

Applause

Volume 19, Number 7

School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC

June 2018



SOA GRADUATING CLASS OF 2018

RUBY

Alan Brehm
Dr. Shannon Cook
The Abedon Family

AMETHYST

The Brown Family
The Cusatis Family
Logan Murray
The Wohlscheid Family

TOPAZ

Caroline Baker
Debra Benson
The Bride Family
Susanne Drennan
The Elliott Family
Ann Marie Fairchild
Sarah Fitzgerald
The Gillard Family
The Griffin Family
Paige Horschel
Brett Johnsen
Beth Lasley
Brandon Lyons
Heath Orvin
Susan Pace
Meghan Slowey
David Thornburg

GARNET

Christine Bednarczyk
Cindy Branscome
Miley Hallen Design
Danielle DeTiberus
Natasha Fields
Robin Grieg
Rutledge Hammes
Beth Hart
Mary Kassinger
School Nurses
Kevin Short

TURQUOISE

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Jannie L. Mack
Shannon Mahoney
Joseph Naas
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Katherine Owensby
Nathaniel Robinson Sr.
Molly Scofield
David Southwick
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Kathryn Sullivan
Cameron Wescott
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Ivy Bradly
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Brenton Burbage
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Jordan Douglas
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Izzy Gustafson
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Maddie Kelley
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Hayes Martini
Burton McCulley
Sutton Meyer
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Michal Segle
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Ava Trolley
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Eyamba Williams
Andrew Wise
Peyton Woodall
Lola Woodall

Letter from the Editor

Dear Readers,

Well, this is it. The final issue of *Applause* for the school year. After a year of hard work and dedication, it's almost difficult to leave. I find myself thinking back on the papers we have produced this year, and still continue to think of new ideas for future issues, but I suppose that is the nature of change. I, however, am confident that *Applause* is in good hands next year, and will continue to represent the best of School of the Arts.

As we run around frantically getting our Golden Tickets signed and watch our peers leave for the final time, or to return next year, it becomes bittersweet to reflect on leaving. The end of the year doesn't quite seem real yet, but for many at SOA, there is palpable change in the air. For our Seniors, the thought of Graduation, and college has become a reality rather than just a far off dream. For several of our beloved teachers, SOA is in the rearview and retirement ahead. Summer break is rapidly approaching, and with it comes the relaxation that the devoted students and faculty of SOA need.

This issue, the 64-page Graduation issue, is dedicated to the Senior Class of 2018. From Art Major Overviews to essays and surveys from Seniors speaking on their experience here at SOA, this issue is all about reminiscing on the past year, and for Seniors, all their years at School of the Arts.

Thank you to all of our patrons and advertisers for supporting *Applause* in its endeavors, and thank you to you, our readers, for giving our publication a purpose and an audience.

SOA, thank you for everything,

Patrick Wohlscheid
Editor-in-Chief



Applause

since 1999, the official student

publication of

School of the Arts

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Letter from the Junior Editors

Dear Readers,

The end of the year is upon us, and what a great year it is for the Class of 2018 to be sent off into the world, despite its hardships and troubles. We all have seen the things they each are capable of, and each and every one of them will no doubt go on to make this world a much better place. And what a great year it is to welcome a new class of seniors, one that we're sure will achieve and accomplish much within the coming school year.

However, let's not forget about what next year holds for *Applause*, as we will be celebrating its 20th volume. As the future Editors of this paper, we three are absolutely thrilled to have the opportunity to build upon the strong foundation left by this year's talented Editor-in-Chief, as well as those who have come before him. We three promise to deliver the same quality journalism that has allowed *Applause* to flourish for nineteen years.

Braedon McConnell, Maya Cline, and Tes Smoak
Applause Junior Editors



2011 grad Calvin Baxter combines SOA education with musical talent to create a unique sound

by Malachi Jones

Calvin Baxter's path is one paved with musical notes. He looks back fondly on his formative years in the School of the Arts band room, the guidance of his instructors Quentin Baxter, Charlton Singleton and **Mr. Basil Kerr**, the legacy of our school's founder Rose Maree Myers, and above all, the precedent that late music icon, Prince, set for his quickly growing career.

He's gone on to produce, mix, and master hundreds of songs for other artists, as well as tour the world with renowned gullah-jazz band, Ranky Tanky. Last year saw the release of his most ambitious project, an EP titled *Purple Pew*, a funk R&B mix that draws strong influences from his love of Prince and church.

However, despite his enormous talent, it was the moment he looped SOA's middle school blue lanyard around his neck that he knew music making was the career for him.

The first chords were struck when Baxter was very young. His close-knit family, is full of musically gifted individuals such as a multi-instrumentalist father and vocalist mother and sister. His uncle, Quentin Baxter, is an internationally known and Grammy nominated drummer. With weekly morning visits to Mount Zion Holiness Church filled with organ shrills and hymns, he'd be by his uncle's side popping a tambourine while Quentin played drums. He couldn't escape music's grip.

Once Baxter taught himself to play drums, there wasn't much to keep him away from sound. Growing up in Russelldale, North Charleston,— “really, really intense... the ghetto”—music was the safest thing for him to indulge in. “I never went outside, ever,” he says, “I had a few friends in the area, but as far as me being busy, I was in church or music.” It wasn't until he experienced SOA that his perspective broadened.

Baxter recounts his audition as strange. He knew close to nothing about the man interviewing him, but the man interviewing him knew quite a lot about Baxter. From 2002 to 2007, SOA was honored to have renowned Charleston musician and composer Charlton Singleton for its middle school band director. Having been born into and immersed in the

Charleston sound, Singleton was no stranger to Baxter's talented family. “Calvin is a Baxter and his mom's side of the family are the Campbell family. They are some of the most musical folks in the Lowcountry! Calvin immediately had that gift of music!”

Quentin Baxter had also been Singleton's best man at his wedding. But this history and friendship weren't clear to a young Calvin, who at that point couldn't read music and was particularly shy. It was a very short audition. Baxter was waitlisted. A few weeks into the 2005-2006 school year, however, he received the call he had been looking for. A spot had opened for him to



Baxter working in the Charleston Sound recording studio.

attend SOA. There wasn't a second thought. He rushed over from his local middle school and didn't look behind. “It was cool for what it was, but I wouldn't have lasted there,” he says addressing his eagerness to leave his old school. “It was just too much...it wouldn't have worked out.”

The next four years were major strides in Baxter's musical range. Under the instruction of Mr. Kerr and others, he learned to be a multi-instrumentalist like his predecessors. The process took place in the back of practice rooms and at afterschool band sessions. “At first it was just going to be drums, drums, drums, but I got to SOA and got exposed to guitar, and keyboards, and piano, and a music tech class.”

Being a band major, Baxter took full advantage of the space and instruments. He'd stay in the band room until the early evenings, playing whatever felt natural. Even off campus, he'd be practicing songs with his best friend and frequent bandmate, **Demetrius Doctor**. The relationship started out with a mutual respect for each other's talents, with Baxter mastering drumlines

and Doctor wearing down piano keys. They'd turn out to be members of the same church and became common guest sin one another's homes. “We got close really, really fast,” Doctor told Adam Parker of the “Post & Courier.” Baxter and Doctor developed a powerful brother-like synergy. “I don't think I have that chemistry with anyone else,” Calvin admits. “We've been playing together so long. We still work on projects together, so I mix and master his projects, which is killer.” Doctor vouches, “He literally is my brother!” Because as coincidence would have it, Doctor married Baxter's

sister in 2017, making them brother-in-laws.

It was also during this period that he was exposed to the multi-genre superstar Prince. Though the Baxter family was religious and Calvin was limited as a percussionist, music wasn't centered on gospel. His favorite artist range from Stevie

Wonder to Billy Joel. His father's jazz and 1970's funk were in heavy rotation growing up. On the other hand, his mother was anchored in the 1980's. “Eighties pop, Eighties rock, all that stuff.” With such a healthy blend of sound, it's somewhat unsurprising Baxter finds inspiration in Prince, who was renowned for unique and odd contributions to pop, R&B, psychedelic rock, and more.

He was eleven when his uncle Quentin gave him *Diamonds and Pearls*, one of Prince's studio albums. Shortly after that, Calvin found a stack of thirteen Prince CD's left at his door by his instructor, Charlton Singleton. Baxter didn't fully understand Prince until he heard the first track from *Diamond and Pearls*, “Thunder.” According to him, that song changed his whole outlook on music. “I'll never forget the day I heard that song. It was like a five or six minute song. Prince was just doing everything he could in that one song.” And so, Baxter took after his idol, making it his goal

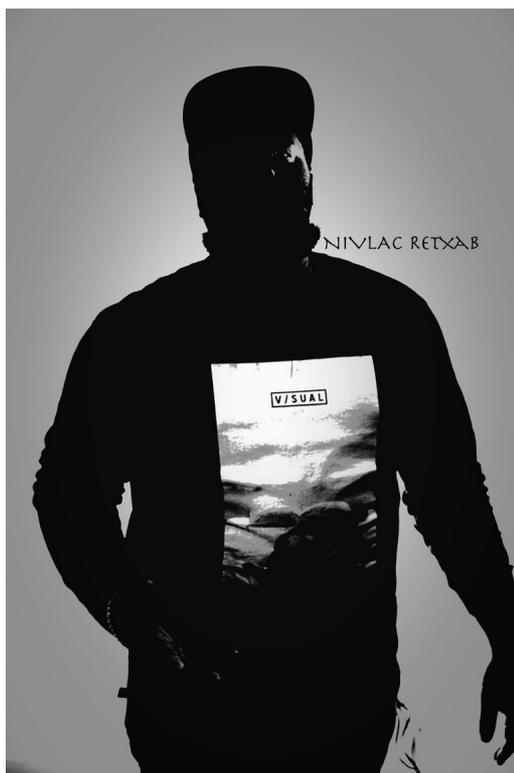
to be just as refined, just as confident, and just as versatile. “He did everything himself. That’s what really drove me to be say, ‘I want to be that,’” Baxter says. He took this drive with him as he entered high school.

In June 2011, *Applause* staff asked students, “Which senior has inspired you the most and why?” Tenth grader Brent Hubbard responded, “Calvin Baxter because he’s so hardworking and what he does with his music.” Always known for his work ethic, Baxter was a standout among his peers. Mr. Kerr speaks highly of Baxter. “Calvin was able to use the colors of the different parts of the drum set to create a sound that enhanced the music. This is a rare quality for many drummers.”

However, the “most likely to be famous” superlative winner, had a less than ideal high school experience. He came into his freshman year with three band electives on his schedule: jazz, symphonic band, and concert band. Unphased by the impending hours of practice and performance, Baxter took it with ease when the school year began. However, a hurdle came between him and a passion to create sound. “Concert band wasn’t getting things accomplished,” and so Baxter, apathetic toward his bandmates, figured “if they’re gonna waste time, then I might as well waste time.” The ill-advised actions resulted in Baxter’s being dismissed from SOA, and he spent his sophomore year at Wando High School. The “year in exile”, as Mr. Kerr coined it, put much into perspective for Baxter. He returned to SOA his junior year after auditioning with his priorities in order and grateful to Mr. Kerr for the opportunity to return. From middle school to then, Kerr was a guiding hand both in and out of band room. “Mr. Kerr changed my life,” Baxter asserts, “Seriously, man. Mr. Kerr changed my life in a lot of ways.”

Baxter finished the remaining school semesters, receiving the Quincy Jones Award, and the Rose Maree Myers Scholarship for Artistic Excellence. Named after the school’s founder, the award recognizes the student who epitomizes the usefulness of an arts education. Nominated by Mr. Kerr,

Baxter was the second recipient of the scholarship. It came as a shock to him, but he took time to speak of Rose Maree Myers’ living legacy. “For what she stood for, man...She’s incredible. It’s people like



her we have to thank that this place even exists, first of all. She’s such an advocate for art—for all art. Visual arts, music, creative writing, dance: all this stuff mattered to her.”

And if it couldn’t get any better for Baxter, the man who influenced him the most—marking each stage of his life with a music note—gave the commencement speech for his graduation: Quentin Baxter. The foundation of Calvin Baxter’s decision to become a musical artist was watching his uncle tour and make a living. “You can rule the world and still be a musician.

He kind of made that possible for me to see.” The commencement speech focused on the importance of art and how artists are needed just as much as lawyers and doctors. It was a form of confirmation for the younger Baxter.

When he graduated, Baxter took what seemed to be a calculated risk of leaving home for Phoenix, Arizona. There he planned to attend the Conservatory of Recording Arts and Science and hone his production abilities. However, the conservatory turned out to be much more than just Production 101 and Baxter considered leaving two months in. “I told Demetrius, ‘I’m coming home because this is not what I planned. This school is not what I wanted it to be,’” Baxter says. Though distinguished for his work ethic, Baxter was out of his element. It was a whole new environment with areas of music he hadn’t been exposed to at that point (mixing, mastering, reverb delays, etc.), so he had to rely on the few relationships he had made in those two months to keep him motivated.

On advice from his classmates, Baxter began going to the conservatory

when classes had ended. Parallel to his afterschool high school jam sessions, he once again found himself immersed in a newfound passion. “I got a whole new perspective,” he said enthused, “I got decent at mixing, so I was like ‘maybe I like mixing more than producing.’” After completing the year-long program, he now possessed a multitude of ways to pursue a musical career. In a way, fulfilling the sense of musical independence he had sought to mimic from Prince.

Now a full-time music man, Baxter contributes to countless tracks for artist across the Southeast as well as for his own projects. He goes by the moniker Nivlac Rextab, his full name spelled backwards. His most recent project is titled *Purple Pew*—a callback to his grandmother’s church with purple pews and a humble reference to the classic Prince album *Purple Rain*. The album’s name and its content are a harmonious fusion of funk, R&B, and gospel. The Prince influence is made clear as Baxter collaborated with Prince’s former tourmates: bassist, MonoNeon, and saxophonist, Marcus Anderson. Another notable feature is fellow SOA alumnus, David Parker, who is rapper J. Cole’s guitarist. Outside of his own work, Baxter toured Europe with jazz band Ranky Tanky. As the group’s touring drummer, he rejoined Charlton Singleton, no longer a student but as a bandmate.

Calvin Baxter’s versatility, both in instrumentation and outlook, is admirable. He’s gained instruction beyond the average musician of his age but hasn’t viewed himself through rose-tinted lenses. Though he operates close to home, parts of the world from Norway to the Czech Republic have already received a sneak peek of the star in the making. It’s the consensus. Mr. Kerr is certain that “we’ll be hearing about him performing at the highest levels with the biggest artists over the coming years.” Singleton contends “Calvin is already a star” with a musical stock “rising at a rapid speed.” Frankly, he’s a growing artist that Prince himself would undoubtedly see as an impending sonic force. But it’s important to remember that music is encoded in Baxter’s DNA, so for all the beautiful notes he produces, there’s an underlying reference to his character and why he is beloved by all who have the privilege to know him.

PTSA Interviews: Beth Bast and Cris Temples

For this month's PTSA feature, Applause writer **Finian Butcher** interviewed outgoing PTSA Board Members Beth Bast and Cris Temples to learn more about their time and legacies with the PTSA. Beth Bast has served on the board for six years, and Cris Temples for three.

Beth Bast:

Finian Butcher: What are you the most proud of regarding your time in PTSA?

Beth Bast: I'm proud to have been able to support SOA through the work of the PTSA and to have worked with some awesome parents in the process.

FB: What do you see as the most important function of our PTSA?

BB: SOA's PTSA is a critical support for the entire school. Our work directly benefits students and teachers. Besides teacher appreciation activities all year long, PTSA is able to fund teacher grants so they can bring in a guest lecturer or buy supplies for a new course, after-hours campus security

to keep our kids safe at evening events and equipment that the school does not have the budget for. An example of the latter is the \$4,500 spectrophotometer for the science labs.

FB: What are your hopes for PTSA's future at SOA?

BB: I'd like to see more parents involved. They can support PTSA several ways: by becoming a member, by volunteering to help with activities like Teacher Appreciation, registration and the Reflections Competition and lastly, by being on the PTSA Board. We have several parents, like me, who are graduating from SOA with their students and the following Board positions are open: Vice President, Membership Chair, Teacher Appreciation Chair (2 people share this role), Reflections Competition Chair, Treasurer and Corresponding Secretary. PTSA President Bobby Baker is passionate about PTSA and is bringing together a great group of Board members. I'd also like to see more support from and better communication with Administration in reaching parents, coordinating events and anticipating school needs and monetary requests.

FB: How has the PTSA changed during your tenure?

BB: An obvious change is the new members



Bast.

that come on each year to lend their energies and talents. Over the 6 years I've been on the Board, the PTSA has faced increased competition for parent funding and involvement from the Art Area Booster Clubs and the SOA Foundation. These organizations also are a vital support to the school and serve distinct purposes.

FB: What do you hope will be remembered about your legacy at the PTSA?

BB: I helped spearhead the move to our online membership platform: Membership Toolkit. This gives members instant access to an online student directory where before it would take us months and lots of data entry to print and distribute the directories. I also set up our monthly Board teleconference calls to make it easy for Board members to attend meetings.

FB: Is there anything else you would like to add?

BB: Congratulations to the Class of 2018 and a bittersweet farewell to my PTSA friends.

Cris Temples:

Finian Butcher: What are you the most proud of regarding your time in PTSA?

Cris Temples: We've been able to raise and allocate more funding for teacher grants.



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FB: *What do you see as the most important function of our PTSA?*

CT: Supporting our teachers and making sure they feel appreciated for the great job and hard work they do.



The Middle School Orchestra visits Universal Studios in Florida.

FB: *What are your hopes for PTSA's future at SOA?*

CT: To be able to get more memberships from parents so we can do more for the teachers and do more for the school. Some parents feel that PTSA is a trivial expense. Every missed membership squeezes our budget. That means that we have to deny teachers grants for many wonderful things that they would like to do for our students. We've had to turn down several wonderful grant requests this year because people didn't think their membership made a difference. Ten more memberships or even less would have fully funded one of those grant requests.

FB: *How has the PTSA changed during your tenure?*

CT: We've really been able to grant more teacher requests.

FB: *What do you hope will be remembered about your legacy at the PTSA?*

CT: As treasurer, that our checks never bounced, and we put the donations we received where they benefitted the students and teachers the most.

Middle School Strings: A Year in Review

by Susan Mears

The Middle School Orchestra students made it into Region and All State Orchestras with 27 students in Region Orchestra and 17 students in All State Orchestra. They have maintained the most from any school program in South Carolina for 15 years strong. The MSO performed several times throughout the

year including sitting next to the HSO students in the 5th Annual Side by Side Concert. The Holiday Spectacular, with our SOA Singers, was very successful with music from a variety of genres, including Sacred, Secular and Rock and Roll. This year 18 Middle School Violinists performed Bach's Double Violin Concerto without a conductor! Along with several classical pieces, the MSO rocked out on some Rolling Stones and ColdPlay.

We had a featured artist from our Academic team, **Dr. John Cusatis**, join his son, **Giovanni Cusatis**, on Guitar and Vocals on "As Tears Go By" and we invited our guest drummer, **Asher DiBenardo** to join us on "Viva La Vida" and "Red Lodge Reel." The 8th Grade String Ensemble shared their talents with the Angel Oak Elementary students. They performed engaging music with vocal students and on their own. As part of their enrichment, the entire MSO attended a performance by the Charleston Symphony Orchestra at CSU.

To finish out the year, our middle school students participated in a hands-on Music and Motion Picture experience. Not many orchestras get to do this at this level. They have to prepare the music precisely and perform to a specific metronome marking in order to fit to the animation. Then, several students are asked to provide the speaking rolls and the sound effects! An amazing experience for all!

The MSO has been featured in two magazines in the past year! *School, Band and Orchestra* featured the MSO during our Sound Design Workshop, and even used our picture on the cover! Also, *Teach and Travel Magazine* included an article focused on our experience traveling to Orlando and the educational benefits.

High School Strings: A Year in Review

by Finian Butcher

The high school orchestras have had a tremendous year. We had 40 high school students qualify for a very competitive Regional Orchestra this year, and 23 of those students went on to All State orchestra, more than any other school in the state. The esteemed sinfonietta performed twice in the Galliard lobby preceding the Charleston Symphony Orchestra, performed a concert with the North Charleston Pops at the North Charleston Performing Arts Center and traveled to Columbia to play "Mozart's Requiem" with the USC choir.

Aside from our diligent conductor **Dr. Selby**, we had lots of outside help this year. This outside help ranged from after school sectionals with Charleston Symphony musicians to masterclasses and workshops with the Zuill Bailey and Scott Laird. Our string seniors came out in droves this year and completed their senior thesis at a record level, thus resulting in one of the longest senior thesis concerts in SOA history. There was a lot of playing in general this year; there were six symphony concerts this year and the chamber orchestra had given concerts at three local middle schools. In the latter half of this year, the entire Symphony program had traveled to Atlanta, Georgia to compete in the National Adjudicators Invitational where we won the top award in the competition. The awards concert was a fantastic conclusion to the year where Dr. Selby was honored by his students, and the class of 2018 had a joyful conclusion to their high school experience.



The SOA High School Symphony Orchestra celebrates their competition victory in Atlanta.

Creative Writing: A Year in Review

by Rutledge Hammes, Beth Webb Hart, and Danielle DeTiberus

This year the Creative Writing Program at SOA has made its biggest splash yet on the national stage, earning a record number of awards in some of the country's most prestigious writing competitions, including the Princeton University High School Poetry Prize, the Atlantic Institute Essay Prize, the Skylark Prize, the Carl Sandburg Prize, the Gannon University Poetry Prize, the USC Honors College High School Writing Contest, and the Dr. Linda Veldheer Memorial Prize, judged by Sandra Beasley. In addition, student work was selected for publication in the competitive *Interlochen Review*, and our creative writing students in grades Seven through Twelve garnered a remarkable 442 regional and nineteen 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. Our National Scholastic Medals, including a Gold Medal Writing Portfolio (one of only eight given in the country), will be accepted at the world-famous Carnegie Hall in June. 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 hosted a variety of guest speakers, including the Reverend Nelson B. Rivers, III, who spoke with our students about his role in the Civil Rights Movement and his ongoing work as a community and nationwide activist and speaker, as well as widely published and nationally recognized poets Emma Bolden and Richard Garcia.

The sixth grade began their year with poetry. Each student wrote several imagist poems as they explored the importance of concrete imagery, metaphor, simile, and symbol, and they also wrote nature poetry inspired by their collaborative trip to Bulls Island with the Sixth grade Visual Artists. 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.

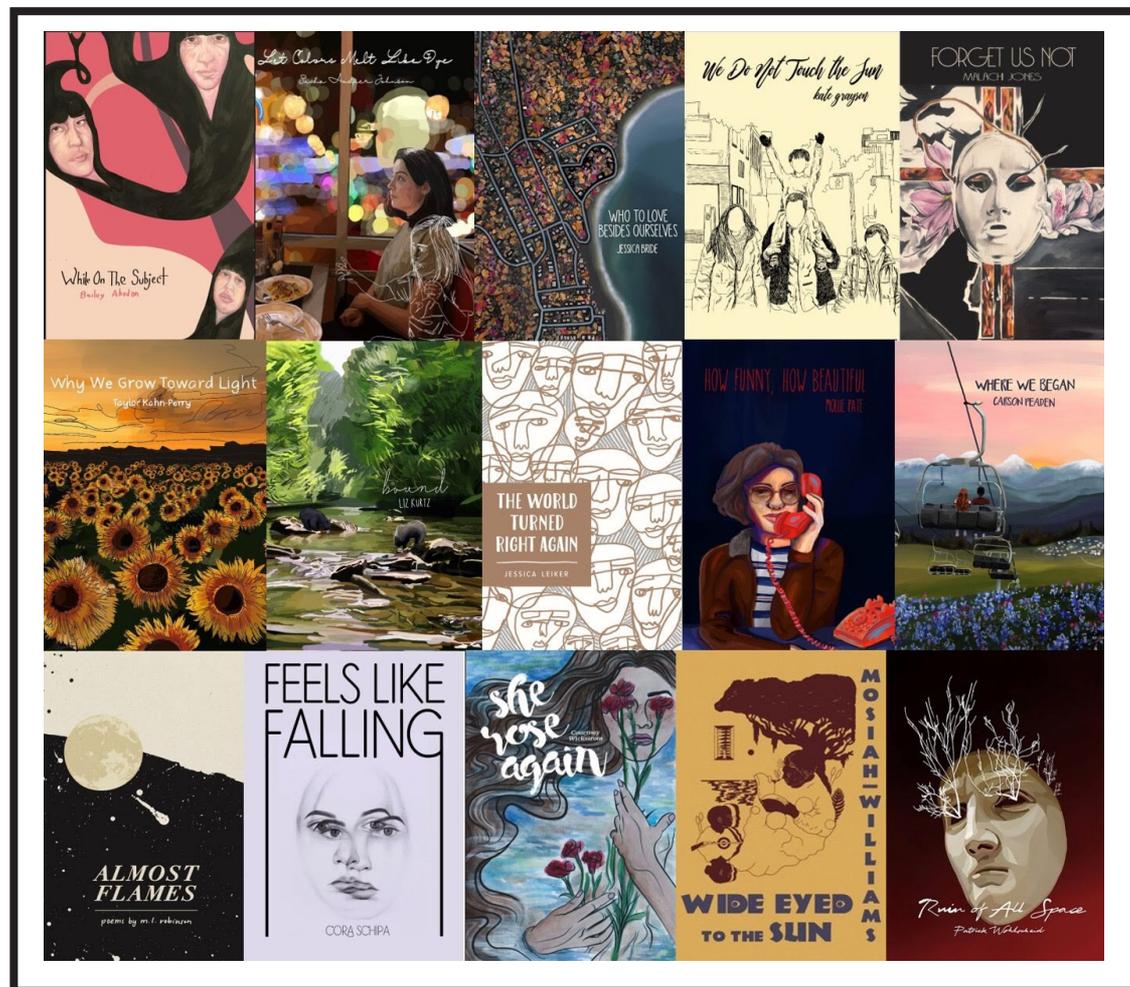
Seventh graders focused on fiction during the first semester. They studied plot structure, pacing, conflict, dialogue, point of view, flashback, and characterization within a short story and crafted four extensive pieces that explored these techniques. In the spring, they studied poetry, creating works 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 Media Center, 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 Media Center.

