

# Applause

Volume 17, Number 8

School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC  
soa-applause.com

June 2016



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**PEARL**

Colleen Aponte

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Fred Horton

Kristina Kerr

Emily Lanter

Christian Leprettre

Abby LeRoy

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Ari Levine

Collin Lloyd

Sharon Mahoney

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## Letter from the Editor

Julie Frye

Dear Readers,

It's been a good year, but all good things must come to an end. Over this year, we've put out eight issues with 276 pages. It seems like so much and so little at the same time. And yet, here we are. Nine months since the start of school and we're all graduating. Bittersweet.

Anyway, this last 64-page special edition of *Applause* has a lot of great content that you are craving. Every year, we get each senior to write an essay about SOA (35-49) and answer a survey about their time here (50-62). We have exclusive interviews with the valedictorian and salutatorian on pages 7 and 8. We've also got senior thesis reviews and major year in reviews on 10-18. Want to know where the seniors are going to college? Check out page 5. Want some opinions? There's our final editorial (and our final opinion piece by Jay Rode) on 20.

Thank you to all those parents who sent in congratulations (22-34). Oh, and page 32? Those are the *Applause* senior superlatives.

I've really enjoyed being your editor. Thanks for a great year, everyone.

Jakob Lazzaro, Editor-In-Chief



# Applause

since 1999, the official student

publication of

## School of the Arts

*Founded in 1995 by Rose Maree Myers*

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## Recap: Ten important moments from this school year

The first week of school became the last week in the blink of an eye. This year was an interesting one for SOA, both on and off campus, so **Jada Orr** took a look at a few of the highlights from this school year.

### 1. "NotADistractioN"

Earlier this year, SOA's Feminism Club spoke up about CCSD's dress code policy. Students all over campus joined in a silent protest by wearing red A's in reference to "The Scarlet Letter." The student action gained attention from *The Post and Courier*, *The Huffington Post*, *Teen Vogue*, *Mashable*, and various other media outlets.

### 2. Pauletta Washington visits SOA

The wife of actor Denzel Washington, singer and actress Pauletta Washington performed on campus this year to honor the recent victims of the tragedies that have taken place in Charleston.

### 3. "End It" day

Middle school students took the initiative to raise awareness of modern day slavery by wearing red X's on their hands. Images were posted across social media under #enditmovement.

### 4 Spirit week's character day

This year, students came dressed up as various characters, celebrities, and more. From Kanye and Kim to Nauruto, SOA students went all out!

### 5. The junior vs senior powderpuff game

Ready, set, hut! The junior ladies played hard in the annual powderpuff game, but the seniors could not be beat. However, it's no question that the cheerleaders stole the show!

### 6. The SOA fashion show

SOA showed off its fashion scene during Charleston Fashion Week. Fashion majors created collections based off the theme "things that changed the world." In addition, there was an after party following the runway show. A great show indeed!

### 7. The SOA poetry slam

This year Mr. Foley hosted a poetry slam and it was nothing less than great. Students wrote original poems on various topics they chose and presented them in front of a live audience.

### 8. The Jefferson Service Club's food drive

SOA students are always in service. Our SOA Jeff Club seeks to go beyond their responsibilities for the community, and a good example of that was the annual food drive.

### 9. Ayoka Lucas visits the SOA Fashion department

Ayoka Lucas, fashion designer and mother of SOA alum Khari Lucas, stopped by the Fashion department to give advice and talk about her personal experiences.

### 10. Busy Being Born

Thirty students participated in this concert, a celebration of Bob Dylan's 75th birthday, held in the Rose Maree Myers Theater. *Applause* sponsored the show and the proceeds went to the Rose Maree Myers Scholarship.

**CCSD Board Scholar Certificate**- Must have a four year GPA of 4.25 or better. 54 class of 2016 seniors earned this award.

**Palmetto Fellows Scholarship**- Score at least 1200 SAT with a 3.5 GPA or a 1400 SAT with a 4.0 GPA. 16 class of 2016 seniors qualified for this award.

**Academic Honor Award Recognition (AHA)**- Receive at least a 'B' in every course from 9-12th grade and an SAT score of 1400 or above. 13 class of 2016 seniors will receive this special diploma.

**School of the Arts has been named the second-best high school in South Carolina and the 349th best in the nation by *US News and World Report*. Congratulations!**

## Optimists Club awards three seniors for exemplary essays

by Jay Rode

Seniors Christian Leprettre, Abigail Reeves, and Georgia Hunt participated in the Optimists International essay writing competition, hosted by the West Ashley Optimist Club. This year's prompt was "Lead by example: fact or fiction?" Christian Leprettre took first place in the region with Abigail Reeves and Georgia Hunt tying for second place.

The Optimist International is an organization of local clubs focused on developing a positive outlook in children's lives and in the community.

## Say goodbye to Mr. Smyth

by Nick Huss

Bill Smyth, one of SOA's most influential teachers, is retiring this year. Mr. Smyth became interested in teaching 38 years ago when he was a student at the University of South Carolina Law School. One of his professors told him about an available teaching job, believing that he would be a good fit. Mr. Smyth did not know if he wanted to switch majors and change directions, but after thinking upon it he accepted the job at Heathwood Hall in Columbia.

"It was like a fork in the road: two totally different paths," he said. "I chose the one that I thought would be better for me."

Mr. Smyth has had quite a varied career since that first job at Heathwood Hall. He has taught at six other schools including Wando. He has taught Psychology, World History, Current Events, Arts and Humanities, Piano, Law, Sixth Grade History, and set up internships. One of Smyth's biggest education achievements are the books he has published through his Arts and Humanities course. Each student in the class writes pages on a specific topic of history and the book is published and sent to the Library of Congress at the end of the school year. Smyth has also spent 13 years of his career working for the CCSD offices and has been the head of all social studies and all foreign language courses.

As a fairly young teacher, Mr. Smyth took it upon himself to be almost like a big brother to his students. For example, he once ran an outdoors club: members went biking, rafting, skiing, and did other activities together.

"Some of my best teachers in high school were the younger ones that could relate to the students," he said. "That's who I wanted to be."

Even though he is retiring, Mr. Smyth will still be heavily involved in SOA's activities. He will continue to run the internship he started at SOA and will also remain a member of the Friends of SOA Foundation. Mr. Smyth also plans on pursuing his passion of travelling the world. He's planning on travelling to Japan for a month and to Cape Town, South Africa.

Thanks for all you have done for SOA, Mr. Smyth.



Jay Rode

"I chose GIA because as opposed to jewelry design programs at SCAD or RISD, GIA offers an in depth look at not only gemstones, but also how and where they form, how they impact the economy and why they are important."

**-Amy Walsh**

"I've always wanted to take a gap year in Israel, and going to Yeshiva Orayta was the obvious choice! I am beyond excited to spend a year in the land that I love and learn in a classically Jewish environment."

**-Ari Levine**

"I like the fact that Berklee College of Music is the place where some of the best musicians go to school and that I get to study with some of the best Jazz musicians of our time. I can not wait to go there and I only hope it exceeds my expectations."

"I'm really excited to go to GMU, because they have a really good study abroad program, and I feel that studying abroad will further my education and knowledge of the world around me."

**-Zach Gilbert**

"I'm pretty excited to attend Universidad Nacional Autónoma due to the fact I'll be exposed to a different place other than my hometown."

**-Daniela Garcia Desa**

"I am super excited for college, I chose Pratt because I fell in love with New York and the school and they have a really good and well respected program! Without SOA I never would have continued to pursue art, and I'm really excited to see what happens in the future."

**-Copeland Barrett**

"I'm really excited to be going to Northwestern. It's in a great location and Medill is a fantastic journalism school. Evanston is a great college town that's only an hour on the train from Chicago, which is also a really cool city. I'm looking forward to exploring both places."

**-Jakob Lazzaro**

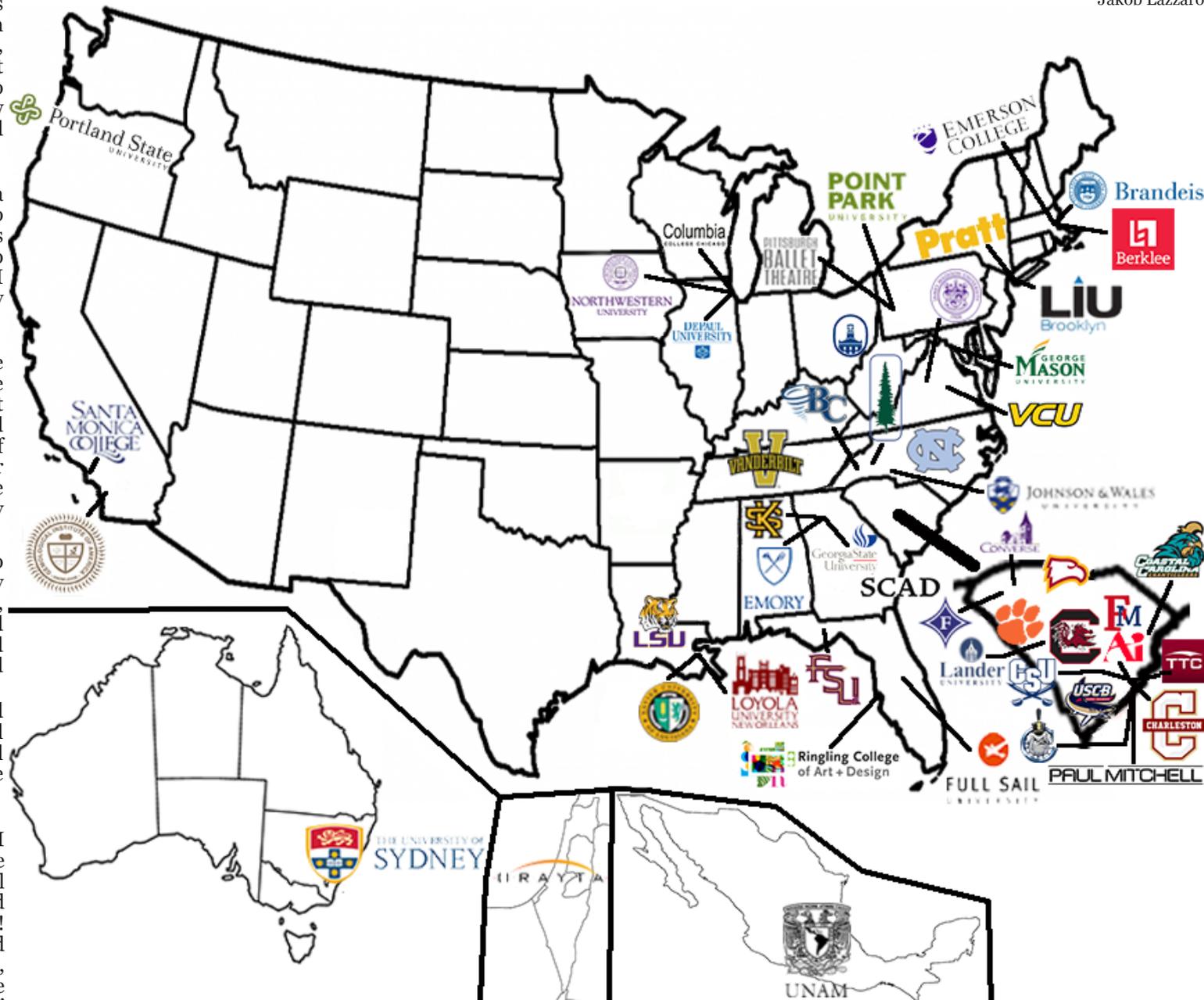
"Since I've attended primarily white schools my entire life, I decided that I wanted a change. Historically Black Colleges or Universities have a completely different atmosphere in which I'm excited to immerse myself. I am thrilled to start becoming more in-touch with my culture. Xavier, in addition to being an HBCU, has an excellent science department and leads the nation with the most African American STEM and medical graduates. Though majoring in biochemistry will be time-consuming and probably considerably frustrating, I'm excited to begin this life-changing journey in The Big Easy."

**-Alex Hepburn**

"I chose Emory because it has one of the most outstanding creative writing departments in the nation. Not only are you taught by previous US poet laureate Natasha Trethewey, but you also get perspectives from people Pulitzer Prize winners as well as notable characters such as Jericho Brown. Aside from academics, it is medium-sized school with a wide range of people, it's only a short drive from central Atlanta (which also means music is awesome) and it has a great underground arts vibe. SOA creative writing has had the greatest affect on my decision. I hope to write for magazines in the future, and the classes I've taken as a high schooler as well as the classes offered at Emory will give me all the tools I need to do so. And if you are considering Emory, they have a huge endowment because they own a lot of Coca Cola stocks, so you should definitely apply!"

**-Nicole Sadek**

"So, first of all, I want it to be clear that this dance program is not college. Even though going straight into this type of company environment is very common for ballet dancers, I've had a very hard time gaining enough confidence to tell people blatantly that I'm not going to college next year. The graduate program with Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre has gradually become the clear choice for me over the past year, though. I went to an intensive there last summer after my ballet instructor recommended it to me, and I fell in love with the people there and with the city itself. After the two weeks of the intensive, they invited me to join the graduate program when I felt ready. Being at SOA has helped me realize that I physically can't live a life without pursuing dance. It has also allowed me to feel comfortable about shamelessly expressing my passion for dance; the fact that I get to interact with others who understand what it's like to have a literal addiction to their art helps me remember each day why I work so hard for a job that will leave me financially broke, physically in pain, and out of the work by the time I'm 50. At SOA, people get it; they don't question my decision to tackle the challenge of becoming a professional ballet dancer, they understand the feeling of waking up early and going into the studio for ballet class. This is something that brings me more joy than I can convey, and I can't wait for the day that it becomes my job. Enrolling with PBT is the next step for me in getting to live that life some day"



"UNC Chapel Hill has always been my dream school and I'm so excited to be a Tarheel!" **-Carly Edwards**

"I'm really excited to be going to Northwestern. It's in a great location and Medill is a fantastic journalism school. Evanston is a great college town that's only an hour on the train from Chicago, which is also a really cool city. I'm looking forward to exploring both places."

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## Narrative 4 begins: Creative Writers participate in unique story-sharing program

Jay Rode

by Jay Rode

Sophomore, junior, and senior Creative Writers recently participated in Narrative 4, writer Colum McCann's program designed to introduce diverse strangers to one another in an effort to breed a greater understanding and appreciation of differences and of storytelling.

The students visited North Charleston High School, or NCHS, before Spring Break to meet their partners, who were randomly selected members of North Charleston's Advanced Placement Literature classes. After the break, the students returned to swap stories. An SOA student would tell a NCHS student a story, and then the NCHS student had to retell the story as if it they were the SOA student and vice versa.

Students took this assignment and ran in many different directions. NCHS senior Anjelica retold SOA senior Hannah Kelly's story of her many attempts for a driver's license, while SOA sophomore Jessica Bride shared NCHS sophomore Matthew Simmons' experience of being a bad student and acting out in sixth grade. SOA Senior JJ Goller's partner shared JJ's story of how he came out as transgender.

"I was incredibly surprised with how accepting the audience was," JJ said. "Adaijha was able to articulate what I could not put into words."

NCHS student Jaime Coakley, addressed her depression with her partner, SOA junior Aurelyn van Kirk.

"I wear this fake mask [of happiness]," Aurelyn, sharing Jamie's personal story, said. "So that one day, when I find real happiness, I can pretend I had it all along."

Teachers were not exempt from the exercise. Creative Writing teacher Beth Webb Hart shared NCHS AP Literature teacher Stephanie Doksa's tale of making assumptions about a neighbor's possible case of domestic violence. Not believing the neighbor's excuses, she soon after opened a pantry door into her head, giving herself a black eye. She realized that when others didn't believe her explanation we shouldn't be so quick to jump to assumptions.

The two schools hope to meet again during May, according to Creative Writing teacher F. Rutledge Hammes.

## Old, current, and new brought together at showcase

by Nick Huss

This past May, SOA's majors performed in the annual Spring Showcase. It was a night of food trucks and performances: a way for the public to enjoy a night out and see what each major has been doing. For example, the Vocal Department performed a number of pieces from their recent Music Down in My Soul concert.

Former alumni and teachers were also invited back to gather together and revisit old friends and teachers. Some members of SOA's first ever graduating class were in attendance. In addition, sixth grade orientation occurred simultaneously, giving future students a feel of what SOA is like.

Special thanks to Mr. Smyth and the Friends of SOA for putting on this great event. We hope to see you next year!



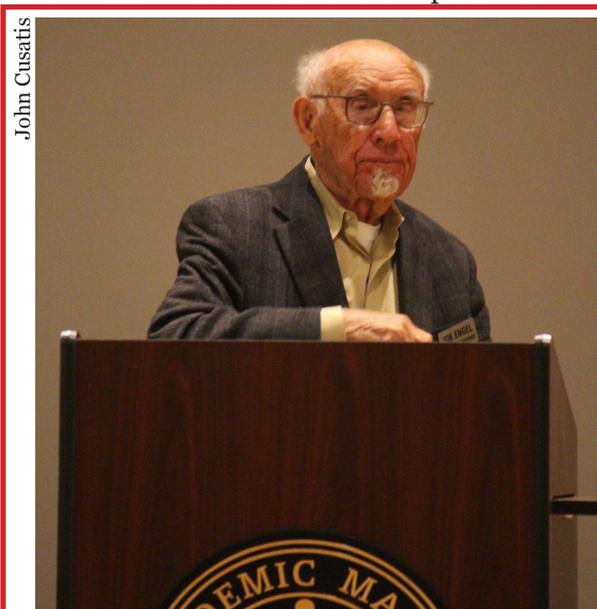
(Left to right) SOA Creative Writing teacher Mrs. Beth Webb Hart, former SOA Creative Writing teacher Mrs. Rene Miles, NCHS senior Natrese Dorsey, and SOA Creative Writing junior Sterling Windham clap as NCHS junior Mayra Lomelli-Garcia recounts Nick Scapellato's story about his sister.



NCHS senior Ira Anderson and SOA Creative Writing senior Vasantha Sambamurthi swap stories.



Left to right: Dr. John Cusatis, former SOA teacher Chris Ambrose, former SOA Assistant Principal Roy Davis, and former SOA teachers Terry Graves and Marge Cooper.



In April, local Holocaust survivors Joe Engle and Diny Adkins spoke at SOA. Joe Engle is pictured.

## Allie Durand: our valedictorian

SOA valedictorian Allie Durand will attend the Pittsburgh Ballet Theater School this fall. **Jay Rode** caught up with her.

**Jay Rode: Why did you decide to attend the Pittsburgh Ballet Theater School?**

**Allie Durand:** This fall, I'll be enrolling in Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School's Graduate Program; every day I will be taking ballet classes, learning repertoire, and working with various instructors with the purpose of reaching the highest level of technique possible. It's basically designed to prepare dancers for their transition into the workforce. After a few years, they could be offered a contract with Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre or they could choose to audition for other companies in hopes of receiving a job. I chose this option for a number of reasons: I first learned about the company itself from one of my ballet instructors as one of his old teachers, Dennis Marshall, is a director of the school. I was accepted into a PBT summer intensive called the "Company Experience" last summer, and I loved the program and was really drawn to the atmosphere while I was there. At the conclusion of the intensive, Mr. Marshall and another director invited me to enroll in the graduate program. This spring, I was in the city for the National High School Dance Festival with some other dance majors, and I continued to love the area the more time I spent there. In the past year, such a multitude of random connections to Pittsburgh through friends and family have been made that it kind of seems like that's God's plan for me right now. I am beyond thrilled to finally spend my days doing the thing I love most. I've never had the opportunity to spend every morning and afternoon training in the ballet studio instead of going to school. I hope that the time I get to spend working directly on dance instead of stressing about homework and losing sleep will allow me to improve more than I ever have been able. I've found that the difference between working early in the day after getting decent sleep and working after a day of academics and sleep deprivation is enormous, so next year I'll actually be able to devote the peak hours of the day to ballet. My ultimate goal in enrolling in this program is to earn a contract with a ballet company. I'm not set on a particular one as of now. I'd certainly love to work with PBT, but all I really care about is getting a secure job at a place that I enjoy. The ideal situation would be for me to end up in a medium-sized company in which I have a chance at promotion, because ballet dancers begin as apprentices or corps de ballet members and then progress to soloist and then principal/prima dancers.

**JR: How do you think your hard work at SOA will contribute to your post-high school plans?**

**AD:** I hope that the work I've done at SOA has helped me to grow not only in my major, but in important life skills as well. This year, I've learned the importance of keeping a detailed schedule and of balancing the energy I spend in all that I take on, and I have a bad habit of taking on a lot. As for dance, I have definitely improved as a result of the fact that I get to dance both at school and at the studio outside of class. My thesis has also helped me discover my passion for choreography. I've realized that I definitely want to continue creating dance and possibly pursue it as a career during/after I get older and my performing career concludes. I've known since middle school that I want to be a professional ballet dancer, so not much has changed there. I would say, though, that my understanding of the reality of the dance world and of the rigorous work necessary in order to have a chance at getting a job in a company has caused the intensity with which I approach my training to increase dramatically. I've always wanted this, but only recently have I started devoting every minute I get to achieving it and really considering how my decisions for next year will affect my future job prospects.

**JR: What advice would you give to people about chasing their dreams?**

**AD:** Have pride in your goals, employ every means you can to achieve them, and don't underestimate yourself. However, never allow yourself to stop enjoying what it is you love. It is extremely important to work diligently when you want to reach a goal, and that will almost always lead to times of exhaustion, frustration, or pain: it's going to happen. NEVER allow these times to overshadow your passion for your goals, though. Forgetting the reasons that you worked so hard in the first place can cause you to burn out if you don't allow yourself to always find happiness in your efforts.

## Elsa Cline: our salutatorian

SOA salutatorian Elsa Cline will attend Warren Wilson College this fall. **Jay Rode** caught up with her.

**Jay Rode: Why Warren Wilson?**

**Elsa Cline:** Warren Wilson College is a small liberal arts college about twenty minutes outside of Asheville. It is on 1,135 acres, with hiking trails, a sustainable farm, and a garden. Warren Wilson is a work-triad college, combining work, community service, and academics. It is largely student run. Each student is on a work crew, which can be anything from plumbing and electric to fiber arts and farming. This is something I am very excited about. I love the idea of learning a skill without having to take classes in it. I first visited Warren Wilson in tenth grade. At that time, the idea of college was fairly scary to me. It is one of the most beautiful places I have been to. Walking around the campus and learning more about the school I realized that this was the right place for me. There is a huge emphasis on sustainability and it seems like a very open and accepting environment. I will be able to spend a lot of time outside in a beautiful place. They have an environmental studies program with a Conservation Biology major. I know I want to be doing something in an environmental/sustainability field. I could see myself doing field work and possibly working for a conservation organization like the Peregrine Fund, but we shall see.

**JR: How do you think your hard work at SOA will contribute to your post-high school plans?**

**EC:** I had a crazy senior year. I took AP studio art (a minimum of 24 pieces) and several other AP classes. I also spent a minimum of eight hours a week at the Center for Birds of Prey, which is usually physically exhausting work. I feel like every moment of my time this year

Jay Rode



Jay Rode



**Continued on page 8**

## **Cline, continued from page 7**

was spent on art, school, or my internship. Any free time I did have was usually spent running in an attempt to relieve my constant state of stress. This year I feel like I have school really figured out. I know that I will do well when I apply myself. It is great to look back and see what I have accomplished. I am also able to take satisfaction from my work. I learned that I like to be busy and engaged, something I am excited about for next year.

**JR: When you started school, what did you want to do? Why do you think that's changed?**

**EC:** I didn't really know what I wanted to do. I kind of just assumed I would do something art related. When I started to look into colleges though, I realized I didn't like the idea of going to art school. Around the same time, I started my internship at the Center for Birds of Prey. This was huge for me. I was able to be around knowledgeable people who care deeply about birds and the role humans play in the environment. I soon realized that I need to be doing something that I am passionate about. From working at the Center I know I am working for the birds. I take pride in my work: I know I am doing something, however small, to make people more conscious about the consequences of their actions and to gain a better understanding of the natural world. I can spend hours working (often doing some pretty gross jobs) for free and leave feeling proud of what I have accomplished. I want a job that requires me to keep learning and thinking. If I see a greater purpose to the work, I get a lot more satisfaction and joy from it.

**JR: What advice would you give to people about chasing dreams?**

**EC:** I didn't isolate my work ethic to school alone. In my junior year I started to realize that my time was limited. I tried to devote my hours to more productive activities. I moved out of the Netflix binge watching days of my youth and rediscovered my love of reading. I started running regularly and became a healthier eater. Studying started to become standard, whether I really needed to or not. I formed some helpful habits that have served me well. Finding a balance between school and the things that bring you joy can be challenging for me because I can easily get wrapped up in working and studying. I think that it definitely can make you a better student and a happier person if you know when to call it quits and go sleep or something. Put your all in and then be happy with the results. I also think that finding something that you are passionate about separate from school is essential. My work at the Center for Birds of Prey feels considerably more valuable than any grades I achieved at school. I think that school, and the emphasis that is put on grades, puts a higher emphasis on achieving perfection than actually learning. Working at the Center, I was thoroughly interested in what was going on around me. What I was learning was directly applicable and seemed to matter. Find something you are interested in and go after it. Getting an internship was huge for me. I was able to gain a better understanding of the world after college and what I want from a job.

Facebook

## **Where Are They Now: Madison Bowman**

*After graduating in 2015, Madison Bowman moved to Perth, Australia to work full time as an unpaid missionary with Youth With a Mission, a worldwide organization that works in hundreds of countries to provide education, disaster relief, slum ministry, housing, human trafficking prevention, and more. Her time is currently split between Australia, Africa, and Asia. Mollie Pate caught up with her.*

**Mollie Pate: How did you become involved with Youth With A Mission and what kind of projects have you worked on?**

**Madison Bowman:** I had never heard of Youth With A Mission until January 2015 at the end of my senior year. One of my spiritual leaders actually felt I should look into it. YWAM has hundreds of locations worldwide and I now work with a base in Perth, Western Australia. The base hears of a need from communities in both devolving nations as well as more established societies and then sends out teams. I have gotten to minister in Indonesia, Africa, and Australia to the homeless, to slum dwellers, to tribal people, and to many other demographics who have deep need for help, hope, and the deep love of Father God.

**MP: What countries have provided the most memorable experiences for you?**

**MB:** So many, but I would have to choose Madura, Indonesia and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Those were the most influential.

**MP: Are there any specific stories or experiences you could share?**

**MB:** In February 2016, I was involved in prayer and intercession ministry throughout the city of Addis Abba, Ethiopia. My team focused on opposing the greed that affects the city. As an act to demonstrate generosity, we headed into the slums to show little acts of kindness by giving out bread and bananas to the locals who live on \$1 a day. Their faces lighted up when they were given a gift from a random stranger. Then, the unexpected happened. While giving food to two tiny girls, we were invited into their home. We were served. My friend Erika and I were seated on boxes in 4x6 foot area outside: a small shelter hidden away in the middle of the many tin-roofed shacks. I watched as they began the traditional coffee ceremony. Fresh, green coffee beans roasted over an open flame. Crushed to dark brown grounds with mortar and pestle. Brewed in the traditional jug over the flame that served as a centerpiece to our small gathering. They offered us sugar, an expensive commodity that is most likely saved for special occasions. The matriarch translated and as the whole family was giving time and hospitality to us, two probably over privileged Westerners, out of their own need. My heart was so full and also so broken. I walked away from that experience realizing that some slum dwellers are richer than any of us could ever be.

**MP: How has your faith influenced or guided you in this adventure?**

**MB:** When you fully understand that you are completely, deeply loved by the God of the universe, your life is dramatically changed, because the God who created supernovas and oceans and the human cell actually cares intimately about each individual person on earth, whether they believe in Him or not. Human kind has done horrible things, unthinkable things. And they have looked their loving Father God in the face and said "I don't need you. I don't want you." But the crazy thing is, He never leaves even if we do. I wouldn't be who I am

**Continued on page 9**



## Where Are They Now, continued from page 7

today without Jesus. I might not even be alive. He is the reason why I live today. He is the reason why I love. He is the reason why I work full time without pay. He is the reason I am here in Australia 11,000 miles away from home. And He is so worth it.

**MP: Where do you see yourself in the future?**

**MB:** As of right now, I have committed to serve as a full time volunteer with YWAM for at least another 2.5 years. Even that short a period of time has so many possibilities. I could and probably will go to a myriad of different countries and communities. I will also pour into my studies with University of the Nations. After that, I have no idea. But no matter where I am or what I will be doing, there is a constant: I am loved by God. And He is always faithful to lead His kids.

## Get to know Everett Ladson

Savannah Porter

**Savannah Porter** is taking a closer look at the Deaf/Hearing Impaired department. This month, she spoke with freshmen Everett Ladson.

**Savannah Porter: What was your favorite memory from this year?**

**Everett Ladson:** Signing "Silent Night" with the Vocal and Strings departments.

**SP: What are your plans for this summer?**

**EL:** I am going to Camp Wonderhands in Columbia to hang out with my friend John Small and my other friends.

**SP: What is your favorite thing about high school?**

**EL:** I like it when my teachers help me and I like my interpreters.

**SP: What are some of your favorite hobbies?**

**EL:** I like soccer, basketball, football and baseball and volleyball.

**SP: What will you miss about SOA during summer vacation?**

**EL:** I'll miss my friends and teachers who care about me, but I won't miss homework!



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## End of the year sports update

by Jacob Fairchild

**Wando Soccer:** Senior Peter Gair is a Band major and captain of the Wando Soccer team. Wando lost in the third round of the state Division II playoffs to River Bluff in the final minutes in a crushing 1-0 defeat. This ended their season with a 26-2 record, only losing two games. This stellar season left a mark on Wando's soccer history, with Peter at the helm.

**Wando Baseball:** Junior Vocal major Adam Reisburg is a pitcher on the Wando baseball team. The 7-13 season ended when Wando was knocked out in the first round of playoffs. Throughout the season, Adam totaled 15 strikeouts, an impressive feat. He has made SOA very proud.

**Wando Tennis:** Senior Band major Woods Browder is the number one regional tennis winner and a trumpet player at SOA. The team is currently ranked number three in the state and reached semifinals in the playoffs for regionals before being knocked out. Despite this disappointment, we still applaud Woods' prowess at being number 1 and look to see great accomplishments from him in the future.

**Stall Baseball:** Sophomore Band major Bryce Reed plays baseball for stall. Stall reached a 6-10 season, upsetting the number 2 team in the region. Bryce Reed has received a college recruitment letter from Ohio and is sure to attract more attention for baseball in the coming years.

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## Theatre thesis: a dramatic end to a dramatic major

Tom Steenhuisen

By Ryan Biddix

In the first week of May the senior Theatre majors performed for the last time, showcasing the skills they've fostered throughout their high school careers. Senior Theatre majors go through a three part process for senior thesis. First, the class focuses on group pieces, and then all perform in a class practicum play. Last, but not least, are the solo pieces.

Solo pieces consist of students writing, producing, and directing their own fifteen minute performance. The



Six senior theater majors present Hernan Pena's thesis *Got to Get Her Back*.



Abby LeRoy and Emily Kucklick act in Emily's thesis *The Choices We Make*.

productions span genres and ratings and take place over four nights. There were seventeen Theatre majors: Anna Walker, Emily Kucklick, Emilia Steenhuisen, Ari Levine, Hernan Pena, Legare Hay, Carly Crawford, Ryan Biddix, Rylee Puckhaber, Jessie Cox, Abby LeRoy, Shamond Riddey, Ava Hoffman, Carlin Dooley, Daniela Garcia, Kaci Martin, and Dalia Tucker. Each night, four to five students performed their pieces as other class members ran tech for the productions. The final night brought *Passing of the Mantel*, where the seniors hand the juniors a sentimental floral arrangement to pass on good luck for future senior theses. Congratulations to all seventeen graduates.

## Theatre: a year in review

By Ryan Biddix

This past year has been hectic but very rewarding for SOA's theatre department. The entire department, including middle school, produced a total of seven plays this year, including *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Aliens Versus Teenagers*, *Starmites*, *Frostbite*, *Cut*, *Mustardseed*, and *Season of Light- A Winter's Fairy Tale*.

Students were also challenged to write original pieces, with a whopping 200 being publicly performed this school year alone. Students also received award recognitions in the SCTA High School One Act Competition.

In addition, the Theatre majors volunteered in 20 art outreaches to various South Carolina schools. They performed and ran workshops for over 3000 students. This year marks the fifteenth anniversary of the formation of the fighting gnomes. It has been a busy year for the Theatre department, but it was all worth it.

## Senior dance major appears on *Ellen*

Senior Dance major Ashley Green recently appeared live on the The Ellen DeGeneres Show show as a dancer in *DancerPalooza*. You can see her performance here: <http://ellentube.com/videos/o-9qp3pzy6/>

**Erin Molony and Emily Dail: How did you make it on *Ellen* and how were you treated on set?**

**Ashley Green:** I know the director of *Ellen* and he thinks I'm a really great dancer, so he called me and asked me to be a part of it. I was treated really nice! Some lady won a car on *The Ellen Show* and I got to sit in that car before the show.

**EM/ED: How were the dance rehearsals?**

**AG:** Long, but they were fun. I was with friends. We rehearsed Thursday, Friday, Monday and Tuesday. Some days we practiced three hours, and some days we practiced 11 hours.

