kid in elementary school to the lovely young woman you have grown into. We will continue, hopefully, to keep in touch. Your mom has a seat ready for me at your graduation, and you bet I'll be there. You have made me so proud! Thanks for making me read the "Twilight" series. I have never read so much in such little time. In closing, I would like to say, au revoir (that's for you "Mother Superior" from "Sista My Bad"), adios, goodbye, see ya, TTFN, L8r, hasta la vista baby and all that other stuff and just know that I have enjoyed my time

Brady Suit Band



As my years at SOA finally come to an end, I stop and realize that I am a totally different person now than I was four years ago first entering the doors of our building. This school has been, without a shadow of a doubt, the most influential aspect of my life. I've grown to learn and respect that nobody should ever judge a book by its cover. This school possesses more talent and passion than any other school that I have ever seen or will probably encounter. We all know that the average Joe would drive up to the front of our school and probably want to turn around for the fear of his life. Not me. I have grown to love everything about this school no matter what appearance it has from the outside. Nobody but a true SOA student can ever understand that concept. Sure we are not the perfect school, but I would surely consider us one of the "better" schools in South Carolina. I am truly going to miss everything about SOA: the flooded sidewalks and parking lots after a famous North Charleston monsoon, the countless times our water has to be turned off, the lack of parking spaces, the fight for sidewalk space between classes, and everything in between. I am also going to miss the dedicated arts and academic faculty here at SOA. If it weren't for my teachers, especially the 12th grade faculty and Mr. Kerr, I would not be anywhere near where I am today.

Skylar Spies Visual Arts



By 2019, I would want to have reached some of my career goals of becoming a certified interior designer, have had years of career experience, and have many contacts in my career field. In 2019, I hope to be working for a large interior design firm, where I deal with large projects that could possibly cause me to travel to different cities. On the side,

They have all taught me so many things that I am going to carry with me for the rest of my life. Not just facts that South Carolina requires them to teach us from a book, but important lessons on life and growing up as a functioning member of society. I am forever grateful for their dedication to help us succeed not only in school, but in life. Most specifically, I am going to miss the reason that I am at SOA: Band. Mr. Kerr is one of the most intelligent people I have met in my entire life. He constantly amazes me with how much knowledge he possesses. I couldn't begin to go into detail on how much I have learned from him. For that, I am very fortunate to have been able to study under him for these past four years. Apart from Mr. Kerr, I am going to miss each and every individual in the band program. I've made so many good friends and created so many close bonds with others just from that one class. The comradery and bond shared amongst us is something that can never be surpassed by one group. That is, without a doubt, going to be the hardest thing to let go. It is a bittersweet ending leaving SOA and saying goodbye is never an easy thing. However, life goes on and we are all destined for bigger and better things. I would like to leave you all with an Irish blessing: "May the road rise up to meet you, may the wind be ever at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face and the rain fall softly on your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the hollow of his hand." Peace out SOA, it has been one heck of a ride. '09!!!

I hope to start pursuing my overall career goal of managing my own interior design firm.

I intend to make this all happen by continuing on the path that I am on right now. The first step after graduation is to attend Winthrop University so I can be a part of the only accredited interior design program in South Carolina. Then upon graduating from Winthrop, I plan to pursue the difficulties of becoming a certified interior designer which would set me on track for my goals for the year 2019.

Charles Williams Vocal



There is something about this school that is really off. Something that I felt the first time I came to SOA in ninth grade and never felt at any other school I have been to. After pondering for four years about this unique essence of SOA, I finally realized that it was the people who surround me everyday. Seriously, all the teachers are really goofy from the overly pizzazzful Mr. Rogers to the overly zealous Mr. Smyth to the overly organized Ms. Colquitt. And the students of SOA are even goofier! Yet, these goofy students are the one aspect that made my high school experience worthwhile and what I will probably miss the most.

When I came to SOA in ninth grade, I didn't know what to expect. I knew

absolutely nobody except the few I went to middle school with. I heard stories of the awkwardness of SOA, and I was scared out of my mind of the unknown. That's why I was really quiet; I had to observe first and figure out who I would be dealing with. However, what I observed was a family just like my own. A family that lies, gossips, teases, and also laughs together, and encourages each other. School was like going to one of my dysfunctional family reunion everyday and I enjoyed every second of it.

Usually whenever I leave a school, I cannot be more excited to leave my classmates behind and move on with life, but this year is different. I'm going to miss all of these SOA goofballs. To Shakira, Candice, Alecia, Devon, Landon, Craig, Lindsay, Quinterra, Shaniqua, Sam, Taylor, and Elissa and all the rest of the characters in our school I truly love you guys to death and only pray that I meet people as wild as you all at Howard University.

Chris Benson Band



SOA is a great place. There are no boundaries when it comes to groups of people like there are at other schools. There are no divisions, just everyone hanging out with whoever, no matter how different. We are all like one family that knows everyone's business. Even though that is annoying sometimes, other times can really help. At SOA I feel like I'm a family member and not some number that has to wear an I-D to be recognized. Here at SOA I know that others have my back and would jump through hoops to help me out.

Just being at SOA has made my high school and even middle school days survivable. I have learned many trades from playing an instrument to blowing a straw like a slide whistle from people that if I went to a bigger school would not have probably given the time of day. Through the many years I have attended SOA I feel like I have grown as a person from 6th grade when I was shy to now where I will carry on a conversation with any random person walking by. SOA has helped me grow not only mentally but as a person, friend, and family member. I am very grateful to have been given this opportunity to go to a school like no other around. SOA has truly been my home away from home.

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<p>Angel Oak Eye Center 2875 Maybank Highway • Johns Island Phone: 843.559.5333 E-Mail: DrBohac@AngelOakEyeCenter.com Hours: Mon-Fri 9-6 • Sat by Appointment</p>	

Hannah Riddle

Vocal



My senior year of high school has been so full of memories that I had a hard time deciding what to write about. Because this has been my first and last year at SOA,

I tried to think about what has had the greatest effect on me during my time at this school. I quickly realized that it has always been the people here who have had such a positive influence on me. The people of SOA are what make our school so unique and the reason why I love it so much.

From my first day at SOA, I was shocked at how friendly the students were. I was pretty nervous starting at a new school for my senior year, but the students at SOA put me at ease right away. When I went into my homeroom on the first day of school, I was greeted by kind students who wanted to introduce themselves and get to know me. In every class after that I met new people until soon I was well acquainted with almost everyone in my senior class and countless other students. All these students made me feel at home in this new school and I even made some friends whom I will probably keep for the rest of my life.

The teachers at SOA have all greatly surprised me as well since I came to the school. They are dedicated to teaching the highest quality of education and provide each student with the

Shannon McNellis

Creative Writing



On the first day of school in 6th grade, we had to describe ourselves in one adjective that began with our first names. "Shy Shanequa," "Clever Catie,"

and "Funny Francisco" were some of the names that were created. Over the years I have met great friends who all have some unique qualities that constantly amaze me. People like Anastasia have unbelievable talent. Other friends like Dorothy astonish me with their kindness. I appreciate Lauren's perfect understanding, and Penelope's ability to make me smile. I love Catie's strength and intelligence, Serena's dependability, and Chris R.'s individuality. However, as I began to know this group of people, my senior class, I have learned the depth of each one of them. Not anyone in our class can fit into simple adjectives and names like "Shy Shanequa," and "Clever Catie." It would be impossible to

find individual help he or she needs. I have realized the passion our senior class teachers like Mr. Brehm and Dr. Cusatis have towards preparing us for our college years ahead. I have been amazed by how readily a teacher like Mr. Smyth would provide me with the recommendation letter to help me get scholarships for college. Of course, I have been overwhelmed with gratefulness for my major teachers, Mr. Rogers and Ms. Slenk. They have taught me so much about the music and have only helped increase my passion for this art. Throughout every step of my year at SOA my teachers have encouraged me towards creativity and excellence inside and outside of the classroom.

By participating in extracurricular activities at school, I obtained an even better appreciation for the kinship of SOA students and teachers. When I was able to have a role in SOA's production of *The Wiz*, I got a close-up look at the dedication teachers have to making school fun despite the hard work involved. Also, I met students from all different majors. In fact, some of my best friends this year are in completely different majors. This community spirit at SOA brings all the students together and is truly unique to our school.

The SOA family is truly astounding and has had such an impact on my life. I feel incredible privileged to have been a part of this school and hope I've been able to give back a little as well. To the people who have made my time here so amazing I am forever grateful!

find people like this anywhere else. Being with a small group of people for seven years has made me realize what makes people so unique, and I love learning people's quirks, talents, and flaws that make them who they are. My favorite thing is being surprised by a person's complexity and unpredictability. I have learned at SOA to appreciate individuality by befriending so many very different people.

When we were accepted to the school, we were told we were selected because of our "creativity." I always felt like I was a mistake, a flaw in the system because I could never feel this creativity they said I had. However, as time went on I began to know that creativity does not mean you feel special, it means you have the ability to create something new. I have learned to look at the creativity in others and with the help of my friends, find the creativity in myself.

No matter how cliché it may sound, the people of this school are responsible for the school's success and personality, and I would like to thank everyone for the best High School years possible.

Jordan Price

Theatre



Thank God! I finally will have accomplished one of the biggest steps in my life in little over a month. I can still see myself walking on to the SOA campus for the

first time. It seemed such a long ways to go from ninth to senior year but now (at some moments) I wish time would slow down just a little bit. I see a bright future ahead of me if I follow these ingredients for success: put God first! Dream, ask questions, and go after what I want no matter what it takes, and be open to learn always, never run in the direction of trouble, don't spend major time with minor people and try to make a difference in someone's life. Oh!! And I can't forget one of daddy's favorites on the list is to enjoy free things first then spend your money later (never turn down free food). I know it is a short list but you can't expect me to give you it in its entirety then everyone would know my secret. Besides what is so fun about having things handed to you instead of experimenting with something and having the feeling of accomplishment after you figured it

out. I remember when I was in third grade and in class we made a list of all things that we wanted to happen for ourselves and even then I dreamed big and I still continue to do so now. By the year 2019 I will have already completed undergrad school at the University of South Carolina Upstate, grad school and settled into a career that allows me to help people (plus it pays good so I can buy my mommy a silver Chrysler.) I would be married and living in a house looking out towards the water. I will be able to travel during the summers (one of those trips I will finally get daddy to go on a cruise with the family) and ready to start a family with my husband. Also I will be starting construction for my paradise resort that I want to open in Florida. This is just a start of all the things I see God can make happen in my life.

I've learned from how fast my high school ride has quickly went by that during my future steps I will continue to enjoy every moment. I truly did enjoy going through every bit of it, including the good and the hard times. I hope I will still have the love and support of my family (love you mommy and daddy!!!!) relationships with the teachers I have become close with and the friends that I have made at SOA. I going to make myself and you all proud!

Katie Safford

Visual Arts



Since the beginning of senior year everybody has been saying how excited they are to go off to college but I am perfectly content with our ghetto school and the wonderful friends I

have made here. Don't get me wrong, I am eager to go experience the "college life" but as graduation is nearing, I am beginning to realize how much I will miss SOA. For the past seven years, SOA has been a second home to me; I have made the best of friends and I know that when summer rolls around I will be truly sad that I have to leave our unique and extraordinary school. I think the thing that I will miss the most about

SOA is the environment. I feel that as an arts school we are introduced to many different types of people which allows us to be more open and accepting of others. At SOA we have learned to celebrate the uniqueness that makes each person exceptional. Instead of mocking someone because they don't follow the current trends, we celebrate that person that doesn't conform and look just like everyone else. I feel that at SOA we strive to learn about what makes each person who they are. Although it took me a while to realize, SOA has taught me to just be myself. This year I feel that I have opened up and learned to stop caring what others think of me. By being myself, I have become more confident, which has allowed me to make more friends. If there is anything I will miss about SOA it is the people and the sense of community.

Vickrum Tipnis

Band



In the year 2019, I hope to be finished with my service obligation to the U.S. Navy and I hope to be enrolled in SEAL training. The way I intend to make that happen is by staying on the course I have already chosen: get my education at the United States Merchant Marine Academy, serve for six years in the Navy and enroll in SEAL training. If that fails, I will serve in the Navy for as long as I am capable of doing so. And if that fails, I will serve in the U.S. Merchant Marines.

Katie Vinson

Creative Writing



Looking back on the seven years I've spent at SOA, I can think of numerous teachers who I connected with on a personal level and learned a lot from. However, four teachers in particular stand out. The first that comes to mind is Ms. Miles, my creative writing teacher. Ms. Miles has encouraged me, critiqued me, and motivated me to turn what was just a hobby into something I couldn't imagine living without. But more than that, she has taken a personal, involved interest in my life and I feel confident that I will keep in touch with her after graduation. She, along with the rest of the senior creative writing class, have been my support group since sixth grade and have kept me focused on becoming a better writer despite what may be going on in my life. My School of the Arts experience would have been much less inspiring and enjoyable without her.

I owe my interest in and love of biology to Ms. Colquitt, who taught me Marine Biology as a freshman and Biology I as a sophomore. Ms. Colquitt's class was always engaging, the material was presented in various comprehensive ways, and Ms. Colquitt's passion for the subject was what truly made the classes interesting. She was

also always available to answer questions and discuss science topics outside of class. I came to her numerous times at the beginning of my senior year to talk about a Biology 101 class I was taking at Trident Tech, and Ms. Colquitt was always willing and able to help me. Easily one of the most challenging classes I've had to take would be Honors English 2, taught by Ms. Bronk. The class was demanding and extremely comprehensive, but Ms. Bronk never advanced until the class understood the subject fully. During the course of the year, Ms. Bronk taught me how to write a research paper, use MLA, read and understand poetry, and take thorough notes when reading. After taking her class, I was a much better student with a much greater interest in literature.

Last, but definitely not least, is Mr. Orvin. Of all the teachers I've had, Mr. Orvin has taken the most interest in my personal life and has always been supportive of me academically. He was always willing to help me in any way possible, filling out Scholarship applications and allowing me to study in his classroom. His friendship has helped make School of the Arts such a comfortable place to learn for me.

In fact, the friendships I've developed with both students and teachers are what I will miss most about School of the Arts. The unique environment made it easy to learn and listen, as well as further myself as a writer and student.

Stephanie Popowski

Theatre



I feel like my four years at SOA are divided in half. My experience at SOA freshman and sophomore years were completely different than my junior and senior year. It's almost as if I went to a completely different school going into my junior year. I came into SOA with one good friend, Maggie Mallard, we attended Mason Prep together. Maggie and I quickly befriended Sylvie Baele, Daniel McKnight, and Ian Gwinnup...of course y'all probably don't know who these people are because most of them left after sophomore year. With the exception of my theater class I have to be honest and say I didn't necessarily like SOA as a whole until my junior year. Sylvie left after freshmen year, leaving Daniel, Maggie, Ian and I. The only thing I enjoyed about SOA was the four of us and outside of that I couldn't wait to get out. Though we hardly had classes together we would go eat lunch in Mr. Reese's class, hanging out every single day of every

weekend...one might say we were inseparable. I did have many other great friends at SOA, but I can honestly say I didn't learn to fully appreciate their friendships until later.

Then my "three amigos" decided they were not coming back after sophomore year...one went to Ashley Hall, one to James Island, and one to Wando...I didn't know how I was going to survive my junior year without them. I was shockingly surprised how much more I began to appreciate what SOA had to offer after my comfort people left. I became even closer with so many of my friends here and began to value the education in the academics and the arts that I was receiving. Today, I wouldn't have traded my experience at SOA for anything. Even though I am not majoring in theater at George Washington University in the fall I know what I have learned will help me in whatever career I choose. The friends I have made at this school are key to who I am today and I think I would have been a completely different person without them. So if you are thinking you cannot wait to get out of this school, just wait and like me you will learn to appreciate not only the education but the diverse, great people you will come across if you just leave your comfort zone.

Kellan Heatley

Band



Trying to reflect on one aspect of my time at SOA is like trying to shoot the stem off an apple at 2000 yards with a BB gun: it could take forever and you still might miss. SOA isn't a school. Schools make you think you're learning something while your will to be different is broken down bit by bit. I didn't come to SOA until freshman year. In fact, I auditioned the first day of school, after spending two weeks in a public high school. Things were so different, I was shell shocked. It took me a couple of days to realize that I had no reason to be startled. I was finally where I could learn, rather than be "educated". I went back to my old school, shadowed a friend of mine for a day. It was kind of creepy. There weren't students or teachers, just people being herded around to match a schedule. Everything was protocol and rules. No understanding, no real human feel to it. I guess that's the best aspect of SOA, the fact that it's alive. SOA isn't a school, but a mentality. It's different for everyone, because it changes. Maybe that's why it's so hard to explain SOA. For me, it was open. Yes there was a schedule, yes

there were rules, but my time here has felt more inviting, more welcoming than a public school. It's also been more fun. I've never had a day when something funny or cool didn't happen. One of the funnier ones was the time Vickrum got stuck on the roof. Someone threw a frisbee on top of the dance studio in the middle of campus, and we were all tired of not being able to get them. So we jimmy-rigged a ladder, Vickrum climbed up, and couldn't get back down. When Mr. Davis saw him, all he had to say was "Well, have a nice day". Another was the first grub on the green. Nick's name got called to hit the piñata, and blindfolded, dizzy, with a piece of pizza in his hand, he destroyed not only the piñata, but also the wooden stick. The ensuing madhouse was awesome. I love the attitude that everyone has. That attitude is what makes great moments happen so often. One day after school during my junior year, I was sitting in my car waiting to leave, when someone next to me started they're car. They revved their engine to get it warmed up. As a joke, I revved mine. Then someone else did, and another person, and another after that. It spread like wildfire until almost everyone was in on it. The administrators just smiled and shook their heads. I'm fairly certain that at any other school, we'd have gotten written up. Things like that helped me survive school. That is my favorite thing about SOA: Good Times...

ShaniQua Gaie

Band



My years at SOA were full of everything any typical student would have plus more. I've made so many great memories and friends here that it would be crazy if I didn't say that if I had the chance to do it all again, the same way, I totally would. I've made so many friends and long lasting relationship with people I can't see myself being without. Jamill: Well, where do I start? Hmmm... We've been friends for 7 years now and you know everything about me (or at least what I tell you). I think this year was our best year though. We actually made our senior year worth something. I mean, we freaking choreographed a dance and performed at Winter Formal!! How much more awesome could that be? Anyway, through all of that and everything else, you made my year hella special. So, thanks, and I love you. Radda, Radda!! Kalyx: 7th grade, the year I met you, bud! I had no idea who you were and what you were doing here but for some reason I liked you anyway. You rock my socks and knock my boots (LOL)! We've

gotten close and we've drifted apart, but I think through it all, we're closer than ever. It sort of sucks though because we're both going to different colleges, but we'll totally keep in touch (I'll actually be the one dialing the number this time). I love you, Kake-Mix.

Zach(ariah): Everything I'm gonna say, you probably already know. Sophomore year at band camp I saw you and I just couldn't get my eyes off of you (you're hot). Then when school started, you were in my English, Geometry, and Symphonic band classes. I still remember that day that Ms. Cobun put us in the same group and I sat next to you. I just couldn't stop smiling. Then, Kalyx finally told you what was up and you asked me out. And now 3 years later, here we are. We're still together and everything's been great. I fall deeper in love with you everyday. And ever since that incident I cherish everyday and every conversation I have with you like it's my last just because you never know what's going to happen. I'm so proud of everything you've done for yourself and for me. Love forever and always, Button (LOL).

Now I'm off to college to meet new friends and have new experiences. But I will always make sure to keep my old friends as close as possible so that they never go away.

Lamar Hunter

Band



“Life is like a box of chocolates... you never know what you’re gonna get”... The day I got my acceptance letter was the day my life changed for the better. The value of an SOA education is second to none. Where else can you learn to smile and laugh when you make a 27 on a quiz? Teachers like Mr. Murray and Mrs. Bronk and Dr. Price taught me fundamental skills that will stay with me for the rest of my life. It is one thing to know the formula, but you are smart when you understand where the formula comes from and how to use it. That skill can be applied to life. People can tell you how to live your life, but it is not until you fully understand yourself and how you fit into the world.

Other courses teach you random facts and activities that seem useless but will come in handy 20 years from now. When the question was posed, “can you see the moon-walking bear?”, I knew how to respond correctly. When I was asked to learn the ins and outs of PowerPoint

because this would be the basis of a website, I jumped to the challenge and grabbed it by the horns. I took it upon myself to become an entrepreneur and make pipe cleaner glasses. Even though I did not make the glasses for profit, I did however start a short epidemic of random pipe cleaner glasses and necklaces for about a week. This was not taught in a course but taught in the hallways and during free-time. Learning does not only take place in the classroom. By watching TV I learned the call the announcer guy from Spongebob made when introducing the Krabby patty. Once again, I took it upon myself to share this call with my fellow peers. The words, “bap peeduh bop bop beeduh bopee dop tee duh bop ee duh bop top beop ahhhhhh...” also was not taught in a classroom, but the classes gave me the confidence to trademark some of these random things I do.