Ninth graders began the year with Advanced Poetry Workshop, studying a range of canonical and contemporary poets. They wrote poems that employed extended metaphors and drew on inspiration from Robert Bly's method of Leaping Poetry as well as from science and scientific metaphor. As a part of our community outreach, they took a trip to The Palms of Mount Pleasant, a senior living center, where they heard history come to life and wrote narrative poems that told their partners' stories. Lastly, they each researched a selected poetic movement, which culminated in a poem written in that style. In Advanced Fiction Workshop, they wrote three short stories and several vignettes for Mr. Hammes, and studied a number of advanced fiction techniques like minimalism, crisis of faith, human prejudice, narrative uncertainty,



and the role of the objective correlative. During the 2nd semester, both 9th and 10th graders traveled to St. Helena's Island for a writer's retreat, which focused on the literature and culture of the Civil Rights Movement and Gullah traditions, featuring an incredible tour with Queen Quet.

Tenth graders learned to craft a script for the stage and the screen as well as how to 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 and prejudices as well as a braided essay about both a talent and a struggle and an extensive interview of a member of their community which focused on a vital, life-changing scene.

Eleventh graders studied thematic obsessions, form and style in *Finding Your Voice*, learning to identify their own voice through a thematic series of poems, lyric essays, and flash fiction. 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, Eleventh graders 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 an interchanging plot story modeled after "Chronicle of a Death Foretold" by Gabriel Garcia Marquez as well as 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 fifteen 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 "To the Lighthouse."

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.

Vocal: A Year in Review

by John White

The Charleston County School of the Arts Vocal department dazzled audiences across the state through song.

The year began with preparations for all-state auditions. School of the Arts was the most well represented school at both the ACDA junior all state and the SCMEA high school all state.

Afterwards, the department remained busy preparing for the middle school holiday concert with middle school strings and the high school holiday concert with the School of the Arts

symphony. High school vocal students were thrilled to join forces with Cane Bay and Wando Choruses to perform the "Mozart Requiem: not only at the Charleston Gaillard Center but at the grand main-stage at the SCMEA conference in Columbia.

March continued to be a busy month. The department was fortunate enough to be accompanied by Charlton Singleton and his jazz orchestra for their annual Music Down in My Soul concert. Additionally, they hosted the Young Americans for a three day musical theater performance clinic. The middle school ended the year performing songs from the new musical, *The Greatest Showman*.

The high school's final concert of the season was a one night only performance of "Shake Your Groove Thing," a disco themed experience. The concert was so popular a second school showing was scheduled a few days later. Finally the vocal department was proud to announce that they would be producing Roger and Hammerstein's "Oklahoma!" during October of 2018.



Vocal students perform in the "Shake Your Groove Thing" concert



SOA High School Vocal majors at the SCMEA High School All State Choir Performance

Band: A Year in Review

by Basil Kerr



Mr. Kerr conducts the Jazz Ensemble at Jump, Jive, and Wail!, a staple event for SOA students, faculty, and the public.

This has been an incredibly exciting, rewarding, and emotional year for the High School band majors. After another successful band camp in August, the bands geared up for the first major performance of the year, the “Game Show Concert.” The “Game Show” featured a combination of “Wheel of Fortune,” “Family Feud,” and “The Price Is Right.” Hosted by “Dynamite Dave,” it was a fun evening.

Next came the big event for the Jazz Band and the school—“Jump, Jive, and Wail!” It was huge success, with over 900 people dancing, eating and socializing to the sounds of the best Jazz Band in the state. This combination of show, dance and homecoming event has become the “must attend” event at SOA.

December featured the annual Holiday Concert, with multiple large and small groups from the entire Middle School and High School Band major. It was another inspiring, beautiful performance for the holidays.

January was a stressful time, with auditions for the state honor ensembles, and seniors making final preparations for their thesis performances. The band majors were also informed by **Mr. Basil Kerr** that he would be retiring at the end of the school year. This caused a sense of nervousness, anxiety and worry about what the future would hold.

February featured the Band Senior

Thesis performances, with recitals for both the classical and the jazz musicians. Some performed standards for their instrument; others wrote original arrangements, organizing the musicians, rehearsing and performing their creations in concert.

“March Madness” has a special meaning for band majors. Beginning at the end of February and continuing through March, SOA band majors participated in All Region and All State honor ensembles in both jazz and concert band. In addition, every of the main performing ensembles of the Band Major performed at statewide performance assessments, including the State Jazz Festival and the State Concert Band Festival. This year, for the first time, every ensemble in the Band Department received “Superior with Distinction,” the highest rating that can be earned at these events. This included the Jazz Lab Band, the SOA Jazz Band, The SOA Symphonic Band and the SOA Wind Ensemble.

As if that wasn’t enough for the month of March, the finalists for the HS Band Director position came to our school and guest conducted the bands. The Band Majors evaluated each candidate, which was included in the decision making process.

April saw the Wind Ensemble travel to Atlanta along with the Symphony, to perform at the National Adjudicators Festival at Symphony Hall. The Wind Ensemble turned in a powerful, emotional performance that will be remembered for a long time. Both ensembles finished with high marks, with the Symphony winning the event and the Wind Ensemble placing third. The Woodwinds were recognized as the

outstanding section of the festival.

As the year wound down, the Seniors and Mr. Kerr prepared for graduation. “This is a great group of seniors to finally graduate with,” Kerr said with a smile. “I will treasure my time with all these great students at SOA.”



The SOA Class of 2018 Band majors and Mr. Kerr in Atlanta.

Caleb Smith wins state oratorical contest

Senior Theater major **Caleb Smith** won first place in the Optimist International Club Oratorical contest in Sumter on May 5. He will travel to St. Louis in June to compete at the national and, possibly, international level. *Applause* wishes Caleb good luck!



Theater: A Year in Review

by George Younts

Another busy year, as always, for the Theater department! Major productions performed at both the middle and high School level included *Grimms Fairy Tales Spectaculathon*, *Working* (the musical), *All in the Timing and Memorandum*. In addition, over twenty arts outreaches were facilitated by the majors for free. This includes touring to schools and retirement communities of original Senior Theatre Major devised pieces along with improv workshops at several Charleston County schools during the week and at weekend conferences and clinics. In addition, school show performances happened here on campus for the SOA student body and outside visiting schools.

In the HS competition realm we fared rather well with a production of Steve Martin's *Wasp*, which was honored with Best Director (**Mrs. Link**) and Best Actress (**Rose Stark**, 12th grade) in South Carolina by the South Carolina Theatre Association at USC Aiken. At the MS competition the 8th Graders received several superior ratings at the Junior Thespian Competition with their scenes and monologues in Spartanburg, SC.

Then there was the student-created *Commedia Del Arte Show* by the 7th Grade Majors, Monologue and Shakespeare shows by the 6th graders. Three improv shows from the 8th Graders and the HS Elective and an annual Southeastern Theatre Conference trip in Mobile, Alabama for the high school where Junior Theatre Majors receive many callbacks to colleges.

Plus, don't forget about the 1st, 2nd & 3rd Nine Weeks Showcases were student pantomimes, masks pieces, Shakespeare Scenes, long form improv, and scene work too were presented at the high school level. Also, we participated in the annual MS Adjudications, where 59 6th through 8th Grade majors gave it their all in a three event checkup: monologues, cold readings and oral term tests.

Our year wrapped up with Senior Thesis week, where twenty one-person shows trotted the boards and HS Playfest, where juniors wrote and directed the freshmen and sophomores in twenty scenes. In conclusion, over fifty different live performances happened this year in the Theater department. All in all, a very busy year!



Dance: A Year in Review

by Linda Cline

The Dance department hosted seven guest artists in residence this year: two in modern dance, one in Latin dance, Greek dance, hip hop dance, contemporary and ballet. There are 7 guest artist pieces of choreography in the departmental performance this year, which showcases the 140 dance majors in assorted styles of dance and choreography. The dance department has awarded the title "Dance Captain" to at least 16 dance majors from 6-12 for their outstanding work in dance classes.

Composition dancers performed in 2 formal concerts in the RMMT. The first one was based on famous artists work. The spring performance was based on the lives and work of contemporary modern choreographers. 3 dancers attended the National Dance Festival in Pittsburgh where they auditioned for college scholarships and summer study scholarships. All three won at least one scholarship. Some of the prestigious awards were from: Boston Conservatory, Joffrey Ballet, University of the Arts in Philadelphia, Point Park, and AMDA. Two students were awarded the Cecilia Slowinski dance department scholarships to summer dance study.

8th Grade Dance majors performed an evening of solo dances in collaboration with the 8th Grade visual arts majors. The National Honor Society for Dance Arts hosted an audition workshop in January for rising dancers who wish to audition for dance at SOA. Senior thesis dancers performed for a panel of judges and received scores from them along with written feedback for refining their work. Senior Thesis dancers performed in 2 formal concerts in the RMMT. The first one had a social awareness theme. The spring performance is artistic collaborations along with choreographic concepts.



SOA displays its talent with annual Spring Showcase

by Carson Peaden



Middle school Strings majors perform in the breezeway during the Spring Showcase.

This past April, SOA celebrated another successful Spring Showcase. Both middle and high school students performed throughout the night at a variety of places around campus. Whether it was an improv routine by The Fighting Gnomes or a rendition of “Bohemian Rhapsody” by Vocal, the night was full of incredible displays of each major’s art.

Maggie Robinson, a 12th grade Creative Writer, found the experience to be rewarding. “It was a great way to share my senior thesis, as well as show my support for the other students performing. I like that everyone showcased their work all in one night because I was able to see what projects each major was working on.”

Later that night, the Creative Writing department surprised former teacher **Rene Miles** by dedicating their hallway to her. More than two decades ago, she began teaching Creative Writing and developed it into the nationally recognized program it is today. The CW Department hung up a plaque with a photo and inscription of Mrs. Miles as a reminder of all the work she has done for the school.

In addition to the art performances, there was also a silent auction and food trucks. But for everyone, the best part of the night was seeing all the students present their talent. **Mr. Smyth**, Internship Coordinator at SOA, was excited to witness all of the majors in performance. “The event showcased our school in so many positive ways for our

parents, grandparents, and rising 6th graders. I always look forward to the Spring Showcase each April.”

SOA says goodbye to retiring teachers

by Bailey Abedon

School of the Arts will be saying goodbye to some of its best this year. **Mrs. Bethany Crawford, Mr. Mark Teseniar, Mr. Basil Kerr, and Mr. Alan Brehm** are all retiring after years of teaching at SOA. I had a chance to ask them to reflect on their time here at the school.

Mrs. Crawford came to SOA when it was still located on the old campus. “It was so exciting to move into a brand new, beautiful building,” she says. She says without question that what she will miss the most from leaving the school is no longer being with her students. “I will miss the relationships and interactions with them more than anything.” But with that said, she said she will appreciate the flexibility of time that retiring will off her.

Mrs. Crawford is excited to explore new fields after her retirement. “I am taking real estate classes this summer and will reinvent myself as a realtor. I also want to use my bilingual skills to do more volunteer work to help members of the Spanish-speaking community. I will travel more and will spend more time with family and friends, including my two grandchildren Carter and Colin. And lastly, I plan on fulfilling a long-time desire, and I believe a calling, and that is to become a foster parent.”

Dr. Teseniar, who always made learning interesting, intends to keep his retired life interesting as well. “I have many interests,” he says, “and I want to indulge them all. I want to read more, take art classes, become a beekeeper, learn to play the ukulele, travel more, volunteer at church, go to the gym in the mornings, spend three months in Central America perfecting my Spanish, drive for uber, pedal a rickshaw, build a chicken coop, walk aimlessly around the yard, hike the foothills trail, sit on the porch, and cook supper for my lovely wife.” He says that while he is excited for retiring, that his teaching career has truly defined him. After 33 years of the profession, he will miss the “routine, the relationships, and the excitement of the first day of school.”

Mr. Kerr fondly recalls the day

when he was first inspired to become a teacher. “In the spring of 1976, I was doing my student teaching in Miami, at an elementary school. (It was required that we student teach in general music and later in instrumental music.) I wasn’t really all that interested in teaching. I had been playing with professional orchestras in the Miami-Dade area, and knew I could have a good career as a symphony musician. I was only majoring in Music Education as a fallback, in case I ended up between orchestra jobs. Well, what we think we’re going to do isn’t always what God intends for us.” Since then, Mr. Kerr has learned the true joy of sharing his love of music with students. “42 years later, I still think back to that little boy. I have tried to be that role model, knowing I will make mistakes. Still, it’s been worth every minute of pleasure and pain. I am proud of having built the Wando Band. I enjoyed helping a struggling band at Lakewood HS in Sumter to believe in themselves. Most of all, the 20 years spent at the School of the Arts has been the most exciting, rewarding, and musically fulfilling of my career. As I start on a new adventure, I hope we will cross paths again. I care deeply

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about every SOA student I have taught, and I hope I've been able to make a small difference to each of you. "



Mr. Brehm, ever the enigma of SOA, declined to comment on his activities after retirement, leaving the student body, particularly the seniors, to wonder what more impressive pursuits he'll be taking on next.

The students of SOA, without a doubt, will miss these teachers too. The impact they

had on School of the Arts will remain once they have left. To them, let us say, thank you.

Above: Dr. T waves goodbye to SOA on behalf of all of the retiring faculty. Applause wishes them all the best in their retirement.

SOA student visits, delivers letters to Parkland

Over Spring Break, sophomore Creative Writing major Caitlin Shelor delivered over 260 hand-written notes and letters, many written by SOA students, to Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. Applause writer Julian Griffin sat down with Caitlin to discuss the experience.

Julian Griffin: What inspired you to take on this project?

Caitlin Shelor: Well, I was already planning on going down to Florida, and I wanted to do something for the students and families of Parkland, because I wanted them to feel loved and supported.

JG: How did you go about obtaining letters and messages?

CS: At first I set up a booth at the Citadel Mall in West Ashley. The first day I didn't get very many cards, so I decided to try at school. Mr Lyons helped me get students to write cards, and I had a booth in the cafeteria for two days, while also spending two more days in the mall.



Caitlin visited MSD High School, the site of a deadly school shooting in February that killed 17 students and faculty and injured more.

JG: What was visiting the school and delivering the letters like?

CS: Seeing the school was the first part that really hit me, just seeing the exterior of the school. They were switching classes when I got there, and it was really quiet, nobody was talking. When I walked in to give the cards, one lady said that it was sweet and amazing that I had come all the way from Charleston. They let me take a few pictures at Parkland. There was a lot of security on campus; checking IDs, making sure the box that held the cards was just holding cards, and they had to know everyone who was in our car. I was only there for a few minutes, though.

Design: A Year in Review

by Caroline Baker

This is the fourth year for the new Costume & Fashion Design Major at SOA. This year, students visited the Halsey Art Gallery at College of Charleston to view collections on plastic, manipulation and the environment; costume design studios including Charleston Stage & CofC; as well as a wedding dress designer, Emily Kotarski, retail studio and worked with a European footwear designer, Roderick Pieters, to create their own shoes.

The design students benefited from the extended teaching of **Mrs. Marie Nichols**, founder of the Costume & Fashion Design Major. We held an incredible spring fashion show to debut their garment collections based on the theme of "Manipulation" and displayed that work at the annual Showcase. The students' visual art talents are showcased in mood boards throughout the campus. The 2018 Fashion Show was our biggest yet with forty-two designers, 191 models and over 750 people in attendance. Freshman showed one-two looks, sophomores showed two-four, juniors showed four-six looks and seniors previewed six to eight pieces from their ten piece Senior Thesis collection.

Seniors showed the full ten piece senior thesis collection with artwork on Tuesday, May 1, in the cafeteria. Our second class of graduating seniors will be CTE completers in addition to earning their SOA Diplomas with Thesis. Our graduates are attending the most prestigious art and design schools in the world such as RISD, Central St. Martins in London, the University of North Carolina School of the Arts and F.I.T. in New York City.

The students learn the foundations of design in this multidisciplinary major as they practice their gifts of sketching, construction, draping and working with flat pattern design. The students concluded the year creating a digital portfolio project, planning of our next NYC trip and creating a community outreach project.



Senior Design major Nadja McGlone's collection, displayed at the 2018 SOA Fashion Show

Middle School Visual Arts: A Year in Review

by Damond Howard

The Middle School Visual Arts department had a busy year, with students entering into many competitions, as well as several local trips. In April, all 6th-8th grade Visual Arts Majors were treated to a tour of the Department of Visual Arts at the College of Charleston and the Halsey Institute of Contemporary Art.

Sixth Grade Visual Arts Major **Sutton Meyer** has been chosen to display her artworks in the 2018 Rising Stars Piccolo Spoleto, on Monday, June 4, in Charleston. In the 2018 SOA Reflections Contest, 7th graders **Savanna Jones** won First Place award and **Benjamin Huston** won Honorable Mention.

At the 2017-2018 Coastal Carolina Fair, 6th grader **Margaret Brown** won Judge's Award, (coming with a cash prize). 8th grader **Kayla McGary** and 7th grader **Evelyn Bueschgen** won First Place Awards, 8th graders **Allison Frizzell**, **Blair Henry**, and **Philia Walker**, as well as 6th grader **Tulah Cramer** won Second Place Awards, and 8th grade Visual Artist **Clara Smith** won Third Place Award.

In the 2017-18 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards competition, Region-at-Large, SOA Middle School Visual Arts was awarded seven awards: 7th grader **John Frost** won a Gold Key, **Emily Apostolico**, 7th grade, and **Eloise Lyons**, 8th grade, won Silver Keys, and **Moyu Yamaguchi**, 7th grade, **Faith Bessinger**, 7th grade, **Clara Smith**, 8th grade, and **Grace Baker**, 8th grade, all won Honorable Mentions.

High School Visual Arts: A Year in Review

by Anne Cimballa

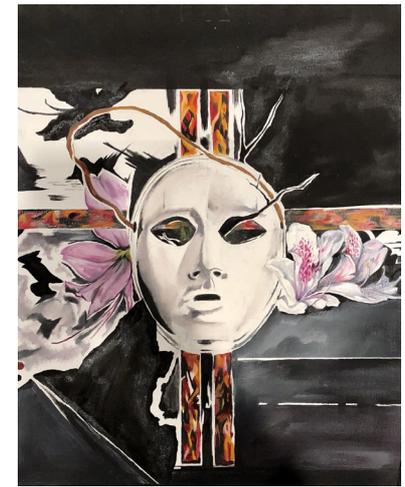
High School Visual Arts left their mark locally, regionally and nationally. We participated in Coastal Carolina Youth Art Exhibition, Scholastic Art and Writing Competition, Atlantic Institute Competition, Young Arts National Competition, North Charleston Arts Festival Youth Exhibition, Piccolo Spoleto Rising Stars competition, South Carolina Youth Art Month exhibition, Charleston Artist Guild Senior Show and at least 4 on-site exhibitions featuring original works of art from grades 9-12 in a variety of media, subject matter and technique.

Our students were recognized at the National Level for Scholastic, bringing home both silver and gold medals. **Ayanna Gadsden**, 12th grade, earned a Silver Medal

for her portfolio. **Leo Horton**, 11th grade, earned both a Silver and a Gold Medal, and **Olivia Jones**, 9th grade, received a Silver Medal.

Teagan Prichard, 12th grade, was recognized by Piccolo Spoleto as a Rising Star and also received a Spoleto-sponsored scholarship. Many of our Visual Artists earned scholarships for both their art and academics. Some of our students will be continuing their artistic pursuits at RISD (Rhode Island School of Design), MICA (Maryland Institute College of Art), SCAD (Savannah College of Art and Design), Milwaukee Institute of the Arts and Design and SAIC (School of the Art Institute of Chicago).

We are proud of all of our seniors and we are excited for their futures. We want to thank all of our Visual Arts students for working hard this year to develop their skills, explore new media, take risks, and demonstrate what they've mastered by displaying their work and sharing it with so many of us this year.



Teagan Prichard



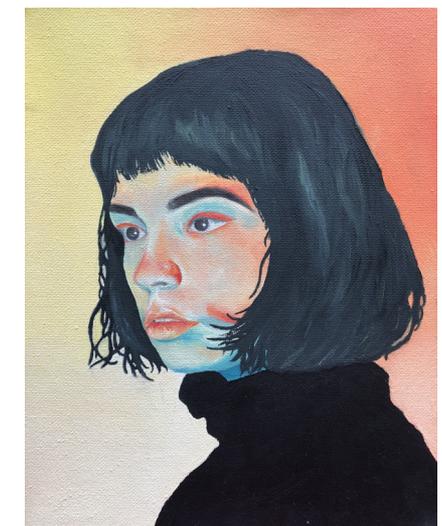
Graham Martini



Ayanna Gadsden



Emily Clark



Elise Richardson

Piano: A Year in Review

by Debra Benson

This year the piano majors welcomed the new sixth grade pianists, a new seventh grade pianist, as well as several new high school pianists.

The first big event of the year was the "Fall Blues" concert that was 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 Andolini's in West Ashley 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. Jazz Piano added a Jazz History Component, which followed American history from the early slave trade to the 1940's.

At the end of January, twenty-seven students attended the Solo & Ensemble Festival at Lander University. Ten of our piano majors were selected, based on their rating at the festival, to perform on the Honors Recital at the South Carolina Music Educators Convention in Columbia.

Piano auditions for the 2018-19 school year took place in February. We also hosted the Louis Mathis Scholarship Auditions at SOA on February 24. Angela Mei was the winner in her division and Michelle Sun placed 2nd in her division and also won a scholarship.

March "madness" began with the high school pianists presenting a rock concert with music of Billy Joel and Elton John. Students from other majors as well as our very own Dr. Cusatis, performed with the piano majors while friends and family enjoyed barbecue catered by Swig and Swine. Achievement Day auditions were held the second Saturday of the month. Forty-six students participated in this event at Charleston Southern University. Having to complete a written theory test,

sight-read, play scales and chord progressions as well as two pieces of memorized repertoire, students worked really hard in preparation for this event. We had 39 students taking



Middle school Piano students competed at the Solo & Ensemble Festival at Lander University in January.

home an "outstanding" rating. Six students were selected to perform on the Honors Recital as a result of their outstanding performance at the event. Students also performed on three nights of solo performances during March. These recitals were held in the Black Box Theater.

At the end of March, we had nineteen students participate in the District Auditions at the College of Charleston. Fifteen of these students who participated in this event, earned an "outstanding" rating and were allowed to participate in the State Auditions in April. As a result of her awesome audition at State, Angela Mei was selected as the top pianist in South Carolina for her division. We also had 2 students, Megan Dinh and Michelle Sun, who made "Honorable Mentions." (You have to be in the top 5 in the state in your division to receive an "Honorable Mention.") The Charleston Symphony Orchestra League held scholarship auditions and we had several students win scholarships to be used for summer programs and lessons. The talented JT Ho-Mueller, Henry Schrecker, Michelle Sun, Angela Mei, Gabby Do,

Joshua Baek and Matthew Blackburn won scholarships. Piccolo Spoleto Rising Star program selected Irene Lui to perform during the Piccolo Spoleto Festival.