**EM/ED: What were your first thoughts when walking into the studio?**

**AG:** First we walked through the Warner Bros. Studio, which was really cool. When we walked on the *Ellen* set, you couldn't really tell you were on the *Ellen* set. It wasn't really what I expected.

**EM/ED: Who did you meet?**

**AG:** Most of the dancers I knew before, but I met a lot of really cool dancers. I met Ellen, but she didn't really talk. She just pointed her fingers at me like guns and clicked her tongue. She thanked us all for dancing. She sounds just like she does on TV. I also met will.i.am.

**EM/ED: Did you do anything else in LA?**

**AG:** I went to Malibu and to a couple of really good sushi places (even though I don't really like sushi). I took a ballet class, which was really cool because we danced with old ladies and they were way more passionate than kids my age. It was really nice to dance with them.

**EM/ED: What was your most memorable moment?**

**AG:** My most memorable moment was the last time we danced on *Ellen's* stage because we did it in one take and it was our best take. It was so much fun. We all did great! I think this experience will impact my career greatly because I can always say I was on *Ellen*.



Ashley Green and the rest of the DancerPalooza dancers.

Facebook

## Senior thesis a perfect ending for Piano majors

by Jakob Lazzaro

Piano's eight seniors wrapped up their career at SOA with their thesis performances on April 17th and 18th. The two nights showcased the many different talents Piano majors develop, as seniors can choose to focus on education, composition, performance, or a combination of multiple tracks for their thesis. Seniors also create a thesis program.

For education thesis, seniors must teach piano to several beginning students. During the performance, seniors give a presentation of their lesson plans and educational philosophies before introducing their students who perform a miniature recital. Composition thesis requires seniors to compose four pieces: one for solo piano, one for piano and vocal, one ensemble featuring piano, and one composer's choice. One piece must be composed each quarter and at least two of them are performed during senior thesis. Seniors begin building a repertoire for performance thesis as early as junior year, as it requires five pieces of piano music from any genre. This thesis allows seniors the most variety in what they play: performances range from modern pop tunes and jazz standards to classical piano music.

Jakob Lazzaro, Shanti Franks, and Nina Murchison presented this year's trio of composition theses. Jakob performed in "The Last Chance," which also featured Stephen Tenney on trombone and Jordan Stuckey on violin, and presented "A Suspenseful Valley," a solo piano piece played by Debra Benson. Shanti performed her vocal piece "Hurricane" and her solo piano piece "Absence of Mind." Nina played three of her compositions: "Le Voeu Solennel," "Clothes Off," and "Number 3."

Ben Zuber, Jessica Keniston, and Nolan Tecklenburg chose performance. Ben played three classical pieces, two solos and one duet with Ms. Benson. Ben also rocked out with Elton John's "Honesty," assisted by Noah Jones on drums. Nolan played four jazz songs and one indie rock number accompanied by Tim Khayat on bass guitar and Paul Croy on drums. Nolan experienced a last minute panic when his two original accompanists were unavailable, but he pulled through. Jessica played five classical piano pieces: four solos and one duet with Emma Gourdie.

Uniquely, Alexandra Hepburn presented a combination education and performance thesis. She played three pieces: Bach's "Prelude No. 2," Liszt's "Consolation 3," and a toccata by Khachaturian. Her two students, Daven Brown and Chance Palmer, also played the duet "Trailing Moon Vines." Emma Gourdie also presented an education thesis, which featured a performance from her two students. Witt Frost played "Playing in a New Position" and Haze Merchant played "Up on the Housetop."

At the end of thesis the eight Piano majors stepped off of the stage to head in eight different directions: Jakob to Northwestern University, Shanti to the Paul Mitchell School of Cosmetology, Nina to Charleston Southern University, Ben to the University of South Carolina, Nolan to Loyola University of New Orleans, Jessica to College of Charleston, Emma to James Madison University, and Alexandra to Xavier University. Thesis served as the stepping-stone to the adult lives of Piano's seniors.

## Piano: a year in review

By Debra Benson

This year was a busy time for the piano majors. The first big event was the Spook n' Blues concert held in conjunction with the Haunted House in late October. This featured the middle school pianists along with several students from other majors. Students started the year working on ensembles for our annual ensemble concerts in November. Students also prepared jazz pieces to perform at the Mezz on Sunday evenings throughout the year. This gave them an opportunity to play jazz alongside professional jazz musicians.

In addition to working on classical repertoire, students have spent many hours perfecting all of their major scales and many of their minor scales, depending on their grade level. They have moved through a written theory book and worked on aural theory skills. The high school classes have explored part of an interactive book in search of an answer to the question of "why music?" and participated in a more in-depth exploration of the elements of music.

March "madness" began with Achievement Day. Thirty students participated in this piano competition held at Charleston Southern University where they completed a written theory test, sight-read, played scales and chord progressions, and performed two pieces of memorized repertoire. Many students earned an "outstanding" rating and seven performed in the honors recital. At the end of March, sixteen students participated in District Auditions, held at the College of Charleston. Students who earned "outstanding" ratings were allowed to participate in the State Auditions in April. Jason Guo came in second place in the state in his division and Sophia Zhang and JT Ho-Mueller earned honorable mentions. You have to be in the top 5 in the state for an honorable mention. Mid-March was a time for travel. The middle school pianists attended a jazz clinic in Asheville, NC. They worked with Michael Stevens, a world-renowned jazz pianist, and had the opportunity to see a performance of his jazz group. Several students were invited on stage to play. They also visited the Moog Synthesizer factory.

April was a big month for the seniors. Jessica Keniston, Alex Hepburn, Nolan Tecklenburg and Ben Zuber gave performance recitals. Shanti Franks, Nina Murchison and Jakob Lazzaro shared two or three of the compositions they wrote during the year. Alex Hepburn and Emma Gourdie shared their experiences teaching students to play piano. They also had their students play for us as part of their presentations. Job well done!



From left to right: Emma Gourdie, Jessica Keniston, Alexandra Hepburn, Nina Murchison, Nolan Tecklenburg, Ms. Benson, Ben Zuber, Shanti Franks, Jakob Lazzaro

## Vocal thesis shows the power of song

by Jacob Fairchild

Vocal's senior thesis was an incredible learning experience for all of the participants. Vocal usually performs as a choir as opposed to the solo performances done for thesis. This change of pace was a challenge for some of the participants, as singing alone is much more difficult than singing in a choir. Despite the difficulty, everyone superbly overcame that challenge.

First up on the 11th was Kimberly Lowman. She performed "Vittoria, mio core!," "Wie Bist Du Meine Königin," "Si le bonheur à sourire t'invite," "At Last," "Close to you," and "Dream." Kimberly's versatility was very impressive. Many Vocal majors are used to hearing Kimberly sing lower alto tones, but her full range was on display at thesis from the low alto notes of "At Last," to the higher pitched notes in "Vittoria, mio core!" Next up, Cody Beasenburg performed "Der Vogelfänger bin ich ja" and Fiddler on the Roof's "Miracle of Miracles." Cody was in his element performing the Broadway piece as he filled the stage with his presence. He was followed by Emily Lanter performing "Ständchen," "Astonishing," and "Landslide." The diversity of her selection of pieces showed her versatility as a singer. In addition to performing in the thesis concert, Cody Beasenburg and Emily Lanter also designed a cabaret. After the individual performances they previewed it with the duets "Suddenly Seymour" and "Seventeen," performed by Chase Godwin and Maggie Wallace. This cabaret, titled Broadway Then and Now, included pieces from both classical Broadway plays (Then) such as *Grease* and *Guys and Dolls* and from modern Broadway plays (Now) such as *Legally Blonde* and *Rent*. Cody and Emily both found the cabaret to be a great learning experience, as they saw the process of putting on a show from the directing point of view as opposed to the point of view for a player. They both hope that this experience will help them in their respective futures, as Cody is going into musical theatre and Emily into music education.

Sarah Silvester performed next, singing "Se tu m'ami," "Apré un rêve," "O cessate di piagarmi," "Hopelessly Devoted to You," "Brokenness Aside," and "When You Believe." Her light tone quality and excellent diction were highlighted in her songs, especially "Se tu m'ami." Nicholas Shaarda performed "Vittoria, mio core!," "Si mes vers avaient des ailes," "I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major General," "The Hammer," "Music of the Night," and "Baba Yetu." The usage of falsetto in "Music of the Night" symbolizes the fragility of the Phantom's emotion, and Nick executed it flawlessly. Shelby Levine finished off the first night, solely performing "Caro Mio Ben," "Alma Del Core," "Cest Si Bon," "Easy As Life." She also sang a duet with her mother: "Love Me Still" had the entire audience- and Shelby- in tears. Her last song "Fix me Jesus" was performed with the Lowcountry Voices, a group where Shelby is a longtime member.

The 12th's performances began with Rebecca Edson performing "Ombra mai fu," "Almen se non poss'io," "Oh! Quand Je Dors," "La Vie en Rose," "Summer of '69," and "All I Ask of You," a duet with Christian Leprettre. "La Vie en Rose" was a French Jazz piece, which suited her voice very well, as she encompassed the spirit of the piece. Georgia Hunt then performed "Non so piu cosa son, cosa faccio," "Maman, Dites Moi," "Vittoria, mio core!," "God Help the Outcasts," "Green Finch and Linner Bird," and "Danny Boy." "God help the Outcasts" was an incredible performance that showcased Georgia's tone quality. She completed her thesis with "Danny Boy," an a capella quartet with, Cameron, Carly, and Shelby. This was followed by Rebecca Putnam, who sang "O cessate di piagarmi," "Ich Liebe Dich," "Ah, Mio Cor," "Til There Was You," "Paper Hearts," and "Piano Man," a song by Korean pop group Mamamoo. Rebecca had a pure tone and succinct intonation.

After Rebecca was Jackie Evans, who performed "O Rest In the Lord," "Nina," "Romance," "People," "Work Song," and "All Our Own," an original composition that Jackie performed with her band Mulooly. Logan Matthews was up next. She sang "Deh Vieni Non Tardar," "Ma Rendi Pur Contento," "Die Nacht," "I Enjoy Being A Girl," "Cry Me a River," and "Weightless." Logan artistically nailed the high notes in her classical pieces. Up next was Ellie Jeffers performing "Sei Miei Sospiri," "Die Nacht," "Se tu m'ami," "Bluebird," "Corner of the Sky," "Vienna," and "Flight," a duet with Cameron Frye. Ellie's Classical pieces showed off her skill for comprehensive classical music.

Cameron Frye was the last to go, performing "O del mio dolce ardor," "Beau soir," "Es leb't un vilja," "All I Ask," "Feeling Good," and "Pie Jesu," a duet between Cameron and her mother. In "All I Ask," Cameron sounded just like Adele with her power-house notes and had a smooth, jazzy sound for "Feeling Good" that left the audience entranced.

The vocal senior theses were a great success with all of the performers doing a great job. We wish them the best for what their life after graduation holds.



The 12th's performers: Ellie Jeffers, Cameron Frye, Logan Matthews, Nick Shaarda, Jackie Evans, Georgia Hunt, Rebecca Putnam, and Rebecca Edson.

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## Vocal: a year in review

by Jacob Fairchild

Vocal has had quite an eventful year, beginning with the birth of Vocal major teacher Heather Hammond Caffarel's twins, Sadie and Sullivan. The two twins later frequented Vocal events throughout the year.

This was followed by 40 of the middle school students attending the ACDA Junior High All State at Southern Wesleyan University. SOA had the highest number of students represented from any one school. Not to be outdone, 70 high school Vocal majors attended Allstate, also the highest number of students selected from any school.

In December, both the middle and high school students gave two holiday concerts. The middle school concert was a joint concert with the middle school orchestra and the high school concert was a joint concert with the symphony.

In February, grades 6-9 performed in a South Carolina Music Educators Association Performance. In March, the 70 high school students who made it into the All-State chorus attended the Clinic at Winthrop University. That ended with a concert. Next was the Music Down in My Soul concert and dinner, where the vocalists performed a concert of soul music while the audience enjoyed soul food.

Eleven seniors performed their theses in April, and the year ended with a Masterworks concert with the Symphony Orchestra, where music from Broadway shows such as *Phantom of the Opera* and *Les Miserables* were performed. This was a great year for Vocal and we hope to have similar success in the future.

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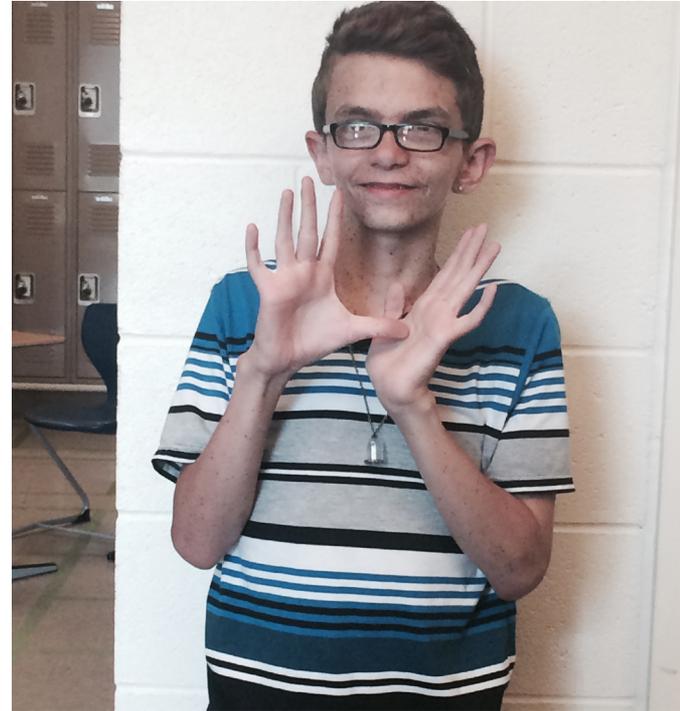


The senior Vocal majors pose after Allstate, held at Winthrop University.

Want a blast from the past? Head to [soa-applause.com](http://soa-applause.com) to read any issue of *Applause*, including the first-ever Graduation issue in 2003.

## Sign of the Month: Congratulations, Seniors!

*Savannah Porter* heads to the deaf and hearing impaired department to teach us all a common phrase in sign language. This month, seventh grader **Colby Carter** demonstrates "Congratulations Seniors!"



**Congratulations:** Savannah Porter  
Clasp your hands like this and shake them.



**Seniors:** Savannah Porter  
Place the thumb of your right hand on the palm of your left.

## Creative Writing: a year in review

by F. Rutledge Hammes

This year, the Creative Writing Program at SOA has made its biggest splash yet on the national stage, earning numerous awards in some of the country's most prestigious writing competitions, including 516 regional and national Scholastic Writing Awards (the nation's oldest and most prestigious contest for teenage writers), which is more than any other school in the country and the most ever in Scholastic's history. Our program won 23 National Scholastic Medals that will be accepted at the world-famous Carnegie Hall in June: also the most in our program's history. That night, the top of the Empire State Building will be lit in gold in honor of their achievements.

This year, the Creative Writing program began its very first community outreach program, the Narrative 4 Story Exchange, in which our high school writers teamed up with AP students from North Charleston High School to experience the art of empathy through the sharing of their stories. The program also hosted a number of amazing guest writers, including poets Nickole Brown, Richard Garcia, and Gary Jackson as a part of our ongoing Guest Writers Series.

The sixth grade began their year with poetry and nonfiction. Each student wrote several imagist poems as well as a novel-in-verse inspired by Sharon Creech's *Love That Dog*. In the spring, students were introduced to fiction and scriptwriting. They wrote two short stories, several vignettes and collaborated with the Dance and Theatre majors to produce traditional Kabuki plays.

Seventh graders focused on fiction and poetry during the first semester. They studied plot structure, pacing, and characterization within a short story and crafted four pieces that explored different techniques of narrative voice. In the spring, they studied poetry, creating works that employed sensory imagery, allusion, pop culture, and persona. They researched the work of a selected contemporary poet, engaging in critical analysis as well as writing a poem in their chosen poet's style. They sent letters to the poets, conveying what they admired about their work and what they learned through close analysis of it. Each student boldly shared their final poem for their inspiration to read, and we were all thrilled that many of the poets responded with gratitude and encouragement. Finally, the class gave a literary reading in the vocal room, honing their performance skills in front of a captive audience.

Eighth graders began their year studying fiction and wrote two full-length short stories centered on experience and perspective, narrative voice, folklore and magical realism, as well as ways in which writers plant their endings early on in a story. The second half of the year they studied poetry and experimented with various forms: an epistolary poem, a found poem, a pantoum, a prose poem, and finally, a sequence poem. They analyzed a wide range of examples and the different ways to approach each of these forms, finding their own avenues of expression and creativity through the restrictions and long traditions that these forms offer. Finally, they shared their works with parents and friends at a literary reading in the vocal room.

Freshmen began the year with a poetry workshop, studying a range of canonical and contemporary poets. They wrote poems that employed extended metaphors and the narrative thread of someone else's story, and drew on inspiration from Robert Bly's method of leaping poetry as well as from science and scientific metaphor. Lastly, they each researched a selected poetic movement that culminated in a poem written in that style. In fiction workshop, they wrote three short stories and several vignettes and studied a number of advanced fiction techniques like minimalism, crisis of faith, human prejudice, narrative uncertainty and the role of objective correlatives. During the second semester, the underclassmen traveled to the Penn Center on St. Helena Island for a writer's retreat, which focused on the literature and culture of the Civil Rights Movement and Gullah traditions.

Sophomores learned to craft a script for the stage and the screen as well as how write and perform slam poetry and in the process produced a film script, a play script, a solo slam poem, and a group slam poem. In nonfiction workshop, students wrote essays exploring their personal flaws, prejudice, the impact of time on childhood memories, as well an extensive interview of a member of their community focusing on a vital, life-changing scene.

Juniors studied the works of Nobel Prize winning authors in finding your voice, learning to identify their own voice through a thematic series of poems, non-traditional plot structures and current social issues. They were also introduced to the senior thesis process at the Creative Writing retreat in Lake Logan, North Carolina. Finally, each student analyzed their own work and wrote an artist's statement in order to solidify their creativity achievements and goals. In the Place and Gender course, juniors took an in-depth look at what role both locus and gender play in the alchemy of creating a work of literature. Students wrote three linked episodic stories based on a fictional place as well as a personal essays and stories about the culture in which they find themselves and some aspect of nature in their unique locale. In addition, students wrote a story from the point of view of the opposite gender, challenging themselves to see from another perspective.

The intensive yearlong Senior Thesis course afforded ten students the enviable opportunity to learn the ins and outs of the writing profession. They each worked one-on-one with a renowned writer to write, revise and publish an original 100-page book, now available for purchase at Amazon.com. The year culminated in a record number of state, regional and national awards along with a well-attended senior thesis reading, themed *This Is Water*.

For all their hard work and dedication to their craft and for all their countless awards and recognitions this year, the Creative Writers truly deserve a big round of applause.

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## Band thesis: a great conclusion to a great year

By Nick Huss

The class of 2016 band majors performed in their final concert over the course of the two days of band senior thesis. The days were broken down into two categories, the first being classical and the second being jazz.

On the first night, Kyle Winstead performed “Drei Romanzen Movt. 1” on Oboe. Melanie Green performed “Beautiful Colorado” on Euphonium. Patrick Burns performed “Pure Imagination” on bassoon. Alec Johnson performed an arrangement of songs from “Phantom of the Opera” on euphonium. Jonathan Zuraw performed “Pop Through the Decades” on Trombone. Manning Shaw performed Concerto in e Minor on bassoon. Ryan Mercado performed “Dance of the Youth” and “Childhood” on trombone. Jordan Huger performed “Haydn Trumpet Concerto (II Movement)” on trumpet. Peter Gair finished the night with a performance of “Trumpet Concerto in Ab Major” on trumpet.

The second night, Zois Manaris performed “Carry on My Wayward Son” on trombone. Woods Browder performed an original composition titled “A Woods Thang” on trumpet and harmonica. McCarthy Fitch performed “Be Yourself” on bass. Terry Roddey arranged the alt-j song “Fitzpleasure” on saxophone. Parris Byars performed “Beatlemania,” a compilation of Beatles songs. Pierre Pinckney performed “Lingus” by Snarky Puppy. Zachary Gilbert performed “Concerto for Clarinet” on clarinet. Stephen Tenney performed an original composition titled “Just My Luck” on trombone. Noah Jones ended the performances with his original composition titled “Mecca: A Jazz Pilgrimage.”

In addition, Summer Coons and Abby Kirkland completed an education thesis: they went out to different schools and worked with their arts programs.

Congratulations to all of the Band seniors on a great end to their time at SOA!



Woods Browder, Jordyn Huger, and Peter Gair after performing their theses.

## Creative Writers drown audience in talent with senior thesis

by Cheyenne Koth

Creative Writing senior thesis is always an emotional affair for those that attend. This year, the ten 2016 graduating seniors showcased their ten wildly diverse works in a show entitled This is Water. No two performances on this night were alike, and from the first word to the very last, the audience was thrilled and amazed with every line break and turn of phrase.

After a brief yet meaningful introduction from Creative Writing teacher F. Rutledge Hammes, Nicole Sadek was the first senior to read. Her collection of short stories, entitled *We Have Seen Strange Things Today*, focuses on the children of the treasure hunters who explored the Oak Island Money Pit. Nicole was mentored this year by Harriet McDougal, editor of the *Wheel of Time* series, and for the performance read an excerpt from her short story “Floating People.”

Second was Nick Scapalitto, who read a powerful excerpt from his creative nonfiction novel *Primitive*, which follows the stories of real people and true events. Nick’s mentor was John Thompson, a Charleston area thriller author. Adonis Pineda was third. His collection of poetry entitled *Dots In The Distance* explores different cultures through his work. Adonis was mentored by Chris Dixom, and read “Broken,” “No Real Martyrs,” “The Smell of Cooking Me,” and “Shoes.”

Following Adonis was Jay Rode, whose beautifully put together collection of short stories and poems entitled *All These Hands* focuses on the concept of time as well as human emotions. Mentored by Owen Duffy, Jay read first an excerpt from his short story “Late: Bound for London” and his poem “After 360 milligrams of Duloxetine.”

Fourth was Vasantha Sambamurti with an excerpt from her short story “Glass Falls.” Her collection of short stories *Ali, Allo, Alter* deals in the stories of people who have been labelled as “other” by society. These people, on the crossroads of gender, sexuality, and race, are often delineated from our worlds. Vasantha was mentored by Cindi Carver-Futch, author of *Leaving the Shallows: Stories From a Life Lived Deeply*. Following Vasantha was Hannah Kelly, mentored by Tony Varallo. Hannah’s biting witty excerpt from her short script “Nowhereland” was performed by Jay Rode and the author herself during the reading. Her collection of short plays is titled *And Yet it Moves*, and deals with what people believe in from the traditional, from catholic priests to radio tower repairmen.

Rhyan Bredlau wrote a full fantasy novel, entitled *The Fall of Nafar* and read a short excerpt in which the main character first sees his sister with wings. Rhyan was mentored by Ryan Graudin, author of *Wolf by Wolf* and *The Walled City*. Next was JJ Goller reading “The Ward,” a short story from his autobiography of short fiction *Spring Cleaning For A Wandering Mind*. Mentored by Frances Pearce, JJ’s beyond emotional reading had the audience floored.

Savannah Porter was the next senior to read. Her thesis, which explores our different uses for needles through poems and short stories, is titled *Pins and Needles*. Mentored by Mary Hutchins Harris, Savannah read three beautifully chosen pieces: “And I’m Shaking the Bones,” “Avante Garden,” and “Freedom.” Last was Maddie DePuy, who was mentored by Nicole Seitz, author of *Beyond Molasses Creek*. Maddie read a short story entitled “Iris.” Her senior thesis *Wild Light* and is centered around the concept of synesthesia and how color shapes our world.

As Maddie was about to read, junior Creative Writer Tessa Abedon said “After Maddie’s done, it’s our turn.” Never have more impactful words been spoken. I love this year’s graduating Creative Writing class. They have taught me so much and I was so proud to see this reading, to finally see the glorious fruit of their labors.



Provided

## Strings thesis an emotional ride

By Nick Scapellato

This year, the Strings senior thesis could not be contained by just one night. The two-part event saw great success on the first night and an even larger turnout for the second. Seniors Sabrina Green, Jenna Farnham, and Elliott Cihlar provided the music on the first night. Each of them played hefty pieces that lasted at least ten minutes each, and did so entirely from memory.

The night was packed with emotions, as tears brimmed at the eyes of nearly everyone in the audience. I, too, fell victim to leaky tear ducts, thinking about how this would be one of the last times I sat in the Rose Maree Myers Theater to see my classmates perform.

The second night of thesis performances welcomed Casey Derieaux, Isabella Sullivan, Erin McQuade, and the return of Elliott and Jenna. The seniors were accompanied by several underclassmen who generously gave immense amounts of time to help make the thesis a solid performance all around.

Elliott Cihlar's performance of Bach's Partita No. 3 Prelude left many people with mouths agape and eyes dazed and mesmerized.

"I made a few blunders, but I felt the heart of the piece," Cihlar said. "The heart of my passion shone through."

He could not have been more right.



Nick Scapellato

## Strings: a year in review

By Nick Scapellato

This year, the high school and middle school Strings majors accomplished astounding things. Impressive accolades aside, this year's side-by-side concert, featuring the middle school strings students as well as the high school orchestra, displayed the entire major's ability to take two seemingly-disparate groups of kids and find musical harmony: a profound talent these students have. Don't fool yourself into leaving your tissues when attending a performance. But you may be asking yourself, What did they really do?

Your time might be better spent wondering about what they didn't do. That list is shorter.

Within the first twenty days of school, the high school sinfonietta played several pieces by Mozart in St. Luke's Cathedral downtown. The acoustics of the church amplified the sound and allowed it to carry for several blocks. A few pedestrians came inside and couldn't believe their eyes (or ears) when they realized the musicians were in high school.

However, most notably, the high school orchestra performed in the 2016 ASTA National Orchestra Festival hosted in Tampa, Florida. The orchestra earned Grand Champion: deeming them the best high school orchestra in the country. Junior Cecilia Ostapeck said the award made her very happy and it "reminded me just how much I love Dr. Selby." This just exemplifies the grace and poise with which Dr. Selby conducts his orchestra both on and off the stage.

The Middle School also had a successful year, sending 28 students to participate in the Regional Orchestra and 18 students to play in the All-State Orchestra, breaking records for the most from one school in both bands.

And when the Middle School Students played in the Carowinds Music Festival, the judges awarded them a Grand Superior, saying they were "one of the best orchestras they'd heard in a while."

Throughout the year, strings students have collaborated with Visual Arts, Vocal, and Dance, majors to create stunning performances. That's not including the countless senior theses that many strings students played accompaniments for.

Year after year, the strings department as a whole seems a little sharper, stronger. This year was no exception. The bar has truly been raised, and everyone cannot wait to see what the talented students of years to come will do the raise it again.



Facebook

The high school strings majors after winning best orchestra in the United States at the 2016 ASTA National Orchestra Festival

## SOA as an art gallery: a look at the Visual Arts senior thesis

Alissa Melsopp

by Alissa Melsopp

On Wednesday April 20th, the senior Visual Artists presented their various theses in their last SOA Art Show, held in the Rose Maree Myers Theater. Each student in Ben Moore's AP Art Portfolio class chose pieces they have been working on throughout the year to put in the show. Much of the artwork present was from each senior's concentration: a series of pieces focused around a central idea or theme.



The Visual Arts Class of 2016

Alissa Melsopp



Selections from Holly Rizer's 24-piece portfolio.

about nature and surrealism and basically trying to see the transformation of that."

"My concentration is to see if I can form a body into something that is made of nature," Laurence Martin said. "I try to see the transformation of that."

Holly Rizer's thesis featured a concentration on travelling.

"My concentration is on travelling," she said. "A lot of the photo references I used for my pieces were pictures I've taken in different countries I've visited in Europe."

Each senior did a spectacular job and the art show's set up was amazing. As the final part of thesis, the seniors submitted their AP Art Portfolios this May.

Alissa Melsopp

## Visual Arts: a year in review

by Alissa Melsopp

SOA's middle school visual arts program has had a busy but successful year. They've been making collages, paintings, and sculptures focusing on linear perspective and complementary colors. The three grades also collaborated with other SOA middle school majors. Eighth grade collaborated with Dance by making artwork that represents some aspect of a solo dance and sixth and seventh grade interpreted songs from Strings into artwork as well.

The middle school classes entered and won several major art competitions: the 2016 Coastal Carolina Fair's Youth Art Show, the 2016 Reel Art Contest, and an Honorable Mention in the North Charleston Arts Fest Youth Art Contest. Most notably, the students won three Gold Keys, seven Silver Keys and eight Honorable Mentions for Region-at-Large in the 2016 Scholastic Art and Writing competition.

The visual arts underclassmen have also been working hard on projects under Mr. Moore and Miss Cimballa. Their main projects include colored pencil portraits focusing on perspective, landscape paintings, oil paintings without a reference, figure drawings, and more. The students also learned different lessons on how to handle their work load.

"I learned that I needed to paint/draw faster in order to meet deadlines, and by practicing this, I was able to maintain the same or better quality of work, but at an increased pace," sophomore Jacqueline Pretorius said.

The students have definitely learned a lot this year, and are excited to continue in their work next year.

"I was challenged to create better, and more meaningful art. I'm glad to see I have teachers that are willing to challenge me as a student," freshman Mahogany Christopher said.

Junior Visual Artists spent most of their year preparing for next year's AP Art Portfolios. Cinthia Arreola has grown a lot over her year in Visual Arts.

"This year, I have gathered many perspectives of my surroundings and incorporated them into sketches and pieces which are able to represent my personality, my thoughts, and overall vision of human nature," she said. "Using different mediums has ultimately improved my confidence in areas I thought were not for me. Through personal and hands-on experience anyone can discover their lust and confidence for many things. This year has definitely served as a backbone for senior year."

Seniors this year spent their time on AP Portfolios and their senior art show. After a year of terrible stress in order to finish 24 pieces of artwork, the seniors are finally done. It has been a long year, but everyone in Visual Arts has pulled through and will continue to make amazing pieces of artwork for years to come.



Mr. Howard's eighth grade middle school classes.

## Dance thesis: the end of a great year of motion

by Emily Dail

The senior dance majors finished up their year by putting on a spectacular show that conveyed social issues including addiction, anxiety, immigration, and women's suffrage. Structurally, the dancers used vocal majors, partnering, and lifts in the six to eight minute pieces choreographed to instrumental music.

"While preparing to dance on stage, I began to realize that it was my last opportunity to dance with my SOA family," senior Dance major Anizia Fulmore said.

At the end of the performance, the juniors gave a senior of their choice a rose and a handwritten farewell note. The dance majors then had a banquet to celebrate the year. Awards were handed out.

Fiona Lewis gave a meaningful speech to her fellow classmates as a final goodbye, causing many happy and sad tears. The senior dance majors will be missed very much, but we know they are headed towards further success in life.

## Dance: a year in review

by Anizia Fulmore

The dance department had a wonderful year full of artistic excellence. All of the senior dance majors completed their theses successfully. Over the course of the year, they worked hard and challenged themselves to go beyond their comfort zones. The faculty is extremely proud of them all!

In the Fall, the freshmen and sophomores spent four days in Orlando attending Disney Performing Arts Workshops, seeing as many Disney productions as they could fit in, and participating in a ballet class at the Orlando Ballet. The dancers also saw how professional dance companies prepare shows at Harddrive Productions. The middle school had a field trip to Myrtle Beach where they learned how to clog (one the SC state dances!). They also took a jazz class and saw a performance.

The juniors and seniors went on a trip to Pittsburgh to participate in the auditions and workshops at the National High School Dance Festival. Almost all of those who attended won scholarships and passed auditions to various prestigious college dance programs, professional dance programs, and summer festivals.

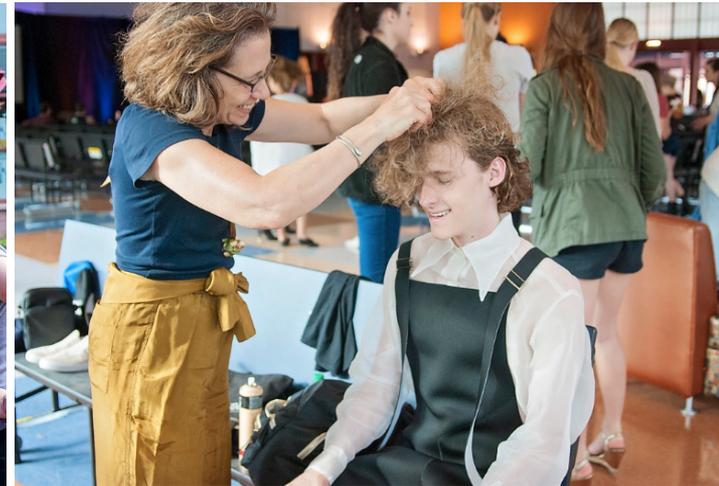
The eighth grade Visual Arts and Dance Performance in January was incredible, as always.

Throughout the year the dance department brought in guest artists who spent time choreographing special dances for each grade. Chicago-based dancer Brian McGinnis, Broadway Performer Karly Ferriera, and SOA alumni Kenna Sommer were just a few of the wonderful guests that we had. These dances were performed at the annual Dance Departmental Performance, which was the best that has ever been presented. The dance department could not be more proud of the students in the SOA dance program!