The educational value of an SOA education is not as important as the social value. Your social skills are honed and nurtured as you progress through each grade. It is only when you decide to apply yourself that the value of the education will not be question. In the words of captain planet, “the power is yours.”

Morgan Lindsey Stewart

Band



To start off, I have to say that School of the Arts has had a huge impact on my life, quite possibly the greatest impact. I remember starting out school in the sixth grade knowing no one and making fast friends with Katie Safford and we remain close even after seven years. Throughout my years at school of the arts I have made some extremely close friends that will hopefully last through college and on into my adult life. I look at the people I have met and lived with throughout middle and high school as more than just a close knit group of friends, but rather more of

a large dysfunctional family. While the campus isn’t really the most impressive thing ever, I will truly miss the raging rivers that run through the campus and the moldy hallways. In reality though it’s really the people that make the school what it is. School of the Arts is really where I learned most of what I know about myself and leaving this will definitely be a very difficult thing for me. Graduation is kind of a bittersweet subject in my eyes; while I will be moving on to a new part of my life, I will also be leaving behind one of the best times of my life. Walking away from this school after seven years will probably be one of the most difficult things for me to do, but I have memories that will surely last throughout my life.

Leah Wilson

Theatre



My first day at SOA was on August 21st, 2004. I was freshman and I was terrified. I thought this school was huge! I couldn’t find any of my classes and I didn’t know a soul. I remember I had to run from building to building dirt pile to dirt pile and...trailer...to trailer. It was a different experience coming from little old Blessed Sacrament. It didn’t help that everybody seemed to know everybody. I felt like I was the only new person at the school. I can remember walking around and hearing people saying to each other, “You remember last year, you remember last year when...” I hated it! But then I came to school the next day and I don’t know what happened but I had a significantly better day and from then on I LOVED SOA! It happened so fast. I think it was because of the people I began to meet. Stephanie Popowski I would have to say was the first to befriend me. We were both new and once we started “conversating” we never stopped! I’m proud to say she is one of my best friends to this day. My freshman and sophomore years I think I met the most people in my life...and I LOVED that too. I’m such a social bug, I remember freshman year I met my other best friend Jasmine Smalls. I remember thinking to myself in theatre class she would never be my friend, (we were such opposites) but that thought changed really quick when I realized I how many classes I had with her, my favorite in ninth grade being Mr. Orvin’s. We had so much fun during this class! Me, her, and Keem! Man I love him too. Keem is another best friend that I met at SOA. My friend making didn’t stop there. Sophomore year in Mrs. Matthews’ class I became close with two more individuals. Michael Horlback aka my Muku and Ericka King. These two along with Keem made French class a blast. I loved to come to second block on A-days because I KNEW I would get a good laugh in by the end of the day...and of course my work done as well. French was not the only class I loved sophomore year. Mr. Reese’s class definitely fell in that “I love this class” category. I simply loved this class because I felt like I learned alot. Mr. Reese is also

an awesome person and a very encouraging teacher, which made it easy to learn. My junior year was also blessed by an awesome encouraging teacher as well, Dr. Price or as my Chemistry Buddy for Life Jamill would call her Dr. V.Price. She was the best teacher I’ve ever had. Her encouragement is party how I got through junior year. Kudos to her. Junior year was also when I won Prom Princess. Man that was cool! THANKS GUYS! And now to the good part...SENIOR YEAR. It definitely wasn’t a walk in the park like most people say it was, but I definitely had some good times that rolled through. First off I think that my theatre class is what helped me get through this year. They are seriously like brothers and sisters to me now and I love all of them. Speaking of theatre I really enjoyed my senior thesis that I wrote, directed, and performed, *Nevaeh*. I was very pleased with the turn out and I’m glad so many people enjoyed it...thanks again if you came to see it. This was one of my biggest achievements at SOA. Big thanks to Raymond, Larissa, and Preston for jogging my thought process. The Wiz was also a very memorable part of this year. It was A LOT of tough work but it was worth it. It was a ton of fun and I became close with so many people because of this play, like Pepi and so many others. Some of these cool kids also made Mr. Baker and Mrs. Hammet’s class a blast for me. Oh and I can’t forget Mrs. Alvanos’s class. Well I don’t want to say too much but it was a blast as well. Landon you’re the best. “Twinkle, twinkle, little star...A, B, C, D, E, F, G” Good times. And now for the not so fun but I suppose very beneficial part of this year. Honors Econ and Gov. Well all I can say is I TRIED to believe what Mr. Brehm believes. “Grades don’t matter.” Pssh. Yeah right. Enough said about that class. PS: Even with all the wonderful 70’s on EVERY test, I still love you Mr. Brehm. But last and certainly not least SOA is the reason why I met my bestest friend in the whole entire world Courtney Nicole Richardson. This girl has become far more than a best friend. I would most definitely consider her next to family. I love her to death and she is and ALWAYS will be my best friend. There’s too much to say about those memorable times so that’s about on SOA experience!

Marisa Dickson

Dance



Something I can say with one hundred percent confidence is that this school has left a great impression on me. The memories I've had here I will never forget. This school and my fellow classmates have helped me to grow into the person I am today. If it wasn't for SOA, I don't know where I would be right now.

Well sixth grade was a pretty rough year I must say, and even though I thought about leaving I am so glad I stuck it out because it was all worth it! I always think about how different my life would have been if I left and went to a regular school, and it makes me feel grateful that I stayed. Seventh grade was a pretty good year especially Barrier Island and crawling through pluff mud for the first time ever! Eighth grade, my first year as a dance major and I loved the difference! It also was an eventful year full of trips and crazy lunches that I always looked forward to. Ninth grade, the first year without teachers following you around which is always more entertaining. Tenth grade was a fun year; I'll never forget those mornings in Mr. Clark's class! Then

eleventh grade, with even more privileges, was my first year having Mr. Murray as a teacher (which is always an eventful experience). I'll never forget the quote he repeated everyday without fail, "A day without homework is a day without sunshine!" Lastly senior year, I've never felt closer with my fellow classmates and hope it stays that way with the years to come. I've learned a lot at this school but I think the most important thing is to just be your self. I love that I can look to my peers for advice instead of worrying about them judging me; this applies especially in Senior Thesis. From the beginning we were taught to learn how to trust and support one another. If it were not for that class, I would not have been able to truly let my guard down and be myself. Before I end this essay I would like to thank everyone that has inspired me or helped me get to where I am now: so thank you mom for always supporting me in my crazy dream, my family for giving me confidence to go for what I want, CYC for opening my eyes to what I truly love to do, Alex for being such an amazing friend from the beginning, all my teachers for being so enthusiastic about learning, my friends for being with me for all the memories and laughter, and of course thank you SOA for everything.

Paul Runyon

Vocal



SOA...Oh SOA; where art thou SOA. Wait a minute that sounds familiar. I better starting writing my own words or they might think I am plagiarizing. Anyway, SOA has been probably the greatest thing that has every happened to me. In my younger years (up until fifth grade) I felt like I was a wandering minstrel, even though I did not change schools. Through this time I never felt fully complete. Yes, some other schools may have sports or four times as many people but there is something about SOA that no other school can duplicate. When I first arrived in sixth grade I was immersed in the artistic atmosphere. It was like nothing I had ever seen or felt before. The artistic atmosphere is not the only great thing about SOA. The academic atmosphere is also an incredible part of our school. Not

only are the students great but the teachers are amazing. Every teacher that I have had over my seven years at SOA has taught me something different. I will remember all of the things they have taught me and I will cherish those memories for the rest of my life. I always thought that becoming a senior would be something I could not wait to do. Now that I am I am sad because I know that next year on the first day of school I will not be stepping through these doors. I won't be stepping through these doors but I will be stepping through new doors. I am so proud to be a part of SOA and thankful for all that it has given me. To all of the people that have supported me through my time at SOA I thank you as well. To all of my friends, teachers and administrators without you my time at SOA would have not been the same. Being a part of your community was an honor and a pleasure and I can not thank you enough. I will miss you SOA but I will never forget what you have taught me and I can not wait to see you again in your new home!

Patsy Helzer

Theatre



When I first came to the School of the Arts in the ninth grade, I'll be honest, I didn't want to come. All of my middle school friends were going to Wando High School, not SOA. I wanted to be with them. But from the moment I walked in the building on that first day of school, I was welcomed with open arms. Although, some of those first friends are not as close and others closer—each of them hold a very special place in my heart.

Things have happened here that I would have never thought would happen. Junior year—I feel truly gave me insight on who I am as a person. I have teachers like Ms. Jane Marshall to thank for that. 10th grade—I learned what it means to work hard from Mrs. Bronk.

And who can forget some certain life lessons that Mr. Orvin taught us all in the 9th grade.

The place, however, in which I learned the most about myself, would be theatre. I admit, I was spoiled in the 9th grade with Mr. Wood but he is someone who taught me that "Life is like a book—if you don't like the story you can change it." Mr. Younts showed me in the two years I had him that if you work hard enough you will get recognized for it. Last, and certainly not least, Mrs. Link—the women who showed me that what I can create can be "really good" even if I didn't realize it.

When I look back on my high school career, I know that I might have been able to have made higher grades, but I have learned some lessons that will last a lifetime. All, of this goes to show that ideas about things can truly change.

Raymond Caulder

Theatre



We should talk SOA. Come here. It's time we stop avoiding this. Here we go...um... SOA. It's been fun, but we should really...uh... how should I say this. Ok, I'm just going to say it. I'm leaving you.

Oh...don't cry. Please don't cry. I knew I should've just sent you a text. What? I didn't say anything. But really, don't you think it's time to move on? Ok fine...you want me to say it? There is another school for me. It's not

that your not adequate...It's just...I need to expand my horizons. And, no offense, but you are a little clingy. I mean...7 hours a weekday. Doesn't that seem a little much? And you're quite demanding. It feels like you rate me on what I do...grade me almost. Why don't we cherish the good memories we have? It's been a good 7 years. There have been some ups and downs and goods and bads. There were times I absolutely hated you, and then times when I couldn't wait to see you. It has certainly been an emotional rollercoaster but I think it is time to finally say goodbye.

Arthur Brown

Band



When looking back at my time at SOA, I can truly say that I enjoyed myself. I learned a lot, met some great people, and became a better person. As everyone knows, SOA is like no other. Like other students, I had the option of going to a different high school when the end of my eighth grade year rolled around, and I'm glad I stayed at SOA. I'm going to miss playing basketball on that slab of concrete by the band room, and football on the uneven field. The teachers I've met here are... interesting. It's really weird, now that I think about it I will never experience this again. The size of the school was a big factor on how well I knew most of peers, especially the band majors. Band...ahhhhhhh... There is so much to say

about that major. From Symphony #2 to Cartoon, these last four years have changed me. I learned from the best (Mr. Kerr and Mr. Singleton). I fell in love with Jazz music, and I met 4 of my best friends today. In band we did some crazy things, whether it was jumping over random things in the band room, or occasionally throwing a party to celebrate some "achievement." This year was hectic, but worth it, I got to know many of my classmates a little bit better. In band, I laughed at least 3 times every day in class at something one of my classmates did. Cameron, Trey, Mandy, Adam, Carly, you guys know I'll miss you dearly. So, to sum everything up, I will miss everyone I've gotten to know. Of course, the class of 2009 is going to end this year how we came into this year, rowdy, excited, hilarious, unpredictable, and just straight up SPECTACULAR! DEUCES! USC here I come.

Reilly Lovingood

Vocal



Most know that in the year 2012 there is supposed to be some great change that rolls around because the Mayan calendar stops, and you know we should all listen to an extinct race of people's calendars. I believe that this change will be a great zombie uprising, and for that I would say I am becoming most prepared for. By 2019 we will be in a full zombie onslaught and for that I will start one of the many leading survivor groups that will help people to a free and safe land where zombies do not rule, but are kept out by the manliest of men. This is an important job, and the chronicling that follows will explain how I intent to make this so.

The zombie apocalypse is going to be broken into seven acts; the first wave, the uprising, apocalypse, destitution, human uprising, reconstruction, and living with the cancerous hordes. I plan on surviving all of this and making it to human general by simply hiding out in my house and bricking up the wall at the top of the stairs. I will bring along plenty of bottled water and canned foods, and even a hot plate that will heat my delicious five star meals of canned corn and Spaghettio's. My friends Tim, Taylor, Trent, and Thayer will be my four T's and we will create a better tomorrow.

Penelope Murray

Piano



There was truly never a dull moment at SOA. Ever since sixth grade, I have loved the sweet breeze of "lovely smells" waft across the trailer filled campus. If I could go through it all again, I would do it all the same except I would take less for granted. From 2002-2003, sixth grade I began my journey across the weedy grass and into a big scary new world. I remember walking through the high school halls my first few days and being called a "shrimp" and "rugrat" because apparently I was tiny. I remember thinking that some of them were the same size as me! The thing I most remember though, about sixth grade was when some stuff was stolen out of the trailers and gang symbols were spray painted on our trailers too. I remember thinking "what a great welcome to the neighborhood!" From 2003-2004, seventh grade, we were promoted to the "Berry Building". I remember feeling like a big kid because I was no longer a little sixth grader (though I probably still looked like one). Dance seemed like a good major to me in sixth grade, though after playing a song in Ms. Graves' class, I realized piano was for me, so I tried out. I also remember that during seventh grade, it rained hard. It was the first time I realized how much of a swamp our school truly is. I thought our school was so cool because we had rivers and lakes, and I ran home and told my parents all about how amazing it was. This was also the great time when Nick Alls hid alarm clocks in Ms. Ledford's room, and she could not find them. Oh how sneaky we were... From 2004-2005, eighth grade, we were the big kids in the neighborhood. I started my new life as a piano major

When things settle down we will venture out into the strange world now awaiting us like something out of a space novel. We will stay the course and move our way to Canada. Once across the border we will head to the Yukon, our Mecca, our Heaven. There, the land of three people for ever ten square miles, we will build our new home. Once it has been well fortified we will venture out into the distant lands to bring people to repopulate this area and create a new hotbed of human existence. It will beautiful, for it will be a winter paradise. We will bring many parkas.

We will all live happily in our parkas and winter vacation villas, and we will start a new system of government, one without all that political mumbo jumbo and corruption. Unanimously, I'm sure, I will be elected the first president of Reility™ (see how I got the name for the new country?), and following a safe and practical five-year plan that will allow for the growing of many winter crops and raising of livestock. I will keep my people happy with 'Cookie Swap Tuesdays™', and 'Casual Fridays.'

I know that this is the way the world will work, and for that I know my plan is brilliant. We will be saved from the zombies. I knew I would rule the world, but who knew it would be that way. I guess everyone should have a plan B too, so if this whole gig doesn't work out, I guess I could be a director like originally planned. Hollywood here I come!

and I loved it. I recall wearing heels to school for the first time and feeling like such an adult. The most momentous time in eighth grade was during math class when we heard screaming and pounding on doors. Senior Parade. That was the first year I became almost frightened of high schoolers. From 2005-2006, ninth grade, we were the "shrimps" of high school. I still remember finding Ms. Drennan's bell that someone had hid, and she gave me chocolate...hey, it was quite momentous for me... This was the year that my brother, Trevor Murray was to graduate and I remember feeling very depressed. I loved having him there because I had connections with upperclassmen, which was a great feeling for a "freshie". From 2006-2007, tenth grade, life was made smoother by the fact that we were no longer freshmen. Ms. Bronk was the most life changing teacher out of all of the great teachers we had in 10th grade. As much as we hated everything, we (well I did..) loved it too because it was so challenging and hard to make an "easy A". From 2007-2008, junior year, life was hard again. This was the time when college was beaten into us. We were told to think about our futures, and what it could hold for each and every one of us. That was a scary time. Dr. Price had the most amazing labs which most people loved to participate in (glowly fire lab.) Ahh the last year at SOA, 2008-2009, SENIOR YEAR! To tell you honestly, this year has been the year where I have found out the most about who I am. It was during this year that I realized how truly precious my time with friends, the school (campus), and teachers really was. Looking back on my time here has made me realize how very sad I am to be leaving my beloved School of the Arts. I will always remember my times here at this beautiful campus (it actually really is..) because they have been the best times of my life.

SaNavia Paisley

Band



One of the characteristics that make our school so different is the teachers. The SOA experience has forever changed me and I will never forget the bond that I have shared with some of my teachers. There are three in particular that have had the biggest impact on me, Mrs. Bronk, Mrs. Marshall, and Mrs. Awkerman.

While most students dreaded going to the "Bronkster's" class, I loved it! Her honors English II class was a challenge, but after passing, all of my other English classes were a breeze! I will never forget some of the special LOL moments that we have shared! For example, I will never forget all the times that she "shafted" my class! Or the time she did a handstand because we dared her to, the time she gave us a 600 question exam (not really, but it felt like it!), or all the times that Tony Linog and I have fought over who was going to eat her lunch! Most of all, I will never forget how she has helped to start the first few sentences to a new chapter in my life. Thank you for always being there and staying after school to help me complete college essays! I will miss you dearly Annnnnnaaaa B (inside joke)!

"You're a harbinger of good things to

Michael Horlback

Dance



It finally come to and ends, and now I'm typing my senior essay for the Applause. Well, let's start with sixth grade. My homeroom was Ms. Blake. I remember walking in class with a pair of blue jeans and a red Nike shirt with my fresh pair of white Air Forces Ones on thinking I was cool. To be honest I was very scared inside, didn't know anybody and did not want to get to know anybody. My seventh grade year was the best because I had the best math teacher, Ms Cooper. Lord knows I love that lady and all her cats. I really hated those cats, but I never told her. My eighth grade year was good. Because I was going through this phase in life where I though girls were my everything. Then high school came, and it was big heart stopper for me because it was another round of new faces in my life. My ninth grade year was good. I got even closer to my best friend Nicholette Singleton and met some new friends like Oleta Johnson, who is my best friend today and Leah Wilson and the list goes on. My tenth grade year was good too; that year I was learning a new language which was French. I was excited about it, and then didn't like it after the first two week. My 11th grade year was awesome; I

come, you're a sign that it's all changing for me," can you believe I still remember the words to that song. However, the words to that Rock the SAT songs are not the only things that will be forever in my memory, so will Mrs. Marshall. Mrs. Marshall has helped expand my vocabulary like no other teacher; thank you for making learning fun! Also, thank you for noticing my note-taking and organizational skills; I think that because of your word of mouth, I was able to win class secretary both my Junior and Senior year!

You know how you think you know exactly where you are going to end up in life and then something pops up and gives you a change of plans? Well, that is exactly what Mrs. Awkerman did to me! Thank you for not only making me an expert with the computer, but also for introducing me to the next four years of my life! I am going to be a proud Terrier with a scholarship! If it were not for your strong advocacy, I would have never known about Wofford College, which is the perfect school for me. You have gone beyond the call of duty putting me in touch with the right people and for that I say thank you.

Each of these teachers has not only helped me to succeed in high school, but have made life-long impacts on me. To all of my teachers, I am glad that I had the privilege of being in your class. I will never forget SOA, but most of all I will never forget the people who contributed to making me how I am.

was getting a little bit older, and I partied so hard this year. Then my 12th grade year came and it came so fast, but I have many memories to take with me when I leave School of the Arts. I'm going to miss my best friend Nicholette Singleton, how we used to always go out to dinner, and I know all her buttons and I know how to push them, how to make her happy or sad and even mad. I'm going to miss all the good and bad times we had together and what a good friend to tell all my secrets too. LOL I'm going to miss Oleta Johnson and how sweet she was and how she would always make me laugh. I remember just being in ninth grade and how nasty she looked when she first came here, but when I got to know her I got to know how sweet a friend she would be. I'm going to miss Paige Brockington. the love of my life!!!! I have liked this girl for along time but just didn't know how to express my feels to her and she still doesn't know today. But she is my best friend, and I'm going to miss her a lot. I can't type about everybody but I'm going to list below all the people that met a lot to me and who I'm going to miss: The Whole Class of 2009 "We Tha Best" Wilfred Rivers, Alexis Freeze, Madison Henry, Lamar Hunter, Shakira Major, Amanda Nelson, Michael Ancrum, Shantonya Griffin, Jordan Price, SaNavis Paisley, Saray Smalls, Hannah Riddle, My Ballet 5 Class, Keturah Thomas, Leah Wilson, Akeem Rivers, Shari Jenkins, Monique Collins, Charlotte Savage, and My Ballet 6 Class.