April was a big month for senior thesis performances and presentations. This year we had performances from **Keegan Vath, William Hepburn, Jordan Le, David Turasov, Michael Root, Zoe De-Luca Parker, Brianna Samonte, McCormick Emge, Virginia Clyburn, and Virginia Quarles** (all performance thesis). **Elizabeth Snyder** gave a presentation about her experience as a piano teacher and had her 2 students perform. She also performed. (education thesis). **Hannah Kelly** did composition thesis and composed four pieces. Hannah presented two of her vocal pieces on Sunday's performance. She and Keegan collaborated on a two-piano piece which was performed on Friday evening. **Jordan Le** also composed a piece as part of his thesis. Keegan wrote our graduation piece for this year. Now we are working on our performance for graduation on May 31.

This has been a busy and successful year for our piano majors. We send "best wishes" and "congratulations" out to our 12 AWESOME SENIORS and look forward to another great year with our piano majors!! Job well done!!



The SOA Class of 2018 Piano majors

Alex Brouwer

Keep your gaze on the horizon; you
will reach it before you know it!
Love, Mom

Caroline Lloyd

Caroline- we are so proud of you!
The last Lloyd to graduate from SOA
but definitely not the least! Now on
to Clemson!! Go Tigers!

Carson Peaden

We are so proud
of you and your
accomplishments,
and know you will
do great things.
Love, Mom,
Heirs, and
Georgia.

Elizabeth Kurtz

Our fearless
warrior child is
now a woman,
gifted with a voice
for the world, an
ear for truth, and a
heart for God.





Trevor Scott

We love our determined, hard-working son! Live life to the fullest, beat the challenges and ALWAYS do your best! Your biggest fans, Mom and Dad



Mollie Pate



Congratulations Mollie!

Seems like yesterday when you showed up, late as usual, and for the last eighteen years we've watched you grow into a beautiful, smart, always entertaining young woman. You've certainly earned all your applause, and we couldn't be prouder of you.

All our love,
Mom, Dad and Will

Madison Crawford

We are so proud of the woman you have become! Continue to do great things and go light the world.
Love, Your (amazing) Family

Malachi Jones

Malachi, I'm so proud of you for your tireless hard work, determination and unwavering focus over the years. You make school look so easy! I'm your biggest fan! Congratulations, Malachi!
With love, from your mom.

Sarah Catherine-Gillard

SOA Dance Class of 2018 - the best of the best! Until next time...

Carson Mann

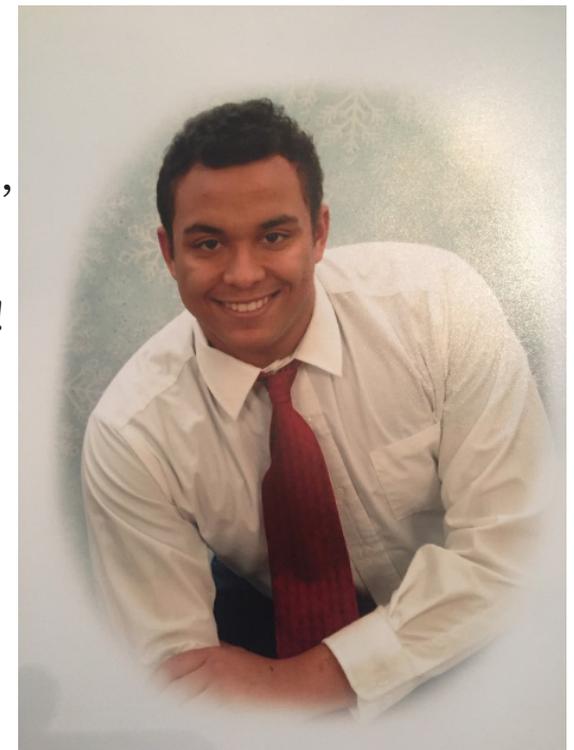
We are so proud of you, Carson, and can't wait to see what amazing things your future holds! We love you! Dad, Mom, and Braden

Mollie Pate

A quote from George Washington (without whom we would likely all still be British subjects) seems appropriate for a Princess opening a new chapter in her young life: "Be courteous to all, but intimate with few, and let those few be well tried before you give them your confidence." Melina and I wish you everything good and great, especially great happiness! Work hard and you will be Blessed with success. Love, Granddad

Elijah Lyons

Elijah Walker Lyons radiates. He fuses kindness and confidence with a dash of dazzle and exudes sunshine. He is all yellow. Love, Mom and Dad

Mark Wolfe

Congratulations, Mark!!!

We are all so proud of YOU !!

Mom, Dad and Jared

Hannah DeRemer

Hannah – Let your glorious voice and all of your vivid colors SHINE. NEVER hold back – the world needs your precious heart, creative vision and compassion for all. Always be YOU! We LOVE you and we are SO excited to see where life takes you - or where you take life!
Dad, Mom, Michael & Carolina, Nellie, Lowcountry & Eddie



McCormick Emge

“Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything.” – Plato



McCormick,

Continue your love of music as it feeds your soul (and ours too);
Always persist with curiosity as this act of inquiry puts air in your flight;
And keep emphatically sharing your compassion as you make this world a better place.

We are proud of you!
Mom, Dad & Ellen

Denver Smith



Dear
Denver,
We're
SHASP.
Mom and
Dad

Emma Rose Stark



Congratulations on your SOA Degree with Distinction and on your acceptance with scholarships to Pace University in Manhattan! See you next on Broadway! Love, Mom, Mark, Grandma, and Grandpa

Hunter Simes



Dear Hunter,
From the day you were born until now with your graduation, each passing day with you is a joy and a wonder. May your life's journey and future endeavors continue to be fruitful, interesting and fun. Your mother, Anastasia, and I are immensely proud of you and your achievements. As you know, we love you dearly as always and especially on your graduation day.
Dank je, muchas Gracias, thank you very very much

Courtney Morrow



Courtney,
We are so proud and excited for what
the future holds for you!
We love you. Mom, Dad, Tradd and
Jana

Jessica Leiker



Dear Jessica –
As this chapter of life comes to a happy close,
a new chapter begins.
Our wish for you is to find your passion and
live the life you dream.
All our love,
Mom, Dad and Jake

Emma Greig



Emma,
We are so proud of you. You turned
out to be a pretty good kid.
Love, Mom, Dad, & Ian

Zoe Counts



Zoe,
Remember to “Seek God’s will in all
that you do and he will direct your
path.” Proverbs 3:6
Love, Dad, Mom, and Miles

Walker Menkus



Walker,
 Congratulations!
 Such a joy watching you
 grow into a talented
 performing artist and
 delightful man!
 So Very Proud of you!
 With Much Love! Mom



Halle Garrett

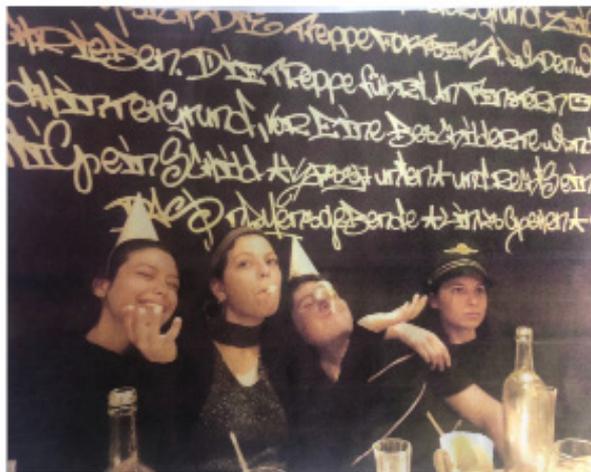


All your dreams can
 come true, if you have
 the courage to pursue
 them.
 Congratulations!
 SCAD bound, you
 have made your
 dreams come true.



Bailey Abedon

The Abedons Celebrate Bailey & All The Creative, Critical Thinkers,
SOA Class of 2018 🍷



Thank You To Our Caring, Committed Teachers -
Shining Beacons Of Learning, To Light Their Paths 🍷

I Love You, Stupid & Ugly
XO
Ugly and Stupid



Carissimo Amò, ci siamo quasi.

Questi bellissimi, intensi, unici, frastornanti anni passati insieme stanno per terminare.

Pare tu sia adulta adesso e debba diventare indipendente.

Sai che sei la cosa-persona più preziosa e bella che ci sia mai capitata nella nostra vita dal famoso 16 marzo 2000, e sai anche che continuerà per sempre ad essere così.

Sei una delle persone più sensibili, compassionevoli e intelligenti che io conosca.

Zoë Alessandra De Luca Parker



Difetti ovviamente ne hai, ma le qualità sopraelencate sono più forti dei tuoi difetti e fondamentali per essere una “bella” persona. Ti porteranno lontano nella carriera ma soprattutto in alto nella vita. Riconoscele e seguile. Congratulazioni vivissime per questo tuo primo emblematico successo.

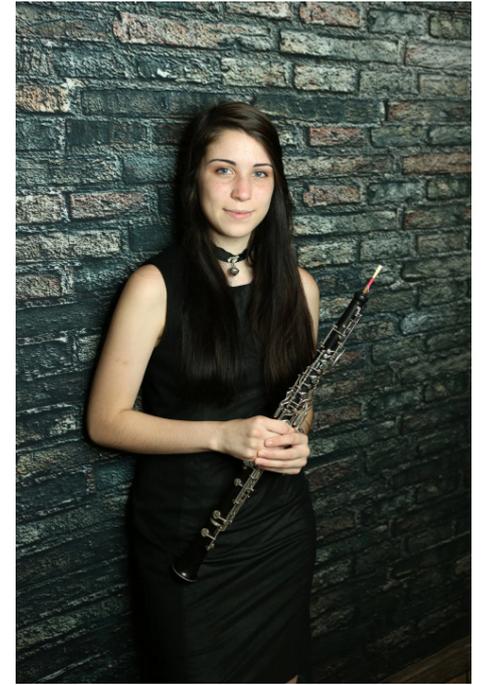
Adesso abbraccia il fantastico resto che deve arrivare.

Con eterno amore, Mammata (and I am sure pateto too).

Madison Craig



We have always been so proud of everything you have done; now go make yourself proud by doing everything you want. Love, Mom and Dad



Lance Wylder



Congratulations

Lance Ellington Wylder,
We've had few quiet moments ---your singing, dancing, stepping, talking...

Follow Your Passion:
Discover Your Purpose

Amelia Cobb



Congratulations, Amelia. Go Tiger! We love you!

-Mom, Dad, and Kaki

Glynn and Alden King



Congrats, Alden and Glynn!
It's been such a joy watching
you two grow up! Can't wait to
see what you'll do next!

Love you!

Mom



Megan LeBarron



Megan
LeBarron, we're
proud of the
strong, bright,
beautiful young
lady that you
are. Continue
to shine at
Queen's
University and
the sky's the
limit!

Abby Haynes



Abby,
Congratulations! We couldn't be more
proud of you, and can't wait to see what the
future holds for you!

Love,

Mom, Dad, and Morgan

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

Bailey Abedon: Stress is temporary.

Luke Ablonczy: To love violin and music.

Laila Aleem: Having the right attitude is just as important as how smart you may be.

Elysia Andrews: The most important thing I've learned at SOA is that learning should never be a chore. Some of the teachers I have had in the past four years have shown me that, when you're eager to learn and are passionate about a subject, learning and exploring new things doesn't become boring. It becomes exciting.

Adam Beall: Being a String major, I learned to manage my time.

Ariana Blevins: I learned how to speak Ubi.

Carlos Boswell: Be your own person.

Jessica Boyd: Band is more than playing music; it's about working together and being a family.

Joseph Brennan: The most important thing I learned at SOA is that it's better to challenge yourself than it is to just take the easy route and drift by.

Jessica Bride: I learned how to prioritize classes. It's okay to spend more time studying and doing work for one or more classes over the others.

Finian Butcher: To be honest with myself.

Hannah Chase: I have learned to use your talent as much as you can for as long as you can.

Virginia Clyburn: How to balance academics and extracurriculars without drowning!

Madison Craig: Education isn't the most important thing.

Madison Crawford: To be who I am, not who other people want me to be, not who my parents want me to be, but who I want to be.

Hayden Daughtry: Nobody believes in the hollow Earth theory.

Nicole Dawson: To be accepting of all people no matter what.

Jessica De La Cruz: Ask for help, there's always someone willing to give you guidance. Don't leave something that you can do today for tomorrow.

Zoë Alessandra De Luca-Parker: I learned how to speak for myself and work hard to attain my goals.

Hannah Deremer: To unapologetically be

yourself and to stand up for yourself. Don't settle for bad friends. Try not to have high expectations of anyone, thought, because high schoolers are selfish.

Heath DuBose: The most important thing I've learned here is to be mindful of yourself.

Alie Duffy: The most important thing I've learned at SOA is that everyone is different, and that is more than okay. Our varying sizes, colors, beliefs, lifestyles,

really positive environment.

Alana Haltiwanger: You never know how much your talent means to someone else. It's a humbling feeling knowing that your talent is a blessing to others.

Vincent Hamilton: Don't go to an art school if you don't like hippies.

Abby Haynes: I've learned that it's pointless to compare yourself to others.

Julia Holmes: How to play my instrument with confidence.

Hunter Horn: The most important thing I learned was that these years in high school despite what everyone says are not the most important years of one's life.

Joshua Hornig: I learned how to eat again.

Mary Grace Hutzler: The most important thing I've learned in my 7 years at SOA was how to get away with doing the bare minimum and still keep all A's.

Taylor Kahn-Perry: The most important thing I have learned at SOA is that art can be used as a tool for social justice. It is up to the creatives in this world to keep asking questions and refusing to take things at face value.

Sophia Karesh: "You are responsible."
-Mr. Kerr.

Hannah Kelly: Every moment is precious. Time will fly by right before your eyes so you have to make the best of it before it all ends.

Emma Kerr: Art really does affect your learning skills. People who are well-rounded have a higher likeliness to succeed. Compared to students I have met at other high schools, I notice the levels of intelligence are very different.

Alden King: The most important thing I've learned is to not take yourself so seriously. Not that SOA helped me learn that, though, that's probably just a side effect of maturing throughout the years.

Glynn King: Usually, the things we stress out about are not really a big deal at all, and if you learn to start thinking like that life becomes a lot more fun.

Gracie King: I have learned how to make decisions for myself and not just to appease others. I have always been a "people pleaser", but SOA has helped me grow as a person and become more independent in my choices.

Erica Kremer: The most important thing I have learned is how to balance your art with the rest of your life.



and talents are what make SOA so awesome.

Caroline Dukes: How to do thirty minutes of work in four hours and five hours of work in ten minutes.

Katie Durand: Accept everyone for who they are, because our differences are what make us unique and powerful.

Jordan Edwards: The most important thing I learned at SOA is that, in the end, people who may not share the same opinions as you can still be really cool and kind people. Don't rule them out.

McCormick Emge: You don't have to sacrifice academics for arts.

Cassidy Enright: I've learned that grades don't define you, all you have to do is try your best and that's all that matters.

Camille Feaster: I've learned how to manage my priorities and use time wisely.

Jenna Flaherty: Life is not fair, and the rules only apply to some people.

Brynnan Frye: I learned that it is okay to be different and how important it is to accept everyone as they are. The diversity and acceptance at SOA has made it a

Jordan Le: The environment here is different compared to other high schools.

Megan LeBarron: I've learned that there's always going to be someone that's better than you at something, so just enjoy what you're doing no matter your skill level.

Jessica Leiker: I've learned is how to speak in front of an audience confidently.

Caroline Lloyd: Definitely how to identify and balance chemical equations. Super important.

Damon Lockwood: To be patient and watch who you call your friends.

Eli Lyons: Public Speaking skills, how to best to represent myself, and the strength to follow through with my passion.

Andrew Macchia: Mind my own business and keep my mouth shut.

Betty Manaris: Academic successes or failures don't define you.

Carson Mann: There's always someone better at your art. Just worry about yourself.

Graham Martini: If you want something, you have to do everything in your power to get it. Intentions mean nothing without executions.

Nadja McGlone: The most important thing I've learned at my time at SOA would have to be that, contrary to what many people believe, the arts are a fundamental aspect of society and will always be needed.

Walker Menkus: Don't let other people tell you what to think.

Adrianna Mitrano: Stay humble and open minded. If you are here then you have a talent, and so does everybody else here. Don't get caught up with competing. Instead try to focus on improving.

Courtney Morrow: No matter how different you are from everyone else, don't change your views or ways to fit it.

Jackson Morton: I have learned that theatre as a career is not for me.

Lily Murchison: How to have a good work ethic.

Joshua Nell: I learned how to better manage work and fun.

Dionte Nelson: The basics.

Lian Norris: Don't worry about what other people think of you, and focus on those that like you for you.

Jada Orr: Mind your business.

Karlee Parshall: Grades aren't everything.

Mollie Pate: How to write and read.

Carson Peaden: Change, either good or bad, is constant. I've learned it's something I have to accept and work with if I want to stay satisfied.

Alec Pourmoghadam: The most important thing I learned was definitely don't reflect on the bad, because it always gets better.

Virginia Quarles: The most important thing I have learned at potential. This year, I effort into my piano



SOA is my own put the most senior thesis and proved to myself what I can do.

Grace Rauton: The most important thing I have learned from SOA is how alike the arts are and how amazing the product can be if everyone's talents are brought together.

Nick Remington: Stay away from liberals.

Elise Richardson: How to balance academics along with art.

Anna Ritchey: How to have love and acceptance for all kinds of people.

Maggie Robinson: How to write decent poetry.

Morgan Roddey: I learned who I could actually trust and who I couldn't.

Tianai Rong: Art is as important as academic study.

Brianna Samonte: Surrounding myself with people who have different viewpoints than me have helped me become more creative and see the world from multiple viewpoints.

Maggie Scapellato: You learn a good work ethic. Going to an arts school means that you have so much on your plate at all times with school and your major. It forces you to be able to manage your time very well.

Amber Schipa: I learned a lot about relationships. It takes a long time to figure out who you really want in your life.

Cora Schipa: Appreciate everything good in life, because things change fast.

Trevor Scott: I have learned that there will always be someone better than you at something. And those people who are better than you have someone better than them.

Taylor Seel: I have learned a lot about acceptance and how to be more open to any ideas and opinions. The population at SOA is pretty diverse with many different viewpoints, styles, and interests.

Hunter Simes: To love people unconditionally.

Caleb Smith: Keep pride and arrogance



in the background, because it won't get you far in life at all. Never think that you have everything handled by yourself; it is okay to ask for help when you need it.

Elizabeth Snyder: I learned how to serve others in our community through the

arts. Whether it was leading SOA Spring Break Art Camp or teaching students piano, I learned how to give back in our community using the arts.

Rose Stark: How to speak Ubi in Dr. Cusatis' class.

Jonathan Stone: Time management.

Haley Swittenberg: Focus on yourself and really enjoy the unique environment of SOA, because everyone in the real world isn't as accepting or celebratory of being different.

What quote do you want to be remembered by?

Cecile Thomson: When bees find a source of food, they communicate to other bees via the 'waggle dance'. The duration of the waggle tells the bees how far the distance is between the hive and the food source, and the angle of the waggle shows the location of the food source relative to the angle of the sun and the hive.

Keegan Vath: Standing out with everyone else isn't standing out; don't try to stand out, just be yourself before you lose who you are.

Elliot Weeks: Time.

Maeve West: How to ignore crazy people.

Cassandra Whiteside: Your grades don't define you or your intelligence, don't bring a rolling book bag to high school (everyone will hate you), life is not fair so get over it, and don't stand in the middle of the hallway or stairway.

Courtney Wickstrom: To stop putting "excitedly," "nervously," and other adverbs after my dialogue tags in short stories.

Quinn Wilder: Acceptance and tolerance of others is one of the most important values a person can obtain. It makes for a happier community and promotes inclusion in all aspects of life.

Cayman Williams: I'd say the most valuable thing I've learned has been independence and expressing myself in the way I feel comfortable to.

Mosiah Williams: I am my worst enemy.

Patrick Wohlscheid: In a competitive environment, it is important not to base your sense of self-worth on perceived successes or failures.

Mark Wolfe: The most important thing I've learned at SOA is a little patience goes a long way. Especially in your major, sometimes people will get on your nerves during stressful times but you have to remember they are going through similar things that you might be going through as well.

Lance Wylder: To be true to my character and to firmly stand up for what I believe in.

Bethany Yeung: I've learned what a healthy amount of stress is and isn't. Balancing all aspects of life is important.

Bailey Abedon: "Lesson one. Ditch the dream and be a doer, not a dreamer."

-Shonda Rhimes

Luke Ablonczy: "Oh how the turntables"

-Michael Scott

Laila Aleem: "What's the world for you if you can't make it up the way you want it?"

-Toni Morrison

Adam Beall: "Don't take life too seriously. You won't make it out alive."

Ariana Blevins: "How can you tell that an elephant has been in your fridge?"

By the footprints in the butter."

Carlos Boswell:

"OPEN THE OTHER FREAKIN DOOR! THERE ARE TWO!"

Jessica Boyd:

"I'm not sarcastic. I'm just intelligent beyond your understanding."

Joseph Brennan:

"If it's flipping hamburgers at McDonald's, be the best hamburger flipper in the world. Whatever it is you do, you have to master your craft."

-Snoop Dogg

Jessica Bride:

"That wasn't like *High School Musical* at all."

Finian Butcher: I've never said anything memorable or even worth mentioning.

Hannah Chase: "We Are The Change That We Seek"

Virginia Clyburn: "Sometimes I'll start a sentence, and I don't even know where it's going. I just hope I find it along the way."

-Michael Scott

Madison Craig: "Everything is temporary."

Madison Crawford: "Did she really just walk out of class again?"

Nicole Dawson: "If I won the award for laziness, I would send somebody to pick it up for me."

Jessica De La Cruz: "Omg, I can't do this no more!!!"

Zoë Alessandra De Luca-Parker: "I

didn't do anything wrong because I can't do anything wrong, but because we're all just products of our environment, bouncing around like marbles in a game of Hungry, Hungry Hippos that is our random and cruel universe." - Bojack Horseman

Hannah Deremer: "I opened my mouth, almost said something. Almost. The rest of my life may have turned out differently if I had. But I didn't."

-Khaled Hosseini, *The Kite Runner*

Heath DuBose: "Nothingness lies coiled at the heart of being like a worm"

-Jean Paul Sartre

Alie Duffy:

"Throughout my life, I've realized that God has every good and bad thing that happens in our lives for a reason. Every trial has it's blessing."

Caroline Dukes:

"I'm an Eskimo, not Asian, hunty."

Katie Durand:

"All you need is love. False. The four basic human necessities are air, water, food, and shelter."

-Dwight Schrute

Jordan Edwards:

"Prettier doesn't

always mean better. There will be people that are prettier than you, smarter than you, funnier than you, whatever, you still have traits and qualities that make you important."

McCormick Emge: "I was never worried that synthesizers would replace musicians. First of all, you have to be a musician in order to make music with a synthesizer." -Robert Moog

Cassidy Enright: "She is water. Powerful enough to drown you, soft enough to cleanse you, deep enough to save you."

Camille Feaster: "She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs without fear of the future." -Proverbs

31:25



Jenna Flaherty: I want to be remembered by the quote "Sometimes you just have to throw on a crown and remind them who they're dealing with."

Brynnan Frye: "Stay positive and happy. Work hard and don't give up hope. Be open to criticism and keep learning. Surround yourself with happy, warm, and genuine people."
-Tena Desae

Lakeisha Gamble: "In order to be irreplaceable, one must always be different."
-Coco Chanel

Tiamoni Garner: "Your attitude determines your altitude."

Chris Garrison: "Please refrain from articulating."
-Dr. John Cusatis

Brittany Gianoukos: "When I see myself as an old woman, I just think about being happy. And, hopefully, I'll still be fly."
-Rihanna

Sarah Catherine Gillard: "GUYS!"

Emma Greig: "Wild Card."
-Charlie Kelly

Sasha Grigorieff: "The vultures are waiting to pick your bones."

Izzy Gustafson: "Not all girls are made of sugar and spice and everything nice. Some girls are made of sarcasm, wine, and everything fine."

Alana Haltiwanger: "At the end of the day, you are who you are, and it's probably who you've always been."
-One Tree Hill

Vincent Hamilton: "I need a pencil."

Abby Haynes: "The appetite is for literature, not for pop-tarts"
-Dr. Cusatis

Julia Holmes: "Honey, where is my super suit?"
-Frozone

Hunter Horn: I don't know.

Mary Grace Hutzler: "Well behaved women rarely make history"
-Eleanor Roosevelt

Coleman Jones: "Don't expect anything, and you won't be disappointed."

Taylor Kahn-Perry: "Slowing down is not really my jam."
-Leslie Knope

Sophia Karesh: "Did you know I'm a legal little person?"