## Costume and fashion design: a year in review

By Caroline Baker

This year, the Costume and Fashion Design (or C/F Design) students learned to draw and sew, created dresses for orphans and children in need, had Charleston Fashion Week founder Ayoka Lucas visit, listened to Charleston Fashion Week emerging designer and finalist Jessica Fulks come speak about the collection she presented this year, visited the theater department at the College of Charleston, met local designer Lindsey Carter of Troubadour, viewed the textile collections at the Charleston Museum, learned



Students prepare for the annual SOA Fashion Show.

about the process of printing fabrics with sublimation at Vapor Apparel, saw industrial production for safety gear at Grand Forrest and began an on-going collaboration with the Occupational Therapy students at MUSC. Quite a lot, but there's more to come.

Now, the C/F Design students are designing a line of clothing for two special young ladies in Charleston who have limited mobility. Marlayah is a freshman at the College of Charleston. She was born with arthrogryposis, which greatly affects all the muscles and joints in her body and limits all her daily activities, especially dressing. Jaelah is a nine year old girl born with a brachial plexus palsy of her left arm and hand. Due to muscle weakness and limited growth, she now has a noticeable difference in the size and length of her right and left arms. We will present these designs next month at MUSC and have a reception for these two special young ladies.

Next year, the C/F Majors will continue with community outreach for children in need and start a middle school program to teach sewing and drawing. The students will also design costumes for Grease, February's upcoming SOA musical. There's also a planned trip to New York City in November to see schools and learn about the costume and fashion design industries. There's also the annual Fashion Show on Friday, March 31st. We also have our first ever Senior thesis presentation on Friday, April 28th!

Emily Dail



R L Terpstra Photography

## SOA and AMHS host Bob Dylan Tribute

Jay Rode



Left to Right: McCarthy Fitch, Misha Pekar, Parris Byars, Cameron Wescott, Nick Bradley, and Nolan Tecklenburg.



Left to Right: Georgia Hunt and Carly Edwards.

Students rehearse for *Busy Being Born*, the Bob Dylan tribute concert held in the Rose Maree Myers Theater on May 25th.

## A spotlight on four of SOA's numerous student bands

by Jackie Evans

To follow up with these bands, visit Facebook or ask them in person if you see them around. Support your classmates and go take a listen!

### Man-Child

Man-Child is a band packed full of SOA students, including five seniors. Noah Jones plays keyboard/piano and does most of the band's arranging; Parris Byars sings, plays percussion and sometimes plays bass; McCarthy Fitch switches off and on between bass and electric guitar, Stephan Tenney plays trombone, Woods Browder plays trumpet and harmonica, and Zach Gilbert plays saxophone and woodwinds. In addition, junior Cameron Wescott plays the drums and sophomore Walker King sometimes accompanies the band on guitar. The band has also had guest performers from fellow seniors Nolan Tecklenburg and Nina Murchison.

### Jump Castle Riot

Jump Castle Riot is the blues/rock band where senior Nina Murchison sings and plays guitar. In addition, eighth grader Asher Dibernardo plays drums, and freshman Alex Schwartz plays bass. Julia Van Raalte, a non-SOA student, also sings and plays guitar for the band.

### Mullooly

Mullooly is a band composed SOA senior Jackie Evans and junior Wando student Cameron Allen. Jackie sings the lead vocals and plays guitar, mandolin, ukulele and piano while Cameron plays guitar and drums. They both play banjo and bass guitar.

### Patrick Burns

Patrick Burns is also making his own music and has been at the game for a few years now. You may have heard of his former band Heartfelt Hinges, whose song "Somersaults" was featured on *Run with Me*, the official 2013 Cooper River Bridge Run CD. Patrick will be taking the next step in his music career by attending Berklee College of Music this fall.

## June Spotify Playlist: Bob Dylan

Spotify

Your monthly Applause certified list of jams: just head to **cusatisoa** on Spotify to listen. This month, the playlist features songs by the famed folk singer Bob Dylan in honor of **Busy Being Born**, the Applause sponsored concert.

Head to the **Rose Maree Myers Theater on May 25th at 6:30pm** to see many of Bob Dylan's works performed by SOA students.



"Knockin' on Heaven's Door"	"Lay, Lady, Lay"
"Forever Young"	"If Not for You"
"Blowin' in the Wind"	"Song to Woody"
"Masters of War"	"Senor"
"A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall"	"You're Gonna Make Me Lonesome When You Go"
"Hurricane"	"Don't Think Twice, It's Alright"
"Joey"	"The Times They are A-Changin'"
"Ballad of Hattie Carroll"	"Lenny Bruce"
"Only a Pawn in Their Game"	"Mama, You Been on My Mind"
"Chimes of Freedom"	"Shooting Star"
"My Back Pages"	"Make You Feel My Love"
"Mr. Tambourine Man"	"Things Have Changed"
"Maggie's Farm"	"Subterranean Homesick Blues"
"Just Like a Woman"	"Man Gave Names to All the Animals"
"All Along the Watchtower"	
"I Shall be Released"	
"Like a Rolling Stone"	
"Just Like Tom Thumb's Blues"	

## O high school, where hast thou gone?

by Jay Rode

These walls are beginning to take a toll on my spirit. It's getting so nice outside, yet here I am: a mouse in a cage. I yearn for sunburn, farmer's tans, and overpriced water parks.

Even if I sound sarcastic, I promise I'm not lying. Spotify has just published a playlist called "Soak Up the Sun," and even sitting in calculus has become hard work as Two Door Cinema Club drifts through the parts of my head where I should be storing the different rules for indefinite integrals.

But I'm at war with myself because I know I will miss SOA. I expect my homesickness will be far more for SOA than for my actual house (sorry, Mom and Dad). I'll spend decades looking through all the photos and videos we've been lucky to record throughout these last seven years. I'll dream about those crazy trips with my fellow Creative Writers and the days of sitting out in the Pegasus Garden, listening to statistics lessons.

I'm already preparing the stories for when my kid(s) ask(s) about "that photo where you are laying in the water in front of everyone, with a splash behind you," and I'll say, "Well, on Senior Skip Day there was a group photo, and I had to be in it, so I ran for the crowd of people and literally dove into the water to pose." I suspect that by the time I actually share that story, I will have added a few more story pieces taken straight from Spring Breakers. Or maybe I'll tell him/her about my first prom where I tried to jump to the beat of "Titanium" and my leg cramped up but I refused to cease jumping.

So many memories. So little time to say goodbye to all my friends. By the time you're reading this, I'll have a few days (at best) to dot the i's and cross the t's, and like that, poof: high school will be done. No more alarms to set off during the matinee showings of Les Miserables, no more pottery rooms coated with thin films of clay, no more Egypt Day's, none of this lovely SOA stuff. There are just a few hours until I walk across a stage (while bawling my eyes out) with my diploma in hand, toss my hat in the air, and celebrate like it's my last night on Earth.

In a way, it is my last day on this planet. SOA has been my world for these last seven years. I lament that I must now leave.

It's been fun, everyone.

## Sass Attack

by Cheyenne Koth

So far this year, each issue, in a few short paragraphs, I complain about things that bother me. In the barest form, I've fulfilled my duties. For me, though, there are an infinite amount of things I could sass, and eight issues will never be enough.

There were sassable things that I didn't mention this year, and in a way I regret it. This isn't how I want the 2016 Sass Attack to go out. This isn't how I want it to end. So. Here it is: the big finish, and end to all sasses. (Sassi?) Consider this the lightning round.

1. Ewoks. They scare me. I'm not sure why they were never a full "Attack". Why do they scare me? Let me break it down for you. Remember the little Ewok who was fleeing the storm troopers? He figured out how to use that speeder bike mighty fast, don't you think? How were they able to capture Han Solo? No one can capture Han Solo. He's Han Solo. Where'd they get that dress Leia wears when they have that shindig? They didn't make it in one day, and it's not Ewok sized: who's it from, Ewoks? Where'd you get that human-sized dress? Previous human that you've grown bored with and eaten? Probably. Also, those "helmets" they play when everyone is partying? Those aren't empty helmets, my guy, those are skulls. Anyways, fear Ewoks.

2. Clingy couples. Have you ever seen a couple that just can't keep their hands off of each other, who are constantly in each other's laps, making out in the nooks and crannies of the school, disgusting the whole of the student body? Of course you have. We all have. At times, you're even a part of these dynamic duos. To all the couples out there: thanks. Really. I savor the feeling of wanting to dispose of my lunch back through my body every time I see you canoodling in the cafeteria.

3. Furries.

That's all, I'm out.

Jay Rode



Jay Rode



## Editorial: CCSD and SOA's new life without 18 million dollars

Eighteen million dollars is a lot of money. You could buy 72 median-priced houses in Charleston, 191489 shares of Apple stock, 1045 Ford Focuses, 81.8 million Bic pens, or 1/12th of a new 787 Dreamliner with that much cash.

Eighteen million dollars also happens to be the exact number of dollars CCSD doesn't have. As in, they thought it was in the bank, but on closer inspection it never existed. Poof.

So what will we lose? Plenty.

117 teaching positions across the county are going away, along with 80-100 support staff at 75 Calhoun Street. Lincoln High School and Jane Edwards Elementary School may close. Special education programs will be reduced. There won't be a new "theater tech" major at SOA anytime soon.

And all of that may not be the end. Superintendent Gerrita Postlewait has said that "There are no sacred cows" when it comes to the budget. Cuts, cuts, cuts. Officials estimate that it will take four to five years to balance the budget.

However, here's a list of things that won't change.

Everyone at SOA will still be incredibly talented. The lunchtime jazz band concerts, the Fighting Gnomes, the beautiful visual art everywhere aren't going anywhere. The close-knit, friendly student body and the atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance can't be stripped with a budget. The teachers, both major and academic, will continue to care deeply about their students. Grub on the Green. Prom. Powderpuff. Art. Applause. SOA will keep on keeping on. The "magic" will survive.

To all the fretful students, to all the nervous parents: don't worry. You're still going to an incredible school. SOA is still the second-best high school in South Carolina. I'm grateful that I was able to go here for four years. SOA made me who I am.

Here's to the classes of 2017, '18, '19, '20, and beyond. Don't worry about the missing 18 million. You're still going to love your time at SOA.

Editorial cartoon by Holly Rizer



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**Nicole Sadek****First day of school****Last day of school**

Between these two photos are twelve years of hard work, dedication, passion, and determination.

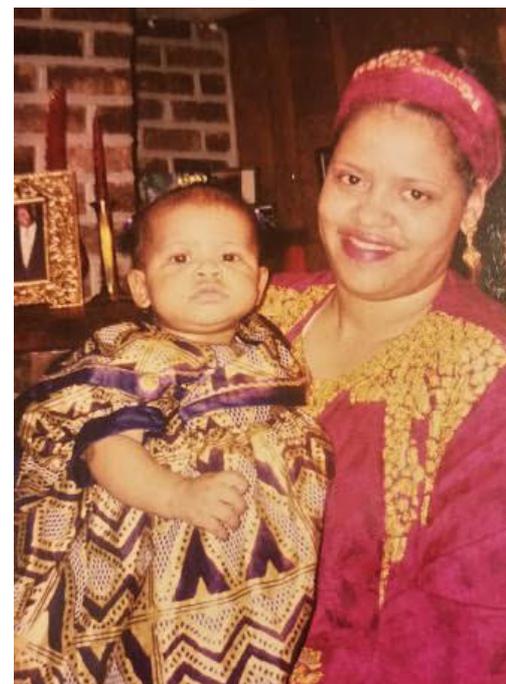
Congratulations, Nicole!

You are amazing and we are so proud of you.

Love, Mom, Dad, Carol, Grandma, and Oliver

**Shelby Levine**

Congratulations Shelby on your graduation! We are SOOOO proud of your accomplishments. Continue to keep God 1st and all of your desires will be fulfilled. Kennesaw State is just the next step on your way to becoming a Neonatologist! We love you and pray that you continue to make us proud! Mommy, "Steppy P," Micah and your Grandparents!

**Collin Lloyd**

Congratulations Collin!! You are a high school graduate and officially a CLEMSON TIGER! We love you!

-Dad, Mom, Cameron, and Caroline.

## Emma Gourdie

Congratulations Emma! We're so proud of you.  
Love Mum, Hannah, and Robby



## Jacob Fairchild



You've always been a tiger at heart. It's your time to spread your wings and reach your full potential.

Love you,  
Mom, Dad, & Josh



## Holly Rizer

Congratulations Holly!!



God blessed you with many gifts and you have used them well. You have amazed us with all your accomplishments.

Continue to believe in yourself as much as we believe in you. Can't wait to see what the future holds!

We Love You.—Dad, Mom & Jonathan

## Alissa Melsopp



Your talent is surpassed by none. Good luck at Winthrop. We all love you very much!!

Love,  
Cheyenne,  
Chloe, and Kim

## Emily Lanter

I will sing to the Lord all my life; I will sing praise to my  
God as long as I live.

—Psalm 104:33



Congratulations Emily!

You are loved and we are so proud of you!

—Mom, Dad & Wes

#FurmanBound

## Noah Evans

HAPPY GRADUATION, NOAH!

May you continue to light up the world with your  
wit, creativity, and kind spirit as you embark on  
your new adventure at SCAD.

We are so proud of you!



—Love, Mom and Dad

## Summer Coons

Sunny,

Before you were born  
I dreamed about the young  
woman you would become.

You have turned out  
even better  
than my best dreams.  
You will do great things and  
I am so happy to be along for  
the joyous ride.

All my love, Mom



## Caroline Zetrouer

“I hope your dreams take you to the corners of your smiles, to the highest of your hopes, to the windows of your opportunities, and to the most special places your heart has ever known.”

— Author Unknown



Congratulations to our special daughter! You light up our life with your smile! You've made us so proud over the years, and we know this is only the beginning. With best wishes for a bright future!

— Mom & Dad

## Kyle Winstead



Kyle, we are so very proud of you and all of your accomplishments throughout middle school and high school! The future holds many wonderful opportunities for you. Be brave and reach for your dreams! We will be here for you every step of the way.

Love, Mom, Dad,  
and Colin.

## Christian Leprette



Do you want to be happy? Let go of what's gone, be grateful for what remains and look forward to what is coming.

Love and best wishes for a wonderful life!  
-Mom, Dad and Logan



*Applause* congratulates our Editor in Chief, Jakob Lazzaro and our Graphics Editor Jay Rode on their graduation. We'll miss you guys!

## Ava Hoffman



**G**raduation is only a concept. In real life every day you graduate. Graduation is a process that goes on until the last day of your life. If you can grasp that, you'll make a difference.

**R**emember there is a good reason they call these ceremonies 'commencement exercises'. Graduation is not the end, it's the beginning.

**A**ll that stands between the graduate and the top of the ladder is the ladder.

**D**eciding to be successful is not the result of spontaneous combustion. You must first set yourself on fire.

**U**nlike going to a concert, there are no shortcuts to any place worth going. LOL!!

**A**ll of your family is extremely proud of you. You can't imagine the sense of relief they are experiencing. This would be a most opportune time to ask for money.

**T**he fireworks begin today. Each diploma is a lighted match. Each one of you is a fuse.

**I**n the New Year, may your right hand always be stretched out in friendship, but never in want.

**O**ne of the great mind destroyers of a college education is the belief that if it's very complex, it's very profound. The truth is that it is a time to discover yourself and learn something of value along the way.

**N**ever forget how much we all love you and support you and that we are always here for you. Take this time to discover your strengths and even your weaknesses and find out what you are made of. It is time to soar and we are so proud of you!!!

XOXOXO, Jane, Mark, Molly, Blake and LV

## Nolan Tecklenburg

Congratulations, Nolan!



“The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of dreams.”  
-Eleanor Roosevelt

With all our love,  
Mom, Dad  
& Teck

## Ava Hoffman



CONGRATULATIONS!  
Graduation is the beginning of a wonderful life that lies ahead. We LOVE you and are so PROUD!  
Hugs- Mema & Aunt Ellen

## Erin McQuade

Erin,  
Words cannot express our love and pride in your accomplishments. You are light, let it shine!



XO, McQuade, Almedina & Moore Clans

## Zachary Gilbert



Congratulations, Zachary! We are very proud of you! We love you MORE.  
Love, Mom, Dad and Ben

## Meagan Horres



Meagan, You've grown from a sweet, funny, happy little girl into a beautiful and amazing young woman. We are so proud of you and all you have accomplished and can't wait to see what the future has in store!

We love you!

—Mama, Daddy and Allie



## Anizia Fulmore

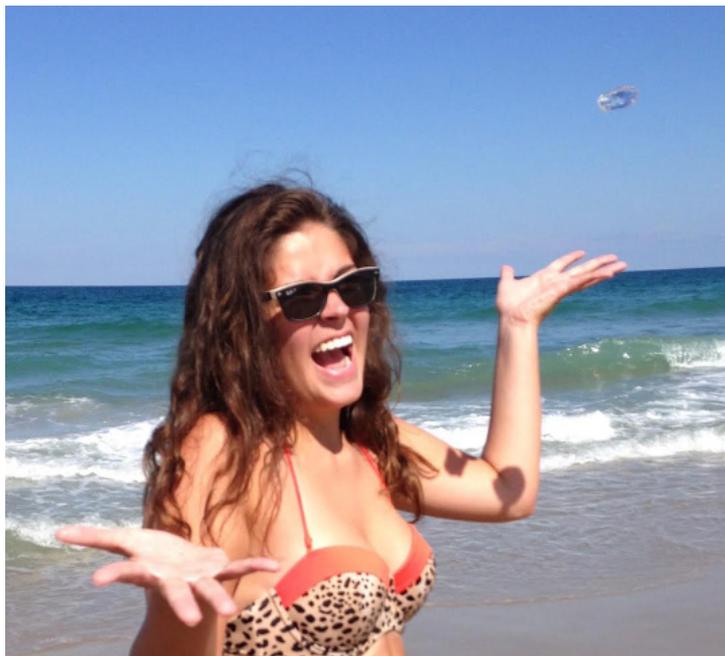


Congratulations on your graduation Anizia Tiana "Bumblebee" Fulmore.

We are very proud of you.

Love, your family.

## Abbey Lauren Kirkland



Abbey, we are so proud of the beautiful person you have become; you are an inspiration to all of us. Today is the time to celebrate your achievements and look forward to a future of endless possibilities. Wishing you love and happiness always.

—Love, Mom, Dad and Michael

## Emily Kucklick



Emily-We are so excited as you move on to your next adventure. Congratulations, we love you so much.

—Mom, Dad, Steven, and Julia

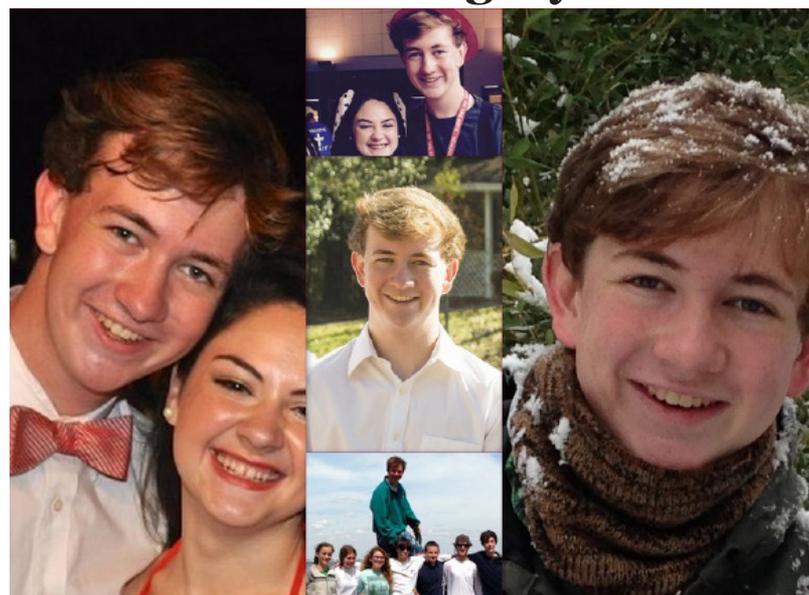
## Tori Newman



Congratulations, Tori! We are proud of all that you have accomplished, and are excited for the wonderful things in store for you.

-Mom and Olivia

## Noah Rigsby



Congratulations! We are so proud of all that you have achieved. There are special and wonderful things in store for your future. We love you so much!

-Dad, Mom and Alex

## Etta Elliot



Reach for the stars Etta!  
So proud of you!

XOXO  
-Mom, Dad and Melon

## Isabella Sullivan

Dear Isabella,  
I am so proud of you and your accomplishments. Your future is bright and full of promise, my girl. Embrace it!  
Love always, Mom



Congratulations and best wishes from all of your family.

**Georgia Hunt**

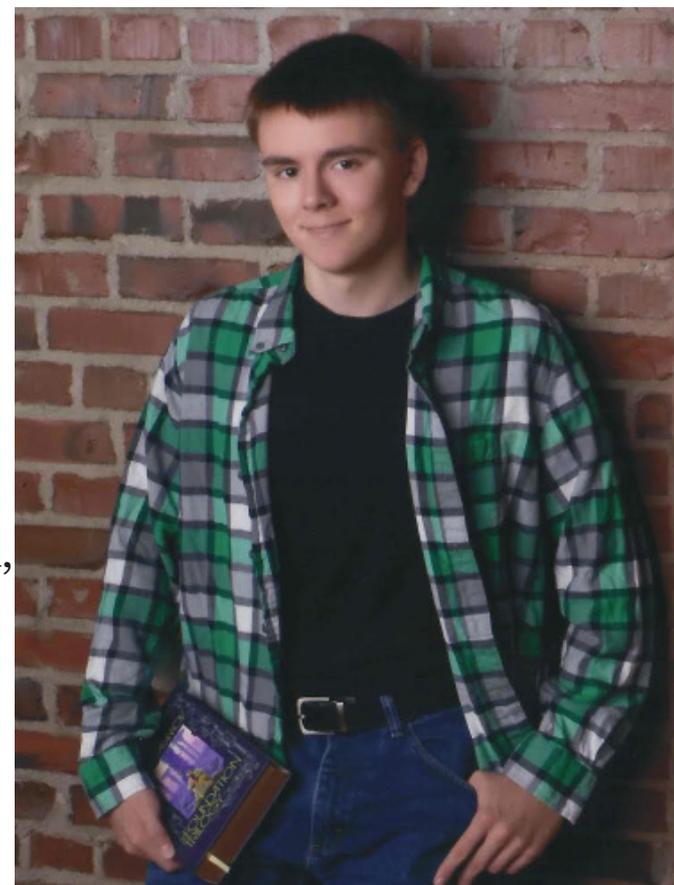
You will do great things !!!  
 Enjoy all your opportunities !!!  
 Love you always, Mom, Dad and Meg

**Elliot Cihlar**

Congratulations, Elliott Cihlar!  
 We are so proud of you and your many  
 accomplishments.  
 Love, Mom and Dad

**Parker Gustafson**

Congratulations,  
 Parker Gustafson! Life  
 is a journey and we are  
 blessed to share it with  
 such a smart, kind, and  
 talented young man.  
 Love Always, Mom, Dad,  
 and Izzy



## Elsa Cline



Congratulations, Elsa! We are so proud of the amazing young woman you have become. You have so much to offer. We can't wait to see where your journey takes you. You are so loved!

-Mom, Dad and Maya

## Rylee Puckhaber



Rylee, congratulations on graduating! We are so proud of you! Your hard work, determination and great talent have paid off! Love you!

-Grammy and Bobby

## Audrieanna Walker-Mueller

"Audra" - The greatest sister, a phenomenal artist and the most loyal confidant, go fearlessly in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you envision. -Alek Mihok



With a proud and loving heart we share this momentous day. Whatever you choose, however many road you travel, we know you will be courageous, bold and tenacious. Your life is artful, waiting for you to shape it. -Your loving Mother and Father

## Cameron Frye



Congratulations to Cameron Frye, the best sister I could ever ask for! I love you so much! -Brynnan

**Best procrastinators:  
The Assembled Horde of  
Visual Arts Seniors**



**Class(iest) president:  
Carly Edwards**

Facebook

# SENIOR SUPERLATIVES

Photos/Photo Illustrations by Jay Rode unless otherwise stated

**Most passionate about their art:  
Elsa Cline and Zach Gilbert**



Facebook



**Most likely to be a  
lumberjack: Patrick  
Burns**



**Most likely to  
sleep through  
graduation: Nick  
Scapellato**



**Most Iconic Car:  
Stephen Tenney**



**Most motherly:  
Savannah Porter**



**Best Dressed: Ryan Biddix and  
Meagan Horres**



**Most likely to have their own  
holiday: Parris Byars**



**Most likely to take  
over the world:  
Christian Leprettre**

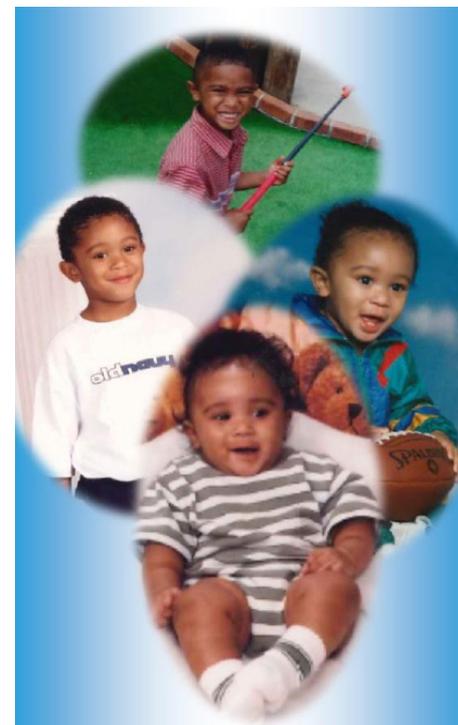
**Maureen Dolan**

Maureen,  
we are so  
proud of the  
accomplished  
young woman,  
potter, and  
violinist you have  
become. Best  
wishes on your  
next adventure  
at Georgia  
State!

**Noah Jones**

Congratulations, Noah! Wherever life takes you  
or how successful you become, never lose faith in  
God. Remain humble.

Love always,  
Mom, Dad and Shakera

**Victoria Watson**

Congratulations on your high school graduation!! We  
are so proud of you!  
Love, Mom, Dad, and Samantha

**Cydney Bennett**

Congratulations!  
We are very proud of you.  
Love, Mom, Dad, Ashton and Dale

## Jakob Lazzaro



Jakob, we are so proud of you!  
We look forward to your  
future adventures.  
Congratulations, SOA Grad!  
Look out Northwestern...  
-Mom & Dad



# SENIOR ESSAYS

SOA's graduating seniors were asked to choose one of the following prompts to be included as an essay in the final issue of *Applause*: reflect on the value of an SOA education, explain what teacher has had the strongest impact on their time at SOA, elaborate on their time spent at SOA, reflect on anything they would do differently if they were now entering SOA as a sixth grader, or describe where they would like to be in 2026.

All pictures by Prestige

## Chamel Adams

When I entered SOA in the sixth grade, it was very different for me. I was more of a tomboy in elementary school, and when I saw a lot of my classmates wear makeup and skirts/dresses I felt that I needed to do the same. If I could go back and do things differently, I would try to be myself more. Because of my decisions of pretending to be someone I am not, I developed friends who were absolutely nothing like me.

In the ninth grade, I started to make new friends very similar to me. I also wish that I could have developed a stronger relationship with my teachers and participated more in different groups and clubs. Getting involved in school is very important because it develops stronger friendships and it helps people to become well-rounded. Although I would have done some things differently if I had to start sixth grade all over again, I am very content about the decisions I have made. I am so thankful to have gone to such an amazing school with incredible opportunities'. These past seven years have changed my life in so many ways, and I will always call SOA my home.



## Copeland Barrett

In 2026, I hope to be extravagantly wealthy. When I say extravagant, I mean extravagant. For example, I plan to take my future style in a direction of being directly inspired by the 2015 Marc Jacobs party dress code which is as follows: FUR COATS OVER LINGERIE, LIP GLOSS, JERRY HALL SIDE-SWEPT HAIR, SEQUINS, GOLD LAMÉ TURBANS, PATTI HEARST SYMBIONESE LIBERATION ARMY GEAR, ROGUE, ROLLERINA CHIC, SHEER HAREM PANTS, MINI SKIRTS AND MUSCULAR LEGS, PLATINUM RECORDS AS HEAD GEAR, SEQUINS, GRACE JONES BUTCH REALNESS, GLOSS-Y SKIN, BLEACHED EYEBROWS, SLITS, RIDING IN ON A WHITE HORSE, SEQUINS, SKY HIGH STILETTOS, MIRRORED AVIATORS, METAL MESH, COWL NECKLINE HALTERS, OR EYES OF LAURA MARS CHIC. NO FLAT SHOES. NO MATTE SURFACES. NO NATURAL LOOKS.

I plan to own a plethora of exotic pets, including a pink dolphin, which are exclusively endemic to the Amazon river, a pure black panther named Bagheera, and a white antelope, widely known as one of the rarest animals in the world. I hope to be so wealthy, I use small bills like 10s and 20s to delicately pat dry my face when I am moved to tears by the thought of those less fortunate than I. I will have many homes, where exclusive and lavish parties will be held around the clock. When I inevitably die young, as only the good do, my body will be immaculately preserved and placed in a crystal clear viewing case with rose gold embellishments so my many mourners may visit and remember me for centuries.

## Cydney Bennett

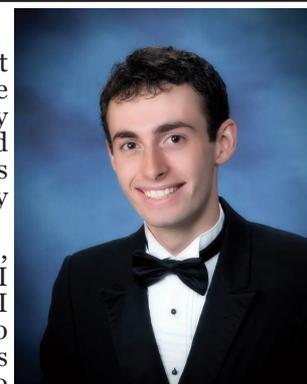
In the year 2026, I hope to be a successful elementary school teacher. Most people think that I'm crazy for wanting to be a teacher, especially for little kids, but I just love to work with children. Next year I am attending Winthrop University, which has a great education program. I am majoring in Elementary Education, which I guess makes sense, and hopefully I will enjoy my time getting all of the experience Winthrop provides. I am very excited to go ahead and jump into a classroom, make up my own lesson plans, get my own students, and grow as a person.



## Cody Beasenburg

If I were to choose any aspect of my four years at SOA as reflective of my growth, it would have to be my growth in my major. Before I came into vocal, my singing abilities were severely limited. I couldn't hold a part among other singers, my sightsinging abilities were nonexistent, and my knowledge of music theory was far less than proficient.

However, under the tutelage of my major teachers, I have been able to use potential I didn't even know I had. My improvements have been incredible and I am incredibly grateful for the chances I've had here to perfect my craft. I feel that my vocal training here has broadened both my abilities and my perspective as to how to best use my talents.



## Jordan Benton

I have learned so much from being at SOA for the past seven years and I have learned to value the education it gave to me. Before joining the SOA family, I was attending a private school. Although it was a great experience, it was nothing like SOA. Here we are able to freely express ourselves and there is a higher sense of a good relationship throughout the school.

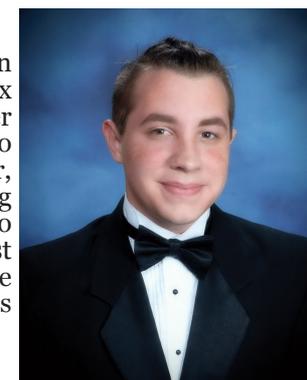
I think by getting an education from SOA you are able to be ready for the future. My major has given me many dance opportunities that have resulted in many scholarships and grants. When it comes to my academic classes, I have learned responsibility and time management through the guidance of my teachers. Something that we have that other schools do not are teachers that are willing to help and unwilling to allow you to fail. There is always an availability of opportunities that normal schools don't have. The decision to continue my journey at SOA was the best. I'm happy to call myself a graduate and soon to be alumni to such an amazing school. It's not everyday you get to find a school that not only guides you through your art but also has such a welcoming and understanding student body, and I'm glad I found that in SOA.



## Ryan Biddix

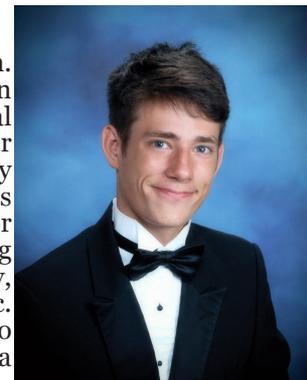
Hello readers, my name is Ryan Biddix. I plan on doing a lot by 2026, such as building the Biddix dynasty and marrying a Trailblazer basketball player from Portland and becoming a b-ball wife. The one who inspired me the most is would have to be Anna Walker, always complimenting me on my brows and not putting out my flame, because not only am I lit but I am also FLAMEboyant. I'll probably be wearing the coolest clothes and listening to the coolest music by this time because I both cool and current. Check out my shoes when I walk across the stage ;)

LOVE,  
Ryan <3 <3 xo xo



## Woods Browder

An SOA education is beyond an ordinary education. You do not just learn the standards, you actually learn life skills like how to manage your time and social skills. SOA gives you a personal relationship with your teachers and fellow classmates. The teachers genuinely care about you and your ability to succeed. SOA puts you in a professional environment and prepares you for the future by making you well-rounded and providing opportunities to take advantage of. Most importantly, SOA has taught me to express myself through my music. I am proud to say that I have had the opportunity to go to School of the Arts and to be able to call myself a recent SOA Alumni.