Taylor Cheney

Vocal



You would think that forming a senior essay would be effortless after writing countless “personal statements” for college applications, dozens of practice essays for ACT tests, and even more scholarship papers- yet for me, this could not be any more difficult. Looking back on my past seven years at SOA, there are definite memories, certain people, and even particular smells that will remain with me long after I exit these familiar hallways, but something I will never forget is the tremendous amount of sincerity and camaraderie given to me by Ms. Bronk. Before sophomore year, I was petrified by the horror stories I had heard from her surviving English students about how their nights quickly turned into mornings from the hours spent studying Shakespeare and weekends

were just a continuation of the week prior. Though, after I completed Bronk’s “wrath,” I gained a genuine appreciation for her distinctive teaching methods and unique character. Never before had I had a teacher who, in the same day, had the ability to give me a failing grade on a poetry presentation but still make me want to laugh at all her quirky motivational antics. For that reason, I decided to join the yearbook staff junior year and as editor this year, I can honestly say that it was one of the best decisions I have ever made. There have been unlimited times when another complication with the templates or one more disheartening visit from Jostens made vaulting off a giant cliff look almost better than graduation, but letting my staff down and more importantly, Bronk, was never an option. I feel incredibly prepared to start college this fall at the University of South Carolina as a Journalism major thanks to the reporting skills and unwavering faith that she has instilled within me- and for that, I owe her everything. Thanks again, Bronk.

Dana Gilmore

Band



Graduation. The words I thought I would never hear coming out of MY mouth, well... it is here, and I’m not so sure I am ready to leave this place where I have made friends, cried, laughed and spent half of my life in this place I call a “school”. It’s more of a second home to us. I have been at SOA since 6th grade, and let me tell you, I have never learned so much about life and growing up. This is more than a school to some of us; it’s a place we come to get away and show our talents, learn and be with friends. Ellen Kay was a HUGE part of my younger years at SOA. Without pushing me and keeping me straight who knows where I would be. To be totally honest with anyone reading this, going to school here has really been a blessing. I have such a bond with some of the teachers here, and it still amazes me how someone can be so caring and available when you need them. Mrs. Olson THANK YOU. Thank you for putting up with me for 3 of

the 4 YEARS in your English classes; I don’t think anyone else would have been able to. I will never forget my senior year discrete math class and everyone in it; I LOVE YOU ALL!! Mrs. Alvanos you are a wonderful person, and so amazing. You made senior year so much more memorable than it would have been. Mrs. Hutchinson, Mrs. Pam, and Mrs. Bright, you are wonderful, wonderful, WONDERFUL ladies not only are ya’ll there for me academically, but for my life situations as well. Tonight I will cheer you all and drink plenty of apple juice! MY FRIENDS, here we are! We did it! Class of 2009! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT!?!? I wish everyone the best of luck and look forward to one day when will we all come together again! I’m still just amazed at how fast this all came. I have never been so excited, yet scared to leave a place I am so comfortable in. I’m not too sure really how I’m supposed to say good-bye, but I guess this is it. So good-bye SOA, keep being unique, don’t let anyone come and change what we love the most. OOOOOHHHH, NINE!!!!!!!!!!!!

Serena Doose

Band



Oh, School of the Arts— made up of condemned buildings, moldy garages, ditches prone to flooding, cloud ceiling tiles, and grass parking lots. It’s a place where students are free to wander amongst their dreams and imaginations, a place where anything malfunctioning is normal and anything that works the way it’s supposed to is a miracle. Those who come here experience the joys of eating in grassy fields and the exhilaration of watching trailers pop up like vinyl wildflowers in every available spot. Where else can you find a campus that looks so decrepit at first glance, but that you come to love because of the majestic oak trees and lack of a concrete sea that is prevalent at so many other schools? When I leave SOA, it’s the small moments that I’ll miss the most: Basking in the sun with my friends at lunch, taking up the entire sidewalk and chucking

paper bags at each other; dubbing certain people honorary Asians and making way too many fried rice jokes; having flute sectionals and taking pictures instead because that’s just what we do; redeeming ourselves at Chattanooga and beasting everyone at this year’s Concert Festival; sitting on the dome in 8th grade singing “We Shall Not Be Moved” because we were that hardcore; seeing little kittens peek their heads out from underneath the trailers; building human pyramids in band just to see how high we could go (pretty high!); sprinting barefoot from class to class in a downpour with the loving knowledge that SOA is just one big puddle anyway; driving past the new school, watching it grow and expand; and finally, becoming a senior and realizing that time has suddenly slipped away. Of course, school here has never been paradise— there were always those days when I had to drag myself to school and my eyelids hung heavy— but SOA will always remain a series of precious memories (happy and sad), preserved through time by pictures and always, by art.

Craig Maxwell

Vocal



I can’t believe it’s finally here. I journeyed so far to get to this point. I’m so glad I transferred from Military Magnet Academy. I regretted the change at first, but I grew to like it. I’ve encountered so much and made so many acquaintances.

First day here, I was in Dr. Price’s Chemistry class. I met a feisty girl by the name of Shakira Major, who I never thought would be one of my closet friends after she cursed me out. She then introduced me to Charles Williams, who also became one of my closet friends. In the same class, I met my “bestest” friend Pepi Rodriguez; she’s my little Star of David. Little did I know, we were all in the same major. I later met the stylish Candice Jenkins. She told me I seemed arrogant, which kind of hurt, but I accepted it. She introduced me to Alecia Coutain. OMG...that girl is so funny,

There’s never a moment when I’m not laughing around her. Hearing her sing is like Heaven on Earth. Devon Heyward and Landon Washington were next on my “new friend list.” They all just welcomed me into their “Circle of Friendship.” I’m so grateful to have met them. I also became close friends with Michael Ancrum *aka* Mikey. I knew him from Military Magnet. We sort of lost contact when we left. However, I’m glad we rekindled our friendship. He’s so cool; he’s like a brother to me.

Just a few months ago, our school put on *The Wiz*. That was such an awesome experience. Unfortunately, the long, gruesome rehearsals weren’t always so great. For the first time, I participated in All-State. FUN, FUN, FUN! Vocal has been a blast for these last two years. I will miss those who aren’t seniors this year.

I’ve learned so much about myself. I’m more confident and comfortable with expressing my individually. I will sincerely miss School of the Arts.

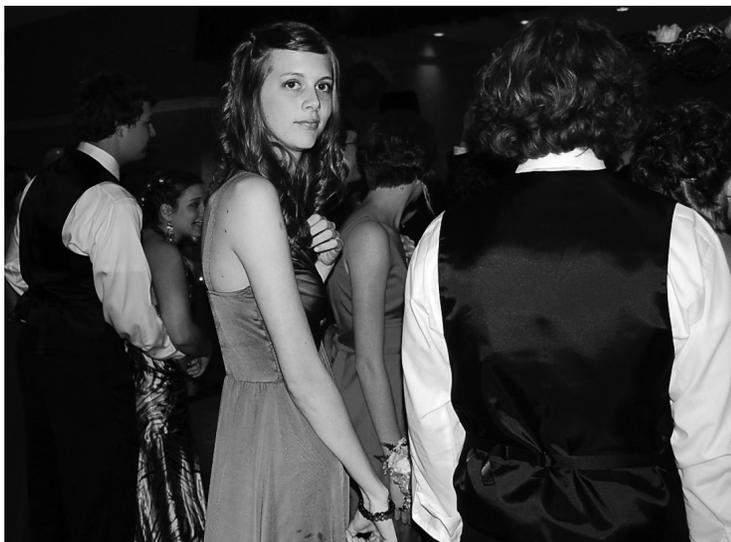
2009 prom shows the spirit of SOA

By Dorothy Behre

On the drive down a dark road in Goose Creek towards the weapons station, the barbed wire fences and cracked concrete seemed an odd backdrop for limousines and

loons and students dancing to the music from DJ Howie. Energy emanated from the dance floor all the way to the corners of the room. When prom court was announced,

the energy multiplied; Demetrius Washington and Brittany Ropp were crowned prom Prince and Princess, and Devon Heyward and SaNavia Paisley were crowned prom King and Queen. As always, all SOA students of every major, neighborhood and background danced together in per-



Senior **Samantha Watson** waits as Junior Council announces the prom court.

SOA students donning elegant dresses and newly pressed tuxedos. However, once the road came to an end and the doors to the Red Bank Club were opened, the prom atmosphere immediately spilled out onto the dark parking lot.

The ballroom was filled with bal-

perfect rhythm on the dance floor, showing the spirit of the SOA community. It was everything prom night is epitomized to be, and even as the limousines made their way at 11 o'clock back down the dark, concrete road, the magic of prom still remained.

Eighth grade prom '09: A Night of Stars

By David Sass

On Saturday, May 2nd, the 8th grade gathered for their last school dance before they moved on to become freshmen in high school. Located at Park Circle, the "A Night Under the Stars" themed party was a huge success. The room was decorated with stars and sea shells on a dark background. The students dressed their best so they could dance to a wide variety of popular songs played by a DJ. "When the party was over, nobody wanted to leave," commented 8th grader Faye Patat.



Eighth grade students dance the night away at Eighth Grade Prom 2009.

Seniors shine in wacky costumes for Senior Spirit Week 2009

By Alek Mihok



Dorothy Behre poses in her Sailor Moon costume.

On April 18th through the 23rd seniors celebrated Senior Spirit week, and themes ranged from cartoon day (where seniors dressed up as their favorite cartoon) to flash-back day (where seniors dressed like their favorite time period) and even to spy day, (which included eye patches, dark suits, and trench coats). Other spirit days included twin day and wacky-tacky day.

Dorothy Behre, an SOA senior, commented on her costume for cartoon day (she was Sailor Moon): "I chose this outfit because I've always loved

fighting evil by moonlight."

The week ended with the always-fantabulous Senior Parade, where



Seniors show their spirit on Wacky Tacky Day.

for a tasty cook out where seniors were served hamburgers and ice cream by Mr. Reinhart and Mr. Davis.

the seniors marched through the campus, weaved through the trailers and caused merry mayhem across SOA. The day came to a close at the front of the school

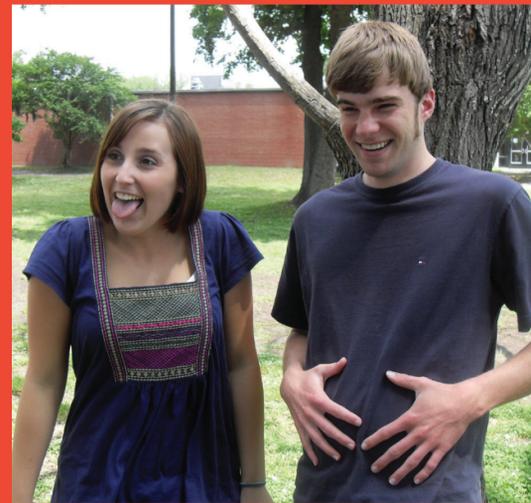


Raymond Caulder and **Darbie Keck** on Twin Day.

SENIOR SUPERLATIVES: CLASS OF 2009



Most Athletic
Samantha Wilcutt and Francisco Figueroa



Most Distinctive Laugh
Taylor Denett and Bradley Poplin



Biggest Flirt
Alexis Freeze and Landon Washington



Most Dangerous to Pedestrians
Katie Grantham and Dylan Davis



Most Likely to Become Famous
Charlotte Savage and Trey Cooper



Most Likley to Fall Down a Flight of Stairs
Morgan Stewart and Mark Reed



Most Likely to Start Yelling 09!
Shakira Major and Michael Horlback



Class Clown
Alecia Coutain and Tony Linog



Most Likely to Eat Someone Else's Lunch
Kenish Magwood and Sebastian Mandell



Most Fashionable
Leah Wilson and Craig Maxwell



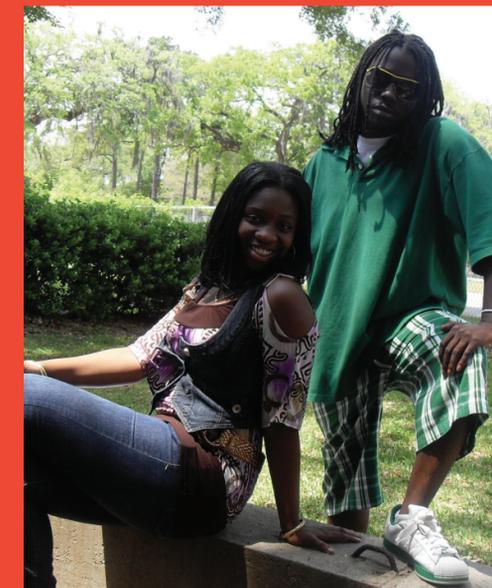
Best All Around
Hannah Riddle and Lamar Hunter



Best Smile
Ashley Sagan and Wilfred Rivers



Most Talkative
Chrissy Thorne and Michael Ancrum



Most Dramatic
Maya Jacobs and Jamill Fields



Most Likely to be Late to Graduation
Laura Stanger and Jerry Wilson

Shakira Major

Vocal



My time here at SOA has been wonderful as I have grown and matured at this school. I have become a better person, academically and socially, over the past seven years here. Two of the most important factors that I have cherished at this school were the teachers that have made a positive impact in my life, and the wonderful friends I have made here over the years. The teachers who have made a positive impact in my life and who I will never forget are Ms. Wade and Ms. Olson. These are the teachers that I had my freshman year and I still stop by their rooms to visit. Ms. Wade was like a second mother to me here at school because she always made sure I was on top of my work (besides trying to hook me up with everyone... LOL) and made sure that I was doing my work to the best of my ability. Ms. Olson is a teacher that I have spent a significant amount of time with throughout my expedition of high school (because I had her for English for three years, I did that purposely). The reason why I like Ms. Olson so much is because she is very sarcastic just like myself and she always challenges your intelligence with her witty comebacks. My best friends Devon Heyward, Alecia Coutain, Candice Jenkins, Landon Washington, Charles Williams, Michael Ancrum Jr., Pepi Rodriguez, Craig Maxwell Jr., and Lamar Hunter, are some of the most intelligent, creative, and hilarious people that I have been blessed to know from my journey here at SOA. These are actually the people that I would like to continue a friendship with after graduation and hopefully beyond college. We're not all just fun and games and "STU-ing," we actually do have each other's best interests at heart and I am very lucky to have people like them in my life because not everyone gets that wonderful opportunity in their life. Devon (Cuzin) has been my best friend for the longest, we've clicked since seventh grade and it's been like that ever since. He is one of the most sarcastic boys you'll probably ever meet and I LOVE HIM VERY MUCH!!! What can I say about MONKIE (Alecia)... I LOVE

THAT GIRL!!! Even though me and Alecia haven't been friends for very long, I feel that she is the one I can relate to the most and she is very smart and FREAKING HILARIOUS!!! I cannot tell you how many arguments we have gotten into at Regal Cinema 18, and how much we got fussed at in Mr. Eakes class in freshman year... Good times, good times. Candice (Dice) is one of the friends that I have known for the longest and she is one of the most sarcastic and meanest girls that I have ever met in my life and I hate her... LOL!!! JK!!! She is AWESOME!!! Landon (Brotha) is a friend that I have known since sixth grade also and he is basically like a brother to me, he is my partner in crime, and he is my creative friend. Landon is the person that we do stuff we're not supposed to do and we NEVER get in trouble, except for one time in Mr. McDivitt's class but that was completely Landon's fault. Charles (Char-ales) is the quiet friend but he has a "saucy" mouth when he wants to, especially with Devon. LOL! I've known Mikey since seventh grade and he so funny, especially when we had PE together sophomore year. He is very funny and has such a smart mouth because he says such smart comments under his breath and it's so funny. I met Pepi (the Pepsta) sophomore year in Current Events with Mr. Smyth, and she is one of the coolest people I've ever met, she introduced me to Cunningham's Muffins which still makes me cry laughing until this day. Hey, can I get yo number, can I get it? LOL! Craig is just a loser we hang out with, just kidding Craig. He is very cool and is a pretty talented person who knows the "Single Ladies" dance RIDICULOUSLY WELL!!! Lamar is also another wonderful that I have been lucky to be friends with over the years. He is an awesome person and I would do anything for him. Some other people who made this year fun for me were Francisco Figueroa, Michael Horlbeck, Charlotte Savage, Ashley Simmons, Allie Augustine, Logan Williams, Kayla Washington, Whitney Graham, Laura Johnson, Brittany Ropp, Kimberly Johnson, Jordan Brown, and JP Hart. Now that I reflect back on these years, I see how much of an impact SOA has had on my life and I am very lucky to have had the opportunity to meet these people. I will miss SOA and everyone here that has made some type of impact in my life.

Paige Brockington

Dance



SOA is a place where I have grown into the individual that I am today. It is a place that holds my most vivid memories, and where I have formed close bonds with people that I call friends. School of the Arts is not only a school that values excellence in education but also emphasizes the importance of the arts. Through the arts, I was able to define myself as an individual. There is no other school that I have attended that allows students to express their individuality. One of the most distinctive aspects of the School of the Arts is the teachers, who are artists themselves. SOA teachers are unlike other teachers because they know the importance of the arts, and incorporate it in their classrooms.

The one class that has impacted my years at the School of the Arts is Mrs. Slowinski's dance class. I have taken her class since I arrived at SOA in the seventh grade. Her ballet class holds so many of

my memories at SOA. Dance class not only taught my fellow senior dance majors and me about the technique and history of dance but taught us about who we are as people. In dance class, I have experienced many ups and downs, disagreements, tears, and lots of laughter, which have all brought me closer to my fellow dance majors. Mrs. Slowinski's class is where I met three of my closest friends, Nicholette Singleton, Michael Horlbeck, and Te'Aire Griffith. During my freshmen year of high school I met my best friend, Oleta Johnson in Mrs. Slowinski's dance class. Since the first day of dance class freshmen year, I knew that my bond with Oleta was unbreakable. I have learned so much about true friendship and about myself through my relationship with Oleta. Now that my senior year is coming to an end, I appreciate Mrs. Slowinski's dance class and the bonds that I have formed with other dancers. As I enter into the next chapter of my life I will never forget her dance class and the thirteen dance majors that I have grown to adore. I love you all, and wish all of you the best in life. I am not going to say goodbye because I hope to see all of you in the future.

Victoria Jones

Dance



I enrolled into SOA in the middle of my freshman year, and I have to admit, I was a little out of my element. I have danced all my life, so that was routine, but I had never attended a school like SOA. I transferred from a 4-A high school with Friday night football games and seven different choices of lunch to eat; something most students at SOA have never experienced. Therefore some make the choice to leave to go to a "real" high school and encounter that experience. However, I would never go back. I would never go back to a school where you attempt to learn in crowded classrooms amid thousands of students and teachers who never even learned your name.

When I came to SOA I only knew

four or five people, although I got to know everyone relatively quickly. SOA is a very small school and that's why I am so fond of it. Everybody knows everybody. The teachers know everybody, the administration knows you by name, and overall, everyone gets along. There are no "cliques" or "groups", everybody intermingles with everybody. I have found three of the best friends I have ever had and seen some of the most talented students perform.

The most important thing I learned in the past years was to be an individual. The famous author John Jake once said, "Be yourself. Above all, let who you are, what you are, and what you believe, shine through every sentence you write and every piece you finish." SOA is an exceptionally unique school, and I am grateful to be a part of its class of 2009. Time to shine!

Michael Staurt Ancrum Jr.

Band



The Charleston County School of the Arts has been my second home for the past six years. Being able to go to such a unique school has had a terrific impact on me. Not only having such a tight core curriculum, but also being able to be artistic and musical everyday has been so cool! This school has been nothing but FUN for me. I've met some of the most amazing people over these years. How could I ever forget being a Pegasus?! My best friends Wilfred Rivers, Devon Heyward, Amanda Nelson, Nicolette Singleton, Shakira Major, Pepi Rodriguez, Craig Maxwell Jr, Lydia Kemmerlin, Elissa Keathley, and Brianna Smart have all made the education experience so much better! Wilfred, I remember the first day I met you, I was so worried about fitting in and who would've known that we'd end up best friends? Devon, no other word can describe you other than AWESOME! We have so many memories together and you'll always be a friend! MANDA!!! You have been there for me so many times when I felt down and out. You're encouraging and it's been fun. Nicky Night?! Nicholette has been so wonderful to be around. Shakira has been a great person to be around. She has a very smart mouth and she violated me in P.E. class. That's a story for another time! What can I say about Pepi? She's an awesome person to be around. She's so funny and I can be myself around

Tanya Lewandowski

Dance



When I entered SOA four years ago as a freshman, I didn't know anyone. There were a few people that had been mentioned to me by former classmates, but no one that I could really relate to. That all changed for me when I attended my first major class at SOA, and met Ms. Linda Cline. Ms. Cline has had the strongest impact on me these

past four years because not only is she a wonderful and gifted person, but because she has always been there to give me that extra boost of confidence when I needed it most. She has never judged me in the way that I dance, and has always given me encouragement. She has helped to direct me, and has also helped me to find my own unique style of movement. If it weren't for Ms. Cline, I would never have thought of pursuing dance as a career or have ever attained the drive and passion I have for dancing.