Hannah Kelly: "I don't want a quote to be remembered by. I'd rather people remember my character over some words."
-Hannah Kelly

Emma Kerr: "That's why I'm first chair"

Alden King: "The next time you hear someone complain about people being fake... plot twist! That person doesn't know how to be real."
-Katya Zamolodchikova

Glynn King: "If I win, I wanna be happy. If I lose, I just wanna pass out"
-Alden King

Gracie King: "We have to dance it out."



That's how we finish it."
-Meredith Grey

Erica Kremer: "I've got nothing to do today but smile"
-Paul Simon

Jordan Le: "No comment."

Megan LeBarron: "If I get it right, I will be very happy. If I get it wrong, I will not be surprised."

Jessica Leiker: I don't know a quote.

Caroline Lloyd: "I had a really bad education, because I thought New Zealand was a country."
-Hannah Chase, age 18. (Note: New Zealand IS a country.)

Damon Lockwood: "Just do it... like Nike."
Abbie Long: "I can't get up. I have a cat on me."

Eli Lyons: "The more you like yourself, the less you are like anyone else, which makes you unique."
-Walt Disney

Andrew Macchia: "Not this class again."

Betty Manaris: "Does anyone need a fork? I don't need it. I just got it so I could walk to the cafeteria so more people could see my outfit"
-Sasha Grigorieff

Carson Mann: "Let it be lit."

Graham Martini: "See you on the other side."

Nadja McGlone: "Does anyone need a fork? I don't need it i just got it so I could walk to the cafeteria so more people could

my outfit"
-Sasha Grigorieff

Walker Menkus: "yeem."

Adrianna Mitrano: "As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands: one for helping yourself, the other for helping others"
-Audrey Hepburn

Jackson Morton: "Maybe next year."

Lily Murchison: "Didn't you not wear shoes for like two weeks in eighth grade?"

Joshua Nell: "You may hate it now, but it goes by faster than you think. Just slow down and enjoy your friends and family."

Dionte Nelson: "YOLO"

Lian Norris: "When that drive drove the driven."
-Toni Morrison

Jada Orr: "The most dangerous creation of any society is the man who has nothing to lose."
-James Baldwin

Karlee Parshall: "People underestimate the power of nostalgia. It's truly one of the greatest human weaknesses, second only to the neck."
-Dwight Schrute

Mollie Pate: "I don't have senioritis. I'm depressed."
-Mosiah Williams

Carson Peaden: "You all took a life here today. The life of the party."
-Michael Scott

Alec Pourmoghadam: "Wig."

Virginia Quarles: Pubmaa: "You know, kid, in times like this my buddy Timon here says, 'You got to put your behind in your past...'"
Timon: "No. No. No. Amateur. Lie down before you hurt yourself. It's 'You got to put your past behind you.'"

Grace Rauton: "It's kind of fun to do the impossible."
-Walt Disney

Nick Remington: "In the kitchen, wrist twistin' like it's Stir-Fry."

Elise Richardson: "You gotta work a little to ball a lot"
-Tom Haverford

Anna Ritchey: "You must always have faith in people, but, most importantly, you must always have faith in yourself."
-Elle Woods

Maggie Robinson: "Road work ahead? Uh, yeah, I sure hope it does."

Morgan Roddey: "Boom By Yah Suckas"

Tianai Rong: "Even when you're at the top, there's always something higher."

Brianna Samonte: "Instead of coloring books, I grew up coloring my music. I like to play in color."

Maggie Scapellato: "It really do be like that sometimes."

Amber Schipa: "Take it moment by moment, and you will find that we are all, as I've said before, bugs in amber."
-Kurt Vonnegut

Cora Schipa: "Life is but a dream."

Trevor Scott: "If you can't convince them, confuse them."

What are your plans after Graduation?

Bailey Abedon: I will attend the Cinematic Arts School at the University of Southern California, where I will major in Screenwriting.

Luke Ablonczy: I will go to USC Honors College for Computer Science.

Laila Aleem: I plan to attend NYU as a Biology major and continue acting. And to be happy.

Elysia Andrews: I will be attending Clemson University, majoring in Biological Sciences with a possible double major in Genetics.

Adam Beall: Studying biological sciences and cello performances at USC.

Ariana Blevins: To watch all of Game of Thrones.

Carlos Boswell: Attend USC and major in Global Studies, and then get a job within the FBI's SRT Tactical Unit.

Jessica Boyd: I plan on going to Charleston Southern University and getting my degree in music education and flute performance

Joseph Brennan: I plan to go to College of Charleston Honors for secondary education under the teaching fellows program and hopefully do an internship over the summer.

Jessica Bride: I'll be attending The George Washington University, and I hope to get my Master's degree in the future.

Finian Butcher: I plan on entering the field of real estate. I'm getting my license this summer!

Hannah Chase: I plan on studying education at The College of Charleston for the next four years.

Virginia Clyburn: After graduation, I'm headed to USC to major in Music.

Madison Craig: Going to USC Columbia for psychology.

Madison Crawford: After graduation, I

will be attending College of Charleston with the Teaching Fellows Scholarship to pursue my degree in Special Education.

Hayden Daughtry: Work, then school.

Nicole Dawson: Enjoy my summer and attend college.

Jessica De La Cruz: Not partying and getting wasted that's for sure. #momlife

Zoe Alessandra De Luca-Parker: I plan on going to University

of Edinburgh for International Law and Relations, and eventually become an International lawyer.

Hannah DeRemer: After graduation, I'm going to be heading to Appalachian State University. I'm going in Undecided, but I plan to study Media Arts/Animation and minor in Philosophy.

Heath DuBose: My plans after graduation are to go to Clemson University and study Economics.

Alie Duffy: I am going to Anderson University to major in Theatre with a minor in Youth Ministry.

Caroline Dukes: Release the virus for the zombie apocalypse and live out the rest of my life in Alaska.

Katie Durand: I will be attending the University of South Carolina starting in the fall, and I will be majoring in elementary education as a South Carolina Teaching Fellow.



Taylor Seel: "I thought I saw a puttytat" –Robin Rogers

Hunter Simes: "Party's over, partyboy." - Mrs. Abedon

Caleb Smith: "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." - Mahatma Ghandi

Denver Smith: "Although the butterfly and the caterpillar are completely different, they are one and the same." – Kendrick Lamar

Elizabeth Snyder: "The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." -Mahatma Gandhi

Rose Stark: "Women need not always keep their mouths shut and their wombs open." –Emma Goldman

Jonathan Stone: "Countin' hunids till my fingers turn blue."

Haley Swittenberg: "You have all been so helpful in my career and formation by being horrible." - Bianca Del Rio

Cecile Thomson: "Sometimes I'll start a sentence, and I don't even know where it's going. I just hope I find it along the way." -Michael Scott

Keegan Vath: "And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you." -1 Peter 5:10

Elliot Weeks: "Happiness is that silhouette of E.T. against the moon."

Maeve West: I already gave y'all a senior quote.

Cassandra Whiteside: "If you don't like something, change it. If you can't change it, change your attitude." - Maya Angelou

Courtney Wickstrom: "Now, I can't pay for your college, but you don't have to go to class to be in class." -Michael Scott

Quinn Wilder: "How many absences do you have?"

Cayman Williams: "Finish each day and be done with it. You have done what you could. Some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day. You shall begin it serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense." -Ralph Waldo Emerson

Mosiah Williams: "It's not senioritis, it's depression."

Patrick Wohlscheid: "Absorb youth and you will be absorbed by youth. Take on new influences without fear and you need not fear what is new. Change the people around you by changing the people around you."- George Clinton

Mark Wolfe: I want to be remembered by "Innerspace Calling to Milady," the first line of my first musical here at SOA.

Lance Wylder: "I haven't even begun to peak."

Bethany Yeung: "Time flies like an arrow. Fruit flies like a banana."

Jordan Edwards: This summer I will spend as much time as possible with my friends from high school and then I will attend Wofford College, double majoring in French and International Affairs.

McCormick Emge: Before going to Clemson for Electrical Engineering, I am looking forward to enjoying my summer.

Cassidy Enright: Intern in Veterinary practices in Charleston over the summer and then move into the University of Charlotte North Carolina.

Camille Feaster: I will be attending the University of South Carolina to major in Nursing.

Jenna Flaherty: I am moving to New York to pursue my career in singing, acting, modeling, and dancing. I want to make it as a professional and be successful. I will be studying criminal justice in online college.

Brynnan Frye: After graduation I am attending the University of South Carolina to study Nursing, and I hope to become a labor and delivery nurse afterwards.

Ayanna Gadsden: I plan to continue to invest in my artistic talent. After high school, I plan to attend the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design for four years. While I'm in the cold, I also plan to sing and expand my music career.

Lakeisha Gamble: I'm going on a cruise as my gift, but I'll probably be working all summer until I go off to school in the fall.

Hunter Garner: I will be attending the University of South Carolina, majoring in Exercise Science. My dream is to attend Graduate School and get accepted into a Physician's Assistant program.

Tiamoni Garner: Attending USC. Go Cocks!

Chris Garrison: I plan to attend USC Honors in the fall and then medical school afterwards in hopes to become a neurosurgeon.

Brittany Gianoukos: I'm attending USC in Columbia, and I will be going in as undecided. I'm planning on joining a sorority and hopefully going into the medical field.

Sarah Catherine Gillard: Next fall, I am going to be majoring in neuroscience with a minor in philosophy and English at the University of Miami hopefully in preparation for a career studying drugs and the brain.

Emma Greig: To move to Australia.

Sasha Grigorieff: I'm going to take a gap year and then go to fashion school.

Izzy Gustafson: After graduation I plan

on becoming a marine biologist with a doctorate degree.

Alana Haltiwanger: I'm attending Western Carolina University as a Forensic Science major with a concentration in Biology.

Vincent Hamilton: Work and college.

Abby Haynes: I'll be starting at New York University as a Global Public Health: Nutrition and Dietetics major in Spring 2019!

Julia Holmes: Go to college.

Hunter Horn: Go to Montana and never come back.

Joshua Hornig: I will be going to Clemson and pursuing a degree in Mechanical Engineering.

Mary Grace Hutzler: I will be attending Georgia Southern University in the fall, likely as a Fashion Merchandising major.

Coleman Jones: Experience life.

Taylor Kahn-Perry: Next fall, I am attending Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. to major in Government and minor in Education, Inquiry and Justice in preparation for a career in education policy.

Sophia Karesh: I am going to Emerson College to study Broadcast Journalism.

Hannah Kelly: I'm going to Trident Tech for two years.

Emma Kerr: I will be working at Bethelwoods Camp and Conference as a lifeguard. I am also going to Guatemala on a mission trip that my youth group and I have been planning for a few years. I'm very excited. Then when the semester comes around, I will be attending Furman University and majoring in Health Sciences.

Alden King: I'm going to CofC, and that's about all I know. I have no idea what I want to major in or even do with my life, but I'm going to try to keep dancing for sure.

Glynn King: All I know so far is that I'm going to College of Charleston. As for lifelong goals or plans, I have no idea.

Gracie King: This fall I will start school at Winthrop University. I plan to graduate, in four years, with a degree in Dance Education (earning my K-12 teacher certification). I



hope to teach High School dance at a school similar to SOA or even here if possible.

Erica Kremer: After graduation, I plan on going to college and taking auditions for orchestras around the world.

Jordan Le: Going to college and pretty much effectively monitoring my studies, grades, and money or loans.

Megan LeBarron: I'm going to Queens University of Charlotte.

Jessica Leiker: I'm planning on going to CofC as an exercise science major and from

there I plan on going on to be a PA or personal trainer.

Caroline Lloyd: Hopefully get some sleep.

Damon Lockwood: I plan to attend Wingate University and major in accounting.

Abbie Long: I'm going to Clemson University to major in physics. Afterwards, I plan to earn my graduate degree and become an atmospheric physicist.

Eli Lyons: I will be attending Winthrop in pursuit of an MBA, majoring in English and double minoring in Business and French.

Andrew Macchia: Going home.

Betty Manaris: I have plans to travel this summer, and next year I will be attending Appalachian State University.

Carson Mann: Go to college, get a good job, and have fun.

Graham Martini: I am going to the Maryland Institute College of Art in Baltimore.

Nadja McGlone: I'm attending the Fashion Institute of Technology in Manhattan NYC as a Fashion Design major. I'm planning on minoring in Accessories so I can continue making complicated and impractical backpacks for a living.

Walker Menkus: Work full time over the summer, go to college for medicine, switch majors halfway through college, lose all my savings, take on crippling student debt, die alone in my 30's.

Adrianna Mitrano: After graduation, I will be spending the summer on the beach. In the fall I'll be attending the University of Alabama at Birmingham, majoring in Anthropology with a concentration in Archaeology.

Courtney Morrow: Enjoying my summer with my friends and family before I leave. I will be attending Lander University in the fall where I will be majoring in Nursing.

Jackson Morton: Be happy.

Lily Murchison: I will be attending Scripps College in California.

Joshua Nell: College at USC.

Dionte Nelson: Attend USC Columbia.

Lian Norris: I will be attending Clemson University.

Jada Orr: I'm headed to Howard University to major in Journalism and Media, and I'm planning to double minor in African American Studies and Public Policy. I'm lowkey considering law school, but also grad school in New York. Basically, I'm either going to end up debating on CNN or a politically involved Kahlana Barfield Brown, *InStyle* magazine's head fashion editor.

Karlee Parshall: I plan on earning my masters in Music Performance.

Mollie Pate: Retire to a lonesome sea cave.

Carson Peaden: During the summer I plan to work a lot in order to save money. I will be attending USC in the fall.

Alec Pourmoghadam: I plan on attending University of South Carolina and majoring in Nursing. I want to become a pediatric nurse practitioner.

Virginia Quarles: I plan to enjoy summer with my Charleston friends and family before I go to college. I am going to USC Aiken as a Nursing major in the fall.

Grace Rauton: I am attending Point Park University (Pittsburgh, PA) in the fall after my graduation and majoring in Dance with a concentration in Ballet.

Nick Remington: Go to University of South Carolina.

Elise Richardson: Going to DePaul University in Chicago.

Anna Ritchey: I will be studying Journalism at the University of South Carolina.

Maggie Robinson: Join a clan of rats and terrorize the NYC subway system.

Morgan Roddey: I'm going to USC in the fall and majoring in International Studies.

Tianai Rong: Go to college. Become a software engineer :>

Brianna Samonte: After graduation, I will be a business major at College of Charleston. My career goal is to be a lawyer and if I still want to be a lawyer after receiving my bachelor's degree in business, I will go to law school.

Maggie Scapellato: I will be going



to Furman University and majoring in Neuroscience. I will hopefully be joining the military after college and going to medical school.

Amber Schipa: Traveling and experiencing as much as I can.

Cora Schipa: College!

Trevor Scott: I plan on attending The University of South Carolina through the Mechanical Engineering program.

Taylor Seel: After graduation I plan to go to College of Charleston and study Marine Biology. I hope to study abroad and travel to places all around the world.

Hunter Simes: I'm going to move to the Netherlands and unlock a new understanding of the world.

Caleb Smith: In the fall of 2018, I will be attending Oglethorpe University on a full scholarship, where I will double major in theatre and film and minor in business. I will also take the opportunity to study abroad at Oxford University.

Denver Smith: I'm becoming an Audio Design and Production major at Columbia College Chicago.

Elizabeth Snyder: After graduation, I plan on majoring in Theology to pursue the career of becoming a missionary in a developing country. I want to continue to serve others throughout my whole life, no matter where I live after graduation.

Rose Stark: I will be attending Pace University for Theater.

Jonathan Stone: Attend the Citadel.
Haley Swittenberg: I'm moving to Oregon, attending the bridge program at Portland State University, becoming an amazing journalist, and subsequently a Portlandia character.

Cecile Thomson: I will be attending the University of South Carolina for Nursing.
Keegan Vath: I plan to attend Coastal Carolina University this fall and major in Marine Science. I am planning on attending college there for 6 years and take the core classes in their 6-year program so that, hopefully with a lot of studying and cramming and hard work, I can get my ph.D. in Marine Science by the Summer of 2024.

Elliot Weeks: My plans are to study Violin Performance at Florida State University.

Maeve West: College and traveling.

Cassandra Whiteside: I will be attending USC Columbia and Midlands Technical College through the gateway program, majoring in Public Health on a path to become a dentist.

Courtney Wickstrom: I'm gonna try my best.

Quinn Wilder: I plan to attend Clemson University majoring in Political Science after graduation. I hope to participate in choir, study abroad, and numerous clubs while I'm in Tigertown. Once I finish my undergraduate degree, I hope to continue my studies in Law at Duke University and become a lawyer.

Cayman Williams: I plan to attend Clemson University in the fall and major in Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management.

Mosiah Williams: I'm probably going to college in D.C. Probably major in Creative Writing and minor in Film and Painting. Probably write a few books, movies, and such. I'm finally probably not gonna dread going to an institution whose missions is to empower me. *laughs*

Patrick Wohlscheid: I will be attending the University of South Carolina to complete an Interdisciplinary Bachelor's degree in Political Philosophy, Ethics, and American History to prepare for law school.

Mark Wolfe: I'm headed up to New York City to prepare for my Broadway debut.

Lance Wylder: Either go to New York on scholarship to sing on Broadway or attend University of South Carolina to major in Public Health.

Bethany Yeung: Spending as much time with my friends as possible and crying a lot.

What was your most memorable moment at SOA?

Bailey Abedon: My Creative Writing Senior Thesis Reading.

Luke Ablonczy: Our tenth grade strings and vocal Broadway concert and my senior thesis.

Laila Aleem: April 22th, 2016: The Prince tribute at convocation. It was amazing how our school used our art to honor one of the most talented individuals who graced the face of this earth.

Elysia Andrews: The most memorable moments at SOA were competing and winning at National Orchestra Festival and Grand National Adjudicators Invitational with the symphony orchestra.

Adam Beall: When we won a National Orchestra Festival in Tampa.

Ariana Blevins: The time Salma acted as Hamlet and almost killed Malachi.

Carlos Boswell: CLASSIFIED.

Jessica Boyd: When I slayed my senior thesis.

Joseph Brennan: One word: Starmites.

Jessica Bride: Standing on stage with my Creative Writing classmates at our Senior Thesis.

Finian Butcher: All the time spent with my friends before every concert.

Hannah Chase: My most memorable moment at SOA is getting a solo in vocal at the 8th grade spring concert.

Virginia Clyburn: Powderpuff this year when we were all dancing in the breezeway having an amazing time!

Madison Craig: Before a band concert, my friend Karlee and I ate a whole bag of Doritos. The big family sized ones. And this unnamed guy reached out for the bag of chips, but I thought he wanted a high five, so I high fived him, and he

said he just wanted the chips. I am still haunted by Dorito guy.

Madison Crawford: My most memorable moment at SOA would be when I put my final senior thesis on stage. Most people will have no idea what I'm talking about but when I put my dance on stage, that is the moment I will remember forever.

Hayden Daughtry: Hacky sack.

Nicole Dawson: All the bad moments.

Jessica De La Cruz: I don't know.

Zoe Alessandra De Luca-

Parker: Being forgotten in my senior yearbook.

Hanna De Remer:

When someone slammed Hannah Chase against the lockers and said "Move, egg." Had to be there.

Alie Duffy:

During my first Music Down in My Soul, there was an older man in a wheelchair, and he was bold enough to start worshipping the Lord right there.

Caroline Dukes: Every time Harrison Dahabi and I scared Ginny Ravenel so badly she fell down like a fainting sheep.

Katie Durand: The Prince tribute at convocation. They sang "Purple Rain," all the lights were turned off, and everyone had their flashlights on. It was a really cool moment.

Jordan Edwards: Right before I performed my first dance senior thesis, Mrs. Cline, the dance teacher who has had me since sixth



Camille Feaster: Winning Nationals with the SOA Symphony in Tampa Florida was super memorable. It was so fulfilling to see all of our hard work pay off.

Jenna Flaherty: My most memorable moment was singing my senior thesis for vocal with my very best friend Lance. We really knocked our performance out of the park.

Brynnan Frye: My most memorable moment at SOA has been all four years of Jump Jive and Wail. It was a different experience than homecoming and prom, another thing that was unique to SOA, and it was fun every single year.

Lakeisha Gamble: It's a tie between playing with the puppies for the fundraiser and powderpuff.

Hunter Garner: My most memorable moment at SOA was winning awards in the Wind Ensemble and Symphony Orchestra, but also making great friends that have made SOA enjoyable and fun.

Tiamoni Garner: It's definitely going to be graduation. I am speaking it into existence.

Chris Garrison: When the Symphony won the National Orchestra Festival.

Brittany Gianoukos: Going on as many trips as I could with the theatre department, and making many great memories with them.

Sarah Catherine Gillard: My most memorable moment at SOA would have to be either performing my final dance senior thesis piece on stage, or making a touchdown in our senior powderpuff game while coated in glitter.

Emma Greig: Writing my thesis and then having it get flagged by the district for mature content.

grade, told me that she was so glad that I had come back. That really mattered to me.

McCormick Emge: Travelling to New York with my Piano family

Cassidy Enright: Jump, Jive, and Wail and Prom are the most memorable moments at SOA. Some lunches were pretty funny as well.



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Izzy Gustafson: The clarinet choir trip to the Midwest to represent our school and South Carolina.

Alana Haltiwanger: One of my dreams since I got here in 6th grade was to become the #1 Alto in the state. I worked super hard for it, and I was finally able to accomplish that my senior year. A great way to go out.

Abby Haynes: In sixth grade, my STEM cards fell off my ID all over the hallway, and I cried, which was a good time. Probably that and the Disney trip with Dance.

Julia Holmes: My first day in symphony.

Joshua Hornig: Mario Kart on the bus.

Mary Grace Hutzler: My most memorable moment was probably filming music videos with my whole class in 6th grade. Search "Moves Like Jagger - SOA edition" for a good laugh.

Coleman Jones: Meeting Mr. Orvin.

Taylor Kahn-Perry: Sitting

in Ms. DeTiberus' classroom the morning of November 9, 2016, with the rest of my Creative Writing class.

Sophia Karesh: Senior skip day.

Hannah Kelly: Senior thesis was the most memorable for me. It was the first time I saw my teacher weep for me and tell me I was part of the SOA family.

Emma Kerr: There are so many memories to choose from, but I think one that will always remind me of SOA is when the Symphony Orchestra won nationals twice in my sophomore and senior year! I am proud to be a part of the best high school orchestra nationwide.

Alden King: Either completing senior thesis with my fellow dance majors (love you guys), or my last Jump, Jive, and Wail with my best friends (love you guys, too). Both memorable for different reasons.

Glynn King: My most memorable moments were probably senior year Jump Jive and Wail and Prom, just because it was all my friends having so much fun together and not caring about anything else in the world.

Gracie King: Definitely the dancers' trip to Disney sophomore year with Mrs. Ratigan. We grew super close as a family and grew as dancers.

Erica Kremer: My first day here.

Jordan Le: Senior thesis.

Megan LeBarron: My most memorable moment is the sixth grade band Carowinds trip where I got peer pressured into riding my first roller coaster. I loved every second of it.

Jessica Leiker: My most memorable moments came from Creative Writing. But what happens in CW stays in CW, so I can't say.

Caroline Lloyd: At the beginning of junior year, Hannah DeRemer, Anna Ritchey, and I erased letters off of the PE board. We got detention from the Academic Magnet PE teacher. In detention, Mr. Brehm found out why we were there, laughed, and then told us to leave.

Damon Lockwood: Junior year at powderpuff doing a big flip.

Abbie Long: My senior thesis performance. It showed me how much I've grown since coming to this school in sixth grade. It was my last hurrah after seven years of hard work.

Eli Lyons: In tenth grade, the last day before our theater class was split for the first time, we spent the class period on the field together. We told jokes, built a human pyramid, and Morgan Roddey got kicked in the face. We left that day filming the end to *The Breakfast Club* with tears running down our faces.

Andrew Macchia: Late-ins and early-outs.

Betty Manaris: I don't have one specific memory that sticks out, but watching my friends succeed in their passions and talents has been amazing and has definitely helped to form me into the person I am today.

Carson Mann: The Strings trips with friends.



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Graham Martini: The seven years I have spent at SOA have sort of blended into one long moment, but I feel like the experience has helped me figure out what I want in life.

Nadja McGlone: My most memorable moment at SOA would probably be closing last year's fashion show as a junior, with the 17 look collection that also went to my 3D AP portfolio.

Walker Menkus: The day I finally stopped wearing actual garbage for clothes.

Adrianna Mitrano: My most memorable moment at SOA was during my performance of my final part of thesis. I moved to South Carolina to go to SOA three years ago, and after much debate with myself, in that moment I was performing my own play, I knew I had made the right decision coming here.

Courtney Morrow: I know it hasn't happened yet, but walking across that stage with definitely be the most memorable moment of my years at SOA.