## Patrick Burns

My seven year term at SOA was off the chain. That is, if “the chain” represents the normal middle to high school experience and being off of it is insanity. But SOA was never too plain nor too insane for the people that stuck around from sixth grade through twelfth grade. So I must rephrase myself and say that my seven year term at SOA was fly. That is, if “fly” means that all of the students soared to the highest levels of artistry.

But SOA is not all about mastering one’s art. It certainly could be if somebody set that as their goal, which many have done successfully. But with a balanced schedule that emphasizes both art and academics, students can prioritize work to their benefit and get a head start on their ideal college or professional career.

So if my seven year term at SOA was not off the chain or fly, was it not any good? As if! In the words of whoever wrote the script for *Clueless*, my seven year term at SOA was all that and a bag of chips. If “all that” stands for everything I’ve expressed SOA to be in this essay and the “bag of chips” means a literal bag of chips as a bonus to top it all off.

## Bethany Burnsed

There are many great aspects of an education at Charleston County School of the Arts. It is an arts education, which allows the students to go farther than the books and relate the information taught in the classroom to the art they love. Also, with arts being a major influence inside and outside of the classroom, students develop a level of respect for the arts and each other that would be difficult to find in many other schools. Relationships between teachers and students are different because the teachers respect the students and support them in class and in their art shows. It is not a strange sight to see a teacher at a visual arts exhibit or a dance performance. The teachers care about their students and what to support them and see the art work they produce. An education at SOA is one that I will always remember SOA and it made me into the woman that I am today.

## Parris Byars

One part of attending SOA that will always stick with me was the fact there was such a diverse system of communication and friendship. This school was/is, in no way, divided into cliques, which is amazing to me, considering that the school already divides the students into majors. I found that everybody could always have a reason to associate with, hang out with, or be friends with just about every other person at the school.

In *Thoroughly Modern Millie*, I became friends with a wide variety of majors and people as a member of the ensemble. In *Beauty and the Beast*, I acquainted myself with a multitude of musicians from different backgrounds. In both of the GQ Pageants, I was graced with the opportunity to make a fool of myself with all-state jazz guitarists, hip-hop dancers, cheesy comedians, and Macklemore impersonators alike. Some of the more rewarding bonds that I have made have been through Quizbowl, where it was okay to be a know-it-all, for I would always have been in the company of about nine others. Overall, I would say that this incredible mix of people has reflected on me more than any other aspect of SOA. Now I’m returning the favor.

## Taylor Carnie

If I was a sixth grader again, I would try to ensure I spent more time focused on grades and less time putting off work. I would also try to spend more time with friends and find a balance between fun and work. I would have spent more time trying to have fun and not worry as much about things that didn’t matter. Other than do more work and spend more time with people, I would not want to change too much about my time here at SOA. It was still pretty fun and I enjoyed being with most of the people here.



## Elsa Cline

After seven years at SOA, it is easy for me to take it for granted. I have few memories of school before SOA and have limited knowledge of how other high schools operate. Sometimes I need a reminder of what I have gained from this unique experience. For me, that reminder was the Senior Visual Arts show. My pieces were mounted on easels in my designated section. It was the first time I was able to see all of my work from this year together. I was able to feel proud of myself and the art I have invested so much of my time in.

I know I was not the only senior Visual Artist who felt that way. None of us would deny that our innate abilities have been enhanced by our time at SOA. We have had access to a wide range of supplies and resources. We have received some level of instruction. We have been given something key to developing any artistic talent; time. It is this time (90 minutes or more a day) that makes SOA so unique. Whether I realize it or not, I have been given something that will help to carry me forward on a new path with new experiences.



## Summer Coons

In 2026, I plan on continuing my work as a high school biology teacher. I will have (if my plan works out) almost completely paid off my Teaching Fellows scholarship and have no more student debt. I will also be acting and doing musical theater outside of my job at school. I’m going to make this happen my busting my... butt. I’m going to be working really hard to be the best teacher I can be and inspire kids to love our planet as much as I do.

I’m also hopefully going to have two beautiful ChowChows and one cat living in a little house with me. Of course all of this is what I dream for, but who knows if it will happen. The one thing I know for sure is that I WILL be teaching and I’m really looking forward to getting to stand in front of a class and teach kids and help them grow as people. Looking a head I know I have a huge ton of work to do but I am ready for the challenge. Teaching isn’t a easy profession but I’m ok with that. I want to help nurture the future generations of minds that will hopefully make our world a better place to live in. I know I’m just going to have to get my stuff done and be the best person I can be or I won’t be able to achieve the things I want to do and be the best teacher I can be.



## Carly Crawford

There is no one teacher or class that could be solely responsible for the “SOA Experience.” The structure alone of the school makes it more of a blend of arts, academics, professional, and friendly relationships that truly leave a lasting impact on the students of SOA. But if there were one teacher I could pick out that has made such a positive impact on my life, I would say it’s Ms. Yackey. No, she is no longer teaching math at our school but our next door neighbors’ at Magnet. Yes, only a small percentage of the student body got the pleasure of learning from her. But despite her quick time here in the 2014-2015 school year, I learned more from her about life in general than any other one person in the timespan of four quarters.

I had Ms. Yackey as a math teacher as well as a host for my teacher monitor class during a free period. Over the course of the year we developed a friendship that still makes us stop to talk during rare, exciting moments of seeing each other in the admin building. The reason Ms. Yackey has had such a strong impact on me is because she practices what she preaches, and she’s always willing to share the lessons she’s learned to help others. One of the best lessons I’ve learned from her is to not make personal decisions based off of the preferences of others. She’s the type of person to make you laugh, stay open to all kinds of ideas, brighten a room, help you solve a problem, listen, and prove her humility over and over again. I’ll never forget the way she lives her life because her positivity is infectious and she makes such a great role model.



## Megan Dawson

In 2026, I want to be enjoying my career as an ecological scientist. Hopefully by that time I'll have two beautiful children and be living in a mansion in Newport, Rhode Island with my amazing husband. That's the dream, but I'll settle for a small house. I just want to be settled with a steady career and family ten years from now.



## Maddie DePuy

It's fourth block on a Friday and I'm sitting in the breezeway. It's a gorgeous day and there are people coming and going, with jazz music and middle schoolers yelling, and a far off train whistle in the air. And I'm sitting here realizing SOA isn't some idealistic art utopia like some of the advocates of this school like to believe. It's still high school, there is still high school drama and people who hate people who hate people etc., etc., etc.

But I'm just sitting here realizing that our school, however flawed and cliqued and challenging and frustrating and tiring it may be, is special. Because there are moments that show us that when it comes down to it, art is deeply connective. And when everyone in this place has a love for art of some kind, no matter how carelessly or passionately they follow that love, and they are in a special place like this, there is that underlying connection between all of us. Sometimes it remains buried but sometimes, during a spontaneous rock concert tribute, a local tragedy, or a thesis performance, it surfaces and we remember for a moment how deeply human we all are, and how necessary art is. These moments are fleeting because this is still high school.

But one thing I've learned from my time at SOA is that every single person is incredibly special and has something to offer to the world, especially if that person is an artist. And no matter how many times we justify it, judging people robs them of a chance to teach you about their true identity. Everyone has a story, everyone goes through stuff, and for artists we pour this stuff out through music and movement and words. However much we all like to knock high school with a "I can't wait to get out of here" or sigh of joy when we turn in that last Brehm test, the truth is we will never be able to experience any of this again. Out teachers and our campus and our circles of friends, we will surrender them to the natural ebb and flow of the world, but the high school stuff we've gone through and tragedies we've seen and the art we've created, that is ours to keep, close to us, however long we let it live on.

## Casey Derieux

What teacher or class has the strongest impact on me and why? Well that's much too easy to answer. Dr. Selby has had an incredible impact on me. Not only is Dr. Selby incredibly supportive of each and every one of his students, but he truly cares for all of his students as well. During the awards concert this year, Dr. Selby sat down on the stage and talked to us for about 15 minutes, giving all of his students incredibly important advice. I'm sure I speak for everyone present that it was advice that will stick with us for the rest of our lives. He reminded us of our two most important lessons that we have learned in symphony this year: it is more important to be together, than it is to be right, and one must listen, always with an open mind, and one must be prepared to temporarily surrender their version of the truth. In class, these lessons may only apply to our music.

But as SOA has made perfectly clear, life is full of music. So of course, it makes sense for the rules that apply to music to be applied to our day to day lives as well. Dr. Selby has had the strongest impact on me, because he was one of the only teachers I have ever had, throughout the past 12 years that I have been in school, who was able to so effortlessly provide lessons that are going to always be relevant in my life. This, as well as Dr. Selby's constant encouragement and compassion towards his students has been a true inspiration to me. Thank you Dr. Selby for an unforgettable four years. Thank you so much.



## Maureen Dolan

Throughout my years at Charleston County School of the Arts, my life was greatly impacted by Roger Taylor. A teacher of stats, calculus, and audio engineering, he imparts wisdom in his students that far surpasses topics of just these three subjects. Even though he is one of the newer teachers, he has quickly earned the respect and love of many students here.

For me, he has quickly risen to be a trusted friend and he has greatly encouraged me and pushed me forward through all his confidence and advice. Without him by my side at school, my life in all areas (not just my school life) would be greatly diminished. I owe this man many thanks for inspiring me to be my greatest and reach my full potential.

## Carlin Dooley

If I was entering SOA as a sixth grader, I would definitely make more friends. Those people that went from middle through the end of high school together formed relationships that will last a lifetime. Most of those friendships that started in sixth grade are some of the deepest I have seen here at SOA and I wish I could have one just as strong with someone I had known for seven plus years. I would also ensure that I made friends with the administration. It's a whole lot easier to get out of trouble if the ones doling out punishment like you and have watched you grow up from a sixth grader to a senior in high school.

## Sam DuPree

Being part of SOA since sixth grade has been one entertaining roller coaster. From Art Smart in eighth grade to our upcoming graduation this year, I have loved my family here. I enjoyed growing up here to get to know every single one of my friends here and wouldn't change it for the world. I remember one of the most important times at SOA was the trip to Washington, D.C. because I realized how close we all were. Being able to experience things with you guys has been crazy and also very emotional for us all. I also figured out what I wanted to do when I become older here.

While drawing here at School of the Arts, I found out that I can put my dedication into my art and I love it. I thank my mom for everything she did to get me to this school because I wouldn't want to go anywhere else and also I would like to thank my sister, Taylor for showing me this school first and drive me to become the best person I can be. I'm going to miss my family and friends here at SOA and I hope everyone the best in the near future!

## Allison Durand

One of the most memorable elements of the "SOA experience" is, in my opinion, the surreal atmosphere of the school itself. Everything about the place manages to exude art. I frequently catch myself grinning and standing up a little straighter when I walk through the campus and hear the steady pulse of jazz music come and go like air around me, or when I notice new paintings adorning the already covered walls of the hallways, or when the faint hum of choral music pervades the space of a classroom. The students here, as my dad observed after witnessing the swarm of dismissal one day, are basically living in Fame, the movie. And it's not just them: I mean, name one teacher here that doesn't have some other incredible artistic talent other than the subject of their class.

Every time that I get mangled in the stresses of academic life and lose sight of how incredible it is, SOA never fails to knock me back into its fantasy. This could be through an unbelievably professional fashion show, through comical dancing during a lunch concert by a group of band majors, or by the goosebumps that sprint across my arms as a creative writer performs a slam poem during convocation.

It's not something you can adequately describe. You just have to live it, be a part of the quirky, talented family that this school is. It's not something that can be contrived. It just flows naturally from the people here. SOA truly makes me proud.



## Rebecca Edson

My time at SOA has been a journey. This year alone has been a whirlwind of emotions, yet this school has been the only consistent thing: it has been my home. Friendships have been built, torn apart, and reinforced within these walls. The person I am now is indescribably different from the timid tenth grader that arrived a quarter of the way through the year. Since then, I have learned so much. I learned that the only way to learn is through experience and through mistakes. That is more brutal than any other teacher at this school. Without SOA, I would never have been thrown into the same situations, but I am a better person for it. I would not trade that for anything.

## Carly Edwards

When I was preparing to start my career at SOA, I remember a current student telling me how cliquy the school was. Until my sophomore year, I would have viewed this statement as true, but maybe that's just high school in general. If I was restarting my time at School of The Arts, I would immediately immerse myself in the activities and clubs offered outside of the classroom. I have met some of my closest (and unexpected) friends through my participation in *Hairspray*, Student Council, The Fashion Show and the AP Art History Trips. I would like to encourage all current and future students to do the same.

Always participate in events like Prom, powder puff, Winter Formal and attend as many of your classmates performances as possible. Talk to people outside of your closest friend group, including those in other grades and even the faculty members. Thank you to all students, teachers and administration for contributing to my wonderful experience of attending Charleston County School of The Arts. Everyone please consider signing up to run for Student Council and Go Pegasus!

## Etta Elliot

I have been impacted by many classes at SOA, but the three that have had the most effect on me have been Dr. Cusatis's AP Lit and English 2, Mrs. Passarello's English 3, and Mr. Clark's World History class. I know I'm only supposed to say one class, but all three teachers have influenced my interests for college and me as a person.

Mr. Clark sparked my interest in The Golden Age of Europe. I have been infatuated with Queen Elizabeth I ever since his class and I'm inspired by her strong and prosperous female role in history. I aspire to be as great a leader and woman as her. I plan to take European History classes in college. Mrs. Passarello taught me how to write, I never knew how well I could write essays or papers until Mrs. Passarello. She always made me feel very confident about my writing and her spunk created my love for her class and my ability to write significantly well. Dr. Cusatis influenced my new love for books; I have always hated to read and never found anything interesting until Dr. Cusatis introduced me to Dante's *Inferno*, *Hamlet*, and *Wuthering Heights*. I never understood how much meaning a simple page had until Dr. Cusatis, and I am truly grateful for that ability he granted me. All of my teachers have been wonderful at SOA, but these three teachers have influenced my passions and ideas of what I want to do after college. I'm majoring in Journalism and minoring in art.

## Jackie Evans

Before I came to SOA, I was very introverted. I was a follower in the groups of friends that I was a part of. I never really got a lot of courage built up to do things like assert myself and show people the talent I possessed. I was known as kind and friendly, but shy. Some people might still say that I'm just that: nice and shy. I have really learned a lot about myself and made friendships that I intend to keep for a lifetime. SOA is unlike any other school. Everyone fits in and everyone has someone. Sure there are still (as always) those disturbers of the peace, but for the most part, everyone gets along. I have had teachers that have affected my life in many ways and really taught me a lot. It really is a magical place.



## Noah Evans

Ah! whither doth I start, mine four years hither at SOA has't been an adventure. I recall mine first day in art class, I nev'r imagined how closely I would bound with the people around me. Whither I has't madeth many friends at SOA, mine art class somehow hath felt closer, like a family. I recall hanging out, listening to music (rap of course), at which hour we got fill'd with pangs of hunger, we would order 'zza and we'd just hang in a way that hath felt more like a relaxation from school instead of actual worketh. I would behold forward to art class. I would behold forward to class everyday as if 't be true I wast meeting at the market or something like wise. Grant you mercy to that, I wilt at each moment miss this school at which hour I leaveth, and wilt at each moment behold back at the times I've hadst.



## Cameron Frye

In eighth grade, I was considering switching schools and going to Academic Magnet or James Island. People kept telling me that was the wrong decision and that I would regret it in the future because I would in no way have the exposure to music that I would have if I stayed at SOA. I thought that I wanted to go to a more "normal" school and have a "normal" high school experience. However, as many people pointed out, I am not normal and would definitely suffer at a normal school. So I stayed at SOA. At first I didn't understand why my parents pushed me to stay, but looking back as a senior, I am so glad they did. I can't imagine going anywhere else. I have gotten so close to the class of 2016 over these past four years and I do not regret staying here one bit. If I did not stay here and continue as a vocal major, I have no idea what I would be doing in college. I doubt I would be going in to music. SOA definitely is the reason why I have fallen in love with performing and I am so grateful to all the students, teachers, and other adults that encouraged me to stay here and helped me through the years.



## Jacob Fairchild

My time at SOA has influenced me greatly. From roaming the walls of the old school drawing on my mom's blackboard (yes blackboard) as a toddler, to coming into vocal covered in mud from the torrential downpour in sixth grade ("I bet I can run through this puddle without slipping"), to gliding my way through the end of senior year, I've enjoyed my time here thoroughly.

Although I look forward to college, there are aspects of high school, particularly SOA that I will miss in the coming years. One of these aspects I'll miss is how SOA is like a family, anyone who has gone here can attest to that fact. With teachers that actually care about your success in life outside of just their class, and students that also care, the atmosphere is unique.

I've learned a lot during my time at SOA, namely procrastination. Most of my projects and big assignments consist of staying up late at night to finish work that is somehow, miraculously, good enough to merit an A. I do not recommend this method to others, it is relatively taxing on the body, and is risky when it comes to getting work done well. Good procrastination skills are my downfall. Somehow pulling off a chemistry paper in Dr. Price's class on Francoise Jacob (the man that discovered the lac operon and how it works) in 10th grade getting a 102 on my first ever all-nighter has cursed me with the skills that allow me wait until the last minute to get things done. Again, I do not recommend.

I've also learned how to appreciate art. I've learned how to look at literature, a piece of visual art that I cannot understand whatsoever, or listen to a piece of music, and see the beauty and complexity that these things entail. This is one of the more SOA specific things that I've learned in the last years, and also one of the more important, as it is more of a life skill than anything else, making my SOA education near invaluable.



## Jenna Farnham

My time at SOA has undoubtedly had a positive influence on my character. It was my parents' decision that I would start taking violin lessons at Ashley River Elementary in kindergarten, but now I can't begin to imagine how dull my life would be without music in it. For centuries, music has brought individuals together and allowed us to freely express emotion in ways that words often fail to.

One individual who truly deserves credit for guiding and expanding my appreciation for music is the high school orchestra teacher, Dr. Selby, who has worked tirelessly to raise our strings program to a whole new level of sophistication and will continue to do so for as long as he remains at SOA.

Although I've spent the most time with Dr. Selby over the past four years, I find it very difficult to have a "favorite" teacher because so many of them have impacted my time here. Dr. Cusatis, the coffee addict, book worm, and fifth grade bandmate of mine, has given me a newfound respect for novels that I would previously not dare pick up by choice. The infamous, former CIA agent, Mr. Brehm, has given me my first dose of "real world" knowledge in high school through government and economics while leaving us all in awe of his intriguing life. Mr. Short, the most passionate science teacher there is, has given me the vision of a future backyard garden that even he would be proud of. Ms. Zerbst, the beautifully intelligent and talented, has helped me, in the pottery room, discover an artistic side of myself that I was previously unaware of. And last but certainly not least, Mr. Taylor, the musically talented computer geek, has managed to cheer up some of my worst days with his profound sarcasm and five-star music taste. With these only being the teachers I had this year, you can imagine that the list goes on. I can confidently say that this school would be utterly uninteresting without the teachers that have come and gone since the very beginning, and I would like to thank each and every one of them for the lasting impact they have made on my life over the past seven years.



## Marissa Gigis

An SOA education goes beyond the classroom. You come in contact with so many people. Strange people. But you're all in the same weird predicament: being an artist and being super invested in grades. Having to go to another high school to play volleyball seemed lame at first, but it made me appreciate the bond and style we have here. I'm sure that SOA being second academically in the state really helped us all on our college applications too... So to you kids giving it your all and arguing for your 98 to become a 99, thank you. As annoying as academics have been, I'm going to actually miss this place for it's small size, my honey badgers dance class, and the overall good memories of being the last class to experience the old campus. #itsbeenagoodrun2016



## Zachary Gilbert

My School of the Arts career has had its ups and downs. The thing that really made the most impact on me was how to treat people. I've been in so many situations where knowing how to treat people made the most difference between being successful and total downfall was learning the respect I needed to treat others with. Especially when it came to people I had arguments with, I still had to respect their point of view and the opinion they shared with me. Sometimes, I had to change the way I acted when I was around a certain person, because they didn't share the same viewpoints that I did. Although some people might not have liked me or respected my work, that didn't mean I couldn't respect them and value their artwork the same as mine. I truly believe the most important thing I've learned is how to respect and make do with the different attitudes and beliefs of others.



## Shanti Franks

In 2026 I will be turning 28. By this time I will definitely be done with cosmetology school and be a graduate from Paul Mitchell. I would specialize in makeup and hair. At this point, I would have lived in Washington state for probably 5-6 years and would be working on, if not already complete, getting a degree in music composition and/or music production. During the day I will work in a salon, preferably my own, and at night I will focus on my music. Even if I don't get anywhere with music, I will always still play and write for my own enjoyment. I will always make time for music.



## Emma Gourdie

In a year from now, I hope to be a well-adjusted freshman at James Madison University on my way to completing a Masters degree in elementary education. In ten years from now, I will have completed training in the Montessori method of teaching and will be working at an elementary school in Virginia or Maryland. I would like to be working alongside educators who are "making things happen," such as designing elective courses aligned to the Common Core or writing grants to provide funding for school gardens and the like. I hope to be enjoying the spontaneity, laughter and intellectual challenge of teaching. Most of all, I hope to be applying my skills and passions to an educational approach that helps children reach their full potential in all areas of life.



## Anizia Fulmore

By the year 2026, I plan to have graduated from Winthrop University with my Bachelor's in English and a minor in criminology. I intend to have studied abroad in London to gain a worldly experience of the publishing world there. To achieve this, I will acquire the credits for the school year and hopefully study abroad by my sophomore or junior year. I will be 27, living in Charlotte, New York, or Colorado, hopefully working at a publishing company. I would love to become an editor in chief at a company such as, Penguin Random House or Simon & Schuster. That would be my dream job, and I hope to be able to edit adult fiction books and build a name for myself around the country.



## Ashley Green

SOA has brought me hopes and dreams that I can only wish to one day fulfill. By the year 2026, I strive to be touring as a backup dancer or dancing in a professional company, like Alvin Ailey or Complexions. These dreams now stand like a distant finish line, and I know in order to get closer to them, I need self-confidence and willingness to put myself out there in each class and audition. But more than anything, I hope in 2026 I become a person whom I will actually be proud of. Thank you SOA for making me feel as if these dreams were possible and for teaching me what it means to finish the race.



## Melanie Green

An SOA education is an interesting one. Here, you learn to accept one another for who they are and not what they look like or dress like. If I could do anything starting from sixth grade, I would learn to love myself. After starting this school in ninth grade, I met a whole new group of people that actually loved me for me and not what I had to offer them, even if it was a joke or even the answers to last night's homework.

The class that has had the strongest impact on me was my eleventh grade English class with Miss. Pass. She is one of the most inspiring people I know and she gave me the confidence to go for the gold in my academic life; something I could never repay her for. By the year 2023 I will most likely still be in school and I will be traveling and learning about life all over the world; animals and humans alike. I plan to make this happen by studying medicine and nursing at MUSC and pursuing study abroad programs. Once again, the best parts of SOA for me has been the great lessons I have learned with my friends by my side.



## Sabrina Green

In 2026, I will be 28.

The me ten years from now will be far more experienced in worldly affairs. By 2026, I will have travelled a lot and experienced many cultures. I will have met many new people, with different opinions, who will have influenced me to be a better person. The bigger person. The 28-year-old me will be confident in what she wants and will know what her purpose is in this world. She will be one of the many in my generation positively changing the world; slowly but surely. And though there may be many events which may cause her to doubt herself and ask why? I believe there will be many more events where she is reminded of her purpose in this world; because if not her than who?

I hope the future me will be less passive than the current me. That she won't be afraid to fight for what she believes in and won't be as afraid of confrontation. I hope that 28-year-old me will still enjoy the same things as 17-year-old me. I hope that she will still play violin and still love to read (Wilde and Rumi will always have a special place in her heart, though Keats will eventually get his own place too). That nothing will sway her love for classical music, even though she may have a brief love affair with tango music (Piazzolla is far too seductive for her to resist playing at least once). However, I believe she will always return home to Beethoven's Frühling sonata because nothing will scream home to her more than spring.

The me in 2026 maybe different than the current me but I believe that she'll still be me, only a woman playing a more active part in this world.



## Shayla Green

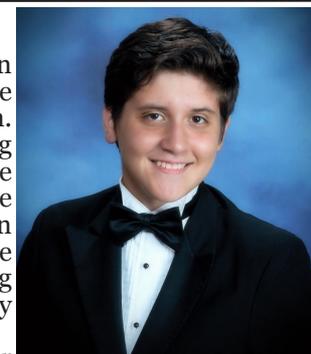
In the year 2026, I want to be working at Pixar Animation Studios. My plan is to attend the University of South Carolina for my freshman year of college and then transfer to SCAD University with a major in animation and a minor in illustration. At USC I will be taking classes such as 3-dimensional design, color composition, and the history of western art as a part of the first steps towards my degree. I think that going into computer animation at SCAD would be a good fit for me because of all the experience I have with the traditional style of art and the attention to detail that it requires. I have always loved and appreciated animated movies and the different art styles.



## JJ Goller

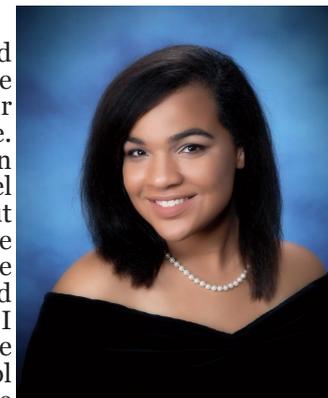
In 2026, I plan to be a full-time RN working in a hospital in San Francisco, hopefully with a nice apartment in the bay area and a few dogs of my own. Right now, I'm taking the entrance exam for nursing school and preparing to move away from home by the end of this July (not to San Francisco yet; I'm as broke as the SOA bathroom soap dispensers). I chose San Francisco so I could be closer to my older brother. We didn't have a lot of time together when we were growing up since he was away at boarding school for most of my childhood.

I'd like to still be playing music as well, as this year marks the ninth year I've been playing viola. If at all possible, I'd like to see another book published and have a little niche for myself in the writing world. But most of all, I want to be able to look at myself in the mirror and say, "We did it, man. We got this far." I won't lie. There was a time in my life when I never thought I'd live to see my graduation day. That was rock bottom for me, when the only possible way for me to go was up. Looking back, it seems like those dark days were just a bad memory, but I still can't believe how lucky I am that I chose to keep going. No matter where I'll be in the future, I will always be proud of what I've accomplished. I owe myself that much.



## Lexi Griffin

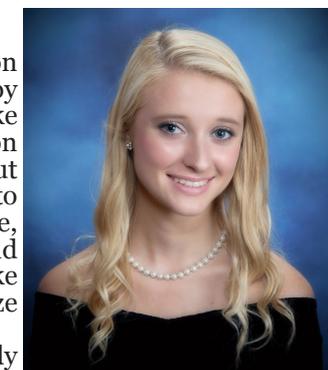
I came from CE Williams Middle School and my education at SOA has been way different. There are so many kids here that actually try to get their education and that also plays a value in my life. Their motivation motivates me to be the best I can be. Also, I came from a school where one grade level has about 400 kids to a school where there is about 130 kids in each grade level. I feel like we are more like a family instead of classmate. Even though I have been here for four years, I felt like I felt welcomed as a freshman. Also, throughout my four years, I really have to thank Dr. Selby. He was there for me and his other students. We both came to this school at the same time, and now our four years have come to a bittersweet end. He has taught me to believe in myself and to be the best I can do. Ten years after SOA, I see myself being an operation room nurse in Austin, Texas. I will get there by studying hard (and getting a strong stomach). Being at SOA has taught me to be the best me there is and, also, to be myself. As this year comes to an end, I will remember the friends I had, the music I made, and now, I start a new life. Know, it is only the beginning.



## Bailey Gruber

I was always told that senior year and graduation would come so quick and that the years would fly by fast, but I never believed it. Sixth grade seemed like it took forever to get through, and then ten million years later (it seemed) I was finally in high school. But looking back on it all, I can remember being scared to audition, being scared for the first day of school here, auditioning for musicals, and anything in between, and honestly, time does fly by. In the moment it seems like time is moving so slowly, but in the end, you realize how fast everything went.

When I was in sixth grade, a senior bus buddy of mine named ShaRonda (who I looked up to more than anyone) told me on her last day of senior year to have fun and take in my opportunities at SOA, because before you know it the years fly by and it'll be time to go. I thought to myself how seven years was a long time to wait and how it seemed like I'd never get there. But if there's one thing you should learn from this not-so-educational short essay, it's that the years really do fly by ridiculously fast, and you need to make the best out of every day.



## Parker Gustafson

Seven years from now and fourteen from when I walked into that cavernous cafeteria of faded white walls, full of stout, lively and garrulous 11 and 12-year-olds running on their legs and lips to and fro, when I just had a book. I had no idea what was in store for me then, and I still haven't found my mutant powers to predict the future. So, it remains foggy. I can't tell what it will be for sure, but that's a rare skill. I know I'm going to college to become an engineer, but I don't know if the type will change, the major will change, or if the college will change.

What I do know is that I will change, for better or for worse (to be on the safe side), but five years of an accelerated masters program and two of either reality or going on another expedition up the peaks of knowledge in another round of scholarly exploits and misadventures. The gist of it is I don't know; I can only take the tools given to me up to this point to help me further break down this grand, complex, terrifying, astounding, and sometimes dumbfounding equation we call existence. I'm just going to keep adding more tools for my collection. See what happens.

## Legare Hay

My time at School of the Arts has been an interesting experience, considering I don't fit in the society most here. Most of the time when people would ask where I go to school they'd be surprised I went here, saying I looked more like a Porter Gaud type. They weren't completely wrong; I'm sort of an outsider in the crowd at SOA. But, throughout my surprising seven years here, I found a close group of fellow misfits. I've also found friends who I would never have suspected to ever be friends with. I've had some amazing teachers, some better than others, some more memorable, and some who I want to forget, but I value the education I gained here.

If I've learned anything here it's to put what you love first and put everything after. What's most important to you is what you should focus on and put your all into it. It may have taken me a while to learn this, but I hope I can carry this with me for the rest of my life. I feel like I have lived on the Hay legacy at this school, and I hope our family leaves a lasting impression on this school forever, as it has for us.

## Ava Hoffman

I believe the class that has had the strongest impact on me would have to be Theatre, for many reasons. When I first came to SOA in my freshman year, I was only familiar with a handful of students. I had come from a 12-person eighth grade graduating class, and I was now in a school with 2 of my former classmates. Actually, we all shared theatre together. We were all strangers in the 150 student class, there were things we didn't know about ourselves. However, as the years progressed, we got closer and soon became a family. It has gotten to the point where when one thing went wrong, many of my classmates were eager to help. The teachers were very caring. Whenever I had an issue, the my major teachers would always do whatever they could to help solve the problem. I am very sad that I will be leaving behind so much when I go to college (but hey, I'm going to college in Charleston, so I can always visit).

## Chloe Hogan

I went to a traditional public middle school. Everyone from my middle school went to the same private high school, except a few people including myself. When I first started at SOA, I was amazed. I felt lucky to meet people who were passionate about art the same way that I was. People would jokingly ask me if my school was like Glee, which is sort of is. Art was integrated into my academic classes as well, keeping me interested and involved in my classes. Had I gone to the private school my middle school friends did, I truly believe I would be a different person: SOA has allowed me to be myself and flourish. I also had great teachers (shout out to Ms. Cimballa!) I truly believe that, more than any other school, SOA students graduate as well-rounded, informed and unique individuals. The friends that I have made will be my friends for life. High school sucks, but SOA sucks the least.



## Jordyn Huger

The value of an SOA Education is very interesting because it teaches you how to learn things on your own. If I were to enter SOA as a sixth grader again, I would have tried harder when it came to doing my schoolwork. Band class had the most impact on me because it made me realize not everyone can get an equal opportunity to do things. Somehow, you have to get the opportunities that other people get on your own. By 2026, I want to be living somewhere else other than Charleston, SC and I want to be financially stable and enjoying life. To get there, I intend to work hard in college and somehow get a good job. After being at SOA for seven years, I must say it was a fun journey.

## Tahj Horton

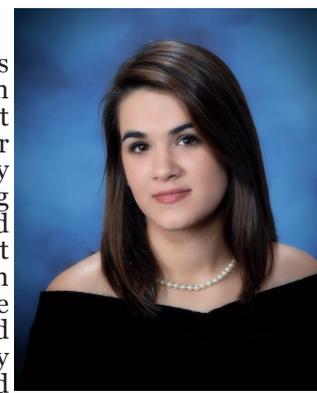
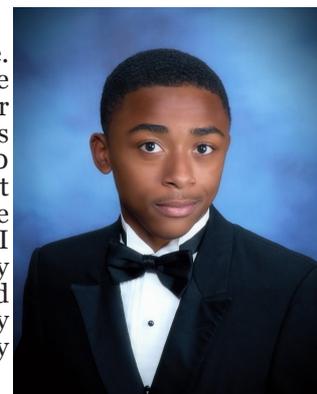
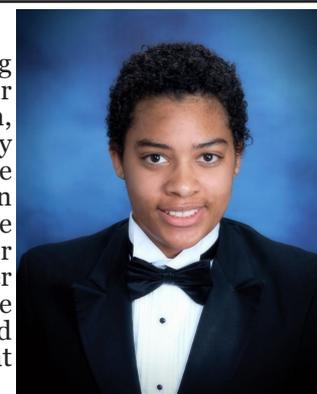
At SOA, education is seen as the defining feature. After all, we are tied for #1 in education. I appreciate most of the teachers I had. They have impacted me for the better and helped me focus on my future. If I was an incoming sixth grader, I would try to maintain a 4.0 GPA from beginning to end. Dr. Selby had the greatest impact on me because he genuinely cared about the things I had going in my life. I appreciate him a lot. I want to be in grad school at JHU or UNC, pursuing my medical career. I love all of the experiences I've had at SOA. I have met many great people and hopefully they remember me as the guy who put smiles on many peoples' faces.