I'm so happy to be a BAND MAJOR! Band has given me the chance to be what I want to be in this world. Mr. Charlton Singleton and Basil Kerr are both positive role models in my life. You both will always be remembered! My most cherished memories have taken place in that old car garage, also known as the band room. Band has made me a better person overall by teaching me what it takes to be a leader and also to follow and listen to others. I don't care what anyone else thinks but, BAND IS THE BEST MAJOR! By being a student at SOA, I've been able to be myself around everyone I know. I'll never forget those times laughing until I fell on the floor in Ms. Wade's classroom. She is such a great person to be around! Mr. Reese, although we got into debates every class, you are awesome and I'll never forget you man! You always made sure I was on top of my work and I learned so much from you. Being a student at SOA has been a journey. I'll miss this school for the rest of my life. Totally Dude.

Shanequa West

Creative Writing



Since the fifth grade, my goal has been to become a professional writer. My first step toward making that dream happen was to attend SOA where I could focus on that area. In each of the seven years that I have been here, I feel that my writing has become stronger, more developed. Having recently finished my senior thesis, my novel is the next step toward becoming a writer. Now that I have undergone the process of writing a book, I feel that I am that much closer to reaching that goal. In 2019, I want to be a published novelist with a book contract. I know that goal is a hard one to accomplish in ten years, but it is possible. I intend to make that happen by continuing to pursue writing. I may have a busy life, possibly continuing with education and schooling or focusing on a career, but I must find time to keep writing.

Trying to accomplish my goal includes submitting essays, stories, and poems to magazines and literary journals. Every day, ambitious writers send in manuscripts to publishing companies and get rejected. And one day I

will be included in that group of people, but although I may get discouraged, that doesn't mean I should just give up publishing my work. It won't just come to me; I have to work hard and try to make it happen. I may send in a manuscript three times, and it may be rejected three times, but I'll try again. And again. I'll send in other works of mine with the hopes that maybe those will be liked instead.

If I give up hope, get discouraged, and don't believe that it can happen, it won't. It's almost like believing in something so much and *willing* it to happen. Having faith in combination with trying to get my writing out in the world will one day, hopefully by 2019, allow me to achieve the career of writing novels and stories for the enjoyment of other people. A lot of writers have additional jobs because although they have work published, they don't bring in enough money to support themselves solely by just writing. But my goal is to be able to make a living through my writing. Although I know that won't happen by 2019, I am determined to at least have both a contract and a good start by that year. As for my ultimate goal of becoming a successful novelist, I will continue to pursue my writing and not give up hope, believing that it can happen.

Taylor DeNett

Strings



School of the Arts has given me by far a greater experience than I ever imagined coming into the school. I have grown so close to my classmates, teachers, and even the campus. I want to thank the people that made an impact on my seven years at School of the Arts. Mr. Reese, you were one of the only teachers to actually push me to motivate myself, and you also showed me how hard work pays off. Ms. Fitzgerald, I have always appreciated you being so understanding, slack, and unorganized. I

am very lucky to have had you as a music teacher since sixth grade. Mrs. Olson, you're the bees knees, you have been my English teacher for three years now and even took on running the Culinary Arts Club and letting me be the President. These are the people that stuck with me through out high school and there is no way I could ever thank them enough for some of the things they have done for me, Andi Musselwhite, Bradley Poplin, Tara Grantham, and Katie Grantham. Leaving SOA is a sad bliss for me. It's hard to leave such a school behind, but I'm excited to start my future. There is no way to know what I will be doing in 2019, but hopefully I will be graduated from the University of South Carolina and working as a Nurse Practitioner.

Taylor Evans

Vocal



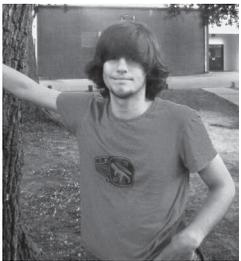
While many seniors are ready to leave their high school, I'm having a really hard time letting go. Coming to SOA every day since sixth grade has been both a blessing and a curse. It's been a blessing because the people here are so talented and sweet. I feel like I have a second family. Plus, getting to go to a school everyday and to spend time singing has been a dream to me. However, it's been a curse because I have been so spoiled. I haven't experienced things people from other schools have like bullies, eating inside, cliques, and dress codes! I don't think I ever would have fit in at a "normal" school, but I do here.

The experiences I've received at SOA have been phenomenal and unique. There will be so many things I'm going to miss: driving around the potholes on the way into and out of school, having "church" in vocal, everyone singing to Dr. Price's chemistry videos, trying to avoid the lake that shows up at SOA when it rains, and so many other things that I can't put into words. But most of all, I'll miss the relationships I have here. There are so many amazing people that I have met and grown close to. To Samantha Willcutt, Kody Fernandes, Lindsay Venable,

Daniel Anthony and Jonathan Heyward, I love y'all so much! Sam, you've been there for me for almost seven years and saying goodbye will be so hard. I've seen you grow so much and can always count on you for anything, and you better know you can count on me. Although we'll be going our separate ways after graduation, I know we'll be best friends for life. Kody, you've gotten me through things you couldn't begin to imagine. Although people look at us as a couple first and foremost, I look at you as a best friend. I'm still not sure how we got to where we are today, but I thank God for it. Lindsay, you are crazy! One moment we hate each other and the next we love each other. I love how honest and open we can be with each other and how quickly we get over it. I really respect you as a person and friend. Daniel, we've been through a lot and somehow, we're still close. I know you'll do wonders with your life and wish the best for you. Jonathan, I wish we hadn't grown so far apart this year. You understand me better than almost anyone and are the sweetest guy I know. I'll miss all of you so much. I wish I could go on with other people, but this would be pages long. I know this essay was supposed to be about my years at SOA and it's gone in a different direction, but I think the people are what have made my time here so wonderful. I've learned so much and will keep SOA a part of me forever.

Dylan Davis

Theatre



I am Dylan Davis, an eighteen year old dude, who has been attending SOA since the ninth grade, and came here to major in theatre. So, yeah, I am defiantly not a great writer, but who cares? SOA, when I first came here, was an extremely laid back school; I am so happy I decided to attend this school solely for that reason. But now my thoughts have sort of changed, because of the new administration. It seems like everyone wishes so badly to turn this school into a school just like all the others, a prison, I can say first hand, artists will never truly flourish in this environment. I really enjoyed the school for the first three

years; I call those years "The True SOA" but for this last year, the 2008-2009 school year, "The True SOA" has been slowly dissolving. Now being the end of the school year, "The True SOA" has basically been wiped away. The deed will fully be done with the collapse of the old school, and the arrival (for all the up coming juniors and lower classmen) into the new building. It is a brand new environment, for all of those who were so used to their old environment. Keep in mind it is a new environment for the administration, use that as leverage. To all the lower classmen, stand up for yourselves, don't be wronged by the man, fight for all the rights you have and wish to have, THAT'S WHAT I DO, now THAT'S WHAT YOU DO! Christoff, Johny-Boy, and Tina, I pass it to you, but it won't be the last time. Now don't forget the rotation.

Wilfred Rivers

Creative Writing



All good things must come to an end. When I entered SOA in the sixth grade, I would've never thought that I'd be spending the next seven years here, Mon-Fri, seven and a half hours per day for nine months of a year. Wow, that's a long time! The reason I came here was for creative writing. That class has taught me numerous ways to put my feelings on paper and how to express them artistically. I've gone from writing about a red wheelbarrow in the sixth grade to writing sophisticated and hardcore metaphors. That brings me to senior thesis. 14 amazing writers published pieces of work that showcase their ultimate best. My thesis, a collection of poetry titled *exposed*, is something I'll never forget or be any more proud of. So to all my C-dub people, I love you all and I will cherish all of the companionship made between the years. We've revealed ourselves through the mystery of our words.

To the massive load of people I interact with on a daily basis: thank you and I couldn't have asked to have had better friends than the ones I gained while at SOA. My brothers, Devon and Mikey: we've had a rocky road but in the end it's straightened itself out. Devon, I won't put in here what you said in science in seventh grade! Mikey, those bus rides were

truly the best! I remember the conversations like it was yesterday. If I could go back and do it again I would. You guys remain "D4L" in my heart and I wish you both the best as we split to fulfill our aspirations. Aim for the sky homies. My group of females, and this is in no particular order so keep your britches on! Paige, love you sis and go show Spelman what you're all about. I still wish I could be down there with you, but everything happens for a reason. Nichollette, you're amazing and I love you to death. Keturah, what would I have done without you over these years?! You keep me sane. Saray, you and I go back like way way back. LOL. I love you too after everything since the eighth grade. My C-dub girls, Shanequa, Raven, Monique. Shanequa, you're bright and as long as you keep your head up you'll go far. Raven, the world follows you and I know it likes where it's going. Monique, the warmth to my soul, show Wofford what it's really about. Alecia, I am deeply saddened that I won't be with you anymore. How am I supposed to laugh now? The girl I've spent the last year with, Amber Wells, it's been fun and I love you too. Try not to miss me too much. The rest of my "peeps", Akeem, Michael H., Landon, Charles, Sha-ri, Shakira, Sa'Navia, Jordan, Ashley: it's been fun. To the best underclassman: Marcus Shuler. Do you, man!

So that wraps up what could've been nine pages of shout outs. SOA: it's time to say goodbye.

Jessica Davidson

Visual Arts



It's somewhat difficult for me to think about my life ten years from now, because ten years ago I never pictured my life to be any where close to where I am right now. But, for the sake of this essay, I'll assume I have my future ten years all figured out.

In 2019, if the world hasn't ended already, I want to have received a Bachelor's degree in General Fine Arts with emphasis in Photography and a Masters in Art Therapy. I'll probably be in school for more than 4 years but, I want to take trips to wonderful places and see parts of the world I have never seen before. I'll use my experiences to educate and help others

who need someone to guide them. I can't imagine having kids or a husband, but things can happen. I would at least like to know the man I'm going to marry and I hope we meet in the most romantic way. If I have kids they're going to be adopted like I was. There are plenty of children out there, no need to contribute more to the massive overpopulation I expect in ten years.

I want to live in a beautiful, sunny and scenic area in or outside of the United States. I want to be happy, worldly, confident and wise. Family is important to me and my family is very close, so I expect I will be seeing a lot of them. If I have a mid-life crisis I want to buy a fast and sexy sports car. Accomplishing all of this may be hard, but like I said, I can only dream about life in ten years.

Alexis Eve Freeze

Dance



I've been so lucky to go to a school that has such an amazing staff of teachers and administrators; I have built some great relationships with in particular I will always hold a special place in my heart for, Mr. Orvin.

Oh my goodness, I cannot tell you how much I am going to miss you next year. Hands down your class freshman year was my favorite class of all time, not only because it was a history class which I loved, but you make every aspect of learning fun and oh so entertaining. I loved waking up on A day mornings knowing I had global studies first period. It was the best part of my day. I love how even to this day almost four years later you still call me "Cleopatra." Oh just thinking about all the memories we made in that class makes me want to go back. Remember the "trouble corner?" It was pretty much our sanctuary; our group consisted of me, Dana, Katie, Mariana, and the four of us alone were a handful, even to this day. I

really doubt I will ever find another teacher I adore more. Mr. Orvin I love how you have this incredible ability to make me smile even on the worst of days. I appreciate you and everything you do.

Seriously though, how can I talk about one great history teacher without talking about the other one and not just because of the conjoining trailers. Mr. Reese, I bet you're thrilled my class is finally graduating. I know having my class for Global Studies II and then again the next year for U.S. History was a treat. Oh, but the memories made in your class will stay with me forever. The constant laughs (like the time Taylor Dennett asked if Jesus was born after WWII) when you predicted our entire class's future, our constant prying into your personal life, your nosiness as to what's going on in ours and of course the constant confiscating of our cell phones. I know we've had a love/hate relationship but I really feel like your class has prepared me for college more than any other. So I want to thank you for pushing me to try harder, I finally picked it up my junior year you can't deny that! I cannot wait to come back in a few years and show you how much I accomplish, and you better believe I will.

Sebastian Mandell

Theatre



I came to SOA in the last half of Junior year. Since then I've had a lot of different feelings about it. Oh well equal trade. Anyways, I'm pretty new here compared to most of you guys, and now I'm basically gone. It's been a real trip for sure. I'm gonna miss my teachers, or at least remember them completely as I keep growing and figuring stuff out. They're one of the most impressive things about SOA. In most high schools the teachers are too naïve to have an insightful connection with their kids. Or at least a sense of humor to pretend they do so they can get a few lessons across. If it weren't for people like Murray, Brehm, and half the others here I would've said, "Screw high school!" long ago. I hope I get the chance to drop by in the future. Come

visit my component-mentors and the younger-classmen. Growth is crazy! It'll be wild seeing how people change over the years. I'm really looking forward to the future, there's a lot out there for me and it's a thrilling concept. My horoscope said 21 would be a dangerous year for me, but I bet I'll survive... barely. I want to encourage some people to keep in touch. Check in every few years and see what's up. Share the past, share the future yah know? If you ever need anything look me up. I'll leave something behind: Leaffx@yahoo.com. Everything right now is a seed, which is my way of thinking the future will always be more exciting, because actions, thoughts, words, relationships grow – and not just up... more like ivy, every which way.

Shout out to the Good Ol' Boys on John's Island!

Cya around – long live the Bally's!

Ashley Sagan

Strings



When I reflect on the years that I have spent attending School of the Arts I like to think of all the teachers with whom I've become acquainted. I can confidently say that I will graduate and move on to become successful in whatever I decide to do because of what I have learned from them. Mrs. Olson and Ms. Rogers are two teachers that have taught me much more than what was expected and have greatly impacted me as an individual. I started out my freshman year with Mrs. Olson as my English teacher and I haven't left her side since. She has helped me find my true self and shape the person I have become today. Mrs. Olson has a tremendous heart and has taught me to be compassionate to others. She has been a great leader in our Culinary Arts Club, and

I wouldn't ask for anyone else to be there guiding us. Her quirky personality is always uplifting; when she yells it is almost like she is whispering. I will never forget her calming smile and loving heart.

Ms. Rogers has just been flat out amazing. I've only had her for my senior year, but I've learned so much from her. When I was younger I enjoyed my math classes, but as I got into high school, it was almost as if I had lost all interest in the subject. Senior year rolled around and Ms. Rogers ended up being my pre-cal teacher. From day one, I have learned something new in her class each day. I am so grateful to have had her as a teacher my senior year, I feel well prepared for the math they will be throwing at me in college. As for SOA as a whole, I will never forget it, and all that I've learned here. It's been a life changing experience, and I wouldn't have it any other way.

Keturah Thomas

Piano



There's nothing like the smell of the paper mill on a Monday morning

there's nothing like the sound of the whole class snoring.

there's nothing like no tissue in the stalls

there's nothing like obscene writing's on the walls

there's nothing like a moldy ceiling

there's nothing like paint on the walls peeling.

there's nothing like doing homework all night.

there's nothing like anticipating a wack fight.

there's nothing like Winter Formal

there's nothing like everyone being abnormal.

there's nothing like random moments

there's nothing like NHS doughnuts

there's nothing like dance warehouse P.E.

there's nothing like stolen T.V.'s

there's nothing like people who care

there's nothing like the good times we share

there's nothing like peers that are family

there's nothing like a burst of laughs randomly

there's nothing like a senior parade

there's nothing like monocle spectacle being played

there's nothing like having class where it's grassy

there's nothing like hearing "PLEASE SIGN OUT OF SASST"

there's nothing like friends that will leave you never

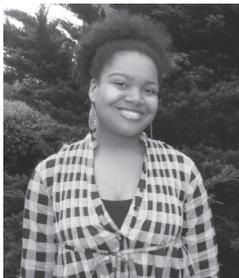
there's nothing like memories that last forever

there's nothing left that I can say

because there is no place like SOA

Candice Jenkins

Vocal



SOA has taught me a lot about myself and others. Over the years I have developed a love/hate relationship with SOA. I think that those of us who have been at SOA since 6th grade can definitely relate to what I'm saying. Being at one school for 7 years... There were times when I wanted to leave because I thought that I wanted the "real high school" experience; but I soon realized that I would never experience a school like SOA again. As I got older I learned that there is no school like SOA and that I should be grateful to have been a part of it. I began to love the fact that my school was small and that I had teachers who had time for me (even though I may have struggled in Mrs. Bronk's class from time to time). I also began to love how everybody knows your name, even the lunch ladies.

It's hard for me to choose just one thing to reflect back on throughout my 7 years of being at this school. I remember being very nervous for the audition process. But Mr. Rogers put my nerves to rest. Nobody plays that piano like Mr. Rogers! I remember the time when I was in eighth grade, it was the last day of school and some of us brought water balloons and squirt guns. Of course, on that day, Mrs. Castle decided to search everybody's bags. In ninth grade I remember meeting Mr. Eakes for the first time and being mesmer-

Trey Cooper

Piano



On my first day at the School of the Arts in August of my junior year, I knew only a handful of the students, but within a week or two I had made friends with almost everyone. I was pleasantly surprised at how friendly and accepting everyone was. One of my favorite memories of my brief time at SOA was the first year I played Jump, Jive, and Wail. In jazz band at my previous school West Ashley High, we spent the whole year preparing for a ten song concert at the end of the year which few people attended. In the SOA jazz band we played over 30 songs for almost a thousand people in November. The concert was amazing; every player nailed their part and the crowd loved it. It is a great feeling to have that

many people dancing to music that you are playing. Being a jazz lover I was very happy to attend a school where that many students appreciate the music. The band was full of top notch players and we played everything from Glenn Miller's "In the Mood" to Tower of Power's "What is Hip?" Another thing about the concert that you wouldn't see at other schools is the infamous third set with its crazy costume changes. I got quite a kick out of playing a rockin' Blues Brothers medley with Jesse Hildreth in a gorilla suit, Zach Thames as one of the Incredibles and Ricky Quiones riding an inflatable ostrich. I fondly remember playing cowbell on "Shining Star" while wearing a gigantic sombrero. For the concert finale we played a wailing version of Louis Prima's "Sing, Sing Sing!" and the crowd went wild. This concert was outstanding and so were all of my other experiences at SOA.

ized at how amazing he was. He worked us to death! In tenth grade Alecia Coutain and I drove Mr. Clark crazy in his Honors Global Studies 2 class; but I know he loved us anyways. I remember eleventh grade -struggling in Dr. Price's chemistry class. However, my most memorable moments occurred this year. "The Wiz" will be an experience that I will never forget. Putting on a production is so hard and requires a lot of time, work, and commitment. I will never forget how demanding Mrs. Link was of us and how there were times when we all wanted to quit. But in the end I was glad I did it; I met so many people that I probably would have never known. I got to know Mrs. Link and Mr. Baker as I never had them as teachers. At times we were at each other's throats but we still made it work and ended up having a good rapport. I will never forget making the National choir, all state chorus, and All County chorus this year. I had so much fun at National choir in D.C. with all of those who were also members. Another part of my year that I will never forget is how close all of us girls were in Lyric Choir. Everybody got along and we were very supportive of each other. Overall, I am grateful for all of the experiences I have had at SOA and I hope that this school continues to be as unique as it is in the future. I would like to give a shout out to all of the Lyric Choir girls (08-09) and to all of the seniors!!! I wish us all the best of luck in the future!!!

Chrissy Thorne

Visual Arts



Art class is by far the best class a student could have. We are laid back, fun, get along, and really "work hard". It is nothing like my middle school art class at C.E. Williams. The first week in high school had to be the spark of it all. It all started with Taylor Wentworth zipping himself into an overly sized jacket on top of the highest stool in the art studio. He lost balance and fell off landing on his head. He came out, okay... The next day, Patrick Wilson locked himself, with the help of some classmates, inside one of the art cabinets. He was there for a full thirty minutes before the teacher realized he was gone. The school is basically fields, ditches, and trees. Once it rained so hard it flooded the early out parking lot. When the bell rang we ran out to see a student canoeing through it. I'm really going to miss "lake SOA". Let's not forget the storm the next day that was so bad, Mrs. Henry got electrocuted through the computer. When we started oil painting, we thought unscented turpentine would help with the smell but instead it just made everyone completely sick. There were so many memories throughout the years. This was just the first week!