Lily Murchison: I can't say.

Joshua Nell: Strings trips.

Dionte Nelson: Senior year!!!!

Lian Norris: When I performed my senior thesis.

Jada Orr: Every day is something new, so I honestly can't decide. I've made memories every day with my friends.

Karlee Parshall: My last moment with Mr. Kerr.

Carson Peaden: Realizing that there's no point in trying to impress people who aren't worth all that much.

Alec Pourmoghadam: The funniest moment was when Hannah Chase fell down the stairs on the first day of junior year and couldn't get up.

Virginia Quarles: My most memorable moment at SOA is feeling accomplished and relieved after senior thesis.

Grace Rauton: I will never forget any of the dances I performed alongside my class throughout my seven years here.



Nick Remington: Being a Native American in the YMCA.

Elise Richardson: Senior thesis.

Anna Ritchey: My most memorable moment at SOA is my senior prom weekend with my friends in Edisto.

Maggie Robinson: Leaving vocal.

Morgan Roddey: The feeling that I got every time I went on stage to perform.

Tianai Rong:

Brianna Samonte: The feeling I had after I finished my senior thesis. I will always remember how relieved and accomplished I felt after performing a repertoire that reflected my time at SOA.

Maggie Scapellato: Winning the national championship with the symphony orchestra. It was an unforgettable moment.

Amber Schipa: Crying in the bathroom.

Cora Schipa: Running down the breezeway every year on the last day of school.

Trevor Scott: Having a sub in vocal so that I can get 16 people in a game of halo and still come out on top.

Taylor Seel: My most memorable moment at SOA would probably be when the Vocal department went to New York City and performed at Carnegie Hall. It was an amazing experience from being on the train to walking through Chinatown to seeing *Aladdin* on Broadway.

Hunter Simes: Wheel Schmitt.

Caleb Smith: Senior powderpuff day. It was one of the most energizing and jubilant days that I have ever had at school.

Denver Smith: Senior thesis.

Elizabeth Snyder: My most memorable moment at SOA was either my senior thesis performance or leading SOA Spring Break Art Camp for two years.

Rose Stark: The success of the school walkout for gun safety. The students were able to organize a smooth running and effective protest that, compared to most schools, the administration was very supportive of.

Jonathan Stone: The Vocal trip to New York City.

Haley Swittenberg: The day I first played my bass trombone and fell in love with music all over again.

Cecile Thomson: Winning two championships with the SOA Symphony Orchestra in the 10th and 12th grade and beating Emma Kerr at All-State twice.

Keegan Vath: My most memorable moment at SOA would have to be the 8th grade piano trip we took to Lander University and Carowinds. We had the best of times, cheering each other on for the piano competition, going to a bowling alley/roller skating rink one night for fun, and riding a bunch of awesome rides at Carowinds.

Elliot Weeks: Winning the title of Prom King, babyyy!!

Maeve West: Orvin's class.

Cassandra Whiteside: When Josh and Carson waited outside for an hour and a half in the cold because my concert was sold out. Josh brought me a bouquet.

Courtney Wickstrom: The scream circle we had in the field by the parking lot.

Quinn Wilder: My most memorable moment was participating in the National Walkout. It was indescribable to be able to participate in such a historical moment.

Cayman Williams: Either going on our dance Disney World trip in 10th grade, our last Jump, Jive, and Wail in October, or my senior prom weekend.

Patrick Wohlscheid: My most memorable moment at SOA was dressing up like Mr. Brehm during Spirit Week and learning how it feels to know people are intimidated by you.

Mark Wolfe: *Grease: The Musical*.

Lance Wylder: Completing my Senior Thesis. Singing was not my primary talent when I came here. I started seriously singing 2 years ago, and to see the reaction I received from the audience during and after my singing was really shocking.

Bethany Yeung: Winning nationals in 10th grade. It was amazing to see our hard work pay off, and the pride, joy, and unity I felt that day was unlike anything else.

What will you miss most about SOA?

Bailey Abedon: Going to miss that factory stench I have been inhaling for seven years, the emo writing on the bathroom stall, and the Creative Writing couches, which have absorbed my sweat, blood, and tears.

Luke Ablonczy: The kind of people who go to SOA.

Laila Aleem: All the “expression.”

Elysia Andrews: I’ll miss Dr. Selby’s symphony class the most and all the pieces we played.

Adam Beall: Strings with Dr. Selby.

Ariana Blevins: I will miss the cannoli I never got.

Carlos Boswell: My major teacher, Mr. Kerr, along with certain teachers and administration.

Jessica Boyd: I will miss the band competitions and preparing for them, because that’s when the band sticks together and works as a team and a family working towards one goal: winning.

Joseph Brennan: I will miss most my friends and the connections I’ve made over the years.

Jessica Bride: The SOA Creative Writing department.

Finian Butcher: I will miss all my lovely friends.

Hannah Chase: I will miss the amazing community I have been surrounded by for the past seven years.

Virginia Clyburn: I’ll miss my amazing senior classmates the most!

Madison Craig: My friends, especially Karlee.

Madison Crawford: What I will miss most about SOA will be the freedom we have. I know it doesn’t seem like we have a lot of freedom .but compared to other high schools we do and I think it truly helped us as students.

Nicole Dawson: The friends I have made over the years.

Jessica De La Cruz: Our school spirit and all the teachers that helped me get through the year.

Zoë Alessandra De Luca-Parker: I will definitely miss my friends the most.

Hannah DeRemer: Being able to see my friends everyday and finding people that I connect with on a spiritual level. People are puzzles, and most people are a lot deeper than they come off as.

Heath DuBose: I will miss the small things that I don’t realize I enjoy now, mostly people though.

Alie Duffy: The different aspects of life that are represented.

Caroline Dukes: Having an arts major.

Katie Durand: How many friends I made and how those friends helped shape me into the person I am today. We will all be going to different schools in the fall, but I know that they will always be important to me, because they made these past four years the best high school years I could have ever hoped for.

Jordan Edwards: I will miss the opportunities given to me at SOA. Nowhere else would I get to dance for an hour and a half for seven years with some of the best people, I would never have gotten to choreograph and see my choreography onstage, and I would have never been able to meet so many people that care about their artforms as much as I do.

McCormick Emge: I’m going to miss being able to get credit for making noise on a piano.

Cassidy Enright: I will definitely miss seeing my best friend everyday, but I also think I’ll miss our beautiful campus and the quirky random dance/sing-offs in the hallway.

Camille Feaster: SOA gave me some of the best friends that I’ve ever had. I’ll miss the relationships that I had with these people!

Jenna Flaherty: I will miss my friends more than anything and all the amazing memories that we had together.

Brynnan Frye: I will miss playing in the Symphony. It has been a wonderful experience and has helped my musical skills so much.

Lakeisha Gamble: I’ll probably miss my theater class the most.

Hunter Garner: What I will miss most about SOA is having the opportunity to be in the Wind Ensemble as well as the SOA Symphony Orchestra

Tiamoni Garner: My classmates.

Chris Garrison: Dr. Selby’s class, and all of the Strings kids that have become my second family.

Brittany Gianoukos: My friends, for sure. I will never meet a group of friends and have the same connection with them like I did at SOA.

Sarah Catherine Gillard: I’m going to miss my best friends and the time I’ve had with them more than anything else.

Emma Greig: My theater teachers, because they really helped me to develop into the person I am today. They helped me embarrass myself and be confident in what I do.

Sasha Grigorieff: My friends.

Izzy Gustafson: I’ll miss the people that have become a family to me including students, teachers, and administrators. On top of that, I’ll miss the whole routine of this unique school.

Alana Haltiwanger: I’ve never been so comfortable and felt so at home, so definitely that. And being so well known and accepted.

Vincent Hamilton: The wonderful garden.

Abby Haynes: The goose painting in the creative writing hallway.

Julia Holmes: Playing my instrument with my friends.

Joshua Hornig: Playing in the orchestra with all my friends.

Mary Grace Hutzler: I will definitely miss being surrounded by so many talented people and immersed in all forms of arts.

Coleman Jones: I will miss the great people that I’ve met and appreciate.

Taylor Kahn-Perry: I am going to miss the support system and family I’ve gained from SOA’s Creative Writing program, particularly the guidance from Mr. Hammes, Mrs. Hart, and Ms. DeTiberus.

Sophia Karesh: Mr. Kerr.

Hannah Kelly: I will miss all the bonds I share with everyone here.

Emma Kerr: I will miss the atmosphere and my friends the most. I am leaving a lot of my great friends. I also will miss the little things like the Symphony Orchestra, our really good concerts, and the trips. The atmosphere and friendliness of mostly everyone here is another thing that I will miss.

Alden King: I’ll miss the people here and friends who are going away for college. Definitely won’t miss everyone, but it’s going to be weird not walking through the hallways and seeing everyone’s faces everyday.

Glynn King: I’ll definitely miss seeing my friends every single day of the week the most, especially my junior friends that are being forced to stay here one more year.

Gracie King: Throughout the last 7 years, I have formed relationships with many students and teachers. Having a small, school environment has definitely contributed to the level of closeness the student body has and will be something I will miss as I move on to the real world.

Erica Kremer: I will miss all the friends I have made at SOA the most.

Jordan Le: The activities.

Megan LeBarron: I will miss going to band every day and seeing the same kids that I've been with since 6th grade. I'll miss Mr. Kerr's long anecdotes that only sometimes relate to what we are doing but always entertain.

Jessica Leiker: I will miss my classmates the most.

Caroline Lloyd: I will miss the smell in the hallways. I know I will never smell it anywhere else :(

Damon Lockwood: Playing basketball at lunch.

Abbie Long: I will miss being able to say 'hi' to everyone when I walk down the hall.

Eli Lyons: Having my theater family to laugh with and support each other through all the social experiments we are required to put ourselves through.

Betty Manaris: I will miss my friends so much.

Carson Mann: I will miss the Strings department the most.

Graham Martini: The people I have come to love.

Nadja McGlone: My friends. Obviously.

Walker Menkus: The Strings program.

Adrianna Mitrano: I will miss my opportunities and experiences that SOA provided me with.

Courtney Morrow: Watching the snakes slither through the halls.

Jackson Morton: My close friends.

Lily Murchison: The security of fairly easy classes.

Joshua Nell: Strings and friends.

Dionte Nelson: Friends.

Lian Norris: I will miss my friends, because after spending seven years together it's weird to think that we are all going our own way.

Jada Orr: My friends.

Karlee Parshall: I'll miss the friendships the most.

Mollie Pate: The looming fear of never graduating.

Carson Peaden: I'm definitely going to miss my Creative Writing friends and teachers. Other than that, there are not a lot of other things I'm going to miss.

Alec Pourmoghadam: I will miss my friends for sure. I have grown so close to them through crazy classes, my major, and general SOA stress.

Virginia Quarles: I will miss seeing my

piano family everyday.

Grace Rauton: My friends are the things I will miss the most about SOA. I have become especially close to my fellow dance majors over the past seven years, so it is going to be very hard to leave them.

Nick Remington: My Republican friends I sit with at lunch.

Elise Richardson: I will miss some of the most genuine friends that I made here.

Anna Ritchey: I'm definitely going to miss the amazing friends I have made and all the memories we have together the most.

Maggie Robinson: Dr. Teseniar. Gotta love the guy. I'll probably grow up to be some strange mixture of him and Mr. Orvin.

Morgan Roddey: The closeness. We are all a family and the thought of not speaking to some of my classmates and teachers on a daily basis makes me really upset.

Tianai Rong: The whole 90 minutes of doing art everyday.

Brianna Samonte: I will miss the constant exposure of the different forms in order to express creativity. The constant exposure inspired me to convey my art in multiple ways.

Maggie Scapellato: The hand soap smells phenomenal. I really will miss that.

Amber Schipa: The windows.

Cora Schipa: Creative Writing, for sure.

Trevor Scott: The friends I have made since coming to SOA in 6th grade.

Taylor Seel: My Vocal family and the trips we would go on.

Hunter Simes: Being surrounded by people with the same passions and mindset as me.

Caleb Smith: My major and all of the hopefully life long friendships I have made over the course of these 4 quick years.

Denver Smith: The easily made friendships and the teachers who are out there to help students.

Elizabeth Snyder: I will miss the multiple piano classes with my fellow piano majors and the Jefferson Service Club.

Rose Stark: I will miss everything about the Theatre program: all the people, the teachers, our performances, and the number of opportunities for outside theater events.

Jonathan Stone: I will miss my Republican friends the most.

Haley Swittenberg: Mr. Kerr, the bandroom, and my beautiful baby bass trombone.

Cecile Thomson: Being in the symphony orchestra.

Keegan Vath: The ease of meeting up with the friends and teachers that I love.

Elliot Weeks: Dr. Christopher Selby.

Maev West: Dr. Selby.

Cassandra Whiteside: I will miss SOME of the people.

Courtney Wickstrom: Creative Writing, without a doubt.

Quinn Wilder: I'll miss my friends the most. They are a special group that has made me into the person I am today and I can't believe I will continue life without them by my side daily.

Cayman Williams: All of the people I've grown close to and the family we've made in Dance.

Mosiah Williams: The people that have believed in me.

Patrick Wohlscheid: I will miss Adobe InDesign causing my computer to crash every ten minutes at the most inconvenient times.

Mark Wolfe: I think I will miss my Theater family the most.

Lance Wylder: My TRUE friends. We all watched each other grow from little sixth graders to seniors, and it has truly been a long journey with my best friends.

Bethany Yeung: Being able to play in an orchestra with all my friends.

Son-Ja Jones wins 9th Annual RMM Scholarship at Stones Tribute



Senior Vocal major **Son-Ja Jones** was this year's winner of the Rose Mare Myers Scholarship for Artistic Excellence. The award was presented at the Rolling Stones tribute, "It's Only Rock 'n' Roll," sponsored by *Applause* and performed by SOA and AMHS students and faculty. Above: junior **Joey McGuinn** (l) and senior **Jalin Williams** (r) jam on the Stones hit "Emotional Rescue."

What advice do you have for underclassmen?

Bailey Abedon: Take it day by day. Do not blindly adhere to authority because despite what they want you to think, they are often wrong.

Luke Ablonczy: The PSAT is more important than any other test, including the SAT, and nobody will tell you.

Laila Aleem: If you don't like something, fix it. If you have an amazing idea, act on it. Take initiative in bringing your goals into fruition, and don't let anything or anybody discourage you.

Elysia Andrews: Don't stress too much about anything! Work as hard as you can, but make sure you give yourself room to breathe. Everything will work out for you in the end.

Adam Beall: Enjoy school while it's free.

Ariana Blevins: Sleep more, and try not to stress out too much.

Carlos Boswell: Don't be scared to grow as a person and explore your creativity. The sky's the limit and take your time growing up!

Jessica Boyd: Don't stress. It's not worth it, because if you stress yourself out, then it will make things worse.

Joseph Brennan: No matter how caught up in schoolwork, it's always more important to make sure you are at a healthy mental state.

Jessica Bride: Do not take a full course load your senior year.

Finian Butcher: I advise that everyone should focus on the useful and develop valuable personal skills.

Hannah Chase: My biggest piece of advice is to never procrastinate. Always get your work done as soon as possible so you do not stress out at the last minute.

Virginia Clyburn: Underclassmen need to stay positive. It's almost impossible to get through all of high school without a positive outlook!

Madison Craig: Colleges don't care about your grades as much as you think.

Madison Crawford: Don't argue. It's really not worth the fight. Just do what you have to do to get out.

Nicole Dawson: Don't wait till the last minute to do your work. Always plan ahead and be prepared for your classes.

Jessica De La Cruz: Don't procrastinate. Seriously. It will catch up to you and bite you in the butt.

Zoë Alessandra De Luca-Parker: Give a lot of thought to what you want to accomplish in high school, and start doing it the moment you get to ninth grade.

Hannah DeRemer: No matter what happens to you in high school, know that there is more outside of SOA. The world doesn't end outside of this building, and life is constantly buzzing. Drama here is miniscule compared to what you'll experience everywhere else in the world.



Heath Dubose: Nothing matters in the end, so live without fear.

Caroline Dukes: Meet your due dates.

Katie Durand: My advice to underclassmen is to always challenge yourselves and put in as much effort as possible. You don't want to regret anything about your high school experience, so do as much as you possibly can with it.

Jordan Edwards: I went to SOA for middle school and then for my freshman year I transferred to Magnet and found that I was really unhappy, so I transferred to Wando to finish my freshman year. Both schools are good for some people, but I found that SOA was the best place for me. So my advice is to take advantage of every opportunity you are given at SOA, because most other schools don't offer them, and it will make you stand out to colleges.

McCormick Emge: Don't forget to enjoy high school, as well as endure it.

Cassidy Enright: Start involving yourself in your interests now and what you'd want to major in for college. It's hard to decide when you're almost out of time.

Camille Feaster: Learn to manage your time now!! It'll make everything so much easier.

Brynnan Frye: Don't take this school for granted. This is an amazing environment to grow up in and we should all be thankful that we've had the opportunity to attend this school.

Lakeisha Gamble: Always Stay on top of your grades!! Monitor them like a baby!

Hunter Garner: You have to balance your academic work and extracurricular activities well. It can become very difficult to juggle performances, tests, community service, and any other activities or clubs that you may be involved in.

Sarah Catherine Gillard: Once you make

it to 4AM during an all-nighter, the desire to sleep starts to go away. Don't put too much effort into people that don't do the same for you. Stick to your people.

Emma Greig: You only have one life so you might as well live it to the fullest. Also, the only person in this world who will always have your back is yourself. So love yourself, and know that you are your own best friend.

Sasha Grigorieff: Be yourself...but, like, not if you're weird.

Izzy Gustafson: Don't sweat the small stuff. The world keeps on turning even if you feel like it won't. These are going to be some of the best years of your life, so enjoy them as much as you can without ruining your life in the process.

Alana Haltiwanger: Never try to "fit in" and be like everyone else. Being your unique self is what's going to attract people.

Vincent Hamilton: Don't warm up shrimp in the microwave in the high school building.



a freshman or sophomore that's already stressing out about college, don't.

Gracie King: Stay organized. Whether you're busy outside of school with a job or extracurriculars involving your major, keep control of your work and schedule accordingly to reduce the stress of procrastination.

Erica Kremer:

Only take a super hard class if it something that you know you will enjoy and be able to excel at; don't take it for your GPA.

Jordan Le: It's harder and more stressful than middle school, and don't lag behind.

Megan LeBarron: If you work your hardest in a class and you still only have a D, that's okay, because that D is your A. As long as you put the work in, you should be proud of whatever you get.

Jessica Leiker: My advice is to stay on top of your work so you don't hate yourself for not doing it later on.

Caroline Lloyd: Need some sleep? Go to the nurse and tell them you have a severe headache. They will let you sleep in there for about 45 minutes.

Damon Lockwood: DO YOUR WORK. Don't get behind.

Abbie Long: Do not take AP classes senior year, don't skip class, enjoy and appreciate your major.

Eli Lyons: A wonderful teacher once told me, "Sometimes the thing you don't want to do is the exact thing you need to do."

Andrew Macchia: Do what you wanna do, and don't let somebody stop you.

Betty Manaris: Find out your date of graduation and make a countdown. Seeing the light at the end of the tunnel will keep you going.

Carson Mann: Have fun, but don't put off work. It can really come back to haunt you later, even if it doesn't seem like it.

Graham Martini: Focus. Get your priorities straight.

Nadja McGlone: Try junior year! And don't get lazy senior year. I know it's easy to do, so but you need that college \$\$\$.

Walker Menkus: Try to decide early

which college you want to go to. If you're not trying to get into the Ivy League, there's really no reason to try to get perfect grades

Adrianna Mitrano: Become best friends with your guidance counselor. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask them. Also, apply early to colleges no matter the deadline, and apply to any every scholarship out there.

Courtney Morrow: No matter how stressful it gets, it'll all be worth it.

Lily Murchison: Don't stand in the middle of the hallway and don't be obnoxious.

Joshua Nell: Don't procrastinate, because it will bite you in the butt.

Dionte Nelson: Don't wait until the last minute!

Lian Norris: Look forward to college and the future, but don't take the time at SOA for granted. No matter what you think, you will miss this place.

Jada Orr: There's so much to your passions, to life, to everything you want. Fall in love with SOA, but not too much so that you leave aimless. Travel during the summer and maybe go to an out-of-state college. Take advantage of study-abroad programs. You've GOT to get outside of your comfort zone to grow.

Karlee Parshall: Don't overwhelm yourself with hard courses and extracurriculars. If you're stressed all the time, you won't enjoy your high school years.

Mollie Pate: Coast.

Carson Peaden: Don't work yourself too hard during senior year. Although you might think you can handle the same workload, the added stress of thesis and college (as well as increasing senioritis) is already a lot to manage.

Alec Pourmoghadam: Apply and do your college stuff early. It is such a stressful thing.

Virginia Quarles: Take advantage of as many late-ins/early-outs as you can if you know senioritis will hit you hard. If you are applying to college, make sure you are aware of all deadlines and to turn your applications in early.

Anna Ritchey: Don't spend too much time worrying about school, you only get one senior year.

Maggie Robinson: Stop wearing clout sunglasses!!!!

Abby Haynes: Trust yourself and (unrelated) take PE before senior year.

Julia Holmes: Do your homework.

Hunter Horn: Stay in the background. It makes everything easier.

Joshua Hornig: Don't work too much, because you'll miss out.

Mary Grace Hutzler: Don't take everything so seriously.

Coleman Jones: It's a lot easier to just do the work instead of put it off, it might suck at that time but it sucks a lot more to just let the work pile.

Taylor Kahn-Perry: Focus on enjoying and noticing the unique energy that comes with being surrounded by a community of artists. It is a rare experience that you may not have again in your lifetime.

Sophia Karesh: Work hard all four years!!! The low grades you get your freshman year will negatively affect when you are applying to college.

Hannah Kelly: For the underclassmen, I really think it's important to be confident in yourself and indulge sometimes too. It's bad to be too self-critical.

Emma Kerr: Okay little children: just know that there will be some people and even teachers at times that will be really hard on you and try to fail you. Just fight it and be strong, because you are strong. Every one of you is special in your own way. If someone tells you that you can't succeed because of that failing test grade, don't listen to them.

Alden King: Sleep is more important than any schoolwork. Also, to the few sophomores in my psychology class who are already stressing about college... stop.

Glynn King: Not everything is as big of a deal as you think it is, and most likely the stuff you're worried about on Monday won't even

Morgan Roddey: Keep your friends close and your enemies closer. You never know how much one of those “enemies” could eventually mean to you.

Tianai Rong: Be yourself in your own art.

Brianna Samonte: Take care of yourself first before your grades. By knowing and overcoming your limits, you will be able to accomplish something meaningful.

Maggie Scapellato: Get a Google calendar. And don't take AP's if all you're going to do is complain about said AP's.

Amber Schipa: With the flurry of distractions inhabiting our modern lives, it's easy to overlook the subtle beauty that's scattered through them. Enjoy the now, because nothing matters as much as you think it does.

Cora Schipa: Remember what's important.

Trevor Scott: Do not stress about your first two years of highschool, because your last two will show you what true stress is.

Taylor Seel: Be prepared and have a rough plan as to what classes they want to take, but have a backup plan because schedules get messed up a lot, and you don't always get what you want.

Hunter Simes: Take care of your teeth.

Caleb Smith: Always remember who YOU are, you are the average of each member of your friend group. Is that really what you want people to remember you by? Always keep your reputation high, and choose a friend group that actually challenges you to be better than who you are currently.

Denver Smith: Stay in your lane and never apply the brakes on what you're passionate about.

Elizabeth Snyder: I would encourage every underclassmen to be themselves. Don't try to “fit the mold,” because colleges want unique students.

Rose Stark: Don't put your feet up on the chairs in the Rose Maree Myers Theater.

Jonathan Stone: Don't be annoying.

Haley Swittenberg: Try and be friends with more people than just your core friend group or major. You'll find that there are tons of cool and different people who could turn out to be your best friend, and you'd never even know.

Cecile Thomson: Apply to multiple colleges. You need options.

Keegan Vath: Try your hardest.

Do your best.

Chin up. Don't

look down. Keep

going. Put effort

into even the

littlest things,

and you'll find

it easier to put

your whole effort

into the big

things. Talk to

your teachers;

they aren't evil.

They're people,

too, and when

you treat them as such, then you'll see how

things will open up and become less tense.

Elliott Weeks: Regardless of how much you know, your personality is important; it is reflected upon everything that you do and everyone that you talk to.

Maeve West: Take all your required classes as early as possible to get all the late-ins, early-outs, and study halls you can.

Cassandra Whiteside: If you feel like you don't like it here, leave while you have the chance because if you don't you'll be miserable, but keep in contact with the people you actually like. Also become friends with the attendance lady (you'll thank me later).