## Lauren Hunt

During all of my years here at SOA, my Strings class has had the strongest impact on my life. From Mrs. Mears to Dr. Selby, I've learned so much about my instrument and they've helped me to dive deeper into my passion for music. Playing in our symphony and performing on stage have always been so exciting for me. Being able to put together beautiful pieces and perform for others has always made me feel important and accomplished. And after this year with Dr. Selby in our Strings 5 class, I've become a lot more comfortable when it comes to performing solo in front of others and being confident in my playing. I'm not the painfully shy person I used to be. I feel like the confidence and lessons that I've gained from this class will follow me through my life as an adult and remind me to hold my head up high and face everything life has to offer.

## Caroline Horres

Over the past seven years, my dance class has formed an amazing bond. I love that all of us got to see each other grow and mature over the past few years. I will truly miss everyone in my dance class. I could not have asked for a better group of people to spend seven years of my life. I do not believe that my SOA experience would have been the same without these amazing girls. I will truly miss all of the good time we have had together. I will never forget these girls and wish the best of luck in their future endeavors.



## Meagan Horres

In the year 2026, I hope to be somewhere completely new, doing something I love, with exciting and innovative people. There are so many things that I want to discover and accomplish before then, so I am not certain what exactly it is that I will be doing. But whatever it ends up being, I want it to be creative. I hope that I am doing something I'm so passionate about that I jump out of my bed every morning feeling eager and excited. Some of my future ambitions include performing in live shows, traveling EVERYWHERE, having a fashion/food blog, writing for a fashion magazine, working on the sets of fashion shows and movies, eventually moving to California with my sister because we absolutely adore it out there, and maybe even working for Disney. I also hope to have my very own glam squad along with Ashley Green! These are big ambitions but I know that if I stay determined, I can make this my new reality. To make this happen I must remain confident in who I am and never second guess what truly feels right. Most importantly I plan to surround myself with only positive and highly motivated people. I want to be around people who are able to show me the world and constantly teach me new things. I feel as though I am on a very bright path, and even though it is not totally clear... I couldn't be more excited!



## Georgia Hunt

As I have attended the School of the Arts since sixth grade as a vocal major, I have developed a passion for vocal music. Unfortunately, midway through my career at SOA, I developed a polyp on my vocal cords that hindered my full ability to sing as I always had before. Through a rigorous healing process, I regained my voice, but I still continue to struggle with it today. This event was ultimately the deciding factor in my career choice. A full on music major would be stressful, as I would constantly worry if my voice would hold up.

But while I developed a love for singing, I also developed a love for science. I wondered what career could, in a way, combine the two? I have decided to attend Clemson University for Pre Professional Health Science with intents of becoming a speech pathologist. I hope to combine the healing powers of music and science to aid those who also struggle with their vocal abilities, as I one did myself. Therefore, in 2026, I intend to have graduated from Clemson, finished grad school, and begin my career as a speech therapist, incorporating my passions in my career in a new, creative way.



## Ellie Jeffers

In 2026, I hope to have already escaped this country. I say "escape" because I don't like to be in one place for very long, yet I am stuck here for at least another four years. After I get my college degree, I want to teach English in other countries. This is my current plan for getting out of this country, but another opportunity may arise in the future so I'm not dead set on teaching English for the rest of my life. However, that is likely where I will be in the year 2026 as that is still early in my life. Whatever I do, I want to go to other places in the world and learn about the different people and their cultures.



## Alec Johnson

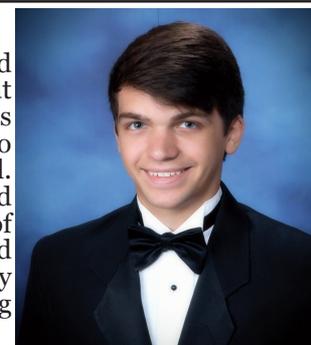
If I was a sixth grader coming into School of the Arts again, I would take all my classes more seriously. I wouldn't say that I didn't work hard these past couple of years since I had to work hard to makeup for all the careless mistakes I made in the years before that. I would have taken my major more seriously instead of coasting along these past couple of years. If I had a chance to restart as a sixth grader, I would change everything except the friends and great relationships with people that I have built at School of the Arts. The people here at School of the Arts are the reason most of us stick around. I hope that never changes.



## Michael Johnson

I've attended SOA since sixth grade, and experienced many educational lessons throughout the years. However, when I entered Mr. Orvin's classroom, I knew at first glance that I was going to learn lessons that were spiritual as well as educational. As I observed the various artifacts, symbols, and student creations covering the room, I felt a sense of comfort and curiosity which every classroom should induce. And the best part was the classroom was only a physical representation of the wise and entertaining teachings of Orvin.

The real beauty of his teaching was the seamlessness of it. You could go through a whole class and feel like you were having a casual conversation with a friend, and then realize you just learned six major religions of the world. And there was never a dull moment whether it is a demonstration of hari-kari, the evolution of weaponry explained with props, or the dreaded walk of shame. All of these moments will stay with me for the rest of my life, especially my favorite section where we learned about Asian culture. The way of the samurai and other Japanese and Chinese traditions were extremely interesting to me, and I was introduced to one of my favorite books, *The Tao of Pooh*. This class had a strong impact on me because it showed me the value of education, how it can introduce you to new interesting things, and change your mindset and life to be much more positive and open. I entered the class as a naïve child and emerged with a whole new sense for the world, because after all, the world is your oyster.



## Hailey Johnson

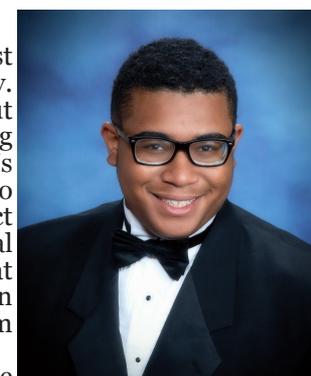
Gladly, we will never have to go back to being our sixth grade selves because if we are being honest, we were all very annoying and unfortunate middle-schoolers. With that in mind, the reason that I wouldn't go back to sixth grade has nothing to do with the experiences that SOA gave me. Everyday at SOA made me who I am today and I would never change that. The past seven years have been like riding a horse, you fall but the only way to progress is to jump back on the horse. This was something that my teachers and fellow classmates did a really good job of helping me with. They made me strive to be the best I could be and for that I am forever grateful. So looking back at it I would not change anything about my experiences here at SOA because they helped to form me into the person I am today.



## Noah Jones

At SOA I have learned many things, but the most important is the ideology of communal responsibility. As students, we do things that we may not enjoy but we believe will bring us closer to success in the long run. This justification is a common ideal in today's society, especially among young individuals starting to make their way in life. This is proven simply by the fact that no matter what career path a young individual may embark upon, they do it because they believe that their hard work on that particular path will not be in vain. They know that their hard work will bring them success in whatever career path they take.

This ideology is embedded in our academia. There is nothing wrong with this justification, but I believe that individual achievement should involve external factors that motivate one to be altruistic in their career goals. The idea of making a positive difference in an individual's community requires more than just the motive of self-success. It requires the notion that with success comes responsibility and with responsibility comes accountability, an accountability to help those who cannot help themselves. My personal career path is to become a positive influence through music. I believe that in order to make a positive change among a generation, we must put forth an effort in instilling positive ideals through music. There are three concepts that I justify this believe with. The concepts include, the moral implication of helping others, how this notion transcends the different types of career paths, and finally the way it will make for a sustainable motivator for one's success in our lives.



## Hannah Kelly

If I was entering SOA as a sixth grader again, my main advice to myself would be to enjoy your time here. You have the incredible opportunity to be at a school with a nontraditional atmosphere, and you should take advantage of it. Try and experience new things and don't be afraid to look stupid.

If I could go back in time, that's what I would change about my stay at SOA: I would be more adventurous and less afraid of not being good at things. I would take more electives, participate in more extracurriculars and join more clubs. I would avoid Chemistry at all costs and go into Mr. Brehm's class with a sense of humor. I would get to know more people and never leave Ms. Cimballa's door open for the bunny to escape. My time at SOA has been amazing; I wouldn't trade it for anything. In light of that, I'll leave you, my past self, with one more bit of advice: do what you love, but don't just limit yourself to that. Good luck with the next seven years.



## Cody Kendle

To me, the value of an SOA education is great because this is the second best high school in the state of South Carolina, after all. I also love SOA's individuality and originality: we as students are free to express ourselves however we feel, and that is really something quite special. An SOA education is unique in the fact that we have our own art majors and our own special talents and abilities. SOA teachers also help add to the value of the SOA education because they will help you to understand what you are learning and won't leave you behind.

## Jessica Keniston

It took me a while to decide what I wanted to do during and after college. I have always wanted to go into the medical field. I finally decided on physical therapy, and this is what I hope to be doing in 2026. Next year, I am attending the College of Charleston. I plan to major in Exercise Science. Once I get my bachelor's degree, I will have to attend two or three more years of physical therapy school. Seven years of schooling is a lot, but I think I will really enjoy getting to help and meet new people while working as a physical therapist.



## Abbey Kirkland

The class that has had the strongest impact on me during my years at SOA has been AP Biology. This class has challenged me in many respects and has also pushed me to develop strong study skills that I will carry through college. While I do not plan to pursue biology in my future, being in this class has still had a significant impact on me. Mr. Short's teaching methods constantly keep the class engaged and he always encourages and motivates his students to do their best. These admirable qualities are just part of the reason that he is my favorite teacher at SOA, and I will miss his class very much.



## Mary Knox

School of the Arts has taught me so much over the years. I've realized that I made the right choice on coming to SOA and trying out. SOA has taught me to be open-minded and non-judgmental. Something that I will carry on for the rest of my life. I appreciate my time at SOA because I made so many good friends and memories that I will never forget. The best part about being here though was enhancing my talent and making it better over the years. I appreciate that because of this high school, I could better myself at my art and talent. Many other high schools can not say that they had the chance to do that, but we can say that it only encouraged us to do better. I wouldn't want to have spent my 7 years in school anywhere else.



## Emily Kucklick

In 2026, I will be the ripe age of 28. Hopefully I will be five years out of college and well into my career as a nurse. And if that doesn't pan out then, well, I hope I'm married to some rich, old guy. You see that was my plan from day one: marry a rich oil baron who is close to death, let him die of natural causes (nothing shady, my hands are clean here), and inherit his fortune. Now a side note about me: I have very expensive taste that I cannot currently uphold at 18 years old. Of course I could get a respectable job, work the standard 25+, budget my money, and be able to buy nice things but, frankly, that's boring. Marrying some wealthy, old dude is all of the benefit with none of the work. By my 30's I'll be a millionaire and living the life that every little girl dreams of: drowning in piles of Louis Vuitton handbags, partying with Kim Kardashian West, and eating my weight in caviar. And if that doesn't work out then, in the words of the great Copeland E. Barrett, "I guess I'll just become a garbage woman."



## Emily Lanter

As a vocal major, the teacher who has had the strongest impact on my life and my time here at SOA has been Mrs. Hammond. Mrs. Hammond has been here since my seventh grade year, and although my vocal class was unsure about having a new conductor in the middle of our middle school years, I believe that she has changed us and the vocal department for the better. She has pushed me to do my best in every musical endeavor that I approach. She has also given me so many opportunities to work on my craft, whether it is the National Honors Choir or the Hibben United Methodist praise band. She is the reason I want to go into music education, and I hope to be the kind of inspiring teacher that she has been for me.



## Jakob Lazzaro

2026. That's as long away as sixth grade is to me right now. I don't even want to think about how annoying I was in middle school, and I'll probably feel the same way about 18-year-old me in 2023, although I hope not. In 2026, I will have graduated from Northwestern University with a degree in journalism. I'll hopefully be used to the Chicago winters by that point. I'll have studied abroad (maybe in Europe) and backpacked around the world as much as I can afford (who needs money when you can travel instead?). I'll have had my "college experience." It's hard to think about being done before I've even started.

But my ultimate goal for 2026 is this: I want to be on NPR. It's been my dream job ever since I walked into my ninth grade journalism class for the first time at SOA. I'm going to try as hard as I can to get onto the radio. I'll get internships and do independent work and make connections and eventually make it! If all else fails, I can just sneak into the station at night and jump on the air when nobody is watching.

The best compliment I've ever gotten is "Jakob, you have a good radio voice." So hopefully, by 2026 you guys will be able to hear me on your local NPR station.



## Christian Leprettre

One of the most valuable things about an SOA education is the fact that you learn from teachers with actual real world experience. Nothing is as important as having an actual understanding of the real world applications of what it is that they are teaching, not only from a theoretical standpoint but actually in practice. I feel blessed to have worked with so many great instructors who not only care about my education, but me as a person.

Whenever I was going through a tough time, I always had a great support group in my SOA family: from the faculty to the student body. I honestly haven't felt as close to any other group of people in my life. I truly am thankful for all the opportunities that I have been given, and even though I know my teachers had to hate me at times, I want them to know that I am sincerely thankful for all the hard work they did for me and my fellow students.



## Abby LeRoy

Get excited. I know that your daily shuffling about the halls easily turns education into the mundane, that it's easy to forget how lucky you are. That you have too much homework or would rather be at the beach. That you're just "done." But, please, please, please. . . get excited. In some developing nations kids can't even go to school. Four years ago, Malala Yousafzai was shot trying to learn. Your education really is a privilege and though you shouldn't stress out too much over your GPA- it shouldn't be taken lightly.

Imagine how excited those kids would be to not only go to school, but to go somewhere where jazz fills the halls. Walking past original artwork or having your cafeteria transform into a catwalk aren't things that happen everywhere. So, get excited! Yes, purple hair is "so SOA," but that's only the case because we create an environment where people feel comfortable doing that. And as far as majors go? You've hit the jackpot. As a theatre major I've been able to act, direct, write, stage manage, and tech shows these past four years. As an adult, I know that no one is going to sit down with me and not only allow me to write a play, but want me to. Further, I'm not going to have unlimited access to talented actors, tech crews, or even costumes and props. The chance to develop your passion and grow in your skills is a unique one. To do it in an environment where people only want you to win is almost unheard of, especially when it's free.

Why not show up with enthusiasm to school?



## Fiona Lewis

I have been traveling down this path since sixth grade and it has had its ups and downs, but I would not want to do it anywhere else. Many people have come and gone throughout the years, but the dance majors will always hold the bulk of my memories. The one thing I would change is to create a stronger connection with those in my major because I have spent the most time with them and the most memories with them. We all created a safe place to grow physically and mentally through the years and for those ladies, I am forever thankful.



## Kimberly Lowman

In the year 2026, I plan to be traveling the world and living outside of the US. I will have a degree in Spanish and international health from Clemson University, and this will be a big start to my traveling pilgrimage. I plan to study hard to become bilingual so that I can be an effective translator. I also plan to gain as much knowledge of the medical field and health administration as possible so that I can possibly work in a medical clinic that my church is creating in a small village called Malpaisillo in Nicaragua.

Once I become fluent in Spanish, I plan to learn Korean which I am currently studying. I also would love to live in South Korea for a while once I am financially stable. Whether I will be living in a Spanish-speaking country or an Asian country by the year 2026 I'm not quite sure, but I would love to see where God takes me because I know he has great plans for me in the pursuit of not only making myself joyful but all whom I encounter.



## Ari Levine

I have always loved the future, mainly because nothing has happened yet. Therefore, anything can happen. My life goals have changed from concentration to concentration pretty rapidly from year to year. But the one thing that has stayed constant is my want to help people.

No matter what I'm doing in 2026, be it a Rabbi, herbalist, Acupuncture practitioner or teacher, I want to make an impact on those around me. My plan is to continue to affect positive change in my own life and learn from everything and everyone I can. One day, I hope the right door will open and I will be smart enough to go inside.



## Hannah Luckie

Mr. Pezzeca has been the most influential teacher at SOA for me. Even though I have only had him for this year, he was the only one who noticed my pain. He was the only teacher/admin who repeatedly sat me down and actually listened to what I had to say. He was my hidden hero this year because of it, and made coming to school a little more bearable. Thank you from showing me how to not let anything get to you and that doing what you love is really all that matters in the end. Thank you.

I spent the first three years blind. I spent them alone, but not in the way one would think. I had plenty of friends. I travelled the world doing what I loved, with the people that I loved, in the situations that I dreamed about and even more that I can't explain how beautiful and proud I felt. Then it all changed for me. I was torn apart and stepped on, completely abandoned and disregarded in a way that shaped me, and pushed me to grow thick skin.

I became a woman this year; in the way that I pray happens to those that follow me. I thought I was a flower, but now I realize that I am the very planter of my own flowers and the rain on that very meadow. We all grow differently, but I am truly blessed to have this sort of love on my side. This is what I learned at SOA.



## Collin Lloyd

There are many things I want to be doing in 2026. I would like to travel, have a good paying job, own a house, and not be living off the streets. I think that I would, out of all the things I could do, want to have my own place and have a job in the field of either computer network systems or computer software or hardware developer. Hopefully I'll have enough money to be able to travel and take vacations as I please. Traveling the world has always been a dream to me. It seems interesting and daring. I'll learn a whole lot more overseas than I will in a four year college.

I'll be attending Clemson University in the fall as a computer science major. I intend to stay there and get my bachelor's degree. I also plan to intern at companies and learn how everything works. The real world seems really tough, but with this toughness brings reward and a whole lifetime of experiences.



## Zois Manaris

The class that had the strongest impact on my world had to be Symphony. I was fortunate enough to be part of it for the last three years of my time at SOA. Dr. Selby brought a fresh, new way of looking at music, one that I hadn't previously experienced. After five years at SOA playing the same thing year in and year out, the long, intricate (and frankly more fun) symphony pieces reinvigorated my interest in playing my instrument. The music was more whole; with the strings the music sounded more complete. The class also allowed me to make connections and have experiences that I might never have had. But most importantly, Dr. Selby's approach to conducting and leading the class made you feel a valued member of the ensemble; he genuinely cares about each student's opinions. That's something that cannot be said for all teachers.



## Kaci Martin

Sophomore year was a very influential year for me. It was the year I switched my major, the year I took biology, and the year I found my voice. I began my SOA career as a strings major. Don't get me wrong, I loved it, but it wasn't my passion. When I got into theater I found my true artistic passion. I learned how to speak up and be creative. I learned how to be a kid and not to take things so seriously. I discovered a part of myself that has made me who I am today. Biology also had a major impact on me. I enjoyed the material and I could understand everything. I knew it was what I wanted to do with my life. Now I am a senior graduating with an AP Biology credit, heading towards a degree with Biology. I'm a quirky girl with a theatrical voice who isn't afraid to let the world know



who I am. Here I am, and here I go.

## Laurence Martin

In 2026, I want to have my very own video game company and have that company be successful. This has been a dream of mine ever since I was 11 years old and in middle school. I've been trying to make this dream happen ever since then, so I began to learn coding and 3D modeling. I also started to understand the industry and the life of a developer. Learning coding and 3D modeling was hard at first, but I began to get better at it. I've excelled at 3D modeling and coding since I was able to get an internship at video game company, Kiz Studios, when I was 16. I enjoy coming in to work every single time I can. I also started to make an app. I am still trying to get better at coding and modeling because there is still a lot I have to learn, but I am also focusing more on the management and what is to come in my life.



## Logan Matthews

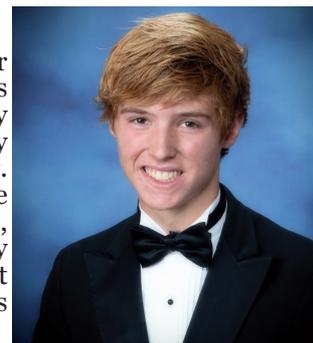
SOA has taught me a lot over the past four years: how to speak up for myself, how to speak up for others, how to work hard to get what you want, and how to procrastinate even more than I had before. I have been shown and taught things that I never would have if I had stayed at my previous school. I have been able to grow as an individual, and as a part of the SOA family. It sounds sappy and cheesy, but that's how I feel.

The thing that has had the biggest effect on me from SOA is probably the importance of speaking up for yourself and for what you believe in. No one should be scared to speak his or her mind. However, having said that, you should still respect everyone's opinions, even if you don't agree with them. I was taught this through various different experiences I've had here, especially on the subjects of religion, racism, and sexism. It has opened my eyes and shown me that the world is far from perfect, but that we can make it a better place.



## Cody McLellan

An education at SOA is the same as any other high school until you see the arts program. The arts departments are what make SOA different from any other high school. I wouldn't do anything differently since I came to SOA in sixth grade. This year Mr. Short's AP Biology class has had the biggest influence on me, he is an amazing teacher and person. By 2026, I want to be wrapping up med school and hopefully transitioning into a career as a Dentist. I am glad that I decided to go here for middle and high school, this school was an amazing fit for me.



## Erin McQuade

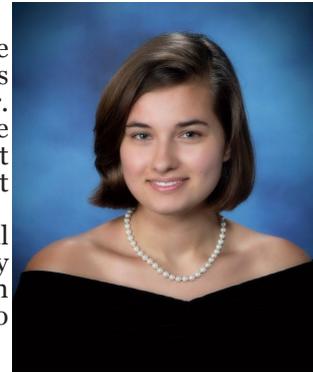
An SOA education gives a young student the opportunity to witness art in its many forms being creating and perfected every day. The school goes beyond academic achievement, and delves deep into what speaks from the soul. Whether you are a musician, a creative writer, or a visual artist, we all have a strong bond and an understanding of the importance of art. Throughout the SOA experience there are multiple coordinating opportunities with other majors. This is especially beneficial for students to learn more about other art forms. When you are surrounded by talented artists, you are pushed to become the best you can possibly be.



## Alissa Melsopp

Although I've taken a butt load of classes because literally everything is required, the class that has impacted me most (or rather is the most useful) is Mr. Brehm's Economics class. It is pretty obvious that he is the senior class's favorite teacher (he is on our shirt after all) for being funny while teaching things that aren't and for making every day feel like a Friday.

The main reason why his class is the most impactful is because I am learning things that will actually apply to my adult life. This is the only class that I can confidently say will really help me in the future. So thanks, Mr. Brehm, and have a good weekend.



## Ryan Mercado

When I first came to SOA, the I heard many stories about Mr. Brehm: how he was missing a finger on his hand, how he used to be in the CIA, etc, etc. So when I began his class this year my expectations had been set pretty high, and he didn't disappoint. Mr. Brehm's class has been really enjoyable, not really because I love learning about government or economics but because he manages to never let his class be boring. Whether he's telling yet another interesting story about his past experiences or cracking a joke about somebody's dumb comments, his classes were always the ones I remember having stories to tell about. It has been a really memorable class with him and I would tell anybody who's going to take his class to not treat it just like some class you need to graduate, but to enjoy that one year you get to spend with the one and only Alan J. Brehm.



## Nina Murchison

In 2026, I want to be working as a pediatric nurse in the NICU. Since I'm only 18 and honestly don't think I'm qualified to make a life long decision, over the summer I have planned an internship at Roper St. Francis hospital to decide wether or not the medical field is really something I want to continue. I've been inquiring about their SCRUBS program for a couple years and with so many college students needing hours and multiple volunteers signing up, I was lucky enough to get a spot this summer. I am looking forward to this internship because I've always enjoyed being able to help people, and I think children are adorable so I figured why not put them together and work as a pediatric nurse. I think it'll be sad being around so many sick children, but at least I'll be able to help the ones that have a chance.

After graduation, I will be attending Charleston Southern University. I have already been accepted into their pre-nursing program and hope to be accepted into their nursing program in the next two years. While attending CSU I hope to continue internships at nearby hospitals so that after graduating I have references to get a job. I don't plan to return to New York and hope to continue to work here.



## Victoria Newman

In the year 2026 I hope to be working as a psychiatric nurse in the Child and Adolescent wing at MUSC. I'm going to Winthrop University and doing a double major in biology and psychology under their pre-med career path for the first two or three years, and then hopefully transferring to MUSC my junior or senior year to take their accelerated nursing program. I hope to one day work at a hospital abroad, but I definitely would like to start my career close to home, and having hopefully studied at MUSC I feel that it would be more comfortable working where I have studied. I'm really passionate about psychology and helping people overcome roadblocks in their lives, so I'm really excited to have an opportunity to study and do just that.

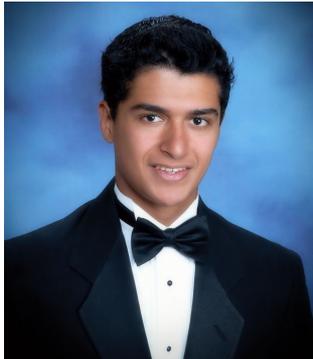


## Olivia Prichard

Looking back, I really do think that SOA was the best high school I could have gone to in Charleston. I am proud to say that I will be an SOA alum. If I could go back in time I would undoubtedly make an effort to not be a vocal major. Ms. Bronk was my most positively impactful teacher, she really pushed me. Mr. Brehm also changed my high school experience, junior and senior year being in class with him was the highlight of my day. Hopefully by 2020, I will be on the way to law school.

## Hernan Pena

The teacher that has helped me the most through out my SOA career is Mr. Karl Clark. Mr. Clark has given me many words of wisdom throughout high school. He always used to say "even though you're not that smart, you still have a lot of potential." Hearing that gave me hope. It made me strive to do better in school. Sometimes I would fall asleep in his class and he would bang on my desk and scream "Wake up Hern!" That made me realize I needed to stay awake during class, and because of that I tried to be a bit more active during class. It was the little things that Mr. Clark said that helped me to become a better student.



## Adonis Pineda

If I were back in SOA from sixth grade, over the course of the next seven years, I'd make sure I was the best I could be. Maybe it was beginner's luck or the novelty of having writing as an art, but I feel I cared more when I was in sixth grade. Developing a creative process, improvising the spoken word, becoming more confident with criticism, condensing groups of words into magic itself. What was new soon became familiar, and inevitably, routine. My skills dulled as my writing saw less exercise and devolved into mediocrity. I knew I could do better, but I was often afraid to try. So if I had a chance to start at SOA again, I would ensure that I would take my art more seriously. If I had actually tried my hardest, I would have become comfortable with the other aspects of writing that I struggle with now.

## Ashton Platts

A teacher or class that has had the strongest impact on me would have to be Mr. Brehm's Government and Economics class. Social Studies is not really my strong or favorite subject, but a lot of lessons taught in this class apply to my daily life or will very soon. Throughout previous years of high school, people always talked about Mr. Brehm and how hard his class was. The first day of school I was very nervous, yet excited to see how this class would influence my thinking. I truly feel that his teaching prepares you for college and the real world that I soon will take part in. His lectures, personal stories, little jokes, and life lessons inspires me to strive for more out of myself. Preparing for college can be quite daunting, but there are so many opportunities waiting to come my way. I appreciate Mr. Brehm and will definitely take and use his advice to my advantage and reassurance along the way.



## Savannah Porter

There have been a lot of impressionable things that have influenced me during my time here at the School of the Arts. I would like to credit a few teachers that gave me the educational tools that I needed to get where I am. Mr. Johnsen sparked my interest in astronomy and the way that our Earth moves with his science class. I remember having so much fun in his star lab, and I remember having a blast at the Gamecocks vs. Clemson day that he orchestrated.

Then, there is Mrs. Greig. I have never had so much fun with labs in my life. She has such a love for the things that she teaches, and she goes out of her way to make science and biology interesting for every child. Lastly, I would really like to thank the Deaf/Hard of Hearing Department. You're all so amazing and welcoming. Every time I walk into one of your classrooms, I am always embraced and taken into open arms. I will miss you all so much, and I wish you so much more than luck.



## Rylee Puckhaber

Looking back, I really value my education at SOA. I went to Ashley Hall before I came to SOA in ninth grade, and thank God I did. At my last school we had to learn Latin and Greek and all these other classes I had no interest in, but at SOA we just learn Spanish and we get to do what we love for 90 minutes a day. If I could go back to sixth grade and do it all over again, I would definitely dress better or at least try to wear less clothes from Hot Topic. The teacher that has had the greatest impact on me is Ms. Luzier because she's the first teacher to ever fail me and that failure taught me a hard but valuable life lesson. :)

In 2026, I would like to be married with eight kids. I plan on doing this by popping a couple out asap. All jokes aside, I really enjoyed my time at SOA. I don't know how much I learned math or history wise, but I learned a lot about myself, the kind of person I want to be, and the kind of people I want to surround myself with. Everyone complains about their school and says they wish they were somewhere else, but in all honesty SOA is a pretty great place to waste a couple years of your life.



## Rebecca Putnam

At SOA, I learned more than just information from a textbook. I have slowly formed my personal, political, and philosophical views on the world, and I created an idea of who I want to be in the future. While this is expected to happen to people in other schools as well, I don't think it would have been the same anywhere else. For example, my taste in music has developed quite significantly thanks to Mrs. Crawford's class and influence from friends. I have completely fallen in love with Korean pop music, and at SOA there is a club for K-pop where students share their favorite groups and songs (and we even attempt to dance to them). Imagine that! My sisters who attend AMHS informed me that they don't have a K-pop club and they want to start one next year. The SOA students are inspirational and independent, and I'm glad I grew up with such strong and creative peers.



## Abigail Reeves

Teachers are the ambassadors of knowledge, and the greatest diplomat of my education was Dr. Price. Entering the class as an intimidated sophomore beginning my first year of chemistry, I was pleasantly surprised to see the lively woman I would later call one of my heroes. Inspired by her career in the medical field before teaching, I have modeled my own career goals after her example. I will never forget her hysterical dancing to the cheesy 80s chemistry videos, and the immense pride I felt when she gave me her lab coat and some of her old research documents. She instilled within me the passion for science, and has shaped me academically and personally. I will never forget her excitement when she told me her coveted secret that she would be teaching AP Chemistry the next year. Although this never came to fruition, as she retired the next year, I still love the advanced sciences. Dr. Price has been a valued mentor and figure in my life, and I look forward to being able to celebrate my future accomplishments with her.



## Noah Rigbsy

The value of an SOA education is boundless and unlike any other in Charleston. SOA has helped me to harness my art talent as well as strive in my academics. The school taught me to deal with time management and stress. Attending SOA was a fun and challenging experience that I have grown to love. Through the time spent here I have made many friends and come to know them very well. SOA is more than an education. It's a life experience. SOA will always be my favorite and I will miss it very much. I will always cherish the moments spent at SOA.



## Holly Rizer

If I could have a total re-do of my seven years at SOA, there are many things I would want to do differently. Firstly, I definitely wouldn't have been so shy and timid in middle school. I also would have dressed way differently in middle school, because I honestly don't think how I dressed even crossed my mind at all back then and it was quite cringe-worthy. How you dress can definitely influence your confidence and how you act.

Moving away from the dark ages of middle school, there are people in my life that, knowing what I know about them now, I would have done more in grow closer to and try to help them with issues they've gone through. In general, I wish that I had made more of an effort to hang out with people more especially during the summer. So many "Let's hang out this summer!" plans never actually happened. On another note, I wish I had looked more seriously at colleges and what I wanted to do with my life earlier on. I started a lot earlier than most students but truthfully it's never too early to start as most everyone ends up changing their minds, including me, about a hundred times. Honestly though, I think deciding what you want to do with your life is a lifelong process that's always changing so it is a hard decision. Finally, the most important thing I would have changed and still want to change is worrying. A word of advice to everyone: if you can do something about an issue, then do it. If you can't, then it's out of your control. Either way, just don't worry so much.



## Leeanna Robertson

The teacher that had the strongest impact on me was my major teacher, Ms. Cimballa. The first time that I met Cimballa was in sixth grade when I accidentally spilt Gatorade all over someone's art work and she went crazy. I was terrified of her until I had her again in eighth grade. I really started to bond with her over the sassy things we would say and our similar tastes in art. Cimballa was more of a friend than a teacher to me. I could always go to her when I was struggling with people or with school. No matter what, she would always give me advice with some sass behind it to make me feel better. With my artwork, she knew exactly what to do to make it perfect or how to help me with references. I had never had an art teacher that was really genuine about helping me improve my skills, and she made me a better artist.



## Terry Roddy

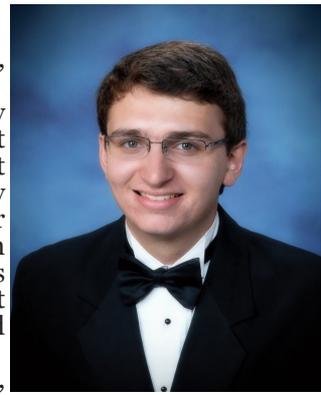
My time at SOA is indefinitely the most prominent aspect and achievement of my life thus far. The time that I spent here has been wonderful, but very challenging. I, like many high school graduates, have had some bumps in the road on my way here, but I feel that I would not be the person that I am without the challenges and opportunities that SOA has given me. I have used my time at SOA to learn from failures, gain unparalleled success, and meet some of the greatest people I have ever come in contact with. The people that I have met at this school have inspired me to become ten times the person I expected to be, and I know that they will remain my closest friends for years to come. SOA has prepared me for the world ahead of me, and I can't wait to use what I have learned to succeed.