Art class has become a big family over the years. With the same people every day for almost two hours all in four years, you would have to expect us to somewhat get along. We went through hating one another,

to inspiring each other, to admiring, and now to loving. No matter how annoying and obnoxious Nick and Tony were every day, how hyper and random Sarah always was in the morning, Taylor's crazy puppets on Fridays, or Wade, McNeelly, and Josh's video game arguments! No, we still loved when Kenish ate everything, when Jessica was always right, when Akeem gave his crazy Taco Bell survival stories, when Katie, Skylar, and Marie came out with one of the most amazing pieces, and especially loved when Anastasia would beat up Wade when he'd mess with her. No matter how annoying or crazy we all were, we all loved each other, as much as possible.

I would have to admit, our art teachers were pretty cool. Senior year we got stuck with Ben Moore. We all thought he would be lazy and not get anything done, but he really showed us. It was through him that I really stepped my game up. I found that color pencil in portraiture is my talent and passion. Mr. Moore gave me many opportunities in competitions and scholarships, which provided that little inspiration I needed. He has really been an impact in my life and my artwork.

It wasn't til my senior year that I realized how important this school is to me. I am really going to miss my art class, the teachers I have connected to over the years, the crazy events of our school, my friends and foes, and of course Mr. Davis! I hope the new school does not lose the unique character of our old school. Remember, it's the students who make the school, not the school itself.

Robert Widlowski

Strings



Ten years from now I want to be performing powerful and liberating music, reaching thousands of souls and ears around the world. The music would be delivered by a small electrified ensemble performing original music or by a symphony orchestra. If circumstances permit, I would be with a woman I love

and possibly a child. I want to live in a beautiful place, perhaps in the mountains of North Carolina.

How I intend to make this hypothetical life happen: hours and days of practicing on my double bass, networking and collaborating with other people in the "music world", rehearsing extensively with an original group of musicians, and making whatever sacrifices which may be necessary to achieve my goals.

Dorothy Behre

Creative Writing



With yearbook pictures and old poems as evidence, I can honestly say that throughout my time at SOA, I have undergone many changes that have led me to find out more about who I am. For me, this process has been only stimulated by my SOA experience.

When I first came as a freshman, I thought that the School of the Arts was a shy person's paradise. In my opinion, the most direct way to understanding a person's spirit is through their art, and every day I was dazzled with the spirits of my fellow students. I thought that I didn't have to put myself out there by talking;

Quinterra Middleton

Dance



Graduation... the word seems to pierce my ears when I hear it and make my tear ducts well when I say it. It's really hard to believe that people I have known for 7 years would probably be the same people I would never see again. When there is a drastic change such as this, I can't help but reflect on what has happened.

Since the very first day, I must admit that I was a bit intimidated and scared. I was entering a school with a major I knew basically nothing about. Dance was one of the last things on my mind in elementary school. I really didn't know much about it and had hardly any rhythm. I'd stand in class and straight up mimic everything everybody around me was doing. I was like a little lemming standing at the bar. I tried to make it seem like I knew something about ballet but found it hard to hide the fact that I really didn't care for it. It wasn't until about 8th grade that I started liking it and 10th grade when I noticed I loved dance. I still think it is weird figuring out that something I was never exposed to in life would be the same thing that I wouldn't be able to live without.

That was a really big change but there are a bunch of things that I'll never forget about SOA. I will always remember 6th and 7th

instead, I put myself out there by writing. In every poem or short story I learned something new, not only about myself but also about my fellow creative writers, who have become like my family. From day one, I knew for the first time in my life that I was in a place where I would be accepted instantly, with no judgment. This is what I told my parents at the end of freshman year, when they were on the verge of forcing me to transfer to Academic Magnet. I know that if I hadn't insisted on staying in the creative writing program, I wouldn't be the same. I wouldn't have reached the depths of my personality that I've been able to reach through my writing and through finally learning to put myself out there in ways other than on paper. I will miss the artistic spirit of the School of the Arts, but I will also be glad to move out into the world with the knowledge and confidence that it has given me.

grade exploratory, 8th grade double dutch on the concrete patch by the dance warehouse, the middle and some high school performances at the Sottile where the dancers would play truth or dare at the end of the show, the annual trips to the Ice Palace the dancers would take, the trip to Barrier Island and DC and to the Dock Street Theatre to see the Taming of the Shrew and The Headless Horseman, the vending machines outside by the cafeteria that had those delicious duplex cookies, potato smiles that weren't soggy, the jungle gym war between the current seniors and juniors, the water fights, White T day, Prom on Mother's Day, the gardener scare, Art Smart, Conventions, The Soaz, the day the Laura Stanger dropped the snake in Dr. Ball's class, church circles with the vocal majors, Tizzy's popcorn reading, Mrs. Colquitt's Classroom Community Reading, lemon pretzel cookies, red rover (with The Wiz cast), The Wiz, Senior Spirit week, and Grub on the Green.

These events may not be remembered by some, but I'll always hold them dear. These memories helped me to become more tolerant and open minded and ultimately made me who I am today. There will never be another school like SOA and experiences I've had here would probably never happen again so that's why I'm trying to make sure not to take it for granted. So when I walk across that stage I'll be proud to say, "I'm a graduate from SOA."

Jamill Fields



I've been a student at SOA since I was in the sixth grade. When I first came here I didn't know anyone. I didn't know the other students. I didn't know the teachers. I knew no one. But like most people I found people to hang around. During my first year I started making friends with people like Raven, Lamar, Shanequa West, etc. Raven was my rock during that year. We were really close and she helped get me through those first two years. Even to this day we're still pretty close. However, some major changes were made in eighth grade. It all started when I switched instruments for my eight grade year. Due to instrumentation I was told to sit by this chick named ShaniQua Gaie. Even though we had been going to the same school since sixth grade, we never really talked. However, through some weird way, we became uber close. Since then she's been my right hand chick, my twin, my

other half, my sister, and my friend. That whole year we were inseparable.

Everywhere she went I went, and everywhere I went, she went. The very next year had a big impact on my life as well. Because ShaniQua and I were together a lot and she was friends with Kalyx, Kalyx and I became extremely close. Ever since then we've been best of friends. Through the years we've all become closer and closer. On the summer between my sophomore and junior year I met Marcus. Even though he was two years younger than me, we still became close. Since then he's been my little buddy, little brother, and uber close friend. In addition to those three, I've made friends with people like Alecia, Arty, Devon, Shakira, Chris B., Vicky, Kody, Brady, Mark, etc. The people that probably have had the greatest affect on me besides my closest friends, were probably the band majors. Even though I would yell at them, curse them out, and be dramatic, I still loved them then, just like how I do now. For that, I'll never forget them. Even though senior year is pretty much done, I'll still love my friends, especially Kake Mix (Kalyx), ShaniQua, and Marcuz.

Kenish Magwood

Visual Arts



My time at SOA over the years as taught me a lot about myself and the people around me. It is here that I met my friends, grew as an artist, and developed my own insight on life. Between the schoolwork, the paintings, and my friends, I've learned that SOA is more than just a school for the visual and performing arts. It is also a training course for life. It is a utopia I will truly miss (hard to believe isn't it?). I've been at SOA since the 6th grade and I'm nothing like I was before coming here. Prior to my days at SOA, I was shy, lazy, paranoid, and seemingly invisible. It wasn't until later that I began to open up. There was no fear here. No matter who you are or what you look like someone will always love you. I learned a lot about judgment here. Someone who dresses in skulls may not necessarily be Satanic. The loudest people may also be the sweetest. The brainy people sometimes may be the most fun. I've come to realize that the students here are more than just their major. We are not stereotypes and we are not artsy freaks (most of us anyway). We are

especially unique yet we all still get along (well, we try!). Let's face it: SOA has been a journey since day one and I can honestly say I love this school. Sure there have been times where I've completely bashed it but who hasn't? I've talked about our lack of lockers and lack of sports. I've talked about our crummy Pegasus mascot and about how our buildings are coming down. I've groaned about our ghetto parking lot and even the lethal food. Basically, I've talked all about how "jacked-up" SOA really is. I mean really, what other schools has it's own parking lot/lake, overly eccentric teachers, and a giant rat that lives in the art room? Even still, what other schools allows their students to express themselves freely and have teachers that can act as friends and not just superiors? What other schools nurture their students' gifts and allow them to experiment in other areas of their art? What schools let their students get away with short skirts and leggings??

All in all, I've had my good times and my bad. I know there will be people I shall talk to forever and people whose relationship with me will end on that graduation stage. I feel I've become a better person at SOA. I love to hate it and I hate to love it. It's been seven long years here at SOA and all good things must come to an end. Truth be told: I wouldn't change a thing.

Katie Grantham

Strings



Over the past seven years at SOA I've taken an array of classes with many different teachers, most good, some bad. As I think back one teacher/class stands out amongst the rest.

Mr. Reese's 4B Global Studies class has had a strong impact on me throughout high school. Mr. Reese has taught me so much about how to become a better student. From the ridiculously long essay tests to teaching our class how to take REAL notes, each aspect of his class helped to shape me as a student and prepare me for college. Mr. Reese also taught me numerous life lessons. I always think back to that day in class when he said, "pay your taxes, and stop at stop signs and life will go your way." I now think my life is fully complete...

Maranda Caldwell

Strings



To reflect on my time at SOA is not very easy. So much has happened here for the past seven years that it's really hard to describe. Friends have left, more have been gained. Watching

each other grow and watching how we have all changed. Becoming who I am, and learning who I am as a person. I feel that these SOA walls have helped me grow and helped make me who I am today. I am thankful to have had the experiences at this school and I am so happy that I got the chance to walk through these artistic halls.

Starting in the sixth grade was really scary; new friends, fresh atmosphere, and a chance to start over. My first year in orchestra with Ms. Johnson, going on my first trip to Carowinds, my first years treading through floods of water and coming to know lake SOA. Also the exciting experience of watching a high schooler kayak through the lake waters. I would never have experienced that anywhere else. The rest of middle school was a lot of fun. Orchestra trips to Orlando and Virginia, painting my name on the Orchestra wall, limo rides to end the year, those obnoxious bus rides that were so annoying but friends made it better anyway. Thank you Mama Graves for sticking with me these last couple of years, you are an inspiration and have a beautiful heart. I love you!

Then came high school, freshman year, first day of orchestra with Ms. Fitz she said to me, "These

thanks Mr. Reese! Besides all the things I learned in this class, I also can say that I've taken away so many memories. I knew the first day of school when I walked in and there were 14 girls and Landon, that the class would be interesting. I will never forget the days when Mr. Reese constantly referred to Dana and Maranda having crack babies before they got out of high school or when Taylor Denett blurted out in class, "So was Jesus born after World War II?" Needless to say Dana and Maranda made it through high school without having crack babies and Taylor now knows that Jesus was definitely born well before World War II! These are the little things that made this class so much fun to be in! Other than all the great times we had in class I can honestly say that each and every one of those girls had a unique personality that helped to make our 4B class like a family. This class will always be special because of the things I learned and the friendships I made! Classes like these are what SOA is really about!!

next four years are going to go by so quickly", and sure enough she is right. Thank you Fitz for being my teacher for the last four years, you are a great person. Love You!

My high school years were a blast. Making many new friends and becoming close. Ski trips to App. State, getting my license and a car, class rings, school plays, senior wall, video production with Mrs. Awkerman, Mrs. Marshall the librarian putting her make-up on in the car dangerously while driving down the road, inspiring teachers. Mr. Orvin and your fun lectures, I will always remember, "NO!", "Why? Why Not??. Mrs. Olson, you are awesome, truly lovely, and have an amazing heart. Cooking club was great and I will miss your sugar cookies. Mr. Reese, thanks for teaching me about Amerrrica. I will always remember our gamecock talks. You're an awesome advice giver and a great teacher. Mr. Brehm, even though I only had you for a semester I really enjoyed your class. You are an inspirational teacher full of so much life. Thank you! Mr. Davis, thank you for sticking with our class all these years. You are one of my favorite people and I will never forget you and your, "Ask me what's cooking" apron. You are what make SOA what it is. I will miss you very much.

SOA is an amazing place and I loved my years here. I will never regret any of my time here. SOA is and always will be apart of me. It's hard to think it's already time to graduate and leave, but I guess we have to grow up some time. I will miss SOA and all the people that are here. It was truly and amazing adventure.

Kimberly Jenkins

Strings



Wow! Where has all the time gone? It seems like just yesterday that I walked into SOA as a scared freshman, not knowing where to go or what to expect.

I hardly knew anyone and was afraid that I would not fit in. I soon learned how wrong I was because everyone was so kind and welcoming. I remember walking into the journalism class and feeling really awkward that I was the only underclassmen. The senior journalists were such awesome people and helped me learn how I could contribute to the newspaper.

The following teachers have had the greatest influence on my education at SOA. Mr. Orvin: your class was filled with action and laughter and helped make high school much easier. Mrs. Bronk: even though your class was the most difficult sophomore year, I learned so much. Even though I didn't understand why MLA was so important then, I do now. Mr. Percy: Pre-calculus was a blast with the SmartBoard and of course, GAMECOCK FOOTBALL! Ms. Marshall: you encouraged me to write and brought me out of my comfort zone. Thank you for encouraging me to take AP Lit. Mr. Brehm: your class has been a real challenge but I've learned so much because of it. You have helped further my love for government. Dr. Cusatis: what can I say? You were one of the first teachers I met freshman year and you are indeed a great one. I enjoyed my teacher monitor time. Good luck finding a comparable replacement (just kidding... not really.) AP Lit was the best class I could have taken. I feel so prepared for college and can easily analyze and write about literature. Last, but certainly not least, Ms. Fitzgerald: you are the best major teacher a person could ask for. I looked forward to coming to class everyday and hearing your "jokes." I have

grown so much as a musician and I thank you so much for helping me expand my musical abilities. To all of my teachers, you have instilled in me a love for learning and I thank you all.

The first person I met at SOA was Alexis Brightharp. We had the same major class together and she helped me find my classes. She has been the greatest friend I could have asked for. Through thick and thin I could always go to her for advice and get an honest answer. Whether gossiping about random stuff or trying to pick a piece of music for juries, she has continually been there and we have become inseparable over the years. This is one friendship that I hope lasts through college and many years to come.

To my fellow graduates: you are the greatest group of people that I have ever met. Lauren: I love your fun personality and unique outlook on life. Thanks for being a great friend. Serena: Dinner at Applebee's was a blast! Keep on playing flute woman. Chris: You have been a shoulder to lean on when I needed you. Thanks for your antics at the NHS breakfast table and your help with Statistics. Patrick: Strings was so awesome! Thanks for being my stand partner through the years. I love your style and I will truly miss you. Devon and Charlotte: Statistics with you guys was enjoyable and you made the time go by so much faster. To the AP Lit class: We had the most inspiring discussion and I have learned so much from you guys. Thanks for being there through all the books and of course, the poetry project! To my freshmen fab, Hayley and Claire: Keep up the good work and keep the orchestra strong. To Rebecca, Ayanna, and Ariel: Hold it down for me and don't take any lip for anyone! Stay strong. To all of those I didn't mention, you know who you are. Enjoy your years at SOA because they go by fast.

My time at SOA is now done. I will miss everyone. Enjoy your time here at SOA because you don't realize how great SOA is until you're gone.

Nicholas Bates

Visual Arts



After graduating School of the Arts, I will attend The Citadel, The Military School of South Carolina. I will major in Spanish and minor in International Affairs. I plan on joining the Marine Corps ROTC program. I hope to become an officer in the Marine Corps and be apart of MARSOC or the United States Marine Corps Forces Special Operations Command. After 6 years of that, I will either continue MARSOC or hopefully move on to a career in the CIA. With dedication and persistence I will achieve my goals.

Raven Mariah Gadsen

Creative Writing



I've loved my time at School of the Arts so much. I wouldn't trade my experience for anything else in the world. I've made so many friends here. We're more like

family than just a group of friends. I've been with a group of amazing people over the last seven years. We've gone through our fights and make-ups, relationships and break-ups, trials and tribulations, joy and utter elation and the best part is we've gotten to do it all together. And now that there's Facebook we'll never be truly apart. I wouldn't trade my time here for anything else in the world. I think if I'd gone to another high school, I wouldn't have learned to appreciate my art as much or everyone else's for that matter. I've developed such a respect for everyone here. We aren't just students, we're also artists dedicated to our craft...well at least some of us. I will miss my family next year when I go off to Winthrop (GO EAGLES!) but I know that we'll never truly be rid of each other. I mean, you don't go through seven years without building bonds that can never be broken.

Being at SOA, I got to achieve a dream that I've always dreamt of: publishing a

Sara Mitchum

Vocal



WOW! It's finally here. The moment we've all been waiting for... GRADUATION. I'm finally the one that's going to be walking across the stage, receiving

my diploma, and getting my picture taken. Where did the years go?

Four short years ago I walked in the doors of SOA. I had been at Hanahan through my elementary and middle school years. I couldn't imagine going to a new school and having to find all new friends, basically having to start over. I guess you could say I wasn't what you would call "thrilled." I didn't have the normal high school experience. Friday night football games, homecoming, pep-rallies, powder-puff, etc. I had something better; I had SOA.

book. And although I did this in the acknowledgements of Beautiful? (available on Amazon.com), I feel it necessary to do it again. I want to let my friends Keturah Thomas, Kaylx Johnson, Shanequa West, Francisco Figueroa, Wilfred Rivers, Devon Heyward, Alecia Coutain, Lamar Hunter and Monique Collins (and anyone else that I forgot) that I love you guys dearly and knowing you and having you in my life has totally been an honor and a blessing from the lord. All my teachers, you guys are truly inspiring. You've really given me the drive to continue with my education and pursue my dreams.

When I first got here in the sixth grade, I didn't think I would be the way I am. School of the Arts has really played a role in shaping the person I am. There is almost no other high school I can think of that is like this one. Its hallways are filled with some of the funniest, most talented, smartest kids I've ever had the pleasure of knowing and I will miss everyone very much.

If I had to leave with a final thought, I would say that I've gotten to be myself and pursue my dreams and who I am here. I would tell classes coming up behind me that the key to being successful here is to be open-minded, know that they are blessed to be a part of a school like this and to be themselves. It's truly unique. And "only at SOA" will you find this blend of people.

Thank you momma (Mrs. Mitchum), for letting me and my friend's crash in your trailer at lunch. There are lots of memories in there and I will never forget them. I love you momma. Mr. Moore, wow, we've had some great laughs. High school would not have been the same without you. Thank you for listening to me when I needed to vent, or just when I wanted to talk. You know how I had to tell you all my crazy redneck stories. You got to love them. I'm going to miss you. Mrs. Olson, aren't you sick of us yet? Three out of four years at SOA I've had you, and I didn't like it when I didn't have you. You're an awesome English teacher, even though we didn't always listen. You're amazing Mrs. Olson and I am going to miss you dearly.

The years have flown by and I don't know if I am ready to leave yet. SOA is my life, and not just the school, but the people in it. I wouldn't trade this high school experience for anything in the world. We did it class of 2009! Congratulations.

Tara Grantham

Strings



School of the Arts has been such a big part of my life over the past seven years. When I think of next year, in college, I can't believe there will actually be spaces to park instead

of a field where people park as they please. I will miss all the craziness from high school and middle school.

I remember the many times I spent in Mrs. Miller's office discussing friend issues, in my younger years. I will miss the random days, like the day we brought a blow up swimming pool and literally had a pool party right outside the Black Box. The most memorable moment from middle school was my first year here when a senior brought a kayak to school and kayaked through "Lake SOA."

Going on to high school from middle school was a little nerve wrecking but exciting all at the same time. I remember Mrs. Kay, the resource teacher, hated middle school kids. I was so happy to finally be liked as a high school student and finally able to do legit homework in resource instead of writing essays on pictures we cut out of magazines. I will miss the late coffee nights with Taylor and Andi when we

tried to study for chemistry and history tests but actually getting absolutely nothing done.

I appreciate and will miss all the teachers who have had an impact on me. Mr. Reese, thank you for putting me on the right track in school. I will always be grateful for when you told me not to be a teacher because I would never get the respect I deserved, and I would never make enough money! When I receive my nursing degree I will always have you to thank. Mrs. Olson, you have been my English teacher for two years now. I will miss your silent reading/gossip hour and your vocab words. Thank you so much for agreeing to be in charge of the Culinary Arts Club, it has done wonders on my college application. Mrs. Hutch, Mrs. Bright, and Mrs. Pam, thank you for being there for me academically but also just to talk to about random things. Mrs. Pam, you will always be my favorite "Mad Gab" player! Mrs. Alvanos, thank you for putting up with me for two years in math. You really made learning math fun, I will never forget my 2B discrete math class and everyone in it...I LOVE YOU GUYS!!! Last but not least, to my friends, (you know who you are) thank you for making school enjoyable and worth while. The past seven years have been amazing and I know it won't stop here. I wish all you crazy people the best of luck in the next four years, IT'S GOING TO BE GREAT!