Courtney Wickstrom: Full-rides to college don't actually exist.

Quinn Wilder: Find a group of people that you really connect with and stick with them through all the hardships that inevitably come. Life, especially high school, is so much

smoother when you have the security of friends.

Cayman

Williams:

Try to say “yes” as much as you can.

It helped me

get out of my

comfort zone

and experience

new things,

and make some

of my favorite

memories with

some of my

favorite people.

Wohlscheid:

Procrastination and laziness are temporary solutions, and the effects will come back to bite you.

Mark Wolfe: Don't slack off and think you can do things at the last minute and still succeed.

Lance Wylder: Stay organized and have great time management.

Bethany Yeung: Sort out your priorities. Try your best and work hard, but don't spend all your time working. Time goes by even faster than you think it will, and you don't want to waste it.

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Senior Essays

Applause asked the graduating class of 2018 to reflect on their experiences and time at SOA through a short essay discussing one of the following prompts: What would they do differently if they were entering sixth grade again, what they hope to be doing in 2028, which teacher has impacted them, and to reflect on the value of an SOA education or any aspect of their years here at School of the Arts.

Joe Brennan

Though there were many teachers who had a great impact on me over the years, there are two in particular who influenced me most: Mr. Younts and Ms. Zerbst. Mr. Younts introduced me to improv and got me involved in the improv troupe, The Fighting Gnomes, which taught me many skills other than just acting, such as social skills. He helped me get better at theater and helped me find characters that I did not know I could do well. He always pushed me to my limit and made me try my hardest. He brought me to my greatest acting potential. Ms. Zerbst, who I have had for 7th grade history, AP World History, and AP Psychology, is truly one of the smartest people I've ever met. She, too, pushes me to my limits and challenges me in a good way. She is always compassionate but is not afraid to throw a challenging assignment at you which always kept me on my toes. Ms. Zerbst's class always had me engaged because of her style of teaching, which I really enjoy. These two teachers had a great impact not only on my school career, but also on me as an individual.



Alana Haltiwanger

In 2028, I would like to have a stable job as a forensic scientist with the FBI or military, working with evidence found at crime scenes or finding out the cause of death of fallen soldiers. I plan on going to Western Carolina University, studying Forensic Science with a concentration in Biology, and receiving my Bachelor's. Then I will go to graduate school for my Master's and have a paid internship at a major lab. Hopefully after I receive my Master's, I will have job opportunities and offers through my internship or go into training for the military job.



Morgan Roddey

Everyone who knows me knows that I am a teacher's pet, and I'm honestly okay with that. Especially since I won't have to see some of you ever again. Anyways, picking just one teacher that had a strong impact on me would pretty much be impossible. So, this is a thank you to all of the teachers who I had an especially close relationship with. Mrs. Horschel, thank you for being like a mom and always believing in me. Mrs. Catangay, thank you for helping me truly find myself in a time when I needed some direction. Mrs. Link, thank you for showing me that my talents are unique and for fostering a place for me to explore them. Mrs. Zerbst, thank you for helping me become such good friends with Abby. You guys kept me on my toes, and I'm still convinced that's why I have the perfect amount of cynicism in me. Madame Bednarczyk, thank you for showing me the world. Ms. Mahoney, thank you for always sticking by me and reminding me of what's important. I will never be able to express my complete gratitude for everything that you all have done for me. I am the person I am today because of your guidance. I hope to one day make you proud.



Hannah Chase

I don't regret anything throughout my years at SOA, but if there was one thing I would change, it would be not procrastinating as much. If I was entering as a sixth grader, I would not procrastinate with school work like I have over the years. Over the years, I have always completed my school work on time, but I had a habit of waiting until the night before to do it, and that was not a smart idea. This habit created tons of stress and was easily preventable. I wish I could go back and change my mistakes and work on my school work right when I received it. I am going to work on this as I enter college.



Courtney Morrow

Ten years from now, I hope to be graduated from college and pursuing a career as a registered nurse. To make this happen, I will be majoring in nursing at Lander University. I want to be a nurse because I want to be able to help people and take care of those in need. My time at SOA has helped me juggle all of my schoolwork, art major, and extracurricular activities, and I will be able to use that in college to help me succeed. A few teachers here are the reason why I am following my dream and going to learn more about something I am interested in. I know that parts of SOA have helped me get to where I am now, and I will take those parts with me.



Sasha Gregorieff

In the year 2028, I plan to be fully deceased. I plan on accomplishing this goal by dropping out of college after going hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt. After my brief stint as a college student, I hope to be able to insert myself into the unemployed and homeless community, preferably in the northeast United States. After a few years of this, I will hopefully die of the cold in my sleep whilst using a dirty newspaper as a quilt. Another good alternative would be to be ended by some frat-brother-hopefuls as part of their initiation process. In all seriousness, I plan to take a gap year to do fashion internships and then go to design school. After that, I hope to be a successful fashion designer based in either New York or London.

Will Schmitt

By 2028, I hope to have a successful acting career of some kind or another. I have been exploring many different fields of acting lately, including stage, film, voice, improv and cosplay. I love to bring fictional characters to life. I plan on going to college and getting a Bachelor's degree in graphic design, then becoming an independent worker in that field. This way, I will have a stable and flexible career to work in while I pursue acting. If my acting career takes off, I plan on hopefully moving to a more acting-based state, such as California.

Jordan Le

By 2028, I want to be enjoying my career and probably building or making something that I wish I had, like a nice go-kart. After high school, I am going to Clemson to be a mechanical engineer. In the first few months during freshman year, I am going to be make a schedule to be more organized, consistent, and well-rounded. Around the middle of my college years, I plan to get an internship that would hopefully benefit me in the long run. At the end of college, I want to immediately go into the workforce and pay off student debts and then get a career.



Tiamoni Garner

Being an SOA student has been the best experience ever. I honestly couldn't imagine being anywhere else. The collaboration of arts and academics makes almost every day interesting. I love that it isn't weird to be creative and different. I have developed relationships that will last forever. In this last year, I have realized who and what has made me the person I am today.



Vincent Hamilton

There are a lot of things that I would do differently if I started this experience over again. My biggest regret is not completing homework and not opting for Honors classes but instead just taking CP-level classes. I would say the thing that held me back from accomplishing a lot more in school is procrastination and not completing homework. Nine times out of ten, I would not do homework and I wish I could go back and complete it all. Not only is homework valuable because of the grade attached, it helps put the content learned in class into your mind so you don't forget. If I would have done my homework as I should have, then I would be in higher level classes. Honors classes move a little bit faster than a CP-level class and have a little more work assigned. This requires the student doing more homework, believe it or not. Also, it is common to see that Honors classes work more efficiently because the students in them are generally more focused unless you have a combined class. So that is another plus to taking faster classes—a better learning environment.



Maggie Scapellato

Teachers are tasked with the job of shaping the minds of the generations to come. Dr. Christopher Selby has touched my life in a lot of ways: he has inspired me to be the best I can be, he has encouraged me to work hard for what I want in life. He loves his students like they're his own, and he seriously loves his job. I have been in the Symphony Orchestra for three years now, and I look forward to going to his class every day. He challenges us to push our musical limits, and I'm really glad to have had Dr. Selby as my teacher.



Brittany Gianoukos

If I was entering SOA as a sixth grader, I would for sure change the way I went about my education. That way, I could have had a better hands-on experience with my school. I feel like getting involved in clubs and extracurricular activities outside of SOA would have really helped me get a better education at my time here. I wish I did more community service so that I would have been able to get the SOA diploma, but I felt like having a job and my academics did not allow me to balance it out.



Glynn King

The most valuable part of going to SOA for me were the best friends that I've made throughout these past seven years. My experience at SOA wouldn't be near the same or half as fun if it wasn't for all my friends constantly being around me. Finding a group of friends who all value and care about each other as much as we do seems very rare, and I'm so grateful that we all were able to find each other and connect on the level that we do. If I'm thankful for anything at SOA, it's the lifelong, irreplaceable group of best friends that it has given me. To Liv, Amber, Cora, Reese, Liv P, Abby, Alden, Mariah, Sarah Catherine, and Tori: I love you guys!!



Carson Mann

If I were entering SOA as a sixth grader, the main thing I would do differently is distribute my time better. Over my time in middle and high school, I've realized that some classes are more important than others, and you can put in too much work almost as easily as you can put in too little. There were sometimes that I stayed up way longer than I should have to do a project or piece of homework that did not need that much work put into it. There is something to be said for taking pride in your work, but at a certain point it is not worth it anymore. There have also been times where I have been too lazy to do something and have procrastinated to the point of potentially failing. If I could do it all again, I would meet somewhere in the middle and put in enough effort to make good grades, take pride in my work, and get enough sleep.



Tillman Simmons

Michael Christensen has had the biggest impact on my four years here at SOA. He runs the RMMT, and has taught me the ropes. I've enjoyed learning the ropes (literally) and gaining life advice through my senior year. Every time I thought that the world was going to collapse and I'd never have a job, Mike would point out how easy it is to get an apprenticeship and go forward in the field that interests me. He's encouraged me to pursue not only my dreams but to be wise with my future. I appreciate all that Mike has done for me.



Caleb Smith

Over the course of my four years at SOA, I have had the opportunity to experience many teachers and their teaching methods.

Among all the amazing teachers that I have been able to learn important lessons from, the teacher that I personally find to be the most passionate, invested, and involved is George Younts. He has given me tools that have set me on the trajectory to achieve anything that I want in my career path. The most important lesson that he has taught me is that ego and pride can only get you so far in life and is more destructive than beneficial. When I first entered his class, I had a sense of entitlement and arrogance towards my major, thinking that my talent without hard work, put me above the rest of my classmates. Needless to say, Mr. Younts stripped me of that toxic characteristic and made me open my eyes to the fact that the purpose of theater is to share stories and improve the lives of others, and, in the midst of that, share the spotlight with who would eventually become more than just my classmates and fellow actors, but more so lifelong brothers and sisters.

Mr. Younts, on several occasions, also took the time out of his hours of work to let me know of other acting opportunities outside of SOA. Among these he has set me up with starring in a TV show and performing at the Dock Street Theatre downtown in the play *Fences*, written by August Wilson. I have also been able to work with Mr. Younts in the Fighting Gnomes improvisation group, where I had the opportunity to travel and teach others the joy and process of improv acting. He has really instilled in me a sense of humility, and as I venture off into the world of college, I want to sincerely thank him for his efforts, teachings, and most importantly his investment in making me both a better actor and person than I was in freshman year. I appreciate all that you do for SOA, Mr. Younts; you have truly inspired me to make the world a better place using my art form.



Courtney Wickstrom

In the year 2028, my only real goal is to be happy. I've learned this year, more than ever, that things do not always pan out how you thought they would. Despite this, I'm still optimistic for my future. I feel like I have taken enough away from my time at SOA that I will be successful in college and whatever career I go on to pursue.



Diante Taylor

Thinking about myself and what I want to be doing in 2028 is kind of scary to me. Can you imagine? By then, I'll be 27 years old, going on 28. Maybe I'll be traveling to Barbados. Maybe I'll be hanging out with my Grammy award-winning friend Caleb Smith, my artist friend Ayanna Gadsden, my favorite D.C. journalist Jada Orr, my military friend Tiamoni Garner, or my friend Carlos Boswell, a future FBI agent. Maybe I'll be living a lavish life in a big house with a fancy car and have not one care in the world. Maybe I'll be engaged to my lifelong partner. Maybe, with my Bachelor of Arts Advertising Degree from Columbia College Chicago, I'll be watching my own commercial play during Super Bowl LXII. Or maybe I'll have a breakthrough and become a famous actor, playwright, painter, graphic designer, activist, model, or even get verified on social media. Anyways, whatever it is I do in 2028, I just want to be happy.

Luke Ablonczy

Without a doubt, Dr. Christopher Selby has been the most influential teacher from my time at SOA. His command of the classroom comes from an incredible mutual respect, a respect that originates from his teaching expertise, his dad sense of humor, and his abilities as a speaker. Dr Selby, through his own passion for classical music, awoke that same passion in me and many of my classmates, nurturing us from ninth graders who merely played stringed instruments to students truly enjoying the music. He has taken us to win national competitions twice in my time at SOA, and has given SOA the kind of positive press it sometimes needs.



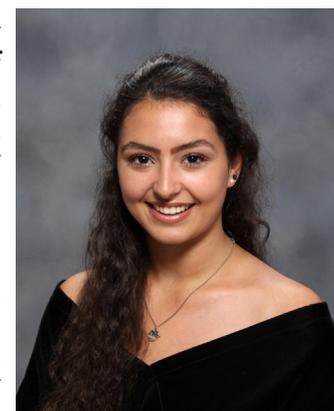
Abigail Haynes

For all of my complaining over the past seven years, I wouldn't be the person I am today if not for my SOA experience. I feel so lucky to have grown up surrounded by such passionate, talented, imaginative, kind, and hardworking individuals. There were highs (senior thesis, dance breakfast parties, my peak sophomore year) and lows (certain challenging classes), but I've finally made it to the other side and could not be prouder to stand alongside some of the greatest people I know on May 31st. To the dancers: we hate each other, but we love each other so much more. Thank you for sending do-nows at the last minute, conquering the 2-degree locker room every morning, and sticking with me through my ugliest phases. Ms. Cline and Ms. T are real ones for putting up with us. Caitlyn, Jade, Glynn, Alden, and members of The Best Carpool™: I love you more than sweet potatoes, probably. It feels right to finish with this quote I wrote down in my agenda last year in APUSH: "Man alive. Wowze- wow." – Dr. T



Adrianna Mitrano

When I first started SOA my sophomore year, I felt like a fish out of water. I didn't know anybody, I had just moved to the south, and I felt lost. But by the end of my first day, I made my first friend. I soon made many more friends and became more comfortable at school and living in Charleston. Although, part of me still felt like an outsider because of the distinct cultural differences I faced from growing up in New England, as I opened up in my classes, I learned my Environmental Science teacher, Vincent-Garrett Pezzeca, was also from the northeast. This connection was the basis for me feeling like I belonged. Throughout my sophomore and junior year, he would become my favorite teacher I have ever had. Mr. Pezzeca never hesitated to be himself and did not apologize for it. He taught me to be bold and strong in everything I do. He encouraged me to be myself and strive to learn as much knowledge as I can. When he passed away during the summer of '17, I didn't know how I would be able to get through senior year without his guidance and radiating light. Then I remembered what he taught me. So here I am. About to graduate and go to a university for cultural science to learn how to give voices to the lives of the past.



Lily Murchison

If I was re-entering sixth grade and starting my seven years over again, I would fight more. There were a lot of times during my schooling where I followed rules blindly and submissively, accepted policies that I knew were skewed. For example, I would not have taken Study Skills in eighth grade, Freshmen Focus in ninth grade, IBA tenth grade, and I never would have worn capri shorts. Senior year, I finally fought and I won. If I had stood up for myself more through my seven years, maybe I would have enjoyed my time more and grown even more as a person.



Lian Norris

Because of SOA, I have had the opportunity to perform on national stages and win national awards. Just the name itself, School of the Arts, and the reputation it has, has opened doors for me. Over the past years, I have had the opportunity to further my academic path and grow as an artist. Coming into sixth grade, I barely knew how to play the saxophone, and now, I have been able to be a part of the top Jazz Band and Wind Ensemble. To think that after seven years at SOA it is all coming to an end is a bittersweet feeling.



Mary Grace Hutzler

SOA has its highs and lows, as does anything, but my favorite thing about this school is its open atmosphere. Students are mostly free to express themselves how they please and advocate for whatever is important to them. There is a place for everyone at SOA, and its small size makes it much easier for each student's voice to be heard. Whether it's actually acted on or not, I think it's important for young adults to practice free speech themselves, but also learn to respect that of others. From the Not A Distraction movement of my 10th grade year to the walkout against gun violence this year, I am honored to have been involved in several student-led movements. They have had a great impact on my life, and I hope the underclassmen continue this initiative to better this school each and every day.



Halle Garrett

An SOA education is special compared to any other school, due to the integration of the arts. When I came to School of the Arts in 6th grade, I was very excited because I was going to be able to do art everyday for an entire period. The classes were more challenging compared to other schools, but including the arts in each of them made them so much better. Being able to apply my major to my academic classes made me more interested in them and essentially do better as I understood more. More importantly, my major gave me an amazing education, as it gave an opportunity that no other high school could provide. It introduced me to graphic design, and this lead me to wanting to pursue a career in this and be accepted into schools that I couldn't have dreamed of being in. School of the Arts is unlike any other school, and I am happy to have gone here for seven years.



Patrick Wohlscheid

When it comes to thinking back on teachers who have impacted me in a significant way, two figures immediately come to mind. Although not a teacher at School of the Arts anymore, Mr. Scapellato, my first Creative Writing teacher, the man who auditioned me (twice), welcomed me with open arms and consistently pushed me in the right direction, be it with my writing or academic pursuits, and is one of my main inspirations in pursuing a legal career. With his Archibald MacLeish like status as poet, attorney, and custodian of knowledge, Mr. Scapellato stands in my mind as a role model of the modern Renaissance man and a constant reminder that just because one is not pursuing their art as a career does not mean that they must lose their passion or creativity.



The other teacher, for whom I have more words (both flattering and unflattering) than this essay allows, is Mr. Hammes. Mr. Hammes' fierce devotion to his students and his craft continues to amaze and inspire me and has made me a better person, a better friend, and a better writer. He has taught me that magical realism is not just a genre, but a way to see the extraordinary in the world and my own life. He has been the teacher who was there for me no matter what, both personally and intellectually, and serves as a model of how a teacher can impact students beyond the classroom. More than just a teacher, I am beyond grateful to be able to call Mr. Hammes a mentor, as well as a friend. I hope that in a number of years, I can look back and recall Hammes' wise and witty remarks, as well as Scapellato's guidance and (often corny) dad jokes, for they are the people who have truly helped me become the person I am today and who I strive to emulate as I leave SOA.

Mollie Pate

In the year 2028, here is the vision I have for myself: It is Super Bowl Sunday. I am heating up the buffalo chicken dip in the microwave. My eight hungry boys are watching the game. Todd just failed to get into little league. My husband, Spider, kisses me firmly, then reclines in his La-Z-Boy. I have reformed the education system and made Superwholock illegal. Weeaboos live in harmony with humans. Kristen Stewart is president, and no one has heard from Donald Trump in years. John Mulaney is godfather to my children. I watch my family laugh and play. My heart is full. All is well.



Jonathan Stone

Throughout my years at the School of the Arts, I have had the pleasure of being taught by many amazing teachers. One teacher I will never forget would have to be Mr. Short. He taught me Biology in 10th grade and AP Biology this year, and not a day goes by where I do not look forward to going to his class. I have gained more knowledge under his teachings in two years than I have in my entire high school career. Not only has he taught me about science, but he's showed me what it means to be disciplined and what it takes to achieve your goals.



Walker Menkus

My high school career didn't go how I wanted it to go. It's easy to say that I wish I would have gone to more parties, I wish I would have made more friends, I wish I would have made it into the "right" crowd. But the thing is, more and more I look back and realize that things really did turn out well. I may not have made it into my top college, but I got some experience with interviews. I may not have had the opportunity to go to a bunch of parties, but I'm a little too introverted for that anyway. I'm pretty content with how things turned out; I didn't get addicted to anything, I built good friendships, I matured, and I had a good time. These four years may not have played out how I wanted them to, but I think they may have played out how I needed them to. Looking forward, maybe I'll have better luck in college. Or maybe not. Regardless of how things turn out, I'm content in simply knowing that they will.



Cora Schipa

Since I've basically spent some of the most influential times in my life here, I owe a lot of who I am to the people I've met and the experiences I've had at SOA. Creative Writing has been the support and space that really got me through the days, while helping me with my writing, which is really important to me. The other reason I appreciate SOA is for bringing me together with certain people, (even ones I don't talk to anymore but especially the ones who have stuck around) who have taught me so much and given me priceless memories. Though I'm excited to leave, and it took some bad times to get here, I'm happy with where I am now and feel pretty confident when I say it was all worth it.



Sarah Catherine Gillard

Thank you to SOA for giving me the chance to meet my irreplaceable best friends. If all goes to plan, in ten years I'll be doing neuroscientific research with focuses on psychedelics and animal behavior. After a long day in the lab, I'll drive back to my quaint but spacious house in the country and greet my pet cows and chickens, then curl up with my mastiff and weiner dog to watch a documentary on Trump's presidency that will no doubt be out by then. My sommelier training will be well on its way.



Jordan Edwards

I think that the value of an SOA education is immeasurable. The value really depends on the student and what they put in to get out. SOA offers so many opportunities that you cannot get anywhere else. A school similar to SOA, the Governor's School of the Arts and Humanities, does not offer the same artistic freedoms as SOA. In dance, we're able to choreograph our senior thesis and junior composition, which is not offered at other schools but is a course common in dance education courses in college. Other schools prepare their students for professions in their art forms, but SOA keeps in mind that a majority of its students will not pursue a professional career in their art, and so the teachers prepare us for a more "stable" career while still keeping in touch with their major. Students are offered many choices in their major to help them prolong their success, but SOA also has great educational teachers that offer so much support and care for their students. I have found such a support system in my teachers at SOA that I know that I could always go to them for help. The help from all of my teachers has allowed me to succeed and I am so appreciative of all of them. Linda Cline has been such an influential impact on my life. Mrs. Cline was my first teacher at SOA, and hers was the first class of my senior year. She has seen me grow from the first day of school and will see me on my last day. Every day, even when my senior dance class would give her a hard time, she always aimed to have a good attitude and remain cheerful. She has been so invested in all of our lives and has always made sure to remain up to date on what we are doing and where we are going. She has so much experience, and when she teaches us, she is able to give us real-life stories from her experiences. Mrs. Cline sometimes reminds me of a small child because she has so much energy and excitement, but also like an aunt because she is so proud of all of us but makes sure to respect our space. If a student is stressed, she expresses concern and checks on them. This year, as we have finished our senior theses, she has without fail made me cry with her words of pride. I love Mrs. Cline, and I am forever thankful for all of the love and care and support and knowledge that she has provided me with throughout the years.



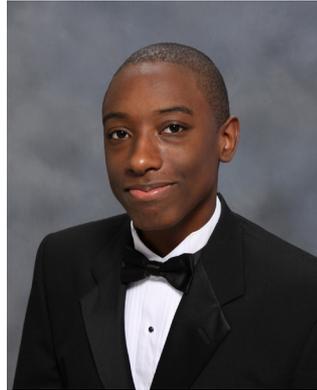
Mosiah Williams

I don't believe that an SOA education has any *intrinsic* value. Although we pride ourselves with our integration of the arts, I believe that what you take away from this place is largely dependent upon you. SOA is a poem with many rhythms and meanings to be pried from it.



Malachi Jones

In retrospect, SOA came to me as a saving grace. I'm sure I would've been okay in some far-off school, but to look back six years and not see this institution is distressing. No place concentrates such creative power as SOA. You see it on the walls and easels, but it's living through the student body. We've painted Charleston and the world over red and gold for a reason. We fail to see it in ourselves because we have grown so desensitized to our work, but from the outside in, what is taking place on Bonds Wilson campus is the epitome of refined talent. And no, it's not always the paradise on this campus. There's still the concern of student mental health; synergy between the staff and students has fluctuated over the years; and a high school in Charleston, SC—saturated with salt, slavery, and Americana—should be flush with diverse stories and experiences. Nonetheless, striving for these solutions is what keeps SOA a magnet for those with vocal opinions and loud thoughts. The opportunities granted to me by this place are surely the result of divine interaction or pure chance. Five months ago, I wouldn't have imagined myself on an Ivy League campus. One year ago, I would've joked about publishing a book. Seven years ago, no one could convince me of loving 14 people the same way I love siblings. And yet, I've been blessed with all those things from the patience, support, and instruction from people who owe me nothing.



Joshua Hornig

My name is Joshua David Hornig II. I am considered to be wise now. I will be giving you a glimpse of my wisdom in the form of several lessons. Lesson 1: Don't be a loser. If you already are a loser, then it's not too late. All you have to do is stop trying so hard to not be a loser and PRESTO! You are no longer a loser. Lesson 2: Don't waste your life. Studying is important, but it's also important to have a life. So, give yourself a break from studying, or you might be next. Lesson 3: Respect other people's ideas, or at least act like you respect them, then make fun of them later. Lesson 4: Fu dilo. Pa dilo. That's better. Lesson 5: Stop crying, you baby! You're so pathetic. Lesson 6: Yes, you do smell. That's why I'm covering my nose. The Final Lesson: The last lesson that I will teach you is a lesson that could change your whole life. At the very least, it could result in you holding some cash. I have hidden 10 small notes around the campus. Each note has a 9 digit code on it, as well as a phone number. If you find a note, call the phone number and confirm the code to receive a cash prize. Have fun.