## Jay Rode

In 2023, I'll have recently graduated (probably), and here's what I expect my life to be like:

I wake to the sound of Alt-J playing through my pillow (that's seven years from now; they'll have put speakers into pillows by then). The room is dimly lit with purple LED's which have been tossed carelessly strung around the room "artistically." My newspaper is delivered to my breakfast table via the drone slot in the front door (these slots have replaced the mail slots of the days of old), and my milk and bread have just arrived from Amazon Grocery. The floors are heated and...

But then I truly awake. I can see my front door, toilet, and microfridge from my bed which is little more than old textbooks covered with a thin topsheet. Breakfast is one grapefruit. The many struggles of being an English major, I suppose.



## Meagan Romagnuolo

I think a School of the Arts education is different than any other. I have spent seven years learning from this school and I would not have changed anything. First of all, the school is small. I feel like I know every teacher, even if I haven't been in there class, and every student, even if I have not had class with them. Also, having a major class everyday has really impacted these past seven years. Although I may dread having to get changed every day into dance clothes, and getting up and dancing full out for a grade, it has taught me so much. I appreciate the art more, and it always made my day better by taking a dance class.



## Nicole Sadek

Saying that my creative writing class has impacted me over these last seven years is an understatement. Since sixth grade, we have had a total of 12 students leave our program. Some came and left during middle school, some came and left during high school, and one left and came back. But because we have had such constant change, I can say that my class has learned to mold and bend; we have learned how to love newcomers and say goodbye to old friends, although none of it was easy. But now, looking at my senior creative writing class, I can full-heartedly say, everything is just right. We have every piece we need to be a successful class, and I am so inspired by each and every one of my best friends. To those of you underclassmen reading this right now, you get to be pretty sentimental when you realize you only have 10 days until the end of high school. So, knowing that, treasure your last few years, and more importantly, treasure the people around you.



## Nick Scapellato

My time at SOA has been mostly alright. The history department has not failed to disappoint since sixth grade (shout-out to Mrs. Blake), and my creative writing instructors have taken on roles that go above and beyond the average teacher's line of duty. SOA has given me opportunities and experiences that I will likely never see again as long as I'm alive. The concentrated community of passionate artists at this school is unmatched, and something as taken-for-granted as the near-weekly performances by some grade, some major, in the Rose Maree Myers Theater will be sorely missed next year.

If you're reading this, listen up. What you have at SOA is magical. It may suck sometimes, Chemistry might be "impossible," and I wouldn't be surprised if you throw up from stress when it's senior year and you have four AP exams in three days, but at the end of the day, you're going to miss this place, you're going to miss these people. So pull your friends close. Give 'em a hug or something, for it's only a matter of time before you're right here, writing this same essay, crying (just a little) because it's all over: you made it. We made it.

## Nick Shaarda

By 2026, I hope to be working at either SPAWAR or somewhere like Microsoft as a computer scientist after college, depending on whether or not I want to actually stay in the Charleston area or not. If I do not stay in Charleston, I hope to move to California or Washington. I plan to take an internship at SPAWAR during the summer break after my freshman year in college to gain the experience to work at a competitive company like Microsoft. If I do not end up working right after college, I would like to pursue a masters degree in my field of study.



## Sarah Silvester

School of the Arts is a very special place. You don't necessarily realize that everyday walking through its halls. It's the small special moments that makes you truly treasure where you are. There are so many people who would love to get into this school and it's easy to forget that. When going through the motions everyday, from class to class, it's easy to forget that every single person you encounter is talented. They are here for a reason.

It's the moments such as when live jazz is played all throughout lunch and everyone starts dancing in the courtyard. It's when a class consisting of students of all different personalities rally together as a family. It's when the school assembly turns into a rock concert. It's having a barbecue grill out with everyone celebrating the fact you've made it this far. It's when you are going through a rough time and your teachers and classmates are there for you. It's getting to walk through hallways covered in art and music always buzzing. It's the little things like these that make an SOA



## John Small

The whole Deaf/HH program has impacted me a lot since I was in eighth grade, because when I first came here, I had no family and lived in a boys' home. I soon met a couple of friends who liked me and made me feel good. The teachers in the Deaf/HH program treated me like family, which made me so happy! I kept asking my teachers, "Will you be my family? I have no family." Now I'm in an adoptive home and still treat my teachers like my family. They helped me and changed my life, since I didn't understand what was going on when I was younger. Now, I understand a whole lot more. We also took a field trip to couple places that really made my school year. I am so glad and lucky to be here. My teachers taught me to choose a good path and to make good decisions. Now I am allowed to move forward with my life. My dad said "You are a good determinator." I also describe him as the "Closest Dad" because he is raising me to be smart and brave.



## Shamar Smith

1. It's been great getting my education at SOA. I have been lucky to have Mr. Walters, Mrs. Duffy and Mrs. Amick to teach me over the years. I enjoyed my friends and family that I got to learn and spend time with.

2. I think I would work harder. There were times I didn't work as hard as I should have.

3. Class with Mrs. Duffy. She helped me with math and reading. I cannot thank her enough! She even got me a job working in the cafeteria! Thank you Mrs. Duffy.

4. I want to be working hard at my job. I want to be married with a family and a house of my own.

5. Maya was my favorite part of my time here at SOA. We've spent so much time together. I will miss her after I graduate!"

## Emilia Steenhuisen

In 2026, I will have graduated from the the College of Education from Winthrop and started working on my Montessori degree. I will do this by applying to the American Montessori Society and going through the proper training for the degree. This will allow me to travel around the world and teach in different countries. I will also be pursuing my master's degree in elementary and early education. I do not plan on staying in South Carolina and, if expenses allow it, I will be moving back to Belgium to get my Montessori training in the Netherlands. However, if I have received the Teaching Fellows scholarship then I will have to teach in South Carolina for 4 years.

## Elijah Stullenbarger

SOA's motto is "where talent and vision meet the future." And throughout my seven years here, I can truly say that my talent has helped shaped my vision of the future. The teachers at this school have worked alongside me with grace, patience, and enthusiasm to shape me into the individual I am today. SOA has helped me realize my full potential and encouraged me to shoot for the stars. I am so happy to have been at SOA dedicating time to my art every day. My major teachers Dr. Christopher Selby and Susan Mears have been instrumental in shaping me into the person I am today, and I will be forever grateful for their passion and drive to contribute to my success.

## Nolan Tecklenburg

SOA has been some of best years of my life, and even though it has its ups and downs, everything always works out. I've been at SOA from the beginning of middle school to my senior year of high school. I've been here for almost half of my life and I honestly thought I would be tired of it by now, but I'm not. I still have a drive to strive to be one of the best in my art form and I always try to further myself as an individual and an artist. The main reason that I haven't gotten burnt out from this school yet is because of my friends and great teachers. I can't explain how much I love having fellow classmates and teachers around that are as engrossed in music and in their art form as me. This is one of the main things that you will get at SOA compared to a regular school simply because it is an art school. Although I never got the experience of cheering on my school's athletic teams like most regular high schools (I don't like rugby, sorry), and administration always seemed like they were poorly planning things (even though they do a lot more than kids think they do), and some students would be arrogant, fake, selfish jerks that thought the world revolved around them, I wouldn't trade my experience at SOA for anything. I still remember when I was finishing eighth grade and I was determining whether I wanted to go to my home high school or stay at SOA. I'm glad I made the right choice.



## Jonteja Venning

Out of all of the teachers at SOA, one particular dance teacher has had the most impact in my life. As a dancer, you have to be vulnerable in your dances and trusting. In partnering, you become very attached to other dancers in your class and your teachers. Coming to SOA, I was a very shy dancer and did not feel completely comfortable dancing around others. In ninth grade, this feeling subsided and I found a new confidence about myself. I owe this all to Mrs. Ratigan who I affectionately call Mrs. Pitman. My experience with Mrs. Pitman has been nothing but positive. Her loving and nurturing heart makes me feel like I have a mother away from home, which was very beneficial to have throughout high school. Graduating and not having Mrs. Pitman around everyday will be hard, but I will never forget the memories and special bond we will always have.



## Anna Walker

In 2026, I plan to be rich and famous. How do I intend to make this happen you ask? Using my body and the power of marriage. Once I have obtained all my money from body building and my rich wifey, I will maybe start making candles or start writing my own soap opera. If I get bored enough, I might become a substitute teacher or a school janitor to make myself feel young again. See you guys later, I'll be in Cali.



## Amy Walsh

If you've ever ridden the Intimidator at Carowinds, you understand my time at SOA. These past four years have been filled with extreme highs and some lows with a few loops thrown in. It also went by fast. It seems like just yesterday I was being strapped in, ready for a wild ride, but now here I am in line again. Freshman year was an enigma, and as Forrest Gump would say, "That's all I have to say about that." Sophomore year was fun and I made a ton of new friends, and Junior year was a rapid succession of loop after loop. However, in a particularly down period I picked up six new passengers who have been riding with me ever since. These six, along with my other friends, have become my second family. I value our friendships above anything else and I cannot wait to see where the coming years will take us. Finally, Senior year has passed in the blink of an eye (exactly as everyone said it would). June 1st will be the end of a wild ride, but I can't wait to see what the next one has in store.



## Sawyer Wasserman

My years at SOA have been pretty phenomenal overall. I do believe I have made some mistakes here or there, but honestly life goes on; the world kept spinning and everything is pretty good now. If I could go back in time, the only thing I would want to say to myself is just to be happy and to only hang out with the people who want you to be happy, too. I wouldn't want to tell myself to stay focused or stay on track because I'm at SOA; I earned my way into this school and now that I'm in, I want to make the most of it.

SOA has always been a school that I wanted to go to. Sure, I could do without the excessive amounts of homework and the preposterous expectations, but compared to the life and the friends and the family of Punk Pandas SOA has given me, it was all worth it. The bonds that were forged here at SOA are the ones that could last a lifetime, if I wanted them to. My last few weeks here are probably going to be the hardest ones for me, not because of exams or the work I need to get done, but because I'm going to wander these halls and have to say goodbye to the friends...the family...even the Tribe of Pandas, if you will. None the less, these days will pass and the world will continue to turn, but the memories I have made, they will always be here at 5109-B West Enterprise Street and within these walls.



## Victoria Watson

These past four years at SOA have been quite an experience. I started school at SOA my freshman year as a dance major. I have met so many amazing people and have created wonderful memories. I am going to miss everyone so much! I will be going to college next year to major in dance. My dream would be to live in New York City and dance in a professional company. I am so excited about this new adventure. I cannot wait to see what the future has in store for me and the rest of the class of 2016.



## Kyle Winstead

The type of education you receive at SOA is different from a typical high school. The level of the courses are higher making them much more challenging. The teachers you will come across are very interactive with the students. Not only do you get to have more challenging, fast paced classes, but students get to pick a major and go to that class every day. The professionalism in the majors allow the students to participate in state and national level events, often winning top three in ranking.

If I was an entering sixth grader, I would have made more of an effort to study. I know it sounds very cliché, but having better grades early on in middle and high school allows a student to have more options in the future. One class that impacted me the strongest would be the high school orchestra. We went down to Tampa, FL, and won first place in a national competition. In 2026, I want to be living back in Charleston, working as a computer engineer and playing in a community band program. These past seven years at SOA have had a lot of ups and downs, but I have met some amazing people. The experiences I have had and the people I have met made these past seven years some of the best years of my life so far.



## Caroline Zetrouer

A good education pays off. I feel like I have a received an outstanding education at SOA from middle to high school. I am so thankful to have had teachers that connected with their students as well as mine did. A few teachers that have helped make my high school experience remarkable include Mr. Orvin, Mrs. Pitman, Mr. Short, and Mr. Brehm. These teachers have taught me the most not just about school, but life as well. They challenge us to make sure that we push ourselves, know how to fully engage students in their classes, and support each and every one of us. Most importantly, I feel like I can trust these teachers along with many more. Most teachers here have amazing qualities that help make learning more enjoyable for us. I am definitely not intimidated when it comes to college classes after attending SOA. I feel like this school has more than prepared me to take on the next level.



## Ben Zuber

Not many schools in South Carolina offer quality in both the arts and academics. School of the Arts gives a great mixture of both. In these past two years, SOA has been ranked number two out of all the public high schools in the state, only behind Academic Magnet. School of the Arts has always been serious and dedicated towards the art areas as well. An SOA education is extremely valuable because it gets the students prepared for college, and it also enhances the students artistic abilities.

Like I have previously stated, it is very rare to attend a high school that excels in both academics and arts. Another great perk about SOA is that it is a very small school. SOA being so small improves the student/teacher relationship. Every teacher knows every student, even if that student has never attended that teacher's class. I view my school as a very big and close family, and you cannot put a price on that. After spending seven years at this school, I can honestly say that I am a better student, musician, and person.



## What is the most important thing you learned at SOA?

**Chamel Adams:** The value of friendship and how art influences our ability to become successful and distinguished individuals.

**Copeland Barrett:** If you're going to skip, don't come back to campus.

**Cody Beasenburg:** The mitochondria is the powerhouse of the cell.

**Cydney Bennett:** When you procrastinate your work turns out better in the end.

**Jordan Benton:** I have to say that I have learned a lot from SOA but I have learned to accept myself as well as others. I think that being able to be at this school has allowed me to learn a lot about me as a person and what I really want to do in life.

**Ryan Biddix:** The most creative people are sociopathic.

**Rhyan Bredlau:** No one needs to be put into a box: not me, not my parents, not my teachers, and not my friends. I learned from the lack of boxes who I am to a much greater degree, and that I am not a waste of time or space. SOA taught me that I have value.

**Woods Browder:** How to be a better musician.

**Patrick Burns:** Prioritization with a procrastinative twist.

**Bethany Burnsed:** How to collaborate with many different people and art types.

**Parris Byars:** Nihilism gets you everywhere you don't want to be.

**Taylor Carnie:** Always try to stay open minded. Don't ignore people's ideas just because they are different from yours.

**Elliott Cihlar:** To be successful, you must do your work.

**Elsa Cline:** I have learned to be a lot more accepting of people. Being judgmental is too much work and has limited benefits.

**Summer Coons:** I've learned to not worry so much about what other people think. I learned that if something makes me happy, whatever it may be, I should do it regardless of what people will say because I live for myself. You need to love yourself enough first to have other people give it back to you. Those people could be friends or not. I've learned that life is short and you need to do what you love because you'll regret it when time flies by and you think back to what you could've done but didn't.

**Jessie Cox:** That there's no better feeling than knowing you've worked really hard and it has all paid off.

**Carly Crawford:** The most important thing I've learned at SOA is that it's a very different environment than other schools. SOA is special in

that we're all more or less bound to each other by our respect for the arts. **Megan Dawson:** Dedication to talent can produce great art.

**Madison DeLoach:** Not to procrastinate doing art all the time, every day.

**Maddie DePuy:** Never judge people by first appearances or isolated actions. Everyone goes through stuff and has a story.

**Casey Derieux:** One of the most important things a person can do is be kind and accepting of everyone. Unfortunately, there are a lot of people in the world who have an incredibly hard time being accepting of those who are too different from them. So, I've learned that the best thing I can do

to attend a school that offers such a high quality education. My teachers have all had amazing life experiences (esp. Cusatis, Short, and Brehm). **Etta Elliott:** I've learned to be more assertive and patient.

**Jackie Evans:** There are places where everyone fits in comfortably. Great places. You're bigger than you think you are even if you might not recognize it in high school.

**Noah Evans:** I've learned about being yourself and being expressive 'cause there will always be someone that you will vibe with, and nothing feels better than being yourself.

**Jacob Fairchild:** I've learned how to appreciate art, even if I don't understand it.

Jay Rode



is set an example by just being a kind and genuine person.

**Maureen Dolan:** Pottery.

**Carlin Dooley:** Acceptance of the things you can't change will save you a lot of stress and heartbreak.

**Sam DuPree:** The value of being responsible. To be kind to others and accept them for who they are.

**Allie Durand:** The importance of being absolutely comfortable and confident being myself. Having the opportunity to attend a school where you can arrive each day with no makeup, sport any style, act naturally, AND receive minimal judgment from any of the previously mentioned actions is truly a blessing. If the same attitude could be expanded to the entire country, the entire world, life would certainly be easier.

**Rebecca Edson:**  $y = mx + b$ .

**Carly Edwards:** How lucky I am

**Jenna Farnham:** The value of acceptance and respect. Being an art school, students are encouraged to fully express themselves without fear of being attacked by words or fists that hinder originality.

**McCarthy Fitch:** Students tend to receive important information at the eleventh hour, creating a vast amount of chaos in schedules. The most important thing I've learned would be independence. For the most part, other people that you work with/around can't really do anything for themselves or they're helpless or they simply don't care, so it's important to stay on top of responsibilities because help is a self-employed thing.

**Shanti Franks:** Being different is OK and should be embraced. If someone is putting you down because they don't like who you are, then eliminate them from your life. There are people who

will love your uniqueness and not the person you pretend to be to fit in. Be yourself.

**Cameron Frye:** The importance of diversity. Our school is extremely accepting of everyone, especially compared to other schools.

**Anizia Fulmore:** Being afraid is not an option. You have to be willing to risk it to gain opportunities here.

**Peter Gair:** Don't eat the yellow snow.

**Daniela Garcia Desa:** Express yourself no matter who is around.

**Marissa Gigis:** There are some weird people out there.

**Zachary Gilbert:** Be humble. No matter where you are on the totem pole of life, you can always be chopped off and moved to the bottom.

**JJ Goller:** Everyone is so different from one another. We all try to be similar or look for someone like us, but all of us have that one thing that makes us different from all the rest. And I think that's great, because SOA thrives on difference.

**Emma Gourdie:** In order to succeed you have to be organized. For the past seven years I have juggled swimming, piano, and school. If I hadn't been prioritized and stayed on top of things, I wouldn't have made it to graduation.

**Ashley Green:** Always be yourself and don't care what anyone thinks.

**Melanie Green:** How to unapologetically be myself.

**Sabrina Green:** Not everyone is who they appear to be and you shouldn't judge people on their outsides. You should judge them on their insides: look at their heart and all other organs; like their brain.

**Shayla Green:** To be proud of who I am and what I can do. I have learned to try new things and to be a more open person.

**Lexi Griffin:** I learned to be myself and I learned that failure is not a failure, but a lesson learned. I have just simply lived in the moment and I do what is best for myself. I am not supposed to please everyone.

**Bailey Gruber:** The importance of accepting diversity. Everyone is so different and special in their own way, and it's amazing.

**Parker Gustafson:** This isn't the last stop before informal education. I don't even see it as the halfway point. There are bigger and better things to focus on, and the school is not the place to learn those ideas, but they are the starting point; a cradle for your mind to rest and grow in. Certainly, it is the bare minimum, but that's where you decide to take control and guide yourself along a path.

**Legare Hay:** Make the most out of what life gives to you, do what makes you the happiest. You don't have to be the best or the smartest person to ever walk the earth, as long as you are content with the person you are then that's all you'll ever need.

**Alex Hepburn:** To not let many things surprise me and that I have to be my own hero.

**Gretchen Hertel:** How to make beautiful pieces of art.

**Ava Hoffman:** Be yourself. At a school this intricate there should be no shame in being who you are. It is an arts school after all, and expressing yourself through your art is a great way to show people who you really are.

**Chloe Hogan:** Accept all people.

**Caroline Horres:** Everyone has their own way of expressing themselves and no single way is better than another.

**Meagan Horres:** It is better to be a leader than a follower.

**Tajh Horton:** Respecting opinions.

**Jordyn Huger:** How to toot my horn and kick brass on trumpet.

**Georgia Hunt:** Don't care what other people think about you and just be your true self. Everyone at this school is so unique and I love how no one is afraid to be themselves.

**Lauren Hunt:** Don't care what other people think about you and just be your true self. Everyone at this school is so unique and I love how no one is afraid to be themselves.

**Ellie Jeffers:** Don't worry about people judging you because, I like, shaved my head on a whim and people still like me sometimes.

**Hailey Johnson:** To accept everyone and most importantly to accept yourself.

**Michael Johnson:** An education from SOA is beneficial in many ways. It prepares you for college, opens your mind to careers and talents you never thought existed, and makes you a very well rounded student. I would say the most important thing I've learned in my time here is that the skills and traits you learn in your artform translate very well to help you in your primary education and your overall life.

**Noah Jones:** To love and respect all types of people. Everyone one deserves fairness and compassion despite their background.

**Hannah Kelly:** Be yourself.

**Cody Kendle:** If you put forth the effort, you will succeed.

**Jessica Keniston:** How to manage my time. Middle school wasn't really a problem, but when I started high-school things started stressful.

I had to learn how to balance all of the projects, quizzes, tests, and homework that teachers throw at us. I know that skill will be very helpful after I leave SOA.

**Abbey Kirkland:** The mitochondria is the powerhouse of the cell.

**Mary Knox:** To accept everyone and try to see their views on things. SOA has made me very open-minded.

**Emily Kucklick:** How to maintain slightly above average grades while still doing the least amount of work possible.

**Emily Lanter:** Speak up and stand up for what you believe in.

Jay Rode



**Jakob Lazzaro:** Tolerance. Everyone is trying to live their own life to the best of their ability. Don't worry about what everyone else is doing with their life and focus on your own. You'll be a lot happier.

**Christian Leprettre:** How to achieve-ish with the minimum amount of work.

**Abby LeRoy:** I found my voice and learned how to use it.

**Ari Levine:** The most important thing I've learned at SOA (through Orvin) is that there is always a new dimension to learn and to discover yourself.

**Shelby Levine:** The most important thing I've learned at SOA is that everyone is a little different and weird and that is 100% OK!

**Fiona Lewis:** I have learned the importance of relationships between friends and how sacred they are to uphold throughout the time that you attend this school.

**Kimberly Lowman:** I learned the importance of time management, because I have to be able to balance my art major as well as my academics. All the homework and rehearsals that I have had to attend forced me to be better at prioritizing my life.

**Collin Lloyd:** To not be late, and to stay organized. Just doing those two things will bring success.

**Hanna Luckie:** I have learned how to make myself bigger. I learned that the only person who is really out here for you, is you. I really learned how to be my own best friend. SOA is where I learned to see beauty in everything. How everything and every single person out here has flaws, but most

of the time if you look hard enough, it turns out they are the most beautiful things about a person. I learned that most people are scared, just as scared as you are to be quite honest. I learned how to be a good friend, and how to keep bad ones away. How to mind your own business, and how to completely slay someone for their BS is how I became strong.

**Zois Manaris:** Always annotate.

**Kaci Martin:** I learned how to be a child and open my mind to new ideas. Growing up is stupid and learning to play is important. Let go!

**Laurence Martin:** It takes hard work to receive the results you want and those results may not be as you want them to be, but they are progress and a step in a right direction.

**Logan Matthews:** If you want something to happen, you have to put in the hard work and determination to make it happen. Don't let people pull you back or convince you otherwise.

**Cody McLellan:** A hard work ethic that will help me complete what is required of me in college.

**Alissa Melsopp:** The super-secret Visual Arts colored pencil tactic that is a secret.

**Ryan Mercado:** Don't let anybody take advantage of the skills you have to offer. If you're good at something, never do it for free.

**Nina Murchison:** The most important thing I've learned at SOA is that you can't b.s. your way through senior year.

**Victoria Newman:** Don't be afraid to socialize. I wish I had gotten to know so many of the other seniors before this year but I always convinced myself that I was too awkward to actually start a conversation, so I never really did.

**Hernan Pena:** Wear an ID to avoid detention.

**Mia Pernice:** Independence. I found that though some of my teachers were wonderful, when it came to technicalities and communication with administration or teachers it was all up to me. To make sure if there was ever anything I needed, or if I was struggling in a class, it was up to me to run after everyone for help. This will for sure be something that will apply in university as well as the work force.

**Pierre Pinckney:** I have learned to be the responsible adult I need to be.

**Adonis Pineda:** Teh mitochondria is powerhouse of teh cell!!!1!

**Ashton Platts:** Acceptance of different backgrounds and diversity amongst a group of individuals. SOA opened my eyes to a plethora of new perspectives and ideas from other people. Coming from a smaller middle school knowing just about everyone to a more unique environment can

definitely be quite daunting, but unleashes just a glimpse of what is later to come for the rest of our lives.

**Savannah Porter:** Tolerance. I have tried to become much more conscious about the people around me and their feelings.

**Olivia Prichard:** That you can pass any class by just doing homework.

**Rylee Puckhaber:** MLA format.

**Rebecca Putnam:** Stay organized and do your work.

**Abigail Reeves:** How to balance every facet of life. Schoolwork is obviously important, but creating time for family, friends, and the things you love is immeasurably more important.

**Shamond Riddy:** Organization is the key to success!

**Noah Rigsby:** That stress is a waste of time.

**Parker Richardson:** Discretion.

**Holly Rizer:** Life is a way more fun when you come out of your shell a little. I was really shy when I came here sixth grade and the students at this school have helped me feel a lot more confident talking to people and letting my inner bubbly self shine.

**Leanna Robertson:** Everything Brehm taught us in Econ and Government.

**Terry Roddey:** I learned that life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get.

**Jay Rode:** Every allusion is to Jesus, especially when you think it isn't.

**Angelica Rodriguez:** Aim for a B because you won't stress as much.

**Meagan Romagnuolo:** Everyone is different, and that's a good thing.

**Nicole Sadek:** How to do taxes lololol.

**Vasantha Sambamurti:** You are so much more capable than you think.

Over the years, I've been in several situations I didn't believe I could brave: English 2 freshman year, a yearbook staff comprised of 6 people, three teachers in one year for AP US History. I think coming to creative writing was one of the most jarring transitions of all. Before ninth grade, I had never taken a writing workshop. I used to think the sincerity and emotion behind writing were what made it beautiful (which, they do) but I never had any concept of technique or craft. Having a room of incredible writers critique my personal stories was disillusioning at first. I had so many insecurities about my work. But, over the years, I've learned to celebrate small triumphs and equate failure and loss with growth. It's something I'm still working on, but I wouldn't know where to start if it weren't for SOA.

**Nick Scapellato:** Mitochondria are the powerhouse of the cell.

**Nick Shaarda:** How to grow out of my shell and open up.

**Manning Shaw:** If you can't get what you want from someone, go to the position above their head. don't be afraid to force a hand.

**Johnathan Small:** How to get ready for college.

**Shamar Smith:** Math and working in the cafeteria.

**Emilia Steenhuisen:** There are

**Chamel Adams:** "Life is not a problem to be solved, but a reality to be experienced."

**Copeland Barrett:** "It's ok baby girl, DON'T even worry."

**Cody Beasenburg:** "With the amount of outstanding work I have, and I mean not turned in, not that it's going to be outstanding" -Alan Brehm

**Cydney Bennett:** I usually only make ridiculously stupid puns and talk about how I'm ready to graduate so I guess my quote would be "I'm S.O. prAying for this year to be over already!"

**Jordan Benton:** "Be Beyoncé."

**Ryan Biddix:** "Ryan Biddix alone could keep American Apparel in business." -Teagan Prichard

**Rhyan Bredlau:** There's no one quote I want to be remembered by. As Hamlet would say, that's all only "words, words, words." I'd rather be remembered by deeds and by how I helped people. That's what changes history.

**Woods Browder:** "I've never found time spent amongst nature to be a waste of time."

**Patrick Burns:** "Do you have the knowledge?" - Anna Bronk

**Bethany Burnsed:** "If you can't fly then run. If you can't run then walk. If you can't walk then crawl. But whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward" Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

**Parris Byars:** "That's Mr. Bro to you." -Alan J. Brehm

**Taylor Carnie:** "You have to just be at peace with what you are and what you really want to be. Like a lot of people will say 'I'm an aspiring artist or I'm an aspiring writer' ...No, you're a writer, you're an artist. If you're doing that 'stuff' everyday, that's what you are... just own it." -Danny Avidan

**Elliott Cihlar:** "Bears, Beets, Battlestar Galactica." -Jim Halpert

**Elsa Cline:** "I'm sorry, if you were right, I would agree with you." -Robin Williams

**Summer Coons:** "My great hope is to laugh as much as I cry; to get my work done and try to love somebody

some classes in high school that I can enjoy and thrive in that help you figure out who you are and want to be (shout out to teacher cadet).

**Elijah Stullenbarger:** The ceiling is the floor and the floor is the ceiling.

**Nolan Tecklenburg:** I learned to synergize with the people around me. Having people skills and group work skills are very important for adult life.

**Stephan Tenney:** Always take care of business because no one will do it for you.

## What quote do you want to be remembered by?

and have the courage to accept the love in return." - Maya Angelou

**Jessie Cox:** "I wanna fling myself into the sun"

**Carly Crawford:** "Bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce, bounce." -R. Kelly

**Megan Dawson:** "We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, but borrow it from our children."

**Madison DeLoach:** "I think it costs, like... a little bit of money." -Copeland Barrett, about a bottle of Apple Juice

**Maddie DePuy:** "You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream." -C.S. Lewis

Ben Zuber



**Casey Derieux:** "Sometimes it is the people no one can imagine anything of who do the things no one can imagine." -Alan Turing

**Carlin Dooley:** "Well...that almost turned out right."

**Sam DuPree:** "Stop being afraid of what could go wrong and start being excited about what could go right."

**Allie Durand:** "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." -Proverbs 4:23

**Rebecca Edson:** "This sucks. I'm gonna pee due to boredom." -Scott Pilgrim.

**Jonteja Venning:** SOA has had a huge impact in framing my perspective of the real world. Being here, in a small environment, I have learned many of lessons and developed many lasting relationships that have been possible by being in an tight-knit environment where you are truly a family.

**Amy Walsh:** How to be myself.

**Sawyer Wasserman:** I've learned how to make some real friends and how to make mistakes but keep going in spite of them.

**Carly Edwards:** "If you want to appease me, compliment my brain." Cristina Yang

**Etta Elliott:** "Be fearless." -Frida Kahlo

**Jackie Evans:** "The best music is essentially there to provide you something to face the world with." -Bruce Springsteen

**Noah Evans:** "Reach for the stars and if you don't grab them, at least you're on top of the world, dale." -Pitbull

**Jacob Fairchild:** "Try to go into an argument with an objective outlook. You just might learn something that will change your opinion." Cameron Frye

used to be. If the world were perfect, it wouldn't be." -Yogi Berra

**Daniela Garcia Desa:** "Uh. Insert a quote here."

**Marissa Gigs:** "Do you."

**Zachary Gilbert:** "Shoot for the moon, even if you miss, you'll land amongst the stars" -Artie Shaw

**JJ Goller:** "erfiolskdlfmqe irtaxkdm vk;lrtlaksdmkgnrioeiopriajridflkgald kfjge kgmierio"

**Emma Gourdie:** "I can't go, I have swim practice."

**Ashley Green:** "Fruit cup it up."

**Melanie Green:** "Always be yourself because the world needs more unicorns."

**Sabrina Green:** "Blessed are the hearts that can bend; they shall never be broken." -Albert Camus

**Shayla Green:** "Goodbye, everyone. I'll remember you all in therapy." -Plankton

**Lexi Griffin:** "Don't let fear or insecurity stop you from trying new things. Believe in yourself. Do what you love. And most importantly, be kind to others, even if you don't like them." -Stacy London

**Bailey Gruber:** "The best way to predict your future is to create it yourself."

**Parker Gustafson:** "Keep moving forward."

**Alex Hepburn:** "It's because I'm black, isn't it?"

**Gretchen Hertel:** "To live is the rarest thing in the word. Most people exist, that is all" -Oscar Wilde

**Ava Hoffman:** "Don't let people get you down. Be who you want to be, and if it bothers them, forget it."

**Caroline Horres:** "Nothing is impossible, the word itself says I'm possible." -Audrey Hepburn

**Meagan Horres:** "I want people to be afraid of how much they love me." -Michael Scott (*The Office*)

**Tajh Horton:** I hope to be remembered for how I made others feel.

**Jordyn Huger:** "Yaaaaa Theresa" -Dr. Christopher Selby

**Georgia Hunt:** Mr. Rogers always made us laugh in vocal. Some of my



favorites include: "Bookbags to the side!", "Sing like big mommas at the opera!", and "Booty Check!"