Tradd Pstrak

Strings



My seven years at SOA have been great. When I joined the SOA family in sixth grade I only knew a couple people. By the end of that year I knew almost everyone in my grade and had made many new friends. I met my best friend Marie League in seventh grade and we are still best friends now. Being able to go to the same school from sixth to twelfth has enabled me to be with the same group of friends in orchestra for the past seven years, and it has been great. We all worked together and matured into better musicians over the past years. With the different classes, I have always had at least a couple close friends in each class. I really have enjoyed my time here at SOA because of the school's atmosphere. Every person here has an individual

artistic personality. Other high schools have cookie-cutter groups such as jocks, cheerleaders, preps, geeks, goths and other groups, while our school is composed of creative, talented people which blend together instead of forming social groups.

Since our school has a much smaller number of students than many of the other high schools, you're able to feel that you are part of the SOA family instead of being just a lone individual.

I think our school has a way with making each person feel like they belong to the family rather than needing to be part of some group to fit in. The quality of teachers at SOA is another reason why the school is so awesome. I've had pretty close relationships with all of my teachers over the past years, and they were always willing to work with me if I had any issues. Even though I'm graduating and leaving SOA, I will always have my memories from my experiences and my close friendships I've made through the years.



SOA welcomes Colum McCann

By Sam Whitley

Colum McCann's life embodies youthful determination, which has led him to a wide variety of literary successes, publishing multiple critically acclaimed books. Born in 1965, he nursed a love of literature even early on, with countless books in his Dublin home. After earning a degree in journalism, the young McCann earned fast praise for a series of articles in Irish newspapers. Eager for change and new experiences, he moved to the United States in 1986, where he embarked on a nearly two year trek across the country on bicycle before enrolling in the University of Texas to major in English and American History. He is the international best-selling author of *This Side of Brightness*, *Dancer*, and *Zoli*. His next novel, *Let the Great World Spin*, to be published by Random House on June 23, is being heralded as an American Masterpiece. With his vast amount of successes, both critical and personal, McCann knows the true value of pursuing personal goals.

Mr. McCann was kind enough to answer Sam's questions on May 28 from his hotel room in Lyon, France, where he was attending an international conference prior to his visit to SOA.

Is pursuing youthful dreams worthwhile?

I am tempted to say that they are the only dreams worth fulfilling, yes, but middle-aged dreams, and probably old-age dreams mean a lot too... So perhaps the only worthwhile dreams are ones that have the bravery to continue.

What initially motivated you to move out and start writing?

Curiosity about the world, and a "knowing" that there were other lives out there at least, and probably, more valuable than mine.

How does an aspiring writer break into the "writing world?"

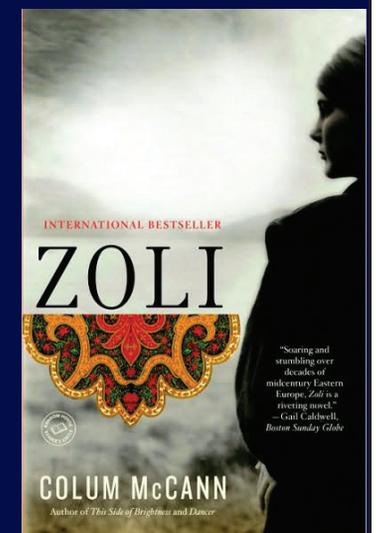
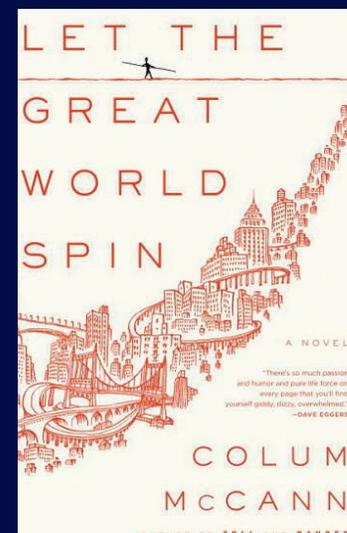
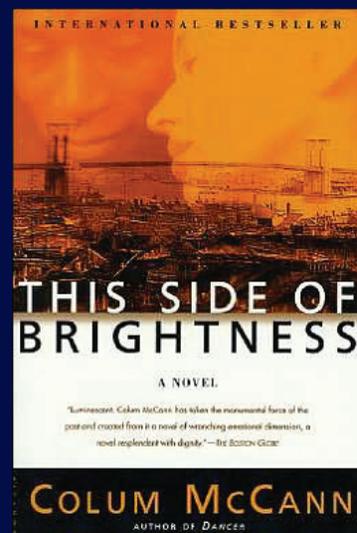
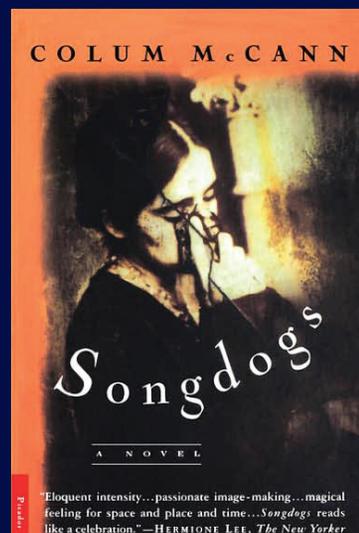
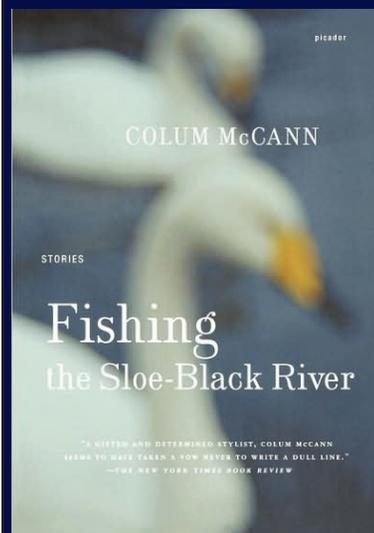
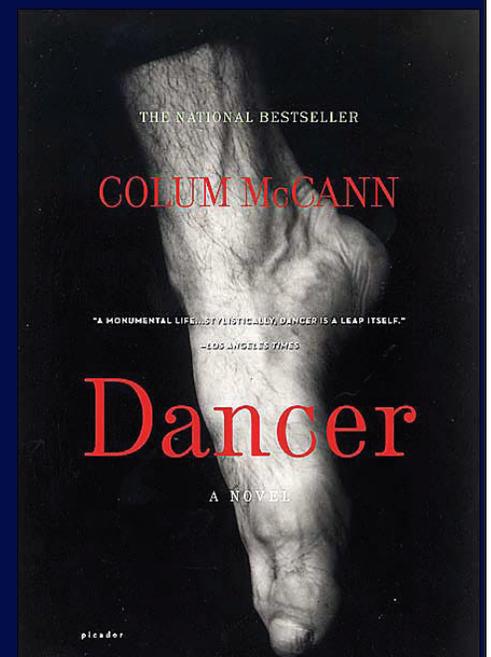
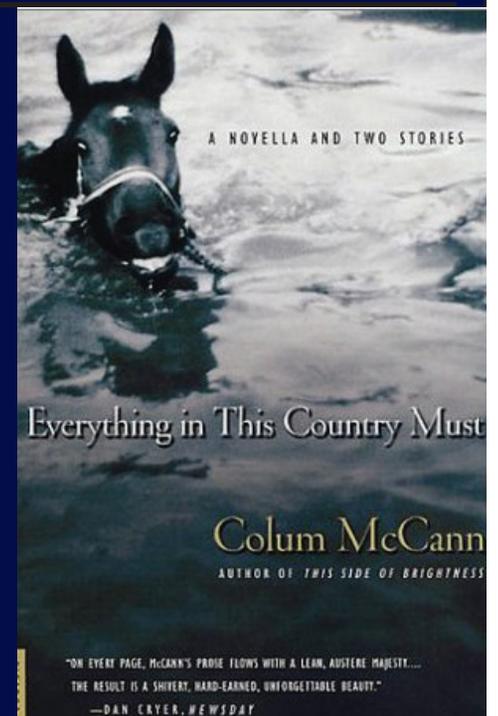
Desire. Stamina. Perseverance. And of course another does of desire and stamina and perseverance!

What are some of the biggest difficulties of living on one's own for the first time?

What you might love – as opposed to what others might want you to love.

What advice do you have for all of us, who are just graduating from high school?

I can only quote another writer, Sam Beckett, by saying, "No matter. Try again. Fail again. Fail better." This is the simplest – and most difficult – credo to live by. And my own credo, which is built by Beckett's, which is: embrace difficulty (and contradiction) because that's where excellence lies.



Steven Moskos

Theatre



I will not be doing anything in 2019. I will skip it via Einsteinian time travel. I will, this summer, suspend myself one inch

above the event horizon of a black hole one thousand times the size of the sun for one day. When I return, approximately one hundred thousand Earth days (two hundred seventy-four Earth years) will have passed. Though the present economic crisis will be over, there will be new economic problems, but I will not have to worry about them. Before I left for the black hole, I put ten thousand dollars into two separate bank accounts: one earning five percent interest, compounding daily; the other, four percent, compounding continuously. Upon my return, I will have approximately a bazillion dollars.

As I buy out all of the corporations of the global market, I come under fire of the World Court: violation of the global anti-trust laws... so, I buy the world court, and problem solved. After five days in the future, I own the world. Owning my own planet put me into a new market of which I had not previously heard: interstellar real-estate.

Here, I hit a snag: planet Earth has declined tremendously in market value. I am annoyed to discover that, though I paid 4,163,207,492,307,001.89 Earth dollars to purchase the planet, it was only worth 3,297,859,298,175,600.36 Earth dollars – seventeen Interstellar Union dollars. Things

Caitlyn Kirkland

Vocal



In the year 2019 I hope to be happily married, cliché I know... but we already have a beautiful daughter and are very happy. Other than

the cliché answer I would like to have my degree in prenatal nursing, or working on my OBGYN license. I would like to be well traveled. I've ALWAYS wanted to leave this place. Even though I love Charleston more

were grim. How could I ever be happy only owning one planet?

Plagued by galactic insignificance, I do what any reasonable person would: the tri-galactic lottery. I mortgage Earth to buy sixteen lottery tickets. Luckily, I win three hundred million Interstellar Union dollars. I then ditch earth to buy other planets. I start small: low risk, undeveloped, outskirts planets. Once the natural resources on those planets begin to yield profits, I sell a portion of my small planets to invest in gas planets.

I sell all my terrestrial planets when I discover that the natural conductivity caused by the gravitation of the gas giants in combination with friction of its revolving gases can be used as a much-needed alternative fuel source; for, there is an energy crisis that has escalated to a point similar to my own time. Fortunately for the cosmos, my method does not require the removal of gases from the planet, so the energy source will never deplete. I secure a non-expiring, intergalactic patent for the process and retire to live off the residuals.

My copious wealth and good looks make me the most sought after sentient being in the galaxy. However, I am lonely. It took six Earth years to finally sit back, relax, and realize: I have no friends. They all died two-hundred and ten Earth years previous. Then, an epiphany: based on decades-old technologies, I can use my memories, and documented DNA samples (a protocol started in 2050) to recreate my former friends. Having reinstated my former life in another time, I begin to live as I once did: happily.

than life itself, it gets boring and everyone needs a change of pace every now and then. One day I'm going to see the ruins of the Aztecs, Mayans, the Greek temples, the Pyramids of Egypt...or at least one of those places! I'm determined to live my life to the fullest. Even though some people would say that because I now have a daughter, my life has halted, ended, it's KAPUT! But I say to all those people IT'S NOT! If you can't get on with your life, then you need to be the one taken care of. I was raised to be independent, to take care of myself.

Congratulations to SOA

Valedictorian Daniel Anthony

and

Salutatorian Shannon McNellis



Devon Heyward

Vocal



I would like to dedicate this essay to the class of 2009 and some of the special people in it. You guys have truly made my experience at

SOA an excellent one. I have laughed with you guys, cried (because of laughter) with you guys, and unfortunately argued with you. All and all, I would not change any of my experience at SOA.

First and foremost I would like to shout out my vocal crew. Alecia, you are one of the most talented singers I know and if I did not meet you in 9th grade I would have a void in my life. Candice, we have had our differences but I always have admired your confidence in yourself and I'm glad we have remained friends over these long six years. Landon, you have made me laugh even when I felt like "warmed over poop" (Robin Rogers) and you have remained the same over the six years I have known you. Shakira, since 7th grade you have always been there and I must say you have been the greatest and appreciate you for that. Charles, you have become a little smart mouth as of late! Just remember Exit 203 will MASSACRE Queens, NY any day. Craig, you have really pushed my buttons and you have only been here 2 years! I would like to thank you because you

helped release my inner gangster! Pepi, thank you for constantly reminding me to give you one of my senior pictures! You helped keep my mind fresh!

Now it is time to talk about my non-vocal buddies. Wilfred, your first impression of me in 7th grade was I was a complete idiot because I did not understand the concept of dividers. You have been a great best friend and do not let anybody bring you down! Saray and Keturah, you two have been that two friends that I felt I could talk to about anything and you guys have been the greatest. Maya, I have known you for 14 long years. I have watched you grow into a fierce rapper. Hopefully I will here one of your songs on the radio soon. Mikey, over the past couple of years we have not been as tight as we used to be but just know you still have a friend in me. Raven, I have known you for 15 years and we are always going to remain close and I'm glad we have managed to stay such good friends for so long.

Finally, I would just like to shout out Ashley Sagan for being a great friend and co-worker! To the other lunch table (Michael, Nicky, Paige, Oleta, Akeem, SaNavia, Shari, Lamar Leah, Te'Aire) I expect you guys to show why '09 is the best at graduation. Again, I shout out the whole class of 2009 and I wish my underclassmen buddies the best of luck in their remaining years of high school!

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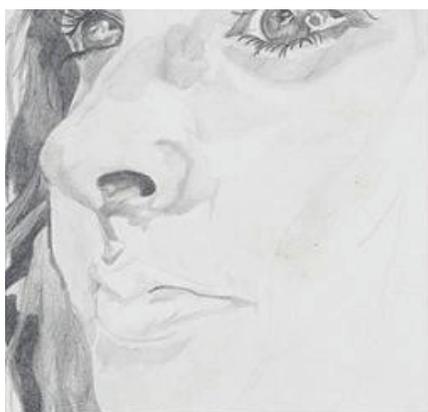


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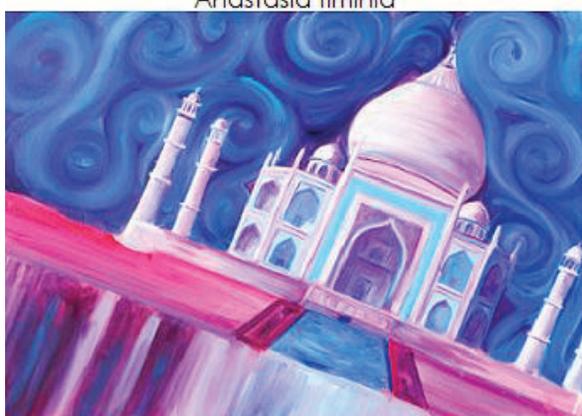
Anastasia Timinia



Chrissy Thorne



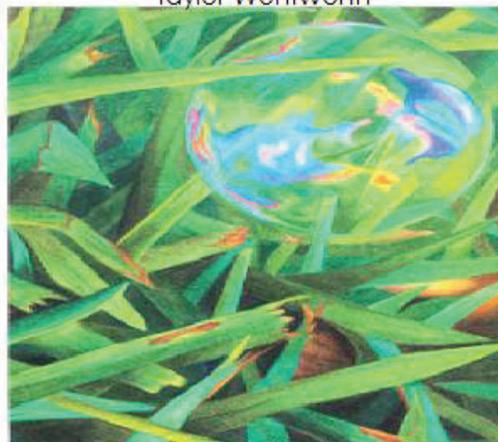
Taylor Wentworth



Jessica Davidson



Skylar Spies



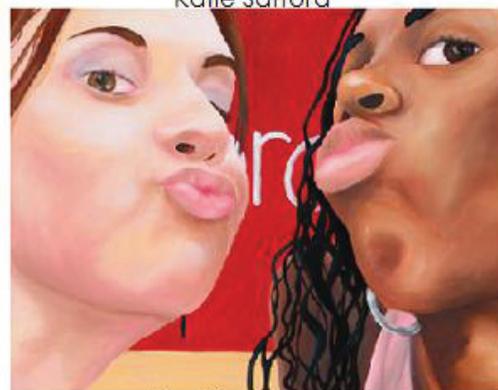
Katie Safford



Nick Bates



Wade Judy



Kenish Magwood



Sarah DiMuzzio



Tanner McNeel

Amelia Nixon

Vocal



I started SOA as a Junior, so my time here was fairly short. In some ways I'm disappointed, but I'm truly glad that I was able to spend two years here. I've learned so much at SOA and I've made some amazing friends and memories along the way. These things have been amazing and I've learned a lot about myself here.

I came to this school not knowing a single person. Fortunately Taylor Cheney was in every single one of my classes the first day. She showed me the place. Without her I would have been lost. Taylor, you're incredibly temple. During my first day I also met Lydia. Lydia, your loud and raucous behavior makes me so happy and I'm glad I've got a friend like you. Through vocal I met Pepi, my Latina "hermana." We really are sisters. Charlotte, you are the only person that can get away with wearing different colored pants and I love you for it. I hope my vocal girls go onto great things.

Later in the year I met one of my best friends, Madison Magill. Along with Catherine Meyer we made Mrs. Cline's class a living hell. Sorry Mrs. Cline. Madison, I love you so

Darbie Keck

Strings



I'm not going to lie; I didn't want to come to this school. I had lived in the same house for 14 years & I was not happy to leave my hometown. I hated South Carolina, I hated Charleston, and I hated this school. As far as I was concerned, nothing compared to where I came from & nothing was going to. But since I had no choice of returning there, I decided that the only thing I could do was be as mean as possible to everyone so I wouldn't make any friends and I could prove to my parents that moving here was a terrible decision. Of course, that didn't work and my parents just told me to get over it. They knew I was bringing this on myself. So, I figured I should probably make an attempt to be mildly happy here. And miraculously, it worked. As cheesy as it sounds, I've met the most amazing people here: The teachers, the students, even the administrators. I know, I know, I want to vomit too.

much. You've made things worthwhile. I swear that we will fulfill every plan for our future and one day we will have our own prime time show that consists of us singing theme songs, eating lunch by ourselves, and making fun of everyone. Through Madison I met Jacki. Jacki, you are so sweet and I'll love you no matter what. You and Madison have made school something I look forward to because of our friendship. During my time here I was also influenced by people who don't go to school here, but have helped me along the way. My mom is a strong woman who helped me get here, and Andrew helped me get through the hard times. I love you all.

This school has helped me to grow not only as a person, but as an artist. Here I learned how to shape my voice and use it to the best of my ability. I appreciate Ms. Slenk and Mr. Rogers for that so much. I'm very excited for my future and to go on to bigger things. SOA will always be what I consider "my" high school, even though I've attended a few. I grew up here. I won't ever forget how SOA brought me to where I am today. These two short years have been some of the most remarkable experiences of my life. I hope you all value your time here and don't take it for granted. I wish the best of luck to everyone I'm leaving behind. I'll miss you, SOA, and the family I made here. Thank you for everything.

My years here are the happiest I've had and now I am aware that I wouldn't have had this experience at my old high school. I love this school even despite the crazy teachers, massive puddles, slightly moldy classrooms, and other oddities. As many of you know, this hasn't been the best year for me. I lost my dad unexpectedly in the second week of school. Not being able to share my senior year with him has been terrible, but the students and faculty have been more than supportive. This year has really shown me that for the past five years, I've been surrounded by people who truly care, and for that, I am fortunate. And I know I whine constantly (and I mean constantly) about being here, but I truly adore this school. I also know that this sounds like every other senior essay you've read today, but that's because we all share the privilege of going to such an incredible school and are now forced to get over our teen angst, and finally admit it. I'd just like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who have made these years great years. I am pleased to say that twenty years from now I will honestly be able to tell people that I loved my high school years and everyone who was a part of them.

Forrest Putnam

Creative Writing



What do I intend to be doing in 2019? I want to be in charge of public relations and tourism for the Republic of Transnistria. Not because I think I would be particularly qualified for the job, but simply because they could not do any worse than their current tourism ad campaign. Visit www.visitPMR.com and see what I mean. Some of the unique attractions boasted by the official travel website of this glorious republic include fresh fruit, running water, taxi services and a pervasive "lack of sleaze." They seem to genuinely believe that this is enough to entice modern middle-class Westerners. Indeed, half the website seems to focus less on travel and more on denigrating Moldova, Transnistria's "sleazy" neighbor and archenemy.