Katie Durand

It is hard to imagine what my life is going to be like in 2028 because it seems like such a long time from now, but I know that it will come sooner than I think. After I graduate from college, I will be teaching in public schools throughout South Carolina for four years as part of my Teaching Fellows Scholarship. At that point, I hope to have an idea of what I want to do next with my career. I will most likely stay somewhere in South Carolina, and I will look for a long-term teaching job. I think I might like to buy a house at some point in my late twenties and settle down, if I am at a solid place with my career. In order to get there, I plan to do teacher shadowing throughout college, and I hope to make connections through that to find a solid job that I can keep for many years. It is still crazy to believe that I am graduating, and I can't wait to see what the future holds.



Gracie King

At the age of two, my mother signed me up for a ballet class. Shortly after, it became the normal, weekly routine and now at 18, it has remained one of my greatest passions. Throughout my seven years at School of the Arts, the education and guidance I have received has led me to my desired career choice. Not only do I enjoy dance but I also enjoy working with kids as well, so I have found a way to incorporate both. This fall I will be attending Winthrop University for Dance Education, where I will earn my K-12 certification. Ten years from now, I hope to have a job as a high school dance teacher at a school within the state, or possibly even here at SOA. Teachers I have had through the years, such as Ashlee Ratigan, have mentored and helped me discover who I am and what I want to do with my future. This school has cultivated my love for the art and has truly inspired me to advocate by teaching.



Madison Crawford

In 2028, I want to be a Special Education Elementary School teacher. I hope to be at a Title One school here in Charleston. I hope to have my own classroom, decorate it any way I want, and to be making a difference in all of my students' lives. This has always been a passion of mine. When growing up, I used to look at my favorite teachers and think, "Wow, I can't wait to be just like them." I plan to achieve this by attending College of Charleston for the Special Education Degree with the Teaching Fellows Scholarship.



Trevor Hamlin Scott

By the year 2028 I would hope to accomplish 3 different goals. I want to have graduated college and found myself a decent job, to have my own apartment, and finally to have started putting out YouTube videos. I have always thought that being able to playing video games with friends and being able to make a little money at the same time sounds good. While it is just a little side job, it would be nice if I could get famous off of YouTube. I know that I will probably be stuck at home for my first few years after college so I can get on my feet, however I do not wish to be that lazy bum that still lives with his parents at the age of 28. However, in order for all of this to happen, I first need to graduate college in order to find myself a decent job in Mechanical Engineering.



Hunter Horn

My school is ten kilometers away from my home, and I drive to school every morning. I love to go to school. I learn so many new things at school every day. There are many different subjects. I study at school. I study languages like Sanskrit, Hindi and English, and other subjects like mathematics, science and social studies. My school is very beautiful. There are nice, pretty gardens with beautiful plants and trees. Sometimes the blooming flowers are a spectacle. My school has a very good library, and I enjoy the books. There are also computers that students can use. I love my school and my teachers. My teachers are very caring. They teach us with a great deal of patience, and they want us to become good and responsible human beings. I want to make my school and my teachers proud of me. My mom said my senior essay couldn't be negative.



Abbie Long

It may seem cliché, but the most important class to me throughout my seven years at SOA was my major. I have been in it with most of the same people for so many years. Band is full of a bunch of... interesting people. Everyone I have met has their own strong personality. I'm glad that we were forced to be with the same people for all of middle school. It gave me a family to lean on and bond with. I am going to miss this senior band class with all of my heart. I hope that we all pursue and achieve our hopes and dreams. Catch y'all on the flip side!



Zoë De Luca-Parker

Honestly, when thinking about what I want to be doing in 2028, I can come up with a lot of things. I want to have a stable job and be traveling the world. I hope to be a lawyer by that time and be successful. I want to buy my parents a beach house in Capri, Italy. Most importantly, I want to spend time with friends and have as many unique experiences as possible. I can't wait to see where all my friends are in 2028, and I hope we all stay in touch because I love them all so much. I'm scared to see what happens in the future but also ready for all my experiences to come.

Cassidy Enright

As time flies by, ideas and dreams change. School of the Arts has guided me through my middle and high school years with a big impact on my life and who I've become. Across the years, the answer to the question, "What do you want to do when you grow up?" has changed a thousand times. Just this year, even after applying to colleges, I changed my mind and decided what I wanted to pursue in my future. I committed myself to becoming a veterinarian, with a concentration in sports medicine and rehabilitation. When I finish my senior year, I intend to participate in veterinary internships in Charleston, and in August, move to North Carolina to tackle the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Once I get my degree, I'll go to vet school and continue on to what the future holds for me. By 2028, I intend to have a stable job working with animals and a steady income for my family. To achieve this, I plan to work hard and live day by day so I will be happy but also successful.



Hannah DeRemer

In 2028, I hope to be an alumni of Appalachian State University, living somewhere on the Pacific Northwest or in California, and working in the movie business in graphics/animation. I feel like I could fit in most there, where culture is rich and there's always something going on. While I'll be living somewhere busy, I'd like to live in a comfy house tucked away in the trees with my dogs, or a super cute apartment littered with warm lamps and soft blankets. I would like to sing in small jazz clubs at night on the side, attending concerts and hanging out with friends in my spare time. I plan on traveling fairly often with my friends and potential family. This time in my life gives me something to look forward to.



Nicole Dawson

During my time at SOA, Mr. Perkins was the teacher who shaped me into the person I've become. Before taking his seventh grade English class, I did not know anything about *Star Trek* or *Lord of the Rings*. Today, I am an avid fan of both franchises. However, the way he truly affected me was by making me a better writer and teaching me to have a stronger appreciation for English and grammar. The moment this happened was around the end of the school year when we were working on our last paper. It was a project we had worked on for a few months. I had already handed in my final copy and was waiting for a revised edition. The moment he handed me back my essay, it devastated me to find out I needed to completely change my style of writing and almost rewrite the entire paper. After our discussion, I became motivated to improve my project to become the best I could make it. In the end, I did not receive a good grade on the paper, but after that experience I remained resilient to become a better writer and hold every paper to the same standards as my seventh grade final project. I am now a better writer because of it and I am always looking for ways to improve.



Elijah Lyons

I could never quite catch a football, run the correct direction towards home base, or pick which soccer goal to aim for. Consequently, I was bullied for most of my elementary years because I was a bit too feminine and a little too different. When I arrived as a sixth grade theater major back in 2010, I was a shy and socially anxious individual. I believed I had made a huge mistake in attending a school with the sole purpose of stretching a student's comfort zone. Over the next few years my personality was exploited every single day and I began to realize how uncomfortable I was with myself. I realized how unhappy I was sitting quietly, and began to feel myself let go. This was of course a long and extremely difficult process, but as I learned more about who I was and who I wanted to be, as did those around me. My theater friends and I have taken huge risks over the years. We learned to live in the characters we portrayed, and, more importantly, learn from them. A school is a source of education and information. Here, in my school I learned that theater can be a coping mechanism for anxiety. I learned that public speaking can instill confidence. I learned to always portray the character I was given, and above all I learned how to



Elizabeth Kurtz

I wake up in a small brick walled apartment, get dressed in jeans and a black turtleneck, finish last night's mimosa, feed my cat, water the plants, kiss my fiance good morning, meet my friends at a 99 cent coffee bar in SoHo, go to work in a slightly known TV show writer's room, wander into a free art festival on the way home, meet Greta Gerwig, tell Greta she's my role model, give Greta my latest screenplay, hear Greta tell me I have potential then watch Greta vanish into the crowd. I order take out and eat it on the roof in my fiance's Sublime shirt I use as pajamas.



Bailey Abedon

The SOA education is most certainly unique from any surrounding school. I think we have an extremely strong student voice. When we see an injustice, we take incredible initiative to confront it head-on. It is the student body that truly makes the SOA education unique. We learn from each other. We learn how to speak up and defend the virtues we hold dear. I was so impressed by how we took on gun control issues this year, and it gives me hope that this class of 2018 will be future voters. We value the importance of participating in democracy and always fight for the underdog. We aspire for intelligence.



Cecile Thomson

The class that has had the most impact on me is Symphony Orchestra with Dr. Selby. I have been a part of the SOA Symphony Orchestra since 10th grade, and it has positively affected my life since. As a freshman, I was part of the SOA symphonic band and was trying my best to adjust to high school level band music. Ever since I joined the orchestra, I have gained confidence and skills in my playing. Trying to learn "William Tell Overture" as a sophomore in high school was a huge jump from being the only horn player at my middle school and playing in the symphonic band as a freshman. If it had not been for Dr. Selby, I most likely would not have accomplished the achievements and awards I have received throughout high school.



Alden King

If someone stopped and asked me what I have learned being at SOA for the last seven years, my first response would probably be, “Nothing I can think of.” But as I’m being forced to reflect on this experience, I have actually come up with a few things. First of all, I’ve learned, partly through my own experience and partly from watching other people, that there’s no reason to judge someone for doing what makes them happy! If someone is doing something that makes them happy, and it’s not harming or offending anyone else, don’t let it bother you. There’s no reason to bring extra negativity into your life, even though it may seem like others thrive on that. Another thing, don’t take high school too seriously. For real. These four years have gone by so so fast, and if you think that anything you do will affect you in the long-term, you’re wrong (aside from like failing classes and not getting into college; that would definitely affect you in the long-term, obviously). Overall, I’ve learned that if you keep negativity out of your life, there’s no way you can have a bad high school experience. Senior year has been the best so far because I’ve taken all of these things into consideration and, after college applications, literally just focused on having fun with my friends. So, underclassmen, take what I’ve learned and apply it to yourself if you want to have a positive experience. I recommend it!



Taylor Kahn-Perry

As my seven years at SOA come to a close, I’ve thought a lot about all the factors that make an arts education so unique and so transformative. I haven’t spent my evenings and afternoons at sporting events or pep rallies; instead, I have attended art shows, concerts, creative writing readings, and lectures from visiting artists. I have been awed over and over again by the sheer talent of the student body that surrounds me each and every day. I’ve watched my closest friends design clothing lines, produce films, create award-winning portfolios, and publish books before my very eyes. Most of all, I have spent the past seven years surrounded by a community that has never shied away from asking, “Why?”. Sometimes these questions of “Why?” manifested on canvas or in a performance. Other times they resulted in movements—sums of students questioning the things we’ve been taught to accept for so long. Pushed by that fierce desire to question that is so innate to artists, the SOA student body has challenged everything from dress code enforcement to gun violence to racial injustice to student mental health. Still other times this desire to probe filled everything from class to lunch to sleepovers with conversations about art, politics, media, and culture in an engaging, genuine, and educational way that I’ve never seen among any other group of young people. It is SOA’s student body—reminding me I am not alone in the often isolating experience that accompanies overthinkers, questioners, and creatives—that I will remember most as I depart from my time at SOA.



Emma Kerr

Throughout my years at SOA, I feel as though the class and the teacher that impacted me the most was Symphony Orchestra with Dr. Selby. I was fortunate enough to audition for that class as a freshman and successfully placed third chair. Being in that class at such a young age really trained me and made me a better player. I learned to play professional music at the age of 14. Not only has being in that class made it memorable, but Dr. Selby has taught me so much about music, and even myself. He is such a passionate teacher, and his passion for music made me want to have passion. As soon as he would get on that podium, he always had a smile on his face. This smile I saw everyday made me want to come to class and made me want to play music. He also would stop some days and just reflect and express his daily thoughts. His thoughts on life, his visions for our future, and just personal thoughts. He spread the love of music and his passion so much, I can’t think of one person who doesn’t like Symphony. So I want to say thank you to Dr. Selby and my fellow orchestra members for making this class so fun throughout my years. Thank you Dr. Selby for being a teacher who truly loves the job.



Elysia Andrews

The most influential teacher I’ve had at SOA is Dr. Selby. He has taught me some of the most valuable lessons that I know will help me throughout my life, not just in high school. He has shown me the growth that comes with self-confidence and perseverance. His support for all of his students, regardless of their academic and artistic pursuits, has been amazing for all of his students. Spending time reorganizing the symphony library and running paperwork while balancing academics and the demands of the Strings major has taught me the value of a good work ethic and has made me appreciate the work that Dr. Selby puts in to ensure each of his students has a memorable experience. I wish I had more time to learn from him.

Congratulations to the Class of 2018, from Mr. Grant



Today’s social climate has thrust a challenge in your lap...decency vs. immorality. I’m encouraged by Young America’s activism and charge for a better tomorrow. Seniors, your better tomorrow begins with fireworks today. Each diploma is a lighted match, each of you...a fuse. It’s showtime!

Mr. Grant

Elliott Weeks

If I had to compose a list of words describing how thankful I am for Dr. Selby, I eventually would fail at doing so. Whether it's during a practice session or a concert, not a single moment goes by in which I'm grateful for the hard work that this man has poured out for all of us at SOA. Dr. Selby was not just a teacher; he was a mentor that I looked up to for 90 minutes every day. I first met him in sixth grade, when he was the conductor for the ensemble I was playing in at All-State Orchestra.

It was then that I realized I could learn a thing or two if I saw him again. But six years later, I have learned more than "just a thing or two." From teaching me the technique of conducting to helping me become a student of the Charleston Symphony Orchestra concertmaster, he has built many qualities within me that are essential to the life of a musician. The doors that have opened for me couldn't have been there without the guidance of Dr. Selby. Like I said at the awards ceremony: words cannot express how thankful I am for this dedicated man, only music.



Chris Garrison

If I could start my SOA experience over again, I would start by practicing more so I could make it into the All-State Orchestra. I would ensure that I get an "A" in Algebra 1 so my GPA and class rank for my entire high school career aren't screwed up. I would study much harder for the PSAT because it is INCREDIBLY important for scholarships (even if no one makes that clear beforehand). At least that is what I would have done if you asked me to start over three months ago. But now that graduation is less than two weeks away, I'm starting to realize there will be things I am going to want much more than a higher class-rank or a few points on the SAT. I'm going to miss the look on Malachi's face when he reads the first question on the physics test and the unanimous laughter that ensues as the whole class comes to the realization they are going to fail. I'm going to miss the lunches spent in Lindgren's lab relentlessly trying to find a gift for a 6th grade girl at Liberty Hill, the long after-school rehearsals with my Strings people, the way Elliot Weeks violently directs the whole violin section with his scroll, and the passion Dr. Selby always brings to the podium. There are so many students, teachers, and things I have experienced during my time here. For better or for worse, it is these things that make SOA so different from any other school. If I could do it all over again, I would remind myself each and every day to appreciate these little things because one day I will no longer be here to experience them.



Rose Stark

Working with Ms. Link this year has dramatically developed my acting skills. I got to work with her so much, from senior thesis performances to the South Carolina Theater Association's competition show. She always gives thoughtful, critical feedback, and her honesty has made me work harder and think differently about acting and directing. Her sarcasm and humorous personality holds our Theater class together, even when the stress is taking over. She has provided me with so many opportunities. Throughout the years of working with her nonstop, I have learned so much about Theater and myself.



Ariana Blevins

If I were entering SOA as a sixth grader, there are only a few things I would have done differently. I think I would have started off by hanging out with friends outside of school more. Middle school was a time where there is so little work and so much freetime that goes unnoticed and wasted. I should have used it and had more fun before I lost the ability/time to in high school. I also should have worked harder. I took a lot of easy courses and never really dared to push myself academically until the 11th grade. If I were to start everything over again, I would definitely begin challenging myself a bit earlier. Probably not in middle school, as there is little control over your classes, but definitely in high school. Lastly, I think I would have done more with my major earlier on. I didn't learn to love my major until high school, and I wish I had been able to do more with it or love it from the beginning.



Julia Holmes

By 2028, I plan to have completed undergrad and medical school. I want to become a psychiatrist, and in order to do that, I must first complete four years of college, four years of medical school, and a four year residency in a hospital. After that, if I want to start my own private practice, I will need to get certified to do so. When I am 28 years old, I will hopefully be halfway through my four year residency. After that, I will work in the psychiatric center of a hospital until I earn enough money to start my own private practice.



Kate Grayson

For the last seven years, I have grown up in the Creative Writing room along with 14 of my best friends. They have truly had the largest impact on me as a student, as a writer, and as a friend. I am so grateful to have been included in the #1 writing program in the country and feel I will use the things I have learned in the Creative Writing room that I will value forever. Watching some of my favorite people grow up has been the greatest experience, and leaving them has proved to be the most challenging.



Camille Feaster

Dr. Christopher Selby has had the strongest impact on me at SOA. We all have such tremendous respect for him as a person and a musician. He is the most influential teacher I've ever had. Four years with him was definitely not enough. He genuinely cares about us as students, he respects our opinions, and he gives us someone to really look up to as a guide. He is the reason that I have any confidence in my playing. He instilled that in me that first week of ninth grade. I'll miss him the most when I leave this school, and I'll try my hardest to come back and support this amazing symphony that he's helped grow. Dr. Selby's hard work proved successful when he brought this school two national titles! We love him, and we all wish him the best with his personal and professional life.



Maggie Tennant

In the year 2028, I would love to be living in New Zealand. I wish to have a job as a costume designer for a local theater and also play in the New Zealand Symphony. Getting to this point will be difficult. After four amazing years at college, I will graduate from UNCSA and throw myself into the workforce. I could work for a theater or on a short film and save up money to move. A couple years later, I'll try to relocate myself to New Zealand. I picked New Zealand because of the beautiful landscapes, and my favorite movie series was filmed there. When I get settled, I'll try to find a job at a local theater and audition for their symphony. Knowing this is 10 years away, my goals will most likely change, but for now, this is where I would like to be in the year 2028.



Alie Duffy

When I look back at all the grades I received, all the tests I took, all the classes I sat through, and even all the performances I've done, I have no choice but to recognize that none of that matters at all. The administration isn't always the best, the classes aren't always fun, and performances aren't always good, but who cares? In ten years I won't be thinking about the time I shouldn't have been marked absent or the song I didn't want to sing. I'm going to be thinking about the people in that class with me and the other vocal majors I sang that song with. In my time here at SOA, I've learned about who Jesus is and the amazing things he's done for me, but I've also learned that not everyone believes that, and that's completely okay. There are so many people in my faith that look down on anyone who isn't a Christian or anyone who lives a different lifestyle than their own, but because of the diversity of my classmates, I've learned that another person's lifestyle is not my burden to bear. In all this time, I've also found that I really love musical theater. If I had never come to SOA, I never would have started acting at Woolfe Street Playhouse, and I never would have learned that I want to go into directing. Because of this, I hope to open a theater with a Christian basis after college, so that I can direct while also teaching people about Christ. Seeing the lack of faith in the world of arts is what fueled this idea, and the more that I talk about it and look into it, the more I believe that this is something God is truly calling me to do.



Michael Root

SOA has taught me some things throughout the four years. I have observed the masses of people who come here. Most of my learning has come from observation rather than the hours I have spent sitting in class being lectured to. I have learned that many people lack proper and well-thought out decision making. Many people go with the flow of life, accepting what is handed to them instead of making clear goals and standing by those goals no matter what opposition arises. Many are influenced by the people who they surround themselves with. Many do not think twice about who they spend their time with and what kind of subconscious impact imprints on them. Personal development is not a priority, but a number on a report card is glorified. The biggest lesson I have to thank SOA for giving me is this: to be successful, you must observe what the masses of people do, and do the exact opposite of what they do. I thank SOA, students, and teachers, for allowing me to grow myself and learn these useful yet simple lessons.



Damon Lockwood

First off, being this close to graduating is hectic and exciting. All the years of elementary, middle, and high school are about to be over. We are moving on to a different chapter in our lives. This makes me wonder what my limits are now that I'm going to have more time and freedom on my hands. So, in 2028 I see myself doing something productive, whether being a part of a dance studio or company, or playing sports in a league or for a club. Overall, I just don't want to get to 2028 and still be dealing with problems from years ago. Being this close to graduation is also kind of sad. After a couple weeks, the people I see everyday in school are all going to be doing their own thing and living their life. I will probably link up with friends every once in a while, but other than that high school friends will be just that: high school friends. That's the sad part because these are the people I have been seeing, laughing, and chilling with throughout my high school career. And to think, in a few weeks I probably won't ever see them again. But, that's why we have fun and make memories everyday in or out of school that we will remember for a long time.



Nadja McGlone

Well, first of all, SOA is not a real high school experience by any stretch of the words. If you're a 6th grader reading this and are expecting SOA to be the stereotypical middle and high school, you should reconsider. I'm thankful I didn't attend SOA in middle school because at least I was able to see how much of a bubble I have been put in at SOA and that any other school is nothing like it. Saying this, SOA can be really terrible or really awesome: it's your choice. If you have absolutely no interest or passion in your major, the next few years are going to be rough for you. You're going to have to spend 90 minutes a day in an interest you won't be pursuing in the future, when you could be taking other classes and graduating early. On the opposite side, if you really do love your major, SOA is the only place for you. You'll be taking classes that you think are fun and interesting and getting credits for it. If you end up going into your major in college, chances are you're going to be way above the other competition, as arts middle and high schools are pretty rare. My best advice is if you see no future in your major and don't like it at all, leave. You'll thank me later. If you love it, be prepared to deal with the petty drama because SOA needs more people who care.



Hayden Daughtry

In 2028, I'd like to find myself in Amsterdam pursuing my goals within the art world and working either as a freelance artist or as a curator for one of the modern art museums or galleries within or around the city. I intend to make this happen by building connections while going to art school in Amsterdam, as well as building friendships with curators and buyers in different areas of the world, such as art festivals like Basel in Miami and in Basel. I think this can and will happen if I prepare myself for it and go through 4-5 years of art school at the Gerrit Rietvald Academie, which has a long list of notable artist alumni, including obviously Gerrit Rietvald.



Heath DuBose

I think Alan Brehm's class has had the strongest impact on me and my choices for my future. Before experiencing his class, I wasn't really sure what I wanted to study in college because I didn't really have any interest in any of my academic or major classes. After Government & Economics though, I've decided I want to study Economics in college. Econ is easy to understand and extremely interesting because of Mr. Brehm. He brings life to each subject he talks about because he's actually passionate about what he teaches, which is sometimes very rare, especially for this topic.



Malena Lisanti

The class that had the strongest impact on me was Fashion Design, mainly because I learned new sewing techniques and time management. Even though I work better under pressure and through trial and error, Mrs. Baker has taught me to make a plan and a schedule every time I am going to start a project. Personally, I hate sketching, but I realized it helped me when I had to do a complicated design because I could see what I had to do construction-wise. Overall, Fashion Design has taught me that while the deadlines might be too close and the projects too many, sometimes I have to do things I don't want to, like follow sewing instructions, in order to achieve what I want in the end.



Cayman Williams

If I had the chance to enter SOA as a sixth grader again, I would try to branch out to my teachers and peers more. I would want to keep some friendships that I lost throughout the years and maybe stay away from certain people who have not proven good to me. I'd take more opportunities within my school, such as seeing more performances and being a part of school musicals. I also would want to try harder in my art area because I feel like if I worked to my full potential for the most part, I could've created better pieces and grown more as a dancer. I thought about changing my major to something different in high school, but never went through with that plan, so that might be something I would do if I could do my time over. My time at SOA has taught me a lot of things that I would not want to miss out on learning, despite complications with some teachers. I would try and take more classes I was interested in, rather than classes I viewed as good for college. I would try to run for more leadership roles, such as student council or a club organizer. Although I do regret some decisions I've made in the past 7 years, I have met a group of friends that have made my high school experience the best possible. I don't think we all would've come together if something was different. This year has been the most stressful academically, but has flown by and included special memories I hope to keep for a long time. I wish I had appreciated my time at SOA more because experiencing the few "lasts" I have left has shown me how much I'm going to miss it all.



Adam Beall

As a cellist at School of the Arts, I learned the importance of time management. While playing gigs, practicing, and being a good student, I learned how to budget my time. Playing in the Symphony Orchestra also helped me grow because it taught me how to work in a large group to accomplish a shared goal. This past year, the goal was to win a national competition in Atlanta. After months of tedious work, we played our concert and ended up winning the entire competition. I will never forget the friendships and memories I have made in my time at School of the Arts and I am excited for what the future holds.



Elizabeth Snyder

In 2028, I want to be helping other people. Whether this is serving as a missionary in a third world country or starting a non-profit, I have a passion for giving back to people in need. Volunteering with a local non-profit, Charleston Hope, has opened my eyes to poverty in Charleston and the lack of basic necessities for many children. In addition to Charleston Hope, my church, First (Scots) Presbyterian Church, has given me multiple opportunities to volunteer locally, as well as in other countries. Through many service experiences, I realized how much I want to continually serve others the rest of my life. Majoring in Christian Leadership at Belmont University will give me the foundation to pursue my dream of starting an orphanage in another country. Although this goal may seem impossible, my friends and family are always there to support me. With the help of my strong faith, I will have an unending passion of helping others. I will always be inspired and motivated when the faces of the people I help light up with happiness and joy. I believe everybody deserves to experience love and happiness, so in 2028, I hope to be spreading love and helping those in need.