**Lauren Hunt:** "Love what you do, do what you love."

**Ellie Jeffers:** "I want to be a rock in the next life." -Min Yoongi

**Hailey Johnson:** "The degree of loving is measured by the degree of giving." -Edwin Louis Cole

**Michael Johnson:** "Stupid is as stupid does."

**Noah Jones:** "I'm for truth, no matter who tells it. I'm for justice, no matter who it's for or against." -Malcolm X

**Hannah Kelly:** "I'm me and my sister's not" -John Cusatis, Ph.D.

**Cody Kendle:** "Don't give up."

**Jessica Keniston:** "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12

**Abbey Kirkland:** "I am not a fan of books. I would never want a book's autograph. I am a proud non-reader of books." -Kanye West

**Mary Knox:** "Blue jays, parrots, crows; those are the only birds I knows."

**Emily Kucklick:** "Wait, the line test is today?!"

**Emily Lanter:** "It's the things you fight for and struggle with before earning that have the greatest worth." -Sarah Dessen

**Jakob Lazzaro:** "Journalism will kill you, but it will keep you alive while you're at it." -Horace Greeley

**Christian Leprettre:** "There is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so."

**Abby LeRoy:** "yes and"

**Shelby Levine:** "When you love and accept yourself, when you know who really cares about you, and when you learn from your mistakes, then you stop caring about what people who don't know you think." -Beyonce

**Fiona Lewis:** "The future becomes the present, the present the past, and the past turns into ever lasting regret if you don't plan for it!" -Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie*

**Collin Lloyd:** "It is better to keep your mouth closed and let people think you are a fool than to open it and remove all doubt." -Mark Twain

**Kimberly Lowman:** "Kill them with success and bury them with a big smile." -Kwon Ji-yong

**Hannah Luckie:** "You can never silence me."

**Zois Manaris:** "Hence, we will not say that Greeks fight like heroes, but that heroes fight like Greeks." -Winston Churchill

**Kaci Martin:** "A beautiful woman is

a beautiful woman, but a beautiful woman with a brain is an absolutely lethal combination." -Prabal Gurung. I want it to be about beauty and brains because those were the two things I grew up on. Call me narcissistic, but I love me a beautiful personality and makeup. \*wink\*

**Laurence Martin:** "All I can do is follow my instincts because I'll never please everyone." -Emma Watson

**Logan Matthews:** "Dankify your life." -Rebecca Putnam

**Cody McLellan:** "Cry like a man and drink your tears."

**Alissa Melsopp:** "I am running away from my responsibilities and it feels good." -Michael Scott

**Ryan Mercado:** "Do it, just do it! Don't let your dreams be dreams. Yesterday you said tomorrow. So just do it! Make your dreams come true." -Shia LeBeouf

**Nina Murchison:** "ughhhhhhhhhhh"

-Tina Belcher

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**Victoria Newman:** "What flavor was bubblegum supposed to be before it was bubblegum flavor?"

**Hernan Pena:** "I sat in gum."

**Mia Pernice:** "Fear keeps us focused on the past or worried about the future. If we can acknowledge our fear, we can realize that right now we are okay. Right now, today, we are still alive, and our bodies are working marvelously. Our eyes can still see the beautiful sky. Our ears can still hear the voices of the ones we love." -Thich Nhat Hanh (Buddhist monk, teacher, author, poet, and peace activist).

**Pierre Pinckney:** "Discipline and consistency is the key to success."

**Adonis Pineda:** I want to be remembered by that quote I wasn't

even allowed to put in the yearbook. I guess we'll never know. "\\_(. \_.)\_/"

**Ashton Platts:** "Practice makes perfect. Truly, if you mess up once, try again. If you mess up twice, try again. The more you practice the better you will become because all those obstacles that come your way only makes you stronger."

**Savannah Porter:** "True heroism is minutes, hours, weeks, year upon year of the quiet, precise, judicious exercise of probity and care with no one there to see or cheer. This is the world." -David Foster Wallace. I love this quote because I feel like teachers and students all have accomplishments that may go unnoticed by a lot of people, but they make such a huge difference in the individual student's learning experience.

**Abigail Reeves:** "The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched: they must be felt with the heart" -Helen Keller

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**Angelica Rodriguez:** "Words, words, words" -Hamlet

**Meagan Romagnuolo:** "The most important thing is to enjoy your life and to be happy: it's all that matters." -Audrey Hepburn

**Nicole Sadek:** "Walk like an Egyptian."

**Vasantha Sambamurti:** "You can bring a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink." -Barrett Jamal Reese

**Nick Scapellato:** "Nick, what are you doing? Sit down. Open up your book." -Dr. Cusatis

**Nick Shaarda:** "When nothing goes right... go left."

**Manning Shaw:** "I thought I was an atheist, until I realized I'm a god." -Watsky

**Johnathan Small:** "Never give up."

**Shamar Smith:** "Deaf power!"

**Emilia Steenhuisen:** "No matter how serious life gets. You still have to have that one person you can be completely stupid with." -Unknown

**Elijah Stullenbarger:** "Did everyone see that? Because I will NOT be doing it again." (In reference to high school).

**Nolan Tecklenburg:** "A genius is the one most like himself" -Thelonious Monk

**Stephan Tenney:** "THAT!!!!!!!"

**Jonteja Venning:** "Throughout my life I have been discouraged at times, but moving forward I will proceed with confidence and strength in little things that give me encouragement. I fall, I rise, I make mistakes, I live, I learn, I've been hurt, but I'm alive. I'm human and I'm not perfect, but I'm thankful." -Unknown

**Amy Walsh:** "Life is a waste of time. Time is a waste of life. So why not waste all of your time and have the time of your life?"

**Sawyer Wasserman:** "In the virtual world there're things you have to protect because it's a virtual world. If you give into your impulses in there, it's going to change who you are in the real world. The player and the character are one and the same."

**Victoria Watson:** "Sometimes I'll start a sentence and I don't know where it's going. I just hope to find it somewhere along the way." -Michael Scott

**Kyle Winstead:** "Sometimes it's better to ask for forgiveness rather than permission."

**Caroline Zetrouer:** "Speak now, think later."

**Ben Zuber:** "You're everything I wanna be, that's why I'm friends with you. So how are you looking up to me when I look up to you?" -J. Cole

**Jonathan Zuraw:** "Stay positive, cause why not?"

## What will you miss most about SOA?

**Chamel Adams:** Jump, Jive, and Wail.

**Copeland Barrett:** Spending all day in the art room.

**Cody Beasenburg:** The little things like having a jazz band that plays at lunch sometimes or vocal singing the "Hallelujah Chorus" for Handel's *Messiah* because they heard a D Major chord.

**Cydney Bennett:** I'm mostly going to miss seeing three weirdos named Jack Jeffery, Hannah Burton, and Molly Weaver in the breezeway on the way to lunch. They're just so cute and lovable. #advertisement

**Jordan Benton:** I will miss being able to see my Honey Badgers everyday, they have become my best friends through thick and thin and we have carried each other through everything.

**Ryan Biddix:** I'll miss the bridge in the Pegasus Garden.

**Rhyan Bredlau:** I'll miss the people here, the safety they create, and the atmosphere of variety. In a conservative area, we're a liberal and accepting bubble. I'll miss being able to trust people with my identity, without having to worry about what they might do to me as a result.

**Woods Browder:** Connections made while making music.

**Patrick Burns:** The fact that attendance is a theory.

**Bethany Burnsed:** I will miss all of the supportive and accepting relationships I have built with fellow students and teachers.

**Parris Byars:** I'll miss the bridge in the Pegasus Garden.

**Taylor Carnie:** I will miss how accepting everyone is and the way everyone here is so talented.

**Elliott Cihlar:** I will certainly miss some of the amazing teachers that inspired me.

**Elsa Cline:** I will miss lunch with my super cool friends and my walk to school with my sister.

**Summer Coons:** I will miss walking through the halls and seeing kids of all ages making art. It could be people having a jam session, painting a picture in the hallway, singing songs, or anything. I will miss being surrounded by creation. I love being surrounded by beautiful things because it in turn makes my life more beautiful.

**Jessie Cox:** Having the outlet of the arts to express myself.

**Carly Crawford:** All the time spent playing around in the Black Box when everyone should've been rehearsing.

**Megan Dawson:** I will miss being able to do pottery every day.

**Madison DeLoach:** I'll miss other schools and colleges are too big for that.

**Jenna Farnham:** The thing I'll miss most about SOA is playing music with such a talented group of musicians that make up our symphony (ranked #1 in the nation), led by the most selfless and devoted teacher, Dr. Selby.

**Casey Derieux:** I'm going to miss symphony the most, probably. The SOA Symphony was where it was at; we accomplished a lot of great things in there. I can't wait to see where Dr. Selby takes the symphony in the years to come.

**Maureen Dolan:** Roger Taylor and Kimberly Zerbst.

**Carlin Dooley:** The sense of home and safety that is imbued into the core of SOA.



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**Sam DuPree:** I'll miss my SOA family. I have learned many things growing up with everyone.

**Allie Durand:** I will miss the relationships that I've developed with the other students here as well as the general everyone-knows-everyone atmosphere. Despite my short time at this school, I feel thoroughly connected to it and have formed many lasting memories with the people here.

**Rebecca Edson:** The adrenaline rush I get from constant dread.

**Carly Edwards:** I am going to miss the wonderful students involved in student government the most. This year student council has pulled off events like the fall food festival and winter formal.

**Etta Elliott:** I will miss all of my teachers who have taught me so much.

**Jackie Evans:** I will miss my friends and the small environment.

**Noah Evans:** Definitely gonna miss the wild spirit weeks.

**Jacob Fairchild:** I'll miss being able to know my teachers as well as I do.

**Daniela Garcia Desa:** Definitely the energy in the building, whether it is tired, lazy, mad, or happy. Definitely that.

**Marissa Gigis:** The size. Everyone knows each other.

**Zachary Gilbert:** Noah Jones.

**JJ Goller:** I'll definitely miss friends (that's a given) but I'm going to miss how close the school is to the CVS

where I buy all the snacks I eat in the middle of class.

**Emma Gourdie:** My friends have always been there for me, through thick and thin. I will miss their humor, their kind words of support and their honesty. I will also miss the welcoming atmosphere of SOA. It's been great to be part of a student body that accepts, tolerates and shows kindness to all who walk through the doors of SOA.

**Ashley Green:** My friends and the connections I made.

**Melanie Green:** The open minded classmates.

**Sabrina Green:** I will miss playing in our symphony and our strings director, Dr. Selby.

**Shayla Green:** I will miss all my friends that have now become my family and the fun environment that is full of many different super awesome people.

**Lexi Griffin:** Dr. Selby tbh.

**Bailey Gruber:** I will honestly miss seeing the same people that I've seen everyday since sixth grade and the general familiarity the most.

**Parker Gustafson:** The mesh of art and education. They're not inherently separate, and this school exemplifies that.

**Legare Hay:** I'll miss the lifelong friendships I have made with friends that will be going on separate paths. I'll miss some very fun and interesting teachers who I've developed bonds with over the years. I'll miss writing pieces for theater and making an audience laugh.

**Alex Hepburn:** I will miss the camaraderie among the majors. I will also definitely miss the teachers who helped me along the way and supported me.

**Gretchen Hertel:** The facilities.

**Ava Hoffman:** The events that each major puts on. I will miss convocation, spirit week, and the Powderpuff games!

**Chloe Hogan:** I will miss the weird and funny people.

**Caroline Horres:** I will truly miss my dance class; we may not always get along but after being together for seven years you form an amazing bond (I love my Honey Badgers!).

**Meagan Horres:** I will definitely miss my dance class because I feel like we have really grown up together. We have definitely seen each other at our worst. Being in the dance major is kind of like being in a sisterhood. So though we make get annoyed with each other, I will miss seeing them every morning.

**Tajh Horton:** Senior year.

**Jordyn Huger:** I'm not quite sure.

**Georgia Hunt:** As I have attended SOA since sixth grade, the thing I will miss the most about SOA is my vocal class. We have had class together everyday for seven years, and I have become very close with them and have made some of my best friends in that class. Not seeing those people everyday will be the hardest thing about leaving SOA.

**Lauren Hunt:** I will really miss being in the symphony here at SOA. It's been such a privilege and an amazing experience to have been able to be a part of it and grow with the symphony as a musician.

**Ellie Jeffers:** The accepting environment.

**Alec Johnson:** Band trips.

**Hailey Johnson:** The people and the moments when we all come together, we are a family.

**Michael Johnson:** The close bonds made with all of my friends these past seven years.

**Noah Jones:** The endless knowledge that teachers shared outside of class time.

**Hannah Kelly:** The laughs. And the crying.

**Cody Kendle:** The freedom to express yourself.

**Jessica Keniston:** I will miss my piano class the most. We all became pretty close friends. I will also miss Mrs. Benson a lot. It was an awesome seven years having her as a teacher.

**Abbey Kirkland:** The bench my friends and I may or may not have broken in tenth grade. Prime place to get a rockin tan while feasting with friends.

**Mary Knox:** I'll miss seeing my amazing, crazy senior class everyday and being at a small school.

**Emily Kucklick:** The thing I will miss the most about SOA is the amazing talent its students have to create drama out of nothing. Haha just kidding, but actually I will really miss the unique environment where you get exposed to many different art forms every day.

**Emily Lanter:** I will miss being around so many people who are so happy being themselves.

**Jakob Lazzaro:** I'm going to miss the people here the most. SOA students are some of the coolest and most interesting people to learn and grow with.

**Christian Lepretre:** My friends.

**Abby LeRoy:** The stories teachers tell when you get them off track.

**Ari Levine:** I will miss hearing live music everyday.

**Shelby Levine:** I will miss my best friends Carly, Georgia and Jalaya!

**Fiona Lewis:** I will miss the support and comfort that I have from just

walking into the doors. Being here seven for years has given me a cushion to lean back on and suddenly that cushion will not be there.

**Collin Lloyd:** The creativity and talent that I see everyday. Plus my friends.

**Kimberly Lowman:** I will miss the great teachers that I got to have over the years who taught me so much not only about academics but about life.

**Hannah Luckie:** I will miss belonging the way that I do. I will miss the excuses that cloud my brain for feeling sorry for me. Although I feel right now that I will not miss these people that I'm graduating with, I know it is inevitable that there will come a day where I look back in longing. But honestly I'm going to miss the definite strength that my true friends give me. I don't think I'm going to miss much of high school. No offense, I mean it's not really SOAs fault in this; it's really just high school in general that I think us seniors are all mad about.

**Zois Manaris:** "We need more welders and less philosophers."  
-Marco Rubio

**Kaci Martin:** I will miss some of the amazing teachers who truly inspired me. Some teachers taught me who I was and some inspired a new passion and career choice.

**Laurence Martin:** Those moments when you feel the entire school working together for a cause.

**Logan Matthews:** I'll miss all the friends that I've made over the years, because they're the dankest, duh.

**Cody McLellan:** I will miss the amazing art programs that are the backbone of this school.

**Alissa Melsopp:** All the cool and interesting people and all the drama they cause.

**Ryan Mercado:** The feeling of community we all have within our class and major.

**Nina Murchison:** I will miss how close and accepting everyone is.

**Victoria Newman:** Definitely my graduating class. I've always been somewhat quiet until I get to know people (and then I never shut up), so it's taken me a while to get to know them, but I can honestly say that these are some really awesome people to be graduating with.

**Hernan Pena:** The geese that walk around in the parking lot from time to time.

**Mia Pernice:** I'll miss having a daily predictable schedule. From now its up to me what I do and though that is extremely exciting, it's also quite scary.

**Pierre Pinckney:** I will miss being around talented students and intelligent teachers who have blessed my life.

**Adonis Pineda:** The fact that it wasn't your average high school and you could count on people here.

**Ashton Platts:** I will miss the one-on-one connections I developed with my teachers and other faculty members. Being able to bond on a deeper level with certain teachers really gave me a welcoming and safe feeling. Having a relationship with a teacher can create more opportunities and later encounters with them. Along with this, I will miss the absolute acceptance of the arts. Everyone accepted into this school has a similar avenue, just taken in different approaches. The realm of



artistic expression really enhanced me to foster into the person I am today and I will not let that be overshadowed.

**Savannah Porter:** I will miss the people that I never spoke to. I may never get the chance to again.

**Rylee Puckhaber:** The food.

**Rebecca Putnam:** All of the tea olive trees that smell amazing when they bloom right next to the gym. I want to just uproot them and plant them in my backyard.

**Abigail Reeves:** I will most miss the incredibly close bonds I have made with my fellow dance majors. Seeing the same girls every day for an hour and a half has created a community as close as family. As college approaches, we will all separate and begin our own lives and I will dearly miss the friends with whom I have cried, laughed, and danced.

**Shamond Riddy:** Having music tech with Ms. Fitz.

**Noah Rigsby:** SOA Art Class with Mr. Moore and the art crew.

**Holly Rizer:** Definitely my friends.

**Parker Richardson:** I will miss my overall freedom as a student living under my parents roof and not having to do real word stuff.

**Lecanna Robertson:** I will miss my major teacher Ms. Cimballa and all of creativity that this school has.

**Terry Roddey:** Nick Scapellato. We was like peas and carrots.

**Jay Rode:** Having classes outside on a perfect Charleston day. "Ain't nothing finer than bein' a Caroliner" or however that goes.

**Meagan Romagnuolo:** I'll miss the senior dance class the most. (Go Honey Badgers!!).

**Nicole Sadek:** Campfires at Lake Logan with my Creative Writing buds

**Vasanth Sambamurti:** I'll miss my creative writing family. We have wept and laughed and learned together. I can't think of another group of people that I trust more wholeheartedly, that I feel safe around. I really needed that sense of camaraderie, especially after middle school. I just didn't anticipate I'd be this fortunate, and I can't predict what will happen after we all go.

**Nick Scapellato:** Producing art on a daily basis with people I can tolerate.

**Nick Shaarda:** My friends.

**Manning Shaw:** My friends and Mrs. Hansford.

**Johnathan Small:** My friends and family here at SOA.

**Shamar Smith:** My friends and family here at SOA.

**Emilia Steenhuisen:** My friends.

**Elijah Stullenbarger:** My AMAZING FRIENDS!!! (Bridget, Abbey, Maddie, Sarah, Emily, Etta, and Allie).

**Nolan Tecklenburg:** I'll miss lunchtime jam sessions in the bandroom and being in such a laid back environment.

**Stephan Tenney:** Definitely Jordan. :)

**Jonteja Venning:** I will miss the relationships I have developed the most. Since I've been here since sixth grade, I have created so many memories that will be hard to leave behind without the people there to cherish them with.

**Anna Walker:** The kid who plays piano at lunch every day.

**Amy Walsh:** Seeing my friends.

**Sawyer Wasserman:** The friends and family I have made and all of the good times we had with each other. I will miss all of the memories we made together.

**Victoria Watson:** My amazing friends.

**Kyle Winstead:** Having major every day and being with the people I've grown up with for seven years.

**Caroline Zetrouer:** The amazing teachers aka Mr. Brehm and Mr. Short.

**Ben Zuber:** I'm going to miss my friends the most. I've been with them for so long, it's going to be really weird going to a different school with different people.

**Jonathan Zuraw:** The friends I have made and seeing them every day cause in a few short months everyone will be everywhere and my new life will be beginning. Also, changing Karl Clark's date everyday.

## What was your most memorable moment at SOA?

**Chamel Adams:** Probably the Prince tribute at convocation.

**Copland Barrett:** When I met MADY DELOACH and MARY KNOX. Angels!

**Cody Beasenburg:** Probably me in the air cheerleading wearing virtually nothing during Powderpuff.

**Cydney Bennett:** Performing *Les Miserables* in the ninth grade with vocal. All the songs may get on my nerves now but I loved doing it with all of my best friends (Not including the best friends/weirdos I mentioned earlier, sorry).

**Ryan Biddix:** Dress code policy.

**Rhyan Bredlau:** My most memorable moment? I don't really have one. That's the downside of being the loud weirdo. Sure, everyone remembers you, but since everything is so loud and weird it all falls away into one blur of surreal oddness. Maybe it was junior prom, which I took a friend of mine to. I don't think so, though.

**Woods Browder:** Jump, Jive, and Wail 2015.

**Patrick Burns:** Having Jay as my friend who put at least one of my answers in the 2016 graduation issue of the *Applause*.

**Bethany Burnsed:** Apple bobbing with Mr. Orvin's class and all of the battles and fun I had in his class freshman year.

**Parris Byars:** I will always remember all of the terrible things that I didn't do if Dr. Perrineau asks.

**Taylor Carnie:** Every Jump, Jive, and Wail.

**Elliott Cihlar:** Definitely when I was in seventh grade and I tripped on a pencil while going up the stairs, breaking my foot.

**Elsa Cline:** There were a few Mrs. Bronk vs. Student yelling matches which were vaguely terrifying and will definitely remain cemented in my memory. On a more positive note, I will definitely remember our senior art show, which was a fantastic display of the time and effort we have all put into our work. We have definitely come a long way.

**Summer Coons:** Mrs. Bronk's PhotoStory project. I still have war flashbacks. That's all I want to say about that right now.

**Jessie Cox:** Winning best director at Playfest my junior year and getting into The Fighting Gnomes.

**Megan Dawson:** The day I came back. I regret that I left. You don't realize how great this school is until you've experienced a normal public high school.

**Maddie DePuy:** All the convocations that have continually reminded me

how talented everyone is at this school. Especially the one that turned into a tribute rock concert for Prince.

**Casey Derieux:** I've made so many good memories at SOA. I've met so many wonderful, talented, and driven individuals. And I've made many friendships that are going to last a lifetime. So, my most memorable moment at SOA was probably getting in in the first place. Because if it wasn't

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for that moment, I never would have met all of the amazing people that I did here.

**Maureen Dolan:** Reading every word of the senior surveys in *Applause* every year.

**Carlin Dooley:** It's kind of a weird one. But I had a friend who identified as a guy and he had to dress as a girl for a show and when I saw him I told him he looked like crap. I've never seen anyone look so appreciative of an insult before, that was the moment I knew the atmosphere of SOA had changed how I looked at people and the world at large.

**Sam DuPree:** Art Smart in eighth grade and the last senior art show

**Allie Durand:** I don't think I can pinpoint one moment. I've loved goofing off with my junior major class, spending time with my sister, getting to know a great group of girls in dance this year, laughing til' I cried in English, actually crying in Calculus, making new friendships, and too many more to enumerate.

just one moment that sticks out when I reflect on my time here at SOA. I distinctly remember participating in *Hairspray* my freshman year, goofing around during the dance competition at JJW with Georgia and laughing so hard I peed on the gymnasium floor in seventh grade.

**Etta Elliott:** When the journalism class all went on a field trip to the *Post and Courier* and then got stranded because the bus driver didn't come.

**Jackie Evans:** I loved all the the Jump, Jive, and Wails that I have gone to. I am very excited to participate in the Dylan Tribute concert, but I also think that I'll never forget some of those first days in sixth grade.

**Noah Evans:** When around the end of the year my Junior year, me, Frank, Tavaris, and Gavin, all played Super Smash Bros Melee in Mr. Lindgren's room on a tiny monitor in the corner.

**Jacob Fairchild:** My most memorable moment is more like a series of moments, those being the multiple times when I intrude on my

mom's classes to ask for something from her.

**Jenna Farnham:** One of my most memorable moments at SOA was playing on the Powderpuff field for a spirited senior class covered in red paint, accompanied by our scandalously dressed male cheerleaders. Even though the juniors put up a good fight, we managed to win fair and square, unlike the seniors the previous year that left a few of

us with bruises and ripped t-shirts.

**McCarthy Fitch:** Can't remember.

**Shanti Franks:** Probably when I performed my senior thesis. To go up in front of friends and family and play my own compositions gave me confidence and filled me with happiness. I am proud of myself for doing as well as I did and for knowing I can accomplish whatever I put my mind to.

**Cameron Frye:** My favorite day at SOA was the Powderpuff Game senior year. Everyone was so enthusiastic and full of spirit all day and those have always been my favorite days here.

**Anizia Fulmore:** The first day of sixth grade at the old building. The dancers were told to go to Ms. Slowinski's room for class, but upon meeting her, she told us we had the wrong teacher and that we needed to go to the warehouse for Mrs. Cline's class instead. This was our first bonding moment as a class!

**Peter Gair:** That one time that I forgot to study for Brehm... oh wait...

**Daniela Garcia Desa:** Performing in front of people, and learning something new every time, which was everyday.

**Marissa Gigis:** When Mrs. Newell yelled at this kid for knocking down her bookshelf and then made him fix it in front of everyone. Too good

**Zachary Gilbert:** Every single Jump, Jive, and Wail I've ever participated in. When you see a sea of people dancing to music that YOU'RE creating... That feeling's indescribable.

**JJ Goller:** I can't choose a single moment. I embarrassed myself so much during my time here that all these cringey memories come up at once. But if I had to choose one, it would be the time that I tried to jump over a bookbag all graceful and tripped and landed flat on my face the cafeteria front of everyone.

**Emma Gourdie:** Singing extremely loudly and very out of tune in the bathroom before the piano senior thesis.

**Ashley Green:** There are too many to count.

**Melanie Green:** The senior vs junior powderpuff game!!!

**Sabrina Green:** There was this one time in my senior thesis where I confused a cello case with a person (I was sleep deprived) and scared everyone in my class, it was hilarious.

**Shayla Green:** When Amy, Shanti, Sawyer, Taylor, Laurence and I sat together at lunch for the first time.

**Lexi Griffin:** Winning the National Orchestra Festival in Tampa, Florida with the 2015-2016 SOA Symphony Orchestra.

**Bailey Gruber:** My most memorable moments at SOA are the assemblies where we all came together and genuinely enjoyed each other's presence.

**Legare Hay:** When I had a costume malfunction during Playfest my tenth grade year, leaving my lower extremities open to public viewing. My advice to you is if you have to wear jorts onstage in front of 75 or so people, make sure to wear something more supportive than boxers.

**Alex Hepburn:** In sixth grade on the day before Christmas break, we walked to tour the new building. It was raining and we were singing Christmas carols the whole way.

**Gretchen Hertel:** Powderpuff Football.

**Ava Hoffman:** When I had a panic attack during senior thesis and some people who I thought wouldn't think twice about me came to ask me what was wrong and helped comfort me. I felt very close to people and it made me feel like I was cared for.

**Chloe Hogan:** Destroying a computer in art class.

**Caroline Horres:** The eighth grade dance when I was dancing so much that I ripped the back of my dress and had to find a stapler to staple it back together for the rest of the night.

**Meagan Horres:** My first middle school dance in sixth grade. It was celebrity themed and there was an epic dance circle.

**Tajh Horton:** Finally taking the girl I've liked for three years on a date.

**Jordyn Huger:** Too many to be able to think of one, but winning best orchestra in the nation was pretty cool.

**Georgia Hunt:** My most memorable moment thus far has definitely been the senior powder puff game. I never experienced so much school spirit from SOA until that day. From running around the

cafeteria to playing on the defensive line and snagging some flags with my teammates, our senior class truly felt like a family that day. A highlight (besides winning, of course) was our spectacular half time show, where Mr. Brehm made a special guest appearance. Of course there are other defining moments from my career at SOA that I will never forget: playing Miss Dorothy in *Thoroughly Modern*



Provided

**Millie,** Carly and I being one of the final couples to be eliminated in the Jump, Jive, and Wail dance competition, and performing my senior thesis.

**Lauren Hunt:** Our Spring concert this year, because it made me realize everything I'm going to miss about this school.

**Ellie Jeffers:** FREE TRANE!

**Alec Johnson:** My second week of sixth grade when I wanted to drop out because I messed up my first playing test in band.

**Hailey Johnson:** There are way too many to pick just one. I love SOA and will never forget the happiness it brought me.

**Michael Johnson:** Visiting New York City on a Vocal trip was very memorable for me because I got to see my first big city as well as my first Broadway show. Both were breathtaking and inspiring.

**Noah Jones:** When all types of students came to a Black Lives Matter rally and supported the efforts for the arrest of the officer who killed Walter Scott.

**Hannah Kelly:** That time the cafeteria caught on fire.

**Cody Kendle:** Graduating.

**Jessica Keniston:** Senior thesis. It took a lot of hard work, and I am proud of my performance. It was a huge relief to all eight of us piano majors and felt like a big accomplishment.

**Abbey Kirkland:** When Gach Zilbert ate my hair... Truly unforgettable.

**Mary Knox:** There are way too many stage. That feeling of and goosebumps to count, but one of my favorites is what I have for in dance since sixth grade and you finally get it towards the end as a sort of blue ribbon for We all bonded and I loved every the second of it. It made me realize how much I'm going to miss everyone. **Collin Lloyd:** My most memorable moment was most likely in sixth grade. LeRoy scaled the curtains in the Black Box Theatre freshman year. After was rainy and wet. Luckily instead of descending, Ms. Catangay proceeded to tell her that was "a big no-no." the new building (We were still at the old campus then). There wasn't much I remembered on the trip, but the thing I do remember was running in the cold rain and getting soaked on our way back. I'm pretty sure I got sick from it.

**Kimberly Lowman:** My senior thesis night. I was able to showcase what I have been perfecting at SOA for four years in front of family and friends, and though it was burdensome at times I was so grateful that I decided to leave my legacy with this school through my talent.

**Zois Manaris:** Ben Zuber's anti-"Not 'A' Distraction" Facebook post.

**Kaci Martin:** The day I switched majors. I tried out for Theater from Strings and the audition was so much fun. I just knew it when my senior class ran through they accepted me before they even did the school yelling and getting everyone because the energy felt so good. My pumped up for the Powderpuff game strings teacher was still so nice to me which we ended up WINNING (fair about it and I felt my whole life change and square) in front of me. It was like starting over again like i was coming home.

**Logan Matthews:** When I found stage for the first time as Bun Foo in out that I placed first in the second *Thoroughly Modern Millie* or racing soprano section at All-State this year.

**Cody McLellan:** Our senior skip day Applauses each day before release. at the beach.

Also, whenever Cusatis got off topic in AP Lit. Those discussions were priceless. **Alissa Melsopp:** Probably Grub on the Green because food.

**Ryan Mercado:** When Zois went up and randomly sang a song with the vocal majors at convocation, then City trip Vocal took for national choir. **Christian Leprettre:** The Salt Lake up and randomly sang a song with the vocal majors at convocation, then **Abby LeRoy:** Questions? Preguntas? jumped off the risers and ran off the Please refer to my autobiography stage. (debuting August 2032) for further concerns.

**Ari Levine:** The last day of freshman year: it was pouring. However, someone who will remain nameless brought a bikini top and I ran around the cafeteria field for an hour getting drenched.

**Shelby Levine:** My senior thesis senior practicum show fell apart in because it was perfect and the Prince tribute that Manchild so eloquently put together last minute! I was in tears the entire time!

**Fiona Lewis:** My most memorable moment at SOA was A Moment Through Time. After choreographing a piece and being completely finished with it, it can take your breath away when put to the

**Nina Murchison:** The fact that my yearbook picture every year was always the worst picture I had ever taken in my life.

**Victoria Newman:** Being in *Les Miserables* freshman year with the Vocal department.

**Hernan Pena:** When the set at our senior practicum show fell apart in the middle of the performance.

**Mia Pernice:** Probably the first time I met my closest friends when I moved here junior year, they offered my some amazing memories both in and out of school which I will forever cherish.

**Pierre Pinckney:** Singing "Come Fly With Me" by Frank Sinatra at Jump, Jive, and Wail.

**Adonis Pineda:** When I had so many temporary IDs that the library staff didn't even ask me for my last name and then they printed out my ID beforehand. I was like VIP until I realized each one was a dollar and my parents were pissed.

**Ashton Platts:** My first performance at the school, eighth grade solos. Aside from performances with my dance studio, this was my first time dancing with other people I didn't really know and it was a lot to take in. I was so exhilarated, yet nervous simultaneously. I felt like that was my time to show everyone why I was accepted into the school and I will never forget the piece I choreographed.

**Savannah Porter:** The last day of my junior year. I ran in through a back door and took my math exam super quick, and the teacher let me sneak back out. My older sister was waiting in the car with coffee and some towels, and we went to Folly to celebrate me being done with school. It was a great feeling.

**Rebecca Putnam:** I loved building the elephant in Mr. Orvin's room and singing songs in Spanish for Mrs. Crawford. I also discovered my second favorite fruit (lychee) in AP World History with Mrs. Zerst. There are too many good memories to choose from.

**Abigail Reeves:** The dance trip to Miami. Only a few of us went as scared sophomores, but we had the most incredible time and made some of the most hysterical memories.

**Shamond Riddy:** Presenting

summer reading projects in Ms. Passarillo's classroom.

**Noah Riggsby:** The time Laurence Martin back-talked Mrs. Cimballa.

**Parker Richardson:** Junior prom.  
**Holly Rizer:** It's hard to pick one moment, it's not one specific really as much as it is all the fun times I've had with my friends here over the years and falling in love.

**Leeanna Robertson:** Hiding from a teacher under a desk in class... sorry, Mrs. Wade.

**Terry Roddey:** I once ran for three years, two months, 14 days, and 16 hours.

**Jay Rode:** The last day at the old campus. It had rained and filled up Lake SOA. Someone had laid a plywood board in the moving water and some of us sixth graders rode that raft to Mrs. Newell's class.

**Angelica Rodriguez:** I don't know.

**Meagan Romagnuolo:** In seventh grade when Ms. Stack left the classroom, one student attempted to throw another student out of the second floor window.

**Nicole Sadek:** Coaching the powderpuff cheerleaders ;)

**Vasanthasambamurti:** When I was in ninth grade, a group of classmates and I prepared a presentation on abortive/reproductive rights and accessibility to contraception for women in developing countries. It's, obviously, a difficult subject to discuss, even more difficult to determine where to begin. We somehow managed to create a powerpoint

and took turns speaking to the class. When it was my turn, I had to read the following definition: "Abortion is the termination of an unborn fetus." But instead, I messed up and said: "Abortion is the termination of an unborn feces." We got a 100 on the project but I don't think I looked at anyone for the rest of the year.