Transnistria is, by the way, a real country. About the same size and shape as Charleston County, Transnistria has half a million people and an advanced industrial base. But it has no civilian airport, which is a bit inconvenient for people commuting to a landlocked country in Eastern Europe from Malaysia or Norway or the U.S.

Any improvement on the tiny nation's international public relations campaign would be welcome, and I believe I could infuse the sort of appropriate zaniness which is the only hope for a travel industry that has so little of the conventional to offer. Transnistrians should face it: their

country is destined to become a novelty, assuming it is ever noticed by the wider world at all. There is something about the place, however, that seems to be unique and positive, maybe even a tourist trap with very careful cultivation. Any country whose official government travel network is this backward and naïve must be quaint in the extreme. It seems like a place happily locked in the nineteenth century, either that or some kind of funny little Soviet Union with lots of apple pie stands and a Keebler elf for a president. If a whole other world is what certain weary and curious travelers are looking for, then Transnistria might be just perfect. I know I would like to see it, see if the self-imposed stereotype of this post-Soviet oddity holds any water.

My point is that the world that surrounds us, that which is accepted as almost universal in a country whose popular culture is so similar to so many others, changes entirely in some regions of the globe. Transnistria, I think, is one of the most unique flukes of history currently in existence. It seems to have developed in isolation without the mean-spirited paranoia of other hermit countries like North Korea. If this is the case then the republic may be a place of refuge from the complexity and competition of the fast-paced modern world. I want to help them develop a meaningful, profitable tourist industry without selling out or damaging their naïve world. Just a few words with the right customer in mind, plus maybe a touch of self-deprecating humor, and no overt mention of their "world famous" gas mask museum, and people might come to drop some cash on apple pie in a non-sleazy environment.

Lauren Hester

Creative Writing



I never fully realized what a family SOA is until I was a senior. At the beginning of this year, I lost my dad, and for a while just making it through each day was a challenge. A lot of people don't realize how hard it is to sit in a class for a hundred minutes, pay attention, pretend that everything's normal, when all you want to do is scream—and what's worse, it's no one's fault, so there is no one to scream at. But somehow, slowly, it got easier, and school started feeling more like it used to. Looking back at the beginning of this year, I see how lucky I was not to be a student at West Ashley or Wando, but here. My friends wrote me letters and sent cards, and one even drove three hours to see me at the visitation, knowing she had school the next day. One class made me a giant card, and another class—a

book and bracelet to let me know they were there. Being at SOA didn't make it hurt any less, but I felt less alone. I told my mom a few weeks after my dad died that I felt like the whole world was speeding by at 90 miles an hour while I stood still and watched it. I was fortunate enough to have teachers who wouldn't let it fly by me, extending deadlines and letting me cry that everything felt so difficult. I'm sure they got frustrated with me, and anywhere else I probably would have fallen through the cracks, but they wouldn't let me blow off my work, and now—at the year's end—I don't need that help any more.

It's weird to see how far I've come this year, from crying in Creative Writing to laughing. My friends at SOA have become a family; one that got me through the hardest time in my life so far, and the idea that these are my last weeks here seems unreal. But the weeks will pass, like years, and eventually a day will come when this whole year will seem like a faraway dream, and that will be okay. What matters is that I found a family, and I didn't fall through the cracks.

Laura Stanger

Vocal



My seven years at SOA have been fabulous, fun, easy, tiresome, awful, educational and always interesting. I have learned so much about myself, the world, and the nature of people. SOA has given me so many opportunities, and I would like to thank all the teachers who recognized my talent and helped me to pursue those opportunities. I would especially like to thank Ms. Olson, Dr. Price, Ms. Ackerman, Ms. Nichols and Mr. Brehm for not making me dread your classes. As happy as I am to be graduating, it will be really hard to leave this familiar place. I truly love every single one of my friends so much it hurts. It's interesting that I have stayed here so long, especially since I have had to deal with so much negativity from those around me, sometimes teachers, sometimes peers. Then I started to realize that

the girls were jealous, boys can be inconsiderate, teachers are always right and people are competitive by nature. I decided that those people were just a little less mature than I, and at that point they were either going to bring me down or make me stronger; I chose the latter. When something negative happens to me, I learn how to find the positive, make the best out of the situation and move on. It's not easy to teach yourself to be like that; it's like a diet for your emotions. I came to terms with the fact that I am the most important person in my life, and I learned to get rid of anything that damaged my aura, including people, because those things simply don't matter. When I look at a future as bright as mine, I refuse to let bad entities block my vision. This philosophy has helped me the most to get through my years at SOA. I will miss SOA forever. I have loved being 14, 15, 16 and 17, and it's sad to think that I will never see those days again. High school has been the best time of my life, but when I get to college, I am never looking back.

Preston Hogue

Theatre



As I look back over my years at SOA, I see a recurring theme in my creative works, both in theatre and in English classes. That theme originates from something that God has taught me as I progressed through my years at SOA. Starting in sixth grade, my family was faced with challenges that seemed insurmountable (as many families do). And just as one insurmountable challenge was put to rest, another of a completely different species presented itself. The one thing that kept me going as I and my family faced these challenges together was my faith in God. He says that He "causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God" (Romans 8:28). Everything includes the insurmountable challenges that were placed before me. Only by experiencing what seemed like punishment could I emerge with strengthened faith and reliance on God.

SOA has given me the opportunity to publicly thank God and give Him the credit for what He has done in my life. Throughout high school I attempted to share how I had come to my newfound dependence on Him, but I was

never able to quite communicate what I wanted to. Finally this year, with the help and guidance of Mrs. Link and my classmates, I was able to create a piece that communicated that God has a plan for everything that happens, even if it hurts to follow that plan. SOA has provided the perfect medium for me to thank God and share my spiritual journey with others who may be struggling with the same obstacles.

So, as my parting words to SOA, I leave you with the words that God Himself spoke to a man who questioned the troubles in his own life (from Job 38:4, 12, 16, 19, 22, 21):

"Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?
Tell me, if you know so much.
Have you ever commanded the morning to appear
And caused the dawn to rise in the east?
Have you explored the springs from which the seas come?
Have you explore their depths?
Where does light come from,
And where does darkness go?
Have you visited the storehouses of the snow
Or seen the storehouses of hail?
But of course you know all this!
For you were born before it was all created,
And you are so very experienced!"

Lindsay Venable

Vocal



Never in my life would I have imagined my high school years being as unique and interesting as my experience here at SOA. It may come as a complete shock to a lot of people, but I am sad to be leaving. In my four years here I have experienced amazing highs and less than exciting lows and have been perceived as negative, cocky, lackadaisical, and many other negative traits. However, I hope I have not failed to show my passion for music and the joy music brings me.

The next paragraphs to follow are dedicated to several people who have made my experience the best:

Mr. Rogers: Thank you so much for dealing with my sometimes negative attitude and teaching me things that I will use in my future profession.

Ms. Slenk: I want to thank you for opening my eyes to beautiful music whether it's a dithyramb or an aria. You have taught me and all the girls how to make music and not just to sing a series of notes on a piece of paper.

Taylor Evans (aka emo Barbie): I can't believe I'm writing this to you! You have become one of my best friends and have done so much for me. You will do amazing things in your life and I hope I'm there to experience most of them with you! If I try and put a joke in here I'll cry so I'll leave it at that.

Samantha Willcutt: I just have one thing to say

to you... and if you believed that then you're crazy! We have had our ups and downs, but you made vocal and high school in general exciting to come to. I enjoy saying stupid things around you waiting for a witty comment to be thrown at me. Words don't even describe how much I will miss you!!! But I'll be visiting you all the time so get ready!

Brady Suit: Can you believe we made it this far?! We've been together since 6th grade Brady! I will definitely be visiting you guys all the time! There just isn't enough space to tell you what I want to. Charles Williams: Yep. From the first time we had math together with Ms. Rivers to Mr. Blakely and now high school... you were destined to be stuck with me! You owe me about \$1000 now... I'll send you a bill. CASH ONLY.

Kim Jenkins: I will always be your cripple as long as you stay skinnier than my pinky!

Annabelle Droze and Maddie Phillips: STOP SINGING THAT HORRID SONG! Just kidding you both are amazing and especially during Dravidian! Yeah that's right Maddie.

Nick Bates: Stop petting me! And of course I'll go to prom with you hahahah.

Mr. Clark: I will and should always be your favorite student hands down no matter what!!!

Mr. Percy: I saved the best for last! I am going to miss interrupting your classes to ask stupid questions! You did what NO other teacher could've possibly handled... you put up with mine and Paul's bickering. I don't think I've ever met a man greater than you. You have been a constant mentor for these two years and I will be back to see you!!!!

Kalyx Johnson

Band



Dear School of the Arts,
I think that it's time for you and me to part. It's not you, it's me. I'm just... moving on. Like one of my favorite rappers, Lupe Fiasco, says, "Things grow. People grow. And people grow apart." I guess I've just outgrown our relationship. We've been through so much, good times, bad times, fun times, hard times, so much time has passed. And I'm going to miss you, but I just have to end this. I always knew in my heart that this would soon have to come to an end, I just didn't know it was going to happen this fast, but I understand that it is over and I am fine with that. I learned a lot from you and I enjoyed my time with you, I really did, but it's totally time for me to move on. I'm doing this to continue to better myself. I love you, and I appreciate every-

thing you've done for me. I've accomplished so much with you, and we've been through so much. I've met so many awesomely awesome people in my time spent with you, and I thank you for introducing them to me. With the good times also comes the negatives, but when you are parting from someone you try not to focus on the bad and remember that person in the best way possible, but just know that there was some pretty crappy time we've spent together. But overall, I think you have truly made me a better person, and I hope to carry on those qualities as I move on from you. Since you and I were together at some of the prime years of my life, you had a tremendous impact in my life and helped make me into the person I am today. I'm moving on to bigger and better things, but just know that a lot of my firsts happened with you and I'll always love you for that. So with that said, I hope we will always remain in each others' heart. Thank you so much for everything. I'll miss you dearly.

Love your one and only,
Kalyx A. Johnson

Samantha Watson

Creative Writing



Even though school could be miserable at times, I would not take back or change the past four years if I could. I know how corny this sounds, but my life has been brightened by all of the people I have come to know and love here. In particular, this is what I will miss and what I loved about my time at School of the Arts: To start with, there is my Creative Writing class (and Mama Miles). I have always felt like they were my family at school. We have fought with one other, cried on each other's shoulders, and grown together. I will miss being with them everyday and hearing their writing. I will even miss making fun of Ms. Henry with them. I guess to sum up how much I will really miss them all I can say is, "Hola gang!"

There are also so many people that I am thankful to have in my life and so many dumb jokes that still make me laugh. Briefly, these are

Tony Linog

Visual Arts



Before I begin I would like to clarify that no combination of words could do any justice to the experience that I have had at the School of the Arts. Now that I've made myself clear, I'd also like to give a shout out to all my peeps...sup? This has all been so much fun, from shooting hornets in middle-school classrooms to getting silly string shot into my mouth by Raymond. We have all grown up a lot, at least out of our awkward looks during our pre-teen phase, (not referring to anyone in particular, seeing that I used to rock glasses and a bowl cut) but I can honestly say that I wouldn't rather have grown up with any other group of people. I am going to miss all of this too. I'll miss Madame Gremion, if that is how you spell her name, saying "ooh la la, hey, hey, s'il vous plait," or just chilling in Ms. Holden-Musser's class watching War of the Worlds. Yeah and making that movie in ninth grade, Orvin's class, with Nick and Matt. Dude that thing was good, like Hollywood status from directing to acting. Then again we did have an A list cast. Also Nick you remember that one time when you were at my house and you were like running and... just kidding, but these past seven years have been crazy fun. Academic achievements have been pretty cool too I guess, winning that speech was fun, kudos Mrs. Bronk, you get full credit. But you know, after all is said and done, there is just one mystery that I have never been able to solve; how the heck does Francisco get away with sleeping in class? Dude I've been trying to figure this out for the longest time, years literally. If anyone has an answer please feel free to shout it out when you read this, it's totally cool, everyone talks to themselves. Also I'd like to remind everyone that I am still the reigning champion alpha male of awesomeness, uh God Don, because I think that I've gotten about a thousand one hundred and thirty four monocle/spectacle lay down defeats, so in your face posers. Get off my level cuz my g-status is way high. One of the biggest things I'll miss is that double early out, boy that's a great thing. Going to Chick-Fil-a with Sarah and Sky. It would also be slack of me if I didn't mention her, so Alex these seven years have been wonderful love. Don't freak out, you at least deserve to be eternalized by my senior essay that so many people will read. Other than that, which barely taps into the whole picture, I guess a thank you is deserved for some folks... so thanks. And to the seniors have fun in college. I thought about using one hundred and twenty something of these words to write all the seniors names but decided against it so bummer. That mammy is ticious? Lord Durango out.

some of my favorite people and best memories of the past four years. Katie Vinson and my whippy (this sounds worse than it is, I promise). Rooftops, docks, and abandoned houses with Aubrey and Katie. Watching in disgust as Ms. Henry belly danced in Savannah. Charlotte tutoring me in French. Wheat thin. Katie throwing her script and screaming obscenities at the top of her lungs at Ms. Henry. Feeling bad about Julia's mom. Playing bloody knuckles with Francisco. Writing sarcastic letters with Darbie in psychology. Taylor, Linda Goodman, and Coco. Teen Wolf at eleven o'clock. Indie McJiggles, my little blueberry, munchkin (you know who you are...). Watching Steven and Raymond almost kiss as they tried to pass a lifesaver. So many moments with Chris that I don't even know where to begin. Richard. Riverrfront Park after the Senior Parade. Young Wil.

There are so many more memories, but I know I can't list them all. Before I end, I just want to congratulate my whole class. You are all amazing people, and I have loved getting to know everyone. This has been entirely too sappy, but I'll miss you guys! Good luck!

Saray Smalls

Piano



Do you remember your first day at SOA? For me, it is one memory I will never forget. As an eighth grader, I walked into Mrs. Castle's homeroom. One of the first people I met was Keturah Thomas. Immediately I thought, "What kind of a name is that?" Her stand-offish attitude let me know that we would not be friends (BOY WAS I WRONG). Later, I entered Mrs. Benson's piano class only to find both Keturah Thomas and Sha-ri Jenkins. They laughed and giggled while I sat waiting for instruction. Although we were all in the same major, we did not get along well.

After a strange turn of events, I stepped out of my comfort zone: I asked Keturah if I could walk with her to major. We walked down the sidewalk in silence, but our silence was golden. After that, Keturah and I became inseparable. We changed seats in our classes just so we could sit next to each other and loudly sang our favorite songs on the bus. In May of 2005, I went through a difficult family situation. Luckily, Keturah was there for me; she cried with me and let me know that everything would be alright. From that moment on, I knew she was definitely my best friend. We all made our way into ninth grade. Our Jazz piano class allowed us to participate in different activities all over Charleston. This gave us time to learn

more about each other. We told jokes, created catchphrases, and had our own personal parties in Mr. Clarke's class; we were the three blind mice. In tenth grade, our classes got harder. I can distinctly remember crying during piano because I had a C on my report card. My two best friends came to my rescue. We went to the bathroom where they reminded me that this one C would not determine whether or not I got into college. They told me jokes that made me laugh so hard that I forgot (well almost forgot) about getting a C. Along with school, or personal lives began to suffer. Keturah went to Virginia, I dealt with some harsh realities concerning my dad, and Sha-ri dealt with some family issues. Although we were all one different pages, we were still in the same chapter. We remained inseparable. (11th grade will remain the unspoken year). We entered our senior year where the Trio was born. Realizing that this would be our last year together, we told more jokes, created more catchphrases and spent more time together. Basically, I just want Keturah and Sha-ri to know that I truly love them. I really don't know what I am going to do without you guys in college. Sha-ri, I am really going to miss making fun of you and depending on you to side with me instead of Keturah. You have showed me that determination is the key to success. Keturah, I would have never thought that we would be friends. You taught me to stand up for myself. You are a "Double Geekburger with cheese." Thank-you guys for always being there. You all are the sisters that I always wanted and finally got. I love ya'll so much.

Zachariah Taylor

Band



My junior year was very interesting due to the mix of very hard classes (cough... Dr. Price!), getting my class ring, going to the prom, and realizing that I only had one more year of high school left. The best thing that popped in my life, though, was my English III teacher Mr. McDivitt. When I first met this scruffy bearded guy, I thought that I'd easily pass this class due to him being the new teacher. I met him during band camp in the summer and we had an interesting conversation. We started talking, the usual greeting stuff, and then I asked him what he wanted me to learn by the end of the year. He looked at me with a stern face and said, "I see potential in you, but only you can tell me what you learned." So for the whole year I hated this guy's guts, never wanted to do work, and felt that he was the worst teacher ever. Our class went over stories that I thought didn't make sense, like "Their Eyes Were Watching God" or "Iron Mills", and "The Secret Life of Bees." In

the end, though, he would teach me a lesson that I couldn't forget. While we were reading these stories, we would do things like projects on places that have child labor or tell what we thought about a book that we had to read during silent reading. I was so sick of 100 minutes of this nothingness! So one day I confronted him, around the end of the year, and asked him why I didn't learn anything while being in the class the whole year. So he asked me what I thought about child labor, and to back up my statement. So I told him that due to the problems they're having in Haiti, Sudan, China, etc. Due to child labor it should. I argued that it may help the nation because of the extra work, but I still believed that it shouldn't be legal. Then he asked me what I learned, but I didn't understand so I didn't reply. He then asked me about all the stories we read and how I liked them or didn't like them. So again I told him what I thought and without him asking, I backed my statement with proof from books that I'd studied countless of times. Finally after about an hour of talking, he asked what I learned, and I understood by the previous argument that I was able to back every statement. So I answered: I learned how to think!

Band

The School of the Arts Band Major continued to build on its tradition of excellence. As in the past, The Wind Ensemble and Jazz Ensemble had their share of successful performances. The SOA Jazz Ensemble had another successful “Jump, Jive and Wail” show at the Charleston Visitors Center. The Jazz Ensemble performed over three hours of music, and a huge crowd attended this event, which has become the “Homecoming Dance” for SOA. “A Swingin’ Good Time”, the newest event for the SOA Jazz, was held at the Blackbaud Headquarters on Daniel Island and was a big hit. The SOA Wind Ensemble has again been recognized as one of the premiere concert organizations among high school band in the state. The Wind Ensemble gave a sparkling performance at the State Concert Festival, performing “Cartoon”, a musical homage to the old “Tom and Jerry” and “Looney Tunes” cartoon music.

This year, the Band has also expanded the chamber music part of the program, especially in the Concert Band class. Because of the success of the chamber music work in the beginning of the year, Concert Band members increased their individual performance levels as well. As a result, this ensemble participated in the state Concert Festival for the first time, earning a “Superior” rating! Next year, the Symphonic Band will be adding the chamber music component to their curriculum, with more diverse ensembles and a wider variety of music to perform. Many individuals earned honors at the local, state and national level. This year SOA had the most students selected to Region and All-State band yet. The members of the Jazz Ensemble continue to distinguish themselves at the state and regional level. The SOA Jazz had more students selected to the Piccolo Spoleto All-Star Jazz ensemble than any other local school. The most important goal of the Band Department is to teach students that perfection is a goal that is always desired, but never achieved. We care about quality and doing our best. It’s more enjoyable when everyone is part of something that is the best it can be, than in a group that accepts “good enough”. If you can handle performing difficult music in front of your peers and the general public, a job interview will be a cinch!

Creative Writing

Words, words, words! 2008-2009 has been filled with more words, both spoken and written, than hairs on my head or numbers in Pi. Students have recounted reveries and revelations, experiences and expectations, lies and legends. And it was a year of firsts. For the first time the Creative Writing department added two men to its ranks, Sean Scapellato and Rutledge Hammes.