Virginia Clyburn

Mrs. Benson has most definitely had a giant impact on my life throughout the seven years that I've had the pleasure of being taught by her. I don't think that I would have been the same person without the influence of Mrs. Benson. The fact that she's pushed all of the Piano majors since sixth grade to be positive people has helped me immensely in getting through the tumultuous times of high school. Being in class with her has always put me in a better mood, even when I didn't think that was possible. I love her so much, and I can't believe that this is my last week with her as my teacher!



Amelia Cobb

In the year 2028, my life will be great. Hopefully, I will have long been a graduate of Clemson University, with a degree in Graphic Communications and a minor in Business. With this, I would have started out most likely in a big company but hopefully, with a few years under my belt, I will own my own lettering, stationery, and letterpress company here in Charleston. I hope to be married a few years later, and with my husband, take many trips around the world. With this travel experience, I hope to start a blog where I can share fashion, travel, and lifestyle tips. Through this blog, I hope to go to even more places and meet many different people, one of whom I hope will be Taylor Swift. My goal is to be able to have fun with whatever career I pursue, so that it feels like a hobby and to not be stuck in a cubical my whole life. But if none of this works out, I'll just live in my parents' room over the garage and watch Grey's Anatomy for the rest of my life.



Carson Peaden

It would be easy to generalize my entire high school experience and label it as bad, but that is not the case. While I have had my fair share of terrible days at SOA, just like everyone else, I cannot ignore what the school has given me. Creative Writing turned into a second home for me. My teachers supported me in ways one could hardly imagine and helped bolster my passion for writing. They taught me how to be politically and socially conscious and emphasized the power of student voices to enact change. I've also acquired a group of friends that I love more than anything. Even though my time at this school has not been the best, I cherish the experiences and the people who have impacted me for the better.



Alec Pourmoghadam

I started out my sixth grade career as a chubby, closeted Vocal major. Over my seven years here, I have learned a lot and I would not give that up for the whole world. But I definitely have made mistakes. Mistakes are apart of the journey, so rather than hide from them, I welcomed them with open arms. The only thing I would change about my SOA experience would definitely be taking things way too seriously. I tried so hard during my time here at SOA. I have definitely had fun, but I think if I had loosened up, I would have enjoyed my time a lot more.



Bethany Yeung

Dr. Selby has had the strongest impact on me. I have always respected the way he can quietly command a room and how hard he works to balance his work and family life. Seeing the effort he puts into the Strings program is inspiring and unlike any other teacher I've had. He genuinely cares about us and takes our other activities into consideration. He gives us confidence, instills good work ethic, and gives us room to voice our opinions. Strings was my favorite and most formative class. Being able to win two national competitions and accomplish so much makes every bit of work worth it. Without Dr. Selby, my SOA experience would not have been the same.



Hunter Garner

An SOA education is important because of the classes and opportunities available. Although my schedule each year in high school has been very busy, I would not have changed my SOA experiences. Being in the band program and the music education has influenced me to practice and succeed. An SOA education not only includes academic classes, but also arts classes that are not available at other schools. It is important to appreciate the opportunities that are given at this school, and SOA has given me opportunities of community service, music, and academics.



Denver Smith

By 2028, I'd like to have a steady career going for myself. I will have graduated from Columbia College Chicago as a major in Audio Design and Production and will have a diploma to make it official that I am an audio engineer. This creates many different paths for me. I've always had the desire to be a working musician, doing gigs and tours playing my original music. I've spent the last 3 years at SOA creating songs for my friends and me to rap and sing on. I have the ability to sell instrumentals to other independent musicians. By 2028, I'd love to own at least part of a recording studio in either Chicago or Atlanta.



Erica Kremer

Strings with Dr. Selby has had the biggest impact on me. First of all, Strings has been able to have a huge impact because of the sheer amount of time I have put into it. The one-fourth of my school day, lunch and after school rehearsals, concerts, recitals, and trips means that over the past four years I have spent countless hours with other Strings majors. When you spend so much time with people who have similar interests as you, you are bound to make some of the closest friends in your life. I came into SOA in 9th grade barely knowing anyone; Strings facilitated not exactly a seamless transition, but one as close as I could get under the circumstances. Playing in Orchestra made me communicate in a whole new way, whether it was a meeting new stand partner, leading a section, or listening and moving with other sections. Through this, I became more confident than I ever have before, and it has given me friends and connections that will last me a lifetime.



Taylor Seel

An SOA education is full of creativity, whether we realize it or not, because we are surrounded by so many differences. Throughout my SOA career, I experienced many things that kids at other schools may not get to experience. Whether it is celebrating certain civilizations in the 6th grade or performing in the spring showcase, every event at SOA presents a variety of talent and is a bonding experience for everyone. Although there is not a big variety of classes to take, most of the teachers give a good education and learning experience to their students. Being in an arts major is what SOA is most known for, and it is a great experience to not only present your talent, but also to create a family of friends and become more comfortable with who you are.



Cassandra Whiteside

If I was able to start all over from 6th grade, I would have worked a lot harder and worked on my time management because in the long run, it would have made my senior year a lot easier. I would not have had a full schedule my senior year. I also would have probably either come for middle or high school, not both, because when you are doing the same thing for seven years, it gets old really quickly and you start to feel resentful. If you do decide to stay for both middle and high school, you should change your major so you can become better in more than one thing and you won't get too bored.



Jessica Bride

For almost seven years, I have been fortunate to witness the power of conversation to change people. During my Creative Writing class, fifteen of us—all from different backgrounds, families, economic statuses, and even towns—have grown from the community Creative Writing has fostered. Our Creative Writing classes have started with sharing personal worries, crying over world events, and debating over the effects of social issues on our nation. I feel fortunate to have witnessed discussion and debate changing all fifteen of us. I have noticed myself become more accepting and fearless. While participating in an exploration of poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and even scripts, I also expanded my academic possibilities alongside the people I now call my second family. Through them, I have been able to recognize and embrace my uniqueness alongside that of those around me. If we had never opened ourselves to each other, then my second family would never have been established.



Ayanna Gadsden

Unlike a lot of School of the Arts alumni, I actually plan to invest in my talent. When I first applied to SOA in sixth grade, I did not get in. However, that didn't stop me, and I chose to try out again the next year for Vocal and Visual Arts. My drawing career started in eighth grade here. So far I have won many awards, including on national levels. Scholastic Art and Writing Awards have awarded me four Gold Keys, two Silver Keys, and three Honorable Mentions. After high school, I plan to attend the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design for four years, which also gave me a great scholarship for my talent. While I'm in the cold, I also plan to sing and expand my music career, therefore making my horizons for creative arts broader. I would say SOA has taught me enough about the real world. Unfortunately, I've learned about the real world outside of school. I have educationally achieved more than the average South Carolina student. Thanks Bonds Wilson Campus! See you later!



Nick Remington

At the School of the Arts, I have encountered many teachers who helped me throughout the years, but one teacher I will not forget would be Mr. Smyth. I had the pleasure of being in two of his classes in the seven years at the school. Not only did he influence me daily, he taught me core values in life and showed me the importance of dedication. I would see Mr. Smyth out in the halls and every time I would pass, he always wanted to have a conversation, to know how I was doing and if there was anything new going on in my life. Mr. Smyth is one of those teachers I will never forget.



Katie Brown

To be a teacher, one must have a passion for education, enjoy working with students, and love their job. In my time at SOA, I have had two teachers that had all of these qualities. My AP Biology teacher, Mr. Short, and my Spanish teacher, Mrs. Crawford. Both of these teachers love what they do and care deeply about their students' education, and as a student, it made me willing to work harder and try my best. Mr. Short has a true passion for biology and has fun teaching and setting up different experiments each and every day. Mrs. Crawford is not only fluent in the Spanish language, but she also knows everything there is to know about all different kinds of Spanish-speaking cultures as well. Both of these teachers were amazing and have inspired me to continue both of these subjects in college and in my career.



Coleman Jones

Ten years from now, I believe that we will be experiencing a catastrophe due to the effects of consumerism and rapid technological growth without thinking about the effects it has on mental health. Media companies' main objective is to get you attached to the feeling that you receive from using the app. A former Facebook executive, Chamath Palihapitiya, said, "The short-term, dopamine-driven feedback loops that we have created are destroying how society works. No civil discourse, no cooperation, misinformation, mistruth." I believe that the first step in countering these effects is becoming aware of the problem.



Izzy Gustafson

In 2028, I plan on being done with undergraduate school and hopefully be getting my Master's in Marine Biology. As for how I'm going to achieve my goal, I plan on going to University of South Carolina in Columbia and getting my Bachelor's in Marine Science. Then I'm probably going to a university or college, either on the west coast or somewhere in Australia, for my Graduate degree. As for life plans, hopefully I'll be either a newlywed or engaged to my man. However, most importantly, by 2028 if I can't achieve anything else, I want to have a dog again because I grew up with one and they can be an important part of a person's life.



Graham Martini

The teacher who has had the strongest impact on me is Ms. Cimballa. She is a passionate artist who I respect very much. Ms. Cimballa cares deeply about the students who care deeply. She has looked out for me every step of the way and continues to support me. The way she teaches is open-ended and encourages individual growth. She has helped me make endless connections that have helped me to succeed in art. Ms. Cimballa has always been the go-to for advice and counseling. I trust her opinion wholeheartedly. I will miss many at SOA, but I don't know if I will ever have a teacher as straight-up as her again.



Tianai Rong

I'm very grateful for having the chance of being a part of SOA in the past two years. I got the chance to meet so many amazing teachers and students, learned varieties of creative drawing skills, and finally, finished my first art portfolio this year. Time has gone fast like an hourglass, and I never thought that one day I could be a "visual artist" with my own art portfolio. From a young girl who only knows how to use watercolor to an 18-year-old "expert" in digital art, small things like sand can also accumulate to a pagoda. Although I might not have the chance to do art so consistently after I graduate from SOA, this memory will always be the most colorful bubble in my memory.

Elise Richardson

I started at SOA as a sophomore, which was an awkward time to enter a school like this, where many students have been together and learning about their major since the sixth grade. I felt very overwhelmed by my other visual arts classmates, but Ms. Cimballa helped make my transition into the school as welcoming as possible. My junior year, I was hesitant at first, but she convinced me to do an AP art portfolio. Way in over my head, she helped me throughout the year to create 24 watercolor pieces. There were many times I felt discouraged due to the talent around me, but she always got me back on track and feeling confident with my work. I don't think that I would have ever been able to get a 5 on my AP portfolio without the tough love, reassurance, and perseverance Ms. Cimballa showed me.



Jessica Boyd

In 2028, I plan to be a successful band director and a professional flute player playing in an orchestra. I intend to go to Charleston Southern University and major in Music Education and minor in Flute Performance. I will go to CSU to get my Bachelor's degree, probably go into the work force, try to get a job in a school district somewhere, and audition for many orchestra jobs until someone selects me. Eventually, I will go back and get my Master's degree and possibly my Ph.D. As for my life plans, I want to either be married or engaged to the love of my life. If that doesn't happen, then I just want to enjoy my life and focus on being great.



McCormick Emge

Sophomore year, I had no idea what I wanted to study in college. I enjoyed playing piano, but I didn't really see how I could keep music in my education. In my free time, I liked to tinker with electronics, but still wasn't sure about STEM. Then I took audio engineering with Mr. Taylor and learned about the science of sound. With the other students in my class "band," I worked with microphones, recorded audio for the haunted house, voice-acted for the part of a certain animated super-suit designer, and produced a song. It opened a whole different field for me where I could combine both my passions for engineering and the arts.



Caroline Dukes

Ten years from now, I will just have finished graduate school and started my career either in environmental law or as an agricultural engineer working in a laboratory. I will also be fruitlessly attempting to pay off hefty student loans. I would like to be working in the realm of biological sciences, whether I'm using my knowledge to protect the environment and heritage sites, or creating genetically modified organisms. I also look forward to having my own residence where I can have many, many cats and other pets. I can't wait until I no longer attend school daily and can finally stop being in fear of tests.



Brynnan Frye

The two classes that had the strongest impact on me are Symphony and Band. Both have helped me to grow musically and personally throughout the years. Mr. Kerr came in almost every day smiling, cracking jokes to the band, and was always honest and kind to his students. He helped me to realize and remember not to worry about the small things and to be the best version of myself possible. Dr. Selby always came in with a smile and a positive attitude, ready for a good rehearsal. He told us multiple times throughout the years that he was thankful to be our director, and that meant a lot to the students in the symphony. Symphony challenged me because the parts were much more exposed than they are in Band, so being a part of the Symphony challenged me and my musical ability. While I was at SOA, I was lucky enough to have directors that truly cared for their students and pushed us to be the best that we can be, and for that I will always be grateful.



Salma Mongy

If I were entering SOA as a 6th grader, I would do several things differently. I would start out by trying more challenging classes and putting in my best effort in all my work. I would also try to establish as many friendships as I can. My years as a high schooler went by very quickly and I feel as if I did not cherish the moments as much as I could have. I would try to make more memories with the friends I had and happily live out my days in school as they quickly passed by.



Carlos Boswell

SOA has many qualities that make it what it is. Yes, SOA gets its hate and bad reviews from the students inside its walls, but in reality we have great benefits. This reflection isn't on one specific aspect of SOA because there is no specific aspect of SOA; it's all unique. Hate may arise from different viewpoints, but at the end of the day, each class of students, for the most part, comes together and has true compassion for each other. Over the years, like anywhere else, friends come and go as well as habits and mindsets. Being at SOA gives you a different aspect in life, due to the fact that it isn't like any other high school. Yes, other high schools are the typical "high school experience," but what is a "high school experience"? Sports, homecomings, pep rallies, ROTC and more? Or the life lessons you learn from the atmosphere and people you are around? High school is truly what you make of it, and despite the negativities, because heaven knows I have mine as well, SOA is a well-rounded, decent school.



Keegan Vath

It's extremely hard for me to pick just one teacher or class, so the two teachers who have had the strongest impact on me at SOA are Mrs. Crawford and Mr. Brehm. Mrs. Crawford has been an amazing example to me of godliness, kindness, and grace. She has taught more than just Spanish, but she has taught me the importance of integrity and selflessness. She has been a true friend to me for the classes I have had with her and even this year when I haven't had her class. I have missed coming into Spanish class every day to singing a song in Spanish with my classmates. Thank you, Mrs. Crawford. Mr. Brehm has been a great model of determination, dignity, organization, and class. The way he runs his class, from what and how he writes on his whiteboard to his detailed syllabus and pacing guide, has been an incredible testimony of how to present oneself to others and how to be diligent down to even the smallest details. His class really whipped me into shape and motivated me to be more organized and to more than who I was at the beginning of the school year. I am so grateful for his teaching and I am going to miss his sense of humour. Thank you, Mr. Brehm.



Jada Orr

Sixth grade Jada,

Do not expect people to really change in high school. By change I mean to mature by the same means you will. Just accept that those same immaturities and insecurities will only take a new form in high school for most people. Everyone is on their own journey, learning who they are, slowly but surely, in different experiences and at different times. And that's okay. Just because you're in touch with who you are or stronger in your character than most around you doesn't mean you're odd or out of place. You're just going to outgrow some things socially that others may take longer to process through. SOA has different kinds of students from various backgrounds, perspectives, and privileges. Some students may be ignorant to things about life outside of school that you were forced to come to terms with as a black child. Either way, they are still your brothers and sisters through Christ, and you will continue to show compassion and love. Do not take the microaggressions personally. It's not even about you, but more so of preconceived ideas of who you are. Stay open-minded so that God can allow some doors to open up for you that you never even knew existed. Sophomore year your going to watch a loved one get sick and pass away slowly right before your eyes. All hope will feel like it's lost. Junior year you'll think you're in love and you'll also get your heart broken. You're going to think you have it all figured out when you start freshman year, just to realize you don't even have the half of it, sis. But don't get it twisted, God is still with you. You have to go through some growing pains, and realize what you've been planning for you God's got something better. Your going to continue to outgrow all your spaces and places until you get to where God wants you to be. Step out in the sun and look down at your skin when you need to remind yourself that your people didn't make it this far for you to give up on your journey. I promise you, you're more powerful than you think.



Megan Vallario

In ten years, I want to be a forensic psychologist. I'd like to have traveled throughout Europe, South America, Africa, and Australia. It's important to me that in ten years I find myself and who I am and what I want to do. I would like to have a pretty house and German shepherd and maybe a husband if I decide. Who knows. Overall, I'm going to be attending the College of Charleston and majoring in Psychology, along with a minor in Criminology. My brother is training to be in the F.B.I, so I'm hoping to get some connections through that to get a good position because finding a job for this subject may be hard. I hope to not live here my whole life and maybe work in New York City. I'm excited to leave SOA and start a new chapter in my life.



Emma Greig

As of right now, I honestly have no idea what I want to do. So your guess is as good as mine on where and what I'll be doing in 2028. I'm hoping to have gone skydiving, gone swimming with whale sharks, met Danny DeVito, ridden a camel, won a monopoly game, walked on the moon, been abducted by aliens, and be married to Iain Glen, if he's not already dead. The things I still won't be 2028 are religious, a conservative, and a groupie. I'm expecting a lot for myself and for the world in 2028. Hopefully aliens will be proven to be real, and the first female president will be elected! My main goal, though, is to be happy in what I'm doing, and if that's by being a wildlife vet, a pediatric doctor, or a criminal investigator in the FBI, then that's fine. I really just want to live life to the fullest and go with the flow. Life's too short to be regretting things or to not be happy. If all else fails, I'll just become the president.



Brianna Samonte

There have been days that SOA has pushed my limits and almost made me want to leave. But along with this, it has made me realize how fortunate I am to be attending this school. If I didn't go to SOA, I would be going to a large middle and high school. I would not have the really close friends I have now, an understanding of my musical abilities, or be the person I am today. I would not have thrived the same way as I have in the SOA environment. SOA was very accepting of me and because of that, it allowed me to figure out the person I wanted to be. My years at SOA have allowed me to learn new things about myself and change to become a person I thought I was never capable of being. Before, I did not enjoy change but after being at SOA for seven years my experiences have made me more open minded and conscious of the world around me.



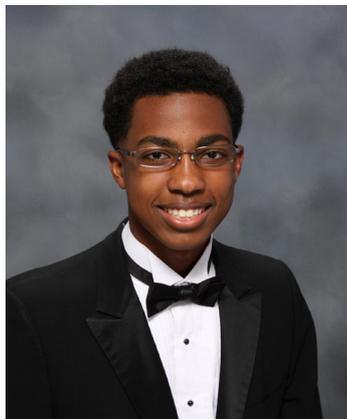
Virginia Quarles

An SOA Education is different from a normal high school education because my classmates share an appreciation for the arts. I have been surrounded by musicians, dancers, artists, and writers for the past seven years and we support one another. Everyone who attends SOA balances their major and academics. Blending the arts and academics is a challenge but is worth it. The ability to take time out of my day and dedicate it to piano is truly unique. My major teachers, Ms. Benson and Mr. Clarke, have helped me become the musician I am today. My major classmates have supported me the most and we have bonded over our art. The SOA education is invaluable to me.



Joshua Nell

After all my years at SOA, I feel that the class that has had the most impact on me was Strings. Not only have I had my favorite teacher but also Strings is where most of my friends are. I have known most of these people since sixth grade and growing and learning with them is amazing. Dr. Selby has also taught me more than just music. I has given me a better appreciation for playing the cello and music. Overall, Strings has taught me so much more than I ever could have imagined and for that I will always be grateful.



Anna Ritchey

If I woke up one morning and it was the first day of sixth grade, there are a lot of things that I would do differently. I would walk into school with confidence and not be so terrified of the high schoolers because I would know that they aren't paying attention to me at all. I would tell myself to study hard but that school is not the most important thing in world. There are people that I would tell myself to avoid because I would know that they would turn out to be a terrible person and friend. I would run for student council, join more clubs, become friends with people I would never even think about talking to today, and audition for school musicals and solos in Vocal. I would tell myself to make the most of my time at SOA because before you know it, it's your last first day of school, last spirit week, last Jump, Jive, & Wail, last powderpuff game, last Vocal concert, last prom, last time walking into school... Make the most of it while you still can.



Karen Wong

Unlike many people who started in sixth grade, I came to SOA in ninth grade. Having moved to six other schools before SOA, I was actually weary of meeting new people and making new friends because I didn't think these relationships would last. Needless to say, after four years, I am actually really grateful that I've been able to know the student body of SOA. I'm surrounded by people who constantly inspire me to become a better person. Through these friendships, I've started to strive for higher goals and to become more aware and involved in my own family and the community around me. I realized the importance of not only working to better yourself, but to also the act of giving back to the community around me. I hope that I take the lessons I've learned while serving those around me to college and into the workforce beyond.



Congratulations to the Class of 2018, from Dr. Cook

Congratulations! You have practiced, written, studied, volunteered, produced, performed and succeeded. It has been a privilege to see you take on the challenges seniors face and press through to reach your goals. You are a strong, talented group of students and your experiences at SOA will stay with you as you go on to the next opportunity life offers. I look forward to hearing about your future success; I'm certain they will be many and varied. I also wish you the best as you use your talents and abilities to continue to make a difference in the lives of those around you!



Sincerely,

Dr. Cook

Congratulations to the Class of 2018, from Dr. Perrineau

Every year the graduating class leaves an impression on you that becomes a jewel in the treasure box of your mind. This year's class is even more special as we started the SOA high school journey together and are forever linked to student issues, accolades, performances, and conversations that will become the memories we carry for the rest of our lives. I am honored to have been a vessel used to navigate the final voyage on the journey to your post-secondary destinations. You are the owners of dreams yet fulfilled, the maker of moments to be captured in time, the leaders of our future world in capacities yet to be established, but most importantly ready to face the challenges that await you in life after the School of the Arts. Congratulations on the first of many milestones, and I eagerly anticipate seeing you achieve success beyond what you could ever imagine.



Sincere wishes in all you future endeavors,
Dr. R. L. Perrineau, Jr.

Congratulations to the Class of 2018, from Mrs. Zerbst

Dear Seniors,
When I met you in 2013 as 7th graders you restored my faith in my calling to education. Each year as I have watched you grow and deepen into the astonishing artists and scholars you have become, that faith has been renewed. I've seen you say goodbye to dear friends with grace and love, and to welcome new friends into the SOA family with open arms. It was more than a joy to be your teacher and now your Assistant Principal, it has been an honor and privilege that I can never adequately express.



"Always remember,
You are braver than you believe,
Stronger than you seem,
Smarter than you think,
And loved more than you know."
-Unknown Author
I believe in you!

Mrs. Zerbst

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“Hunter Horn because he’s my neighbor.”

-Brooking Eager, 8th grade Band



“Bailey Abedon, she’s very driven and never gives up even when there’s a lot on her plate.”

-River Abedon, 10th grade Creative Writing



“Gracie King, because she’s my mentor for dance and inspires me to dance better.”

-Saddy Vanderver, 6th grade Dance



“Nadja McGlone, because she made a meme for her Prom Queen poster.”

-Devin Hare, 7th grade Visual Arts



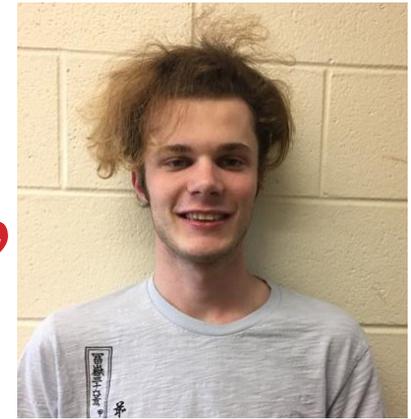
“Taylor Kahn-Perry, she’s on my rowing team and is very encouraging and supportive.”

-Samuel Hagan, 9th grade Piano

Which senior inspires you most, and why?

by Mosiah Williams and Graham Martini

Picture Credits: Mosiah Williams



“Sasha Gregorieff, because he’s unapologetically doing his thing.”

-Joey McGuinn, 11th grade Band



“McCormick Emge, I’ve always been fascinated by people who do tech really well and he’s fantastic at it.”

-Mr. Clark, Geography teacher



“Malachi Jones, because I love him and he’s pursuing his dreams.”

-Liv Provosty, 11th grade Creative Writing



“Jada Orr, because she is so hardworking.”

-Zana Gomez, 10th grade Dance



“Carson Peaden, for the unwavering dedication and determination she shows towards school every year.”

-Zoë De Luca Parker, 12th grade Piano

SOA GRADUATING CLASS OF 2018