**Nick Scapellato:** That time at the old campus that I slipped while jumping across Lake SOA and fell hip-deep in mud.

**Nick Shaarda:** Senior thesis.

**Manning Shaw:** Probably meeting my friends, and very select teachers. Hopefully by the time this is published, my thesis went well, I've worked too hard on it and I've been set up for failure and set back, but hopefully all went well. We made it and I'm proud to be graduating with the class I'm graduating with.

**Johnathan Small:** I remember coming here in eighth grade and wanting everyone to be my family. Now they are!

**Shamar Smith:** Getting my job in the cafeteria.

**Emilia Steenhuisen:** When I realized that I don't need to please anyone but myself in order to be happy. And that lead to having the best friends I could possibly ever have.

**Elijah Stullenbarger:** Breaking the lunch table seat outside during sophomore year.

**Nolan Tecklenburg:** When I was feeling down until a teacher helped me up.

**Stephan Tenney:** Singing at

Jump Jive and Wail was for sure my most memorable moment.

**Jonteja Venning:** Seeing how the whole school came together in honoring the life of Mrs. Slowinski. The emotions that everyone felt during that time exhibited the family type relationship that we have at SOA.

**Amy Walsh:** There are SO many... But if I had to narrow it down probably the time Taylor smashed a Go-gurt under his foot in an IHOP parking lot and it spraying all over Shayla and her car (and Laurence a little bit).

**Sawyer Wasserman:** I can't pick. Every moment of my senior year has been great. All the other years were good, but I feel like I have found my place this year. Although, I think prom night will be the best memory I have of being with my tribe.

**Victoria Watson:** I have many memories at SOA, but I will never forget the dance field trips.

**Kyle Winstead:** I can't pick one memory. Anything that happened at lunch was pretty hilarious.

**Caroline Zetrouer:** On the seventh grade mountain trip, the girls' cabin tricked Mr. Perkins that Kate and Ricky had run off into the woods together at night and he stormed through the pouring rain looking for them for an hour.

**Ben Zuber:** Definitely my senior thesis, because I got to play along side my piano brothers and sisters for the last time.

**Jonathan Zuraw:** Changing the date on Mr. Clark's board for the first time. It was crazy.

## Do you have any advice for underclassmen?

**Chamel Adams:** Just be yourself. If you're weird, express your weirdness. Do not let anyone stop you from being who you are. and also... DO YOUR HOMEWORK!

**Cody Beasenburg:** Don't overstretch yourself while trying to do everything. Senior thesis is a lot of work, so make sure you have the time and energy for that commitment. Also vote for Bernie Sanders 2k16.

**Cydney Bennett:** For the underclassmen, if you have Brehm as your teacher, don't only study the night before the test. Just don't study at all because who knows if it will even help.

**Jordan Benton:** Cherish every moment in life because nothing is definite.

**Ryan Biddix:** Remember to always be yourself, unless you suck. Then pretend to be someone else.

**Rhyan Bredlau:** You will get senioritis, even if you think it's impossible. Everyone thinks it's impossible. The best thing you can

do is accept that it will happen and prepare. Sleep enough. Eat a salad every now and then. I might sound like your mother, but trust me, there's a reason. You'll need the energy. Don't expend too much energy caring about the little things, either. You run out of caring energy faster than you'd expect, and you'll need it to pass.

**Woods Browder:** Focus on what's really important.

**Patrick Burns:** Attendance is a theory.

**Bethany Burnsed:** Preserve through it. Senior year can get a little crazy with college apps and scholarships. Most of all though, have fun.

**Parris Byars:** Don't eat the sweet potato casserole if you're a vegetarian.

**Taylor Carnie:** Make sure you always stay on a teacher's good side. They may help you out later on.

**Elliott Cihlar:** Don't get behind.

**Elsa Cline:** Try hard and do your work but make sure you don't overwhelm yourself.



**Summer Coons:** The only way you will get anywhere in life and fulfill your dreams is by hard work. Luck never got anyone anywhere so get your crap done. Also, get to know as many people in your grade as you can. Once I began getting rid of the mindset that if you weren't in my "clique" I couldn't talk to you, I felt so much more at home and at peace with my grade. I am a happier person now

that I've let everyone in. Your grade is your family, so you should treat them like that.

**Jessie Cox:** Everything is temporary don't sweat it too much.

**Carly Crawford:** Stop worrying about "problems" that don't actually matter, and to put everything into perspective. Don't let one bad thing cause greater effects in your life.

**Megan Dawson:** Get the most out of your senior year. Don't just let it fly by, because it will.

**Madison DeLoach:** No one cares about how many APs you're in, stop mentioning it.

**Maddie DePuy:** Don't stress about school too much, it's really not worth it.

**Casey Derieux:** Senioritis is very much a thing, I promise. Myself and many of my friends always joked about how we have "had senioritis since freshman year," and all that. It is not the same sort of feeling, senioritis is very much a problem if you let it get out of control. Do not

Temptation will be around every corner. Literally EVERY corner. But you have to keep moving forward. Trust me, once it is all done, getting to exempt the majority of your final exams, and graduating, is going to be entirely worth it.

**Maureen Dolan:** Do your homework and apply for scholarships.

**Carlin Dooley:** When it comes time for econ... do the standard statements... just do them.

**Sam DuPree:** Study for Brehm. Not just for the tests... Just study for Brehm.

**Allie Durand:** Embrace your passions and the passions of others. Never be too embarrassed to express your joys in life, and never criticize others for expressing theirs just because they seem unusual to you.

**Rebecca Edson:** No. You will only learn from experience.

**Carly Edwards:** Involve yourself in as many SOA related events as possible. Some of my favorite memories have taken place at school dances, school trips and club related activities. Don't reserve yourself to just talking to students in your clique, branch out as much as possible and surround yourself with diverse groups of friends.

**Etta Elliott:** Don't date boys at SOA because they will all end up being freaky. Also, consider taking health online.

**Jackie Evans:** Don't think that you can just get by. Do yourself a favor and try.

**Noah Evans:** Ey, Brehms tests are no joke. No matter how good you think you are, they are always gooder.

**Jacob Fairchild:** Don't be scared of AP classes. They're really not that bad.

**Jenna Farnham:** Dear underclassmen: the end is near but every year counts, so don't sell yourself short.

**McCarthy Fitch:** Not very far off from what I stated in the first question. Learn to get things done for yourself because the chance that you will get help or information is slim.

**Shanti Franks:** Suck it up and do your homework; it helps you learn and it gives you grade buffers to balance out your test grades. Do it first, don't do anything until you have done all of the crap for school.

**Cameron Frye:** Study for Brehm.

**Anzia Fulmore:** Stand up for what you want, do not be afraid to say what you want or feel. Make sure you always annotate for Dr. Cusatis' class and do not miss Brehm's class.

**Peter Gair:** Take Gov online and don't eat the yellow snow.

**Daniela Garcia Desa:** Don't take AP classes senior year. God no.

**Marissa Gigis:** Senioritis is not a joke.

**Zachary Gilbert:** Practice your art, no matter how boring it gets.

**JJ Goller:** Invest in a Dungeons & Dragons group. They'll be your friends and quest mates forever and will have your back when the dice rolls of life come up low.

**Emma Gourdie:** Don't sweat the small stuff. I've spent too much time worrying about every small detail of work at SOA. I've finally learned to prioritize and let the small fall to the bottom of my list without losing sleep.

**Ashley Green:** Do your homework and have the best time of your life.

**Melanie Green:** SLEEP!!! If you have a 95 in Spanish and you have a choice between Spanish homework and sleep... SLEEP!!!!

**Sabrina Green:** Do your homework and start your college applications early, like in the summer early. Also if you have too many choices for college, visiting schools will help you cull your selection. Don't commit to a school if you haven't visited it. They can be very different from what they advertise online. You should enjoy your senior year as much as possible. You will only have to go through it once, so don't slack off too much especially at the end of the year in your semester classes (\*cough Gov't and Econ \*cough).

**Shayla Green:** Stress less and enjoy senior year while it lasts.

**Lexi Griffin:** Don't stress yourself out too much. You do need sleep at night.

**Bailey Gruber:** Do you and let everyone else do their own thing and don't worry about anyone else.

**Parker Gustafson:** Keep the future in mind. They say the journey is the true reward, but follow a self-destructive path and you will find the end no more rewarding.

**Legare Hay:** Dear Underclassmen, don't get so caught up in the little things in life. There is a world outside of Phhphoto and Instagram. Get outside and be someone, not an Internet being.

**Alex Hepburn:** Don't lose sight of your goals and your dreams. Cliché, I know, but you'll understand soon enough.

**Gretchen Hertel:** Work hard throughout high school so you can have leisure time as a senior.

**Ava Hoffman:** It may seem hard now, but if you put a lot of effort into your studies, it will work out to your benefit! You could get accepted into your top college or even earn special scholarships! Keep your head high and you're bound to make major accomplishments in the future.

**Chloe Hogan:** Make a lot of art while you still have time every day.

**Caroline Horres:** Appreciate the time you have left at SOA. I know it may sound silly and untrue, but time really does pass by very quickly.

**Meagan Horres:** Try and see as many SOA shows as possible. As a Dance major I have seen tons of school dance productions, but I have barely seen any other SOA shows outside of my major. I regret not getting to see the work of other art majors, and feel that I have missed out on witnessing a lot of crazy talent.

**Tajh Horton:** Use both doors when entering the buildings.

**Jordyn Huger:** I'm not good with giving advice.

Jay Rode



**Georgia Hunt:** Become close with your class. This year has been so memorable because of the close relationships the people in our grade have formed. We have all become great friends, and I will definitely miss those friendships when I go to such a large university next year.

**Lauren Hunt:** Don't give up on your talent. Work hard and keep up with it so that you can become greater than you ever thought you could be.

**Ellie Jeffers:** Just don't procrastinate, okay? I did it and it doesn't end well, trust me.

**Alec Johnson:** No.

**Hailey Johnson:** Don't take your time here for granted. It goes by way too fast!

**Michael Johnson:** Hard work in your sophomore and junior year is rewarded with an easy senior year.

**Noah Jones:** Cherish time.

**Hannah Kelly:** Enter Brehm's class with a sense of humor.

**Cody Kendle:** Do all of your work. **Jessica Keniston:** Don't procrastinate. Our classes can get overwhelming sometimes, as we all know. Just get all of your work done as early as possible, so you don't get so stressed out.

**Abbey Kirkland:** Be friends with Bridget Conley next year. She's the best. Make her your (prom) queen.

**Mary Knox:** Take things slow! Don't try to rush out of here because you'll start to miss it towards the end.

**Emily Kucklick:** Dear underclassmen: don't make your senior year ridiculously hard. I know you're trying to impress colleges but trust me, you'll have enough on your plate as it is. Love, Emily.

**Emily Lanter:** Don't stress over the small stuff. If you miss a homework assignment it's not the end of the world.

**Jakob Lazzaro:** Don't burn out. Doing your major nonstop for years can really wear on you, but I promise that in the end it will be worth it. Try and keep the arts in your life in some way after graduation. Remember that this is still high school, and any problems you have with teachers or friends will be forgotten a month after you graduate. Also, park in your own spot.

**Christian Leprettre:** Do your homework.

**Abby LeRoy:** Don't "look back on it one day and laugh," find the funny right now and move on. You'll feel better.

**Shelby Levine:** Don't procrastinate! But have fun, high school is supposed to be the greatest years of your life.

**Ari Levine:** Don't procrastinate.

**Fiona Lewis:** Underclassmen, always think of what you can do better because every second leading up to your graduation will be moments remembered.

**Collin Lloyd:** Don't slack off! Do homework and come to school.

**Kimberly Lowman:** Always do the right thing, even if it's outside of your comfort zone.

**Hannah Luckie:** Just please be honest. Please promise to try in school and push yourself past judgment and stand out because you were born to. You are brilliant and I believe in every last one of you even if it's hard to do yourself, because I understand that. I advise to treat each moment here like it's a picture in the sand, easily wiped away in the end. So that even when things are bad, you have hope to know that even I can do it. My last piece of advice goes to the girls: just dump him already; you'll have a much better year without all of his drama. I promise.

**Kaci Martin:** Take everything with a grain of salt. It will be over soon, I promise. Senioritis is hard, but you have to push through. You will thank yourself eternally if you start scholarships and college applications (or any work) early.

**Laurence Martin:** Put yourself first before schoolwork, but to improve yourself not to please yourself so that the next time a difficult situation comes you're able to handle it, figure out who you are as a person and what you want to do in your life.

**Logan Matthews:** Don't procrastinate... Like seriously, it totally kills your grades. I have experience.

Provided



**Cody McLellan:** Make senior year your best one.

**Alissa Melsopp:** Procrastinating kills. Spread the word. Save a life.

**Ryan Mercado:** Ask upperclassmen what classes are fun so you won't end up taking classes that you hate.

**Nina Murchison:** Never miss Brehm's class. You'll regret it.

**Victoria Newman:** Ask people in the grades above you about classes before you sign up for them, and don't stress out about your grades too much, but don't let yourself not care at all.

**Hernan Pena:** Stay in school.

**Mia Pernice:** Always do your homework, you'll regret not doing it later. Don't let the people around you change who you are, or let them define your actions. You are your own person, and at the end of the day your choices and the person you become is the person you have to live with for the rest of your life. Everyone else is just more baggage you'll carry and possibly lose on your next flight.

**Pierre Pinckney:** DO NOT PROCRASTINATE AND TAKE CARE OF YOUR BUSINESS!!

**Adonis Pineda:** Not everything is worth your energy. Not everything is worth your time. Not everything is worth your life.

**Ashton Platts:** Homework is your lifesaver when you screw up along the way. Time management is very important because when teachers start cramming things in at the last minute, you will realize how little time you actually have to complete everything that is due all on the same day. However, the main thing is to enjoy your high school years; time flies by and that is no joke.



Provided

**Savannah Porter:** Please keep up with your homework and your studying. I'm serious. It will come and get you so hard later on if you do not. Do it in my honor please.

**Olivia Prichard:** Do homework.

**Rylee Puckhaber:** If you're going to skip school, don't come back.

**Rebecca Putnam:** Get your license early on. It is liberating to be able to drive when you need to (plus, our family rule is the driver gets to pick the music).

**Abigail Reeves:** Don't get caught up in the petty drama or feel guilty for not wanting to party if that's not your scene. High school is all about making new friends and learning hard lessons, and the people you think will be your

best friends forever will likely not be the same people you take a million pictures with at graduation. Don't be afraid of change and embrace the struggles as an opportunity to grow.

**Shamond Riddy:** Time management is everything!

**Noah Riggsby:** Make every moment of your senior year matter because it goes by fast and you will miss it.

**Holly Rizer:** Make an effort to make every day a good day.

**Parker Richardson:** Learn who your superiors are and think twice before you do anything, say anything,

behind. I used to chastise myself for not having the same grades as my friends, for getting my license later than them, but this didn't motivate me to accomplish anything substantial. I found that procrastination was a less taxing technique than applying myself (nothing much has changed honestly). But, at the end of it all, your only rival is yourself. Prove yourself wrong and work without expectation. Go at your own pace. And feel comfortable asking for help; everyone pretends to know more than they do.

**Nick Scapellato:** Try.

**Nick Shaarda:** Some situations are not as consequential as they seem.

**Manning Shaw:** Don't let anyone stop you, there is always a way and you can get what you want.

**Johnathan Small:** Stay on task.

**Shamar Smith:** Stay focused and work hard.

**Emilia Steenhuisen:** Find a club or group that you love and an activity to go along with it. You make the best friends once you've found the right people.

**Elijah Stullenbarger:** Awww, honey... get over yourself.

**Nolan Tecklenburg:** Don't procrastinate. No seriously, go do your homework right now. For the love of humanity.

**Stephan Tenney:** Always listen to Alan Brehm.

**Jonteja Venning:** I would encourage any underclassmen to appreciate what you have in going to SOA, because it won't last forever. The mix of art and academics is a relationship that is special and truly makes you creative.

**Anna Walker:** Don't take any hard classes senior year because 1. you're not going to care anymore and 2. you need to use all your energy on Brehm's class.

**Amy Walsh:** Be exactly the person that you know you are.

**Sawyer Wasserman:** Take deep breaths. Breathing will always help you think anything over. Remember that this stuff is one assignment and in the long run it won't have an effect on you. Still though, you should strive to do it. Is it really that bad of a thing to care about what you do?

**Victoria Watson:** Enjoy it while it lasts. It goes by quickly.

**Kyle Winstead:** Do not procrastinate college applications!

**Caroline Zetrouer:** You will not get your way, so stop trying.

**Ben Zuber:** Take junior year seriously and appreciate the school you are at. It could be much worse.

**Jonathan Zuraw:** Sometimes sleep is more important than studying.

or make any decisions.

**Terry Roddey:** My mama always said you've got to put the past behind you before you can move on.

**Jay Rode:** Lots.

**Angelica Rodriguez:** You shouldn't procrastinate on important assignments and don't cram the period before a test, but cram the day before the test.

**Meagan Romagnuolo:** Make the most out of the year and don't let anything or anyone hold you back.

**Nicole Sadek:** Keep your English binder from tenth grade. Seriously. Keep it.

**Vasantha Sambamurti:** Just because there are people ahead of you doesn't mean you're falling

## What are your plans after graduation?

**Chamel Adams:** I will be attending Winthrop University majoring in psych and minoring in criminology.

**Copeland Barrett:** Starving artist, dying young.

**Cody Beasenburg:** College and a lifetime of imprisoning debt.

**Cydney Bennett:** After I graduate I am going to Winthrop for hopefully four years to major in elementary education.

**Jordan Benton:** After graduation I'm going to College of Charleston to get a BFA in dance and move on to perform for Disney, Broadway musicals or even as Beyoncé's backup dancer.

**Ryan Biddix:** Move to the city of roses. Become a basketball wife.

**Rhyan Bredlau:** College, writing more books, switch to full time. I think it's about the same (except for the books) as everyone's plan, these days.

**Woods Browder:** Live in the moment.

**Patrick Burns:** I'm going to Berklee.

**Bethany Burnsed:** I plan to attend Charleston Southern University as an early childhood education major.

**Parris Byars:** I'm going to construct cardboard cutouts of the entire senior class and pretend that nothing has changed.

**Taylor Carnie:** I plan to go into computer science at College of Charleston.

**Elliott Cihlar:** Enjoying my summer and attending Furman University in the fall.

**Elsa Cline:** On June 6th, my dad and I are off on a month long hike on the Appalachian trail. We will be eating a lot of dehydrated pasta and will be hiking over 300 miles.

**Summer Coons:** I plan to become a high school science teacher, but at some point in my life I plan on working with animals. I want to try to save populations of animals and help save our planet. Above all that, I plan to be as happy as I can be and make a difference in people's lives.

**Jessie Cox:** I'm moving to New York City to attend Long Island University Brooklyn.

**Carly Crawford:** To take advantage of every opportunity presented to me in summer and then get all sad when I have to start school again.

**Megan Dawson:** My plans after graduation are to study environmental studies at USC.

**Madison DeLoach:** Spend lots of time lying on the floor, make a profit.

**Maddie DePuy:** I will be attending Clemson University in the fall and majoring in communications with a minor in photography.

**Casey Derieux:** I'm going to Clemson and I'm planning on majoring in biology. Lab technician is what I'm thinking as of now, but everything is susceptible to change, I suppose.

**Maureen Dolan:** College.

Jay Rode



**Carlin Dooley:** Not to fail out of one year.

**Sam DuPree:** My plan after graduation is going to Trident Tech for my freshmen year, then transferring somewhere and hopefully becoming a veterinarian for the military or just a large animal veterinarian.

**Allie Durand:** I plan to attend a ballet program at the Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre School; after a few years of training, I hope to get a contract with a professional ballet company.

**Rebecca Edson:** Apply myself, and I might just succeed.

**Carly Edwards:** After graduation I plan to attend The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I have several career fields I am interested in and look forward to exploring them in college.

**Etta Elliott:** I plan to major in journalism and minor in art at the College of Charleston.

**Jackie Evans:** I plan to go to College of Charleston for the first year and then transfer to App State or SCAD in the fall of 2017.

**Noah Evans:** I'm going to go to SCAD for animation, eventually work for Dreamworks or Pixar, and then eventually bail out and live in a little, waterside modern house. I'll send everone some pictures.

**Jacob Fairchild:** I plan to work through the summer then head up to Clemson in the fall to major in biology with plans to go into the medical field (likely pharmacy).

**Jenna Farnham:** After graduating, I plan to attend Clemson University's

School of Nursing with the intention to study abroad and eventually attend graduate school.

**McCarthy Fitch:** To be innovative.

**Shanti Franks:** As part of my 27 day summer vacation, I am going on my first cruise: to St. Thomas, Tortola, and the Bahamas. On the 28th day, I'm starting college at Paul Mitchell School for Cosmetology, and it will only last

at the University of South Carolina with a focus on animation and graphic design.

**Lexi Griffin:** I plan on going to Trident Tech to study to be an Operation Room Nurse and 4 years later I am moving to Austin, Texas.

**Bailey Gruber:** I plan on attending CSU in the fall for nursing

**Parker Gustafson:** Attend a base college and enroll in an accelerated learning program. Once that degree is completed, apply for another. Perpetual learning.

**Legare Hay:** I plan on going to College of Charleston to major in business marketing and potentially minor in real estate. While I'm still young I want to explore the world; but whatever I end up doing with my life, I want to always call the Lowcountry home.

**Alex Hepburn:** I plan to enjoy Charleston while I can

because the next time I come back, I'll be a visitor in my own town.

**Cameron Frye:** I am starting at Florida State over the summer and majoring in voice performance. I want to continue performing after college as well.

**Anizia Fulmore:** I plan to attend Winthrop University in Rock Hill. I will be attaining my degree in English with a track for creative writing and professional editing. After graduating, I hope to become a book editor and may move to Charlotte.

**Peter Gair:** Plans? Plans are no fun.

**Daniela Garcia Desa:** I'm going to Mexico to study for at least a year, then head to Europe to continue with the studies.

**Marissa Gigis:** Attain a career in landscape architecture.

**Zachary Gilbert:** Sleep, eat, and (most importantly) practice.

**JJ Goller:** I plan to go to nursing school, get a dog, and complete all Skyrim quests. Yes, all of them.

**Emma Gourdie:** After graduation, I am attending James Madison University where I will complete a Master's degree in elementary education, and compete on their Division I swim and dive team.

**Ashley Green:** To either go to college or maybe just move to LA or NY to be in a company.

**Melanie Green:** To sleep... then go to college and give life a try.

**Sabrina Green:** After graduation I intend on chilling with my friends and maybe going somewhere.

**Shayla Green:** My plans after graduation are to major in media arts clubs as possible. I will always

I'll be working at Starbucks and as camp counselor at the Liberty Hill Literacy Program. I also plan on taking college courses during the summer to prepare for my freshman year at Xavier University of Louisiana.

**Gretchen Hertel:** Do pottery and go to College of Charleston.

**Ava Hoffman:** My plans after graduating include attending CofC and figuring out what I want to excel in. I might also want to work in Florida at Universal or Disney World.

**Chloe Hogan:** I plan on attending College of Charleston, majoring in studio art, graduating early and possibly attending graduate school.

**Caroline Horres:** I will be attending The University of South Carolina in the fall.

**Meagan Horres:** I plan on attending the University of South Carolina as a dance major with a concentration in contemporary dance. I also hope to study abroad in some exotic place.

**Tajh Horton:** Clemson 4 years undergrad, UNC, JHU, or Northwestern for med school.

**Jordyn Huger:** More school... because 13 years wasn't enough.

**Georgia Hunt:** After graduation, I plan to attend Clemson University for pre professional health science with intentions of becoming a speech pathologist. I also hope to continue my passion of singing by joining the university chorus, as well as involving myself in as many

as possible. I will always

remember SOA as my home and hope to visit sometime in the future!

**Lauren Hunt:** I plan to pursue a career in nursing. I will be attending Charleston Southern University, and I also plan to transfer later to MUSC.

**Ellie Jeffers:** Hibernation.

**Alec Johnson:** College.

**Hailey Johnson:** I'm going to be attending Winthrop University in the fall where I will major in pre-physical therapy.

**Michael Johnson:** After I graduate, I plan on attending Full Sail where I'll study recording arts. After that, I plan on world domination.

**Noah Jones:** Attend college to pursue a career in music and politics.

**Hannah Kelly:** Drive home.

**Cody Kendle:** To work full time and go to college.

**Jessica Keniston:** I plan to go to the College of Charleston and major in exercise science. Then I hope to find a job in physical therapy after medical school.

**Abbey Kirkland:** After spending four years living it up in tiger town, I plan to save the world with my engineering powers. Then take over the world...

Then become the next Beyoncé....

**Mary Knox:** College of Charleston to major in health management.

**Emily Kucklick:** After graduation, I plan to attend Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, VA as a nursing major.

**Emily Lanter:** I am going to attend Furman University as a music education major.

**Jakob Lazzaro:** I'm going to spend a chill summer working at some retail job and enjoying my last few months in Charleston with my friends before I head to Northwestern University to study journalism.

**Christian Leprettre:** World domination.

**Abby LeRoy:** I'm excited to be attending Brandeis University in the fall! Also, if anyone needs a nanny this summer, hit me up (:

**Ari Levine:** To study in Israel and then earn my psychology degree.

**Shelby Levine:** I'm attending Kennesaw State University in Atlanta, Georgia in the fall.

**Fiona Lewis:** I plan to attend College of Charleston Honors College in the fall semester but over summer I will be traveling and seeing concerts in my free time off work.

**Collin Lloyd:** I will be going to Clemson University in the fall to major in computer science.

**Kimberly Lowman:** I plan to attend Clemson University to receive my bachelors degree in global nursing, and travel the world learning many new languages.

**Hannah Luckie:** I plan on attending school at Lander for marine science. Then, I plan on moving to Florida or California to pursue this major and work with animals and conservation projects. I plan on travelling and learning new things every day and just straight up ballin' in Hawaii at some point. Wish me luck! Of course, I'm always going to sing. I could never give up my biggest inspiration.

**Zois Manaris:** College, if I feel like it.

**Kaci Martin:** I am travelling a little over the summer and starting Clemson in the fall. I hope to study either genetics or microbiology.

**Laurence Martin:** To go to college, start making a name for myself, and prepare for what's to come.

**Logan Matthews:** I'm actually going to see the musical *Hamilton* over the summer, which I'm really excited about. During college, I would really like to study abroad in China and volunteer to help orphanages as well as local schools.

**Cody McLellan:** Go to College of Charleston and from there go to MUSC to study dental.

**Alissa Melsopp:** I'm going to pursue a bachelor's degree in interactive media design at Winthrop University.

**Ryan Mercado:** Go to college. Graduate from college. Get a job. Keep playing music.

**Nina Murchison:** I'm not too sure, but after graduation I plan to go to some college and hopefully major in nursing.

**Victoria Newman:** Celebrate with some friends, dine on some epic French food downtown, hit up a bunch of concerts, maybe go to Universal, work so I don't start college broke, just have fun before going to Winthrop in the fall.

**Hernan Pena:** Go the Citadel and get money.

**Mia Pernice:** I am traveling to Patagonia, China, Thailand, the South of France, Paris, Bora Bora, and a few other places backpacking and documenting my travels. It's a program that allows me to travel but I also will be helping people in need along the way, such as building homes or assisting professionals with medical and dental care. Afterwards

I will be attending University of Maine for a year and transferring over to Trinity University in Dublin, Ireland to study journalism and music performance and production.

**Pierre Pinckney:** My plan is to attend Berklee College of Music as a music production major.

**Adonis Pineda:** I really don't know. I'll go to college, but after that... then what?

**Ashton Platts:** My plans after graduation is to celebrate, of course. I conquered a major milestone in my life. However, I plan to attend Winthrop University in the fall, majoring in elementary education and minoring in sociology.

**Savannah Porter:** I plan on doing the things that Savannah wants to do. I look forward to the freedom.

**Olivia Prichard:** College.

**Rylee Puckhaber:** Move far away, get an arts degree, pay student loans for the next 20-30 years.

**Rebecca Putnam:** I'm moving to Australia in December and I'll study there to be an architect. Maybe from there I'll embark on a foreign exchange program to South Korea.

Provided



**Abigail Reeves:** After graduation, I will be attending the Honors College at the College of Charleston as a William Aiken Fellow and Colonial Scholar with a double major in biology and physics and a minor in biomedical physics. I plan to participate in the premedical program and eventually become a pediatric oncologist.

**Shamond Riddy:** After graduation, I will be attending USC-Beaufort where I will be majoring in elementary education with a minor in history.

**Noah Rigsby:** To major in computer programming

**Parker Richardson:** To go to college and succeed in life... as most wish.

**Holly Rizer:** I will be majoring in illustration at Ringing College of Art and Design.

**Leeanna Robertson:** I will attend Trident Tech for two years and transfer to College of Charleston.

**Terry Roddey:** Going to go to College of Charleston to be a shrimp boat captain and Lieutenant Brehm will be my first mate.

**Jay Rode:** I'm headed to the Winthrop Honors College to major in English. After that? Who knows.

**Angelica Rodriguez:** My plan after graduation is to spend time with

friends and family. Most importantly, I'm going to attend college.

**Meagan Romagnuolo:** Next year I'll be going to the College of Charleston and majoring in exercise science.

**Nicole Sadek:** I'm going to leap out into the parking lot and proceed to do a backflip off of my car whilst singing "Friends Forever" by Vitamin C. Then I'll slide into my car like the cool kid I am and drive on over to the International House of Pancakes to enjoy a meal of waffles.

**Vasanth Sambamurti:** To have an introspective summer, go to college, major in English/Creative Writing, and hopefully become a writer.

**Nick Scapellato:** Go to Clemson and metamorphosize into a tiger.

**Nick Shaarda:** I plan to graduate college.

**Manning Shaw:** After graduation I plan to continue with my music with my college and the River Side Symphony. I'll also continue rowing in college as a coxswain and single man sculling for my school.

**Johnathan Small:** I'm going to Trident to learn about computers.

**Shamar Smith:** My plans after graduation are to continue working here in the SOA cafeteria.

**Emilia Steenhuisen:** College and traveling (anywhere and everywhere).

**Elijah Stullenbarger:** To go to dinner with my family.

**Nolan Tecklenburg:** Go to New Orleans and start anew.

**Stephan Tenney:** To become a famous studio musician, get married, and have a lovely life.

**Jonteja Venning:** After graduation I plan to go to Winthrop University and study pre-pharmacy in pursuit of a degree in pharmacology to be a pharmaceutical sales representative.

**Amy Walsh:** I'm moving to California to pursue a career as a jeweler/gemologist.

**Sawyer Wasserman:** Be happy and enjoy what it's like to still be young. And to spend as much time with the people that I love, as well.

**Victoria Watson:** I am going to college.

**Kyle Winstead:** Road trip to Florida then move into college!

**Caroline Zetrouer:** Nursing School at University of South Carolina. Go cocks!

**Ben Zuber:** My plans are to go to college (USC) and major in business and minor in music.

**Jonathan Zuraw:** Go to get my engineering degree and get a job where I will wake up everyday with a smile because I will enjoy what I do. And then I will retire and with all my free time find a cure for cancer and solve all the other world problems.



“Jordan Benton inspires me. She’s really original with what she does.”  
Tatiana Sabin, sixth grade Dance



“Christian Leprettre. He shows me what not to be.”  
Logan Leprettre, freshman Vocal



“Patrick Burns and his magnificent beard.”  
Cole Vanderwege, Junior Strings



“Zachary Gilbert, because he’s dedicated to his music, and he’s extremely talented at it.”  
Eli Stullenburger, senior Strings



“Ryan Biddix, because he is dope.”  
Kylagh Tew, seventh grade Visual Arts

# WHICH SENIOR INSPIRES YOU THE MOST AND WHY?

BY DENVER BAER AND CHEYENNE KOTH



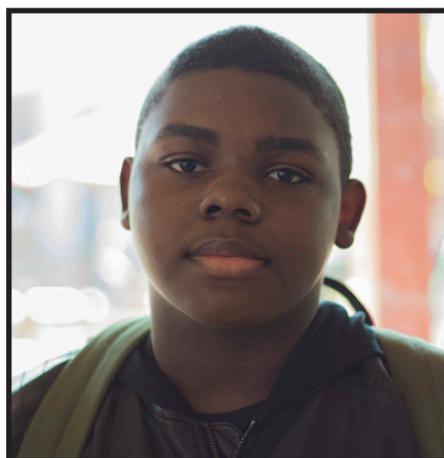
“Colin Lloyd, his incredible personality brightens my heart every day.”  
Caroline Lloyd, sophomore Vocal



“Mr. Karl Clark. He knows how to live life to the fullest, and we hang at the beach together.”  
Ms. Fitzgerald, high school arts



“Myself, because I’m self-motivated.”  
Nick Scapellato, senior Creative Writing



“Shelby Levine. She inspires me to be turned and driven to succeed at the same time.”  
Nelson Gibson, eighth grade Vocal



“Emily Lanter. I love her attitude, she’s always happy and smiling.”  
Bennett Dickison, freshman Fashion Design

“Once you have traveled, the voyage never ends, but is played out over and over again in the quietest chambers, that the mind can never break off from the journey.”

— Pat Conroy