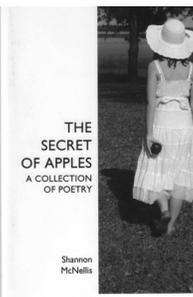
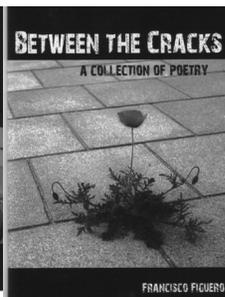
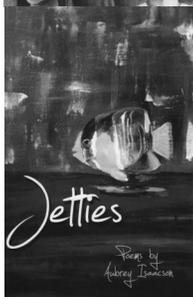
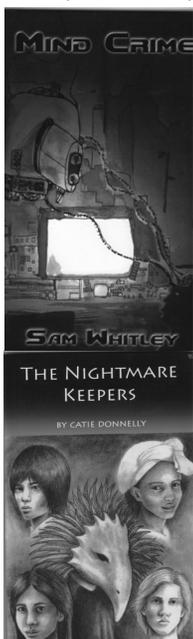
WordFest, a marathon literary reading, was introduced at the Mt. Pleasant Barnes and Noble. And finally, two sections of Senior Thesis were offered and culminated with the publication of 14 books. The 6th grade began their year with poetry and nonfiction. Ms. Miles brought students on the ferry to Bull Island where they spent the day hiking across the island and down the beach to discover sights and sounds to inspire poetry. Later in the semester guests were treated to an evening of poetry in a coffeehouse atmosphere. Many students read from their novels in verse inspired by Sharon Creech’s *Love That Dog*. In addition, several 6th graders published poems in *A Celebration of Young Poets*. Second semester Mr. Rutledge Hammes introduced students to fiction and scriptwriting. 7th graders Creative Writers focused on poetry with Dr. Jessica Bundschuh during the first semester. They accompanied the 6th grade on the Bull Island trip and shared the stage of the Black Box for the fall literary reading. More recently, the 7th grade has been writing plays and stories, as well as working on building scenes with the visual artists. 8th Grade Creative Writing began the year as dancing zombies in an original *Art Smart* production. They also took to the stage for a reading at Kudu Coffee House where they presented excerpts from their short stories. Second semester 8th graders hunkered down for intensive writing of poetry and nonfiction. 9th Grade Poetry Workshop began the year with extensive reading and learned a new form of poetry every week. They presented a Literary Reading at Monday Night Blues at East Bay Coffee House and could often be found munching Dr. Bundschuh’s homemade scones with jelly and cream.

During the second semester, 9th grade Creative Writers studied short stories and collaborated with the Visual Artists to bring art and writing together and visited downtown Charleston to work on character descriptions. The wayward 10th Grade Creative Writers learned the art and craft of scriptwriting. During the second semester, 10th grade Creative Writers studied a variety of forms in Nonfiction Workshop. Students wrote essays exploring their personal flaws, and in addition, wrote people and places essays where they inhabited locales as diverse as SOA Science Night and a Saturday at the Mellow Mushroom. During the first semester, 11th grade Place and Gender students studied the role of setting. As part of their study of place, they read the novel *Rich In Love* and visited with the author Josephine Humphreys on John’s Island. In Finding Your Voice 11th graders studied the works of several Noble Prize winning authors. Students identified the qualities that define an author’s voice and tried their hands at non-traditional plot structures; in addition, they created pieces dealing with current social conflicts. Publication of the seniors’ books during the month of May was the highlight of the year for senior writers, but before they ever set foot in the SOA’s front door they wrote the first ten pages of their books during the summer. Writing and revising, mentor meetings, and finally, uploading and editing filled the fall. All of this work represents a great deal of time spent tapping on those computer keys and the Creative Writers deserve a round of applause for their dedication and love of the craft of writing.

Regional Scholastic winners included: Sydney Cowart, Maya Novak-Cogdell, Shelby Studebaker, Courtland Sutton, Emily Thomas, Sierra Debrow, Will Dodge, Savannah Miller, Cayli Crawford, Hadley Preganz, Sam Rames, Katie Ridgway, Shaless Robinson, Haley Dixon, Sylvester Rodd, Rebecca Witcher, Rebecca Forman, Y’Danair Niehrah, Alek Mihok, Kiante Chapman, Lauren DiNicola, Katie Drennan, Allison Hilton, Caroline Rogers, Wesley Snell, Dorothy Behre, Aubrey Isaacson, Shannon McNellis, Catie Donnelly, Forrest Putnam and Shanequa Sanders-West.

National winners were invited to Carnegie Hall in NYC to accept their awards. They included: Sydney Cowart, Maya Novak-Cogdell, Will Dodge, Sam Rames, Aubrey Isaacson and Catie Donnelly.

Mrs. Miles was chosen to introduce keynote speaker Elie Wiesel at the ceremony. Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor, is a Nobel prize-winning author whose works include *Night*. Mrs. Miles commented, “This job has taken me on a journey that I never expected. It’s a great honor to be included in the ceremony.



Dance



Dance Department 2008-09

2008-09 was an exciting year for the SOA Dance Department. The students danced in 2 fully staged performances featuring faculty choreography. In December they performed *The Nutcracker SOA Style*, a creative interpretation of the classic. The spring performance, *New, Borrowed and Blue*, showcased a rich range of dance styles.

Senior Thesis began the year with an evening of solos. In December they performed thematic pieces and in April they performed group pieces. The students will be finishing up with a formal performance in May.

Ashlyn Spitz, 7th grade dance major and senior Amanda Nelson won 1st place in the Reflections Contest for choreography.

During National Dance Week in April, the dance department held the annual Dance Day with local dance professionals offering classes in a variety of dance genres. The 8th grade dance majors and junior composition students performed during the week.

21 dance majors attended the Regional HS Dance Festival in Virginia. The festival had numerous performances as well as dance classes all day.



Piano

This year piano students participated in 2 classical piano recitals and played for various school and community functions. In February there were 12 piano students that performed on the Honors Recital at the SCMEA Convention. These students were chosen based on their outstanding performance at the Solo & Ensemble Festival last April. In March, 23 piano students participated in the Achievement Day Competition at Charleston Southern University. We had many that received “outstanding” ratings with 6 chosen to play on the Honors Recital. This past April, 39 students participated in the Solo & Ensemble Festival at Lander University. These students received high ratings. Fifteen students were selected to perform on the Honors Recital at the 2010 SCMEA Convention.

Seven seniors performed senior thesis recitals May 13-15, 2009. They were Trey Cooper, Kevin Snodgrass, Saray Smalls, Keturah Thomas, Sha-ri Jenkins, Charlotte Jenkins, and Penelope Murray. The 8th grade piano students will be assisting the Band, Strings and Vocal majors by providing their piano skills on the piano and harp parts. The harp sound will be achieved using one of our new synthesizers. Gabrielle-Mae San Pedro will play the piano part. Sarah Brown, Amma Appiagyei-Dankah, and LaJoyce Jones will rotate performing the harp part. Joseph Riggs and Elizabeth Lucas will play in the Little Big Band, which is joined by 4 horns provided by Band. Tori Sandeno, Patrick McCarthy and Sarah Brown will be playing classical pieces in the Classical Piano Room. Sarah Donegan, Emi Landry, Kerrienne Stewart, and Hayden Strable will play in a Jazz Combo in The Jazz Piano Room. They will be joined by a string bassist from Strings and a flautist and oboist from Band.

Orchestra

The orchestra got off to a strong start in August with after school chamber rehearsals. In September, the high school cellists attended SC Cello Choir at Furman University. Late in the month, tapping for the Tri-M Music Honors Society was completed with performances by the inductees in early October. Also in October, Orchestra students auditioned for Lowcountry Region Orchestra, were inducted into Tri-M Music Honor Society, and began work on the music for The Wiz musical. November brought the annual oyster roast fundraiser, more afterschool rehearsals for The Wiz, and Lowcountry Region Orchestra weekend at West Ashley High School. Congratulations to these students for being accepted into Region orchestra:

Yasmin Alvarez Garcia, Daniel Anthony, Jordan Baer, Daniel Baer, Claire Bailey, Hayley Bell, Paul Cain, Hannah Chilcote, Kelly Daniels, Faith Davis, Sean Fowler, Ryan Gilmore, Catherine Gilmore, Katie Grantham, Rhiannon Heck, Jonathan Heyward, Michelle Hillenius, Bethany Iversen, Jessica James, Darbie Keck, Megan Lewis, Anna Mathias, Victoria Milligan, Mary Claire Moser, Brianna Murray, Alex Nickell, Melissa Payne, Jonathan Pizarro, Bradley Poplin, Josh Rodriguez, Miki Sugimoto, Jill Suter, Peter Webb, Phillip Werner, Robert Widlowski, and Julia Willson

In December, the chamber ensemble performed for the rising 9th grade open house, the Arion Society luncheon at the Charleston Country Club, and the orchestras performed their winter concert at West Ashley High School auditorium. Rehearsals for The Wiz continued through the month. After a well-deserved break, school resumed in January and The Wiz was the major focus after end-of-semester juries. The annual trip to Appalachian State University for the side-by-side rehearsal and skiing was the perfect way to unwind after the musical performances. February brought Joshua Bell to the Gaillard auditorium by the Charleston Concert Association. The chamber strings performed for the District 4 Teacher of the Year luncheon and 8 high school string students attended All-State Orchestra weekend at Converse College in Spartanburg. Congratulations to these All-State musicians:

Daniel Anthony, Daniel Baer, Claire Bailey, Hannah Chilcote, Jonathan Heyward, Michelle Hillenius, Megan Lewis, and Alex Nickell

In March, the orchestras performed their annual Masterworks Concert: Mostly Mendelssohn and traveled to Westview Primary school to participate in the Arts Week Celebration. April brought Solo & Ensemble Festival and in May, the Senior Thesis Concerto Concert. The orchestras will wind up their year in June by sending a chamber ensemble to play at the senior awards ceremony and performing in the orchestra pit at graduation. Congratulations to all of our seniors! Everyone else...have a wonderful summer and keep practicing.

Theatre

This has been a whirlwind year for theatre. The high school program changed a lot this year! Now we are doing a show each quarter which is challenging but rewarding. We started off the year with *Our Town* performed by the freshmen, *Memorandum* and *Twelfth Night* by the 10th and 11th grade, and ended with the seniors performing scenes from the *Cherry Orchard*. Besides these performances, the students also prepared various show cases that highlighted class work. Some major highlights were the Theatre Olympics, where ALL the classes showed their spirit, and our annual trip to SETC (South Eastern Theatre Conference) where we very own improv troupe, “The Gnomes” showed their stuff. Along with that, the Gnomes also did over night trips to perform at Travellers’ Rest and Lexington. Great out reach and great fun. The seniors also took part in Scholastic art and writing competition and the Archibald Rutledge scholarship competition. We took first and second place in the Archibald Rutledge. Senior Thesis took on major changes this year providing MANY opportunities for performances. They took on the challenge to create a solo piece, a group piece and a practicum play. They were responsible for acting, directing, designing and of course writing these pieces. All were extremely successful. It is bittersweet to watch them move on from all their hard work.

Middle school was also quite busy this year, starting off with the middle school touring show *Homework Eats Dog*. Many 7th and 8th grade students were able to stretch their acting chops. Along with physical theatre shows and stage combat shows those students truly kept moving. The 6th grade tried their hand at writing monologues and scenes and working with Shakespeare. The 7th grade worked on a show about Greek myths. All middle school theatre students toured stage spaces and acted in the annual Tunnel of Love, and recognized each other at our annual picnic. The 8th grade had a AMAZING showing with Art Smart and *Midsummer Nights Dream* performing the hundreds and closing the year up nicely. We are proud of all the work and accomplishments our students have made. For those who are moving on break a leg. we are proud of you! for those staying we are looking forward to next year!

Successful year for High School Vocal

By David Sass



This year was quite an impressive one for the SOA High School Vocal Department. In addition to their annual Fall, Holiday and Spring Concerts, the students swelled their lungs and sang their way through some very prestigious events and competitions. In November, forty-nine singers were chosen for the All-State Chorus, the most from any school in the state, and another thirteen were among 125 students from the nation chosen for the National Kodaly Choir. Amelia Nixon and Brantley Rogers performed solos for the Saint-Saens Oratorio with the Trinity Choir in December. Come February, sixty-five vocalists were selected for All-County Chorus, while the Concert Choir provided entertainment for the Charleston County Retired Teachers Association, and later spent three days of intense performances at the Young Americans Workshops/Performance at Wando. In March, the thirteen lucky students in the National Kodaly Choir performed in Washington, D.C., where Brantley Rogers was chosen as the National Choir Soloist. The forty-nine All-State singers sang at Winthrop University, and the month ended with a grand concert by the whole department in the State Choral Festival in Columbia. The high school's vocalists sang with Brad Moranz and the Amazing Grace Inspirational Gospel Show at the Charleston Music Hall in May. Finally, the senior vocalists performed their thesis recital at Westminster Presbyterian Church on May 18. Way to go Mr. Rogers, Ms. Slenk and the SOA vocalists for another great year!



Best Wishes Mr Davis from your friends at *Applause*

Mr. Davis, thanks for always being so supportive of the Applause and its staff members! –Lizzie Caulder

Mr. Davis, all of SOA will miss you, but especially the Applause. Thank you for being our most dedicated reader! –Dorothy Behre

Mr. Davis, you have always been there to lend a open ear or offer a kind word. Thanks for your constant support of the Applause. –Kimberly

Thanks for always greeting me with a smile and a “good morning” every day. Also thank you for always supporting me in everything I do. I will definitely miss you next year. –Chelsea

Thank you for you kind patronage and helping the school for all these years! We're grateful that you've been there. –Sam Whitley

Mr. Davis, through wind, rain and sunshine you were always there. You were the first person I saw at school in the morning and the last before I left. Thank you for everything, you will be missed! –Deanna Kerley

You have a fabulous pedometer, and thank you for always waving in the morning, it makes my day a little bit brighter. Jamming out to Akon's “Right Now” at the bus loop was quite intense. We'll miss you! –Alek Mihok

Mr. Davis, you're the coolest dude in the world. Period. –David Sass

Mr. Davis you are the nicest person at SOA, and I will really miss hearing you say, “Hey, how are you?” on the way to lunch. – K. Chaney Long

Thank you for signing my note at the bus loop, and for always being smiley! –Becca Forman

Remember when I almost hit you with my car? Good times... –Tanya
You have been a tremendous inspiration to me over the past decade as an administrator, friend and fellow-runner. Have fun with your grandkids! –Dr. Cusatis

Junior Lauren DiNicola stays healthy running track

By Wes Snell

Junior Lauren DiNicola competed for her home school, Wando, at the South Carolina Girl's State Track Championship on Friday, May 15 and Saturday, May 16. Lauren placed fourth in the 3200 meter run and second in the 4 x 800 meter relay team. DiNicola's relay team holds the Wando record for the 4 x 800 meter relay and DiNicola holds the record for the 3200 meter. She ran

the 3200m in a swift 11:47 at the Lower State qualifier and again at the state meet. At the state championship, Lauren posted a personal split time of 2:23 in the relay. "I have a really good relationship with my team," Lauren said, "We're all very competitive but we're still



Junior Lauren DiNicola runs track for Wando.

best friends." The competition was held in at Richland High School near Columbia. Lauren commented on her passion for running, "It's good for clearing your head and staying healthy. I don't know what I'd do without running."

High school students represent SOA through soccer

By Wes Snell

SOA's Aubrey Crawford, Cat Bowler, Hillary Ferguson, Kim Johnson, and Leila Gorstein finished their soccer seasons with their heads held high.

Crawford, Bowler, Ferguson, and Johnson advanced to the South Carolina Girl's soccer semifinals with the West Ashley High School's 4A soccer team, the Raptors. The Raptors placed first in their region at the end of the season with seven wins and one loss. They beat the White Knoll Tim-



Junior Leila Gorstein plays soccer for Wando.

berwolves of Lexington 3-1 in an intense first-round playoff match that carried into overtime. They then beat Carolina Forest from Myrtle Beach in the second round in a shutout match with seven goals. Then they played Summerville and won 2-1, but lost to Wando in the Lower State finals 4-0. "Our advantage is speed," said Crawford, "We have a lot of really fast players. Everyone is very athletic." Crawford and Bowler are midfielders, Ferguson plays forward and

defense and Johnson serves as a forward. "It gets really hard at times," said Crawford. "Balancing practice and homework is especially difficult. It's all about good time management." Junior Leila Gorstein and her home school Wando beat Conway 13-0 in the first round of playoffs and went on to the state championship, but lost to Upper State champions Mauldin High School 1-2 after an otherwise perfect season. It was the first game the Wando girls' varsity team had lost in two years. Gorstein, who



Junior Cat Bowler plays soccer for West Ashley

has been playing soccer for over a decade, was center midfielder and outside midfielder for her team. "[Soccer] is a game you have to put your whole

heart into," she said, "and so you come out of a game feeling either complete distress or complete joy." Though there may have been a mixture of both for all of SOA's soccer players, they all have a reason to feel satisfied with their performance.



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WHICH SENIOR HAS INSPIRED YOU THE MOST AND WHY?

Compiled by Alek Mihok and DeAnna Kerley



"Wilfred Rivers, because he's my brother, and he teaches me a lot."

Kenneth Breabham, 6th Visual Arts



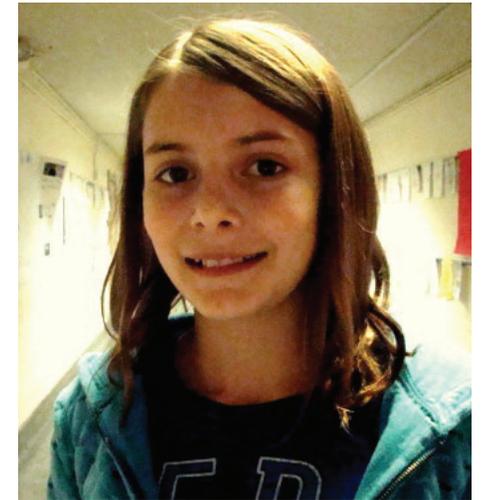
"Elizabeth Griffin, because she's taught me a lot about the violin."

Cynthia Schlakker, 6th Strings



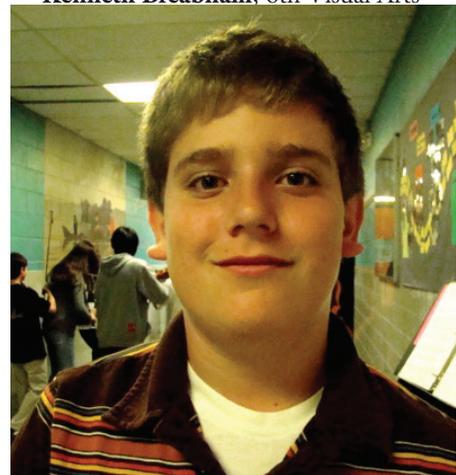
"Mark Reed, because I'm related to him and he's a really good person."

Brandon Kerr, 7th Band



"Samantha Wilcutt, because she's very hardworking."

Ashtyn Liserna, 7th Dance



"Chris Richardson, because he just got an amazing scholarship and it shows that if you try hard, you can do anything."

Ren Fish, 8th Strings



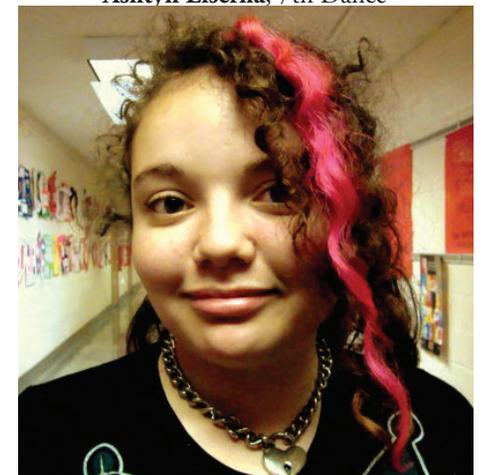
"Darbie Keck, because she's very dedicated to what she does."

Veronica Dales, 8th Strings



"Big Zach, because he's a good football player."

Zachary Sharpe, 9th Band



"Marie League, because she's taught me to be a good and nice person."

Catherine Santos, 9th Visual Arts



"Lamar Hunter, because he's a unique individual."

Larissa Hollabaugh, 10th Band



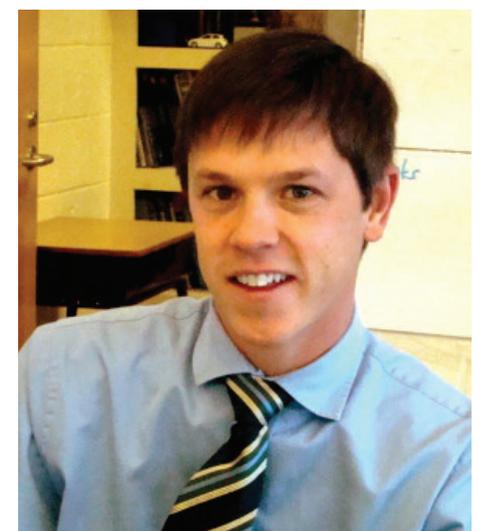
"Michael Horlbeck, because he has always inspired me to be 'da best'."

Britanny Hamm, 11th Dance



"Tanya Lewandowski, because she makes me feel tall."

Chris Maher, 11th Visual Arts



"Larissa Clarke, because she's artistic, strong academically, and takes time to serve the community."

Mr. Lindgren, High School Science