

Applause

Volume 25, Number 10 School of the Arts, North Charleston, SC June 2024



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From the Editors

Dearest Readers, Patrons, and most importantly, Graduates,

This year has been an absolute joy, and now that we have said our teary goodbyes to our seniors, we are ready to distribute our final issue of the school year. In this issue of Applause, we are delighted to present surveys, essays, and photos that encapsulate our lovely seniors' time at School of the Arts. Flip through pages 10-20 to see personal essays written by our Class of 2024, and 23-31 to see their answers to survey questions including (but not at ALL limited to), "What quote do you want to be remembered by?"

In addition to featuring our lovely seniors, this issue does a wonderful job at recapping our incredible arts majors accomplishments this year. Be sure to check out pages 4-8 to refresh your memory on all the fantastic performances from this year!

As the school year comes to a close, Applause wishes you all the best over summer break, and to our seniors, we wish you the best of luck throughout college and beyond, and congratulations on pushing through your crippling case of senioritis! It has been a pleasure being your Editors-in-Chief for the 2023-2024 school year, and we look forward to seeing you all again in August.

Your Editors,

Riley Borkowski and Cate Traywick

Riley Borkowski *Cate Traywick*



SOA Calendar

by Ashley Peterson

May 29th and 30th: Contemporary Theater, *A Night of Scenes*, BBT, 5pm

June 6th: SOA Graduation, North Charleston Performing Arts Center, 7pm

June 7th: 8th Grade Promotion Ceremony, RMMT, 9am

June 8th: 8th Grade Dance, Cafe, 5:30pm

June 10th: Last Day for Students



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Applause

since 1999, the official student publication of

School of the Arts

Founded in 1995 by Rose Maree Myers

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Cover by Riley Borkowski

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Senior
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Senior Essays



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Arts Majors Reflect on the 2023-2024 School Year

Creative Writing

Middle and High School Recap

by Ms. Hart, Mr. Hammes, and Ms. DeTiberus

This year, the Creative Writing majors at SOA have continued to cultivate their voices, hone their skills, and garner recognition on the national stage, earning hundreds of awards in some of the country's oldest and most prestigious writing competitions including Princeton University's Leonard L. Milberg High School Poetry Contest, the international essay competition The Walden Woods Project, YoungArts Writing Contest, the Poetry Society of South Carolina's Skylark Prize, University of South Carolina's Honors College High School Writing Contest, and the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards in which students won over 180 regional awards, and for which we are awaiting the national results in June.

Our program hosted two featured guest writers this year, both SOA alum. Vasantha Sambamurti, an award-winning poet, editor, translator, and prose writer, read from their work and discussed the art of translation.

Dr. Tamara Butler, who serves as the Executive Director of the Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture and Associate Dean of Strategic Planning & Community Engagement for the College of Charleston Libraries, presented a lecture about using her experiences studying creative writing at SOA through her work as a community organizer, as well as conducted a seminar about the importance of place in narratives.



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. They also took part in an ekphrastic poetry unit with sixth-grade Visual Arts majors which involved a day trip to Bulls Island where both artists and writers were inspired by local flora and fauna. In the weeks that followed, students created and traded works of art and poetry based on this immersive lowcountry nature experience, and this unit ended with an art exhibit and poetry reading. In the spring, students were introduced to fiction. They studied Toni Cade Bambara, Kurt Vonnegut, and Pat Conroy, and wrote two short stories and several vignettes, centered around secrets, lies, real human conflict and fiction genres.

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. They also collaborated with dance majors following a trip to the International African American Museum. For this project, writers crafted a narrative based on a story or work of art in the museum and dancers brought the stories to life through choreography. 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. Eighth graders began the year studying fiction, particularly the works of Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Mark Twain, Aaron Sorkin, and Tim O'Brien,

and wrote two full-length short stories, centered around experience and perspective, narrative voice, folklore, and magical realism, as well as ways in which writers plant their endings early on in a story. In the second half of the year, they studied poetry and experimented with various forms: an epistolary poem, a Golden Shovel, 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.

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 science and scientific metaphor. They also traveled to the Somerby Retirement community to interview elders and write narrative poems inspired by their stories. In Advanced Fiction Workshop, they studied the works of Louise Erdrich, Ernest Hemingway, Daniel Wallace, Andrea Lee, and Raymond Carver, as well as wrote two short stories and several vignettes, focused on a number of advanced fiction techniques like minimalism, crisis of faith, human prejudice, narrative uncertainty, objective correlative, and the role that storytelling played/plays in human evolution.

Tenth graders learned to craft a script for the stage and a script for the screen, focusing on multi-layered dialogue, text, context and subtext. In the process, they studied the works of August Wilson and Jonathan Safran Foer, and produced a film script and a play script. 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 essay about the life of someone they admire.

Eleventh graders studied thematic obsessions, form and style in Finding Your Voice, learning to identify their own voice through a thematic series of poems and lyric essays. Finally, each student 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 personal essays and stories about the culture in which they find themselves and some aspect of nature in their unique locale. In addition, students wrote a story from the point of view of a differing gender, challenging themselves to see from another perspective. Both tenth and eleventh-grade students enjoyed giving a public reading of their work at Kudu coffee house downtown.



The intensive yearlong Senior Thesis course allowed eleven students 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 and a well-attended Senior Thesis Reading titled A Riot of Flowers.

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*.

-Ms. Hart, Mr. Hammes, and Ms. DeTiberus

Visual Arts

Middle School Recap

The Middle School Visual Arts department was presented with exciting opportunities this school year. Students learned new mediums, techniques and explored different ways to express themselves. Our sixth graders, taught by Mr. Colie, created "Valdes Creatures". They created creatures from their imaginations and made interesting works utilizing color theory and their creativity. Our seventh graders, taught by Ms. Potter mastered 2 point perspectives over the course of the year. They learned how to utilize composition and the idea of 3D space. Students were taught the skills required for architecture drawing, still lifes and learned rendering for more accurate images. The eighth graders, also taught by Mr. Colie, practiced by doing a thesis assignment. They were required to make an inquiry and create two pieces that represent their idea. This prepares them for AP art and senior thesis. They also created cardboard robotic structures to their own design. This ties in a whole new element of 3D art. Our Middle schoolers were opened up to new possibilities like live drawing at our convocation, a petting zoo to practice realism and field trips. They traveled to Edisto Beach and made sand sculptures as well as painted on shells they found. It is important to learn how to express your art with more materials than just pencil or paint. Their hard work paid off majorly with awards from competitions like scholastic and the county fair. Sixth grade fair winners include Mallie White, June Prause, and Moxie-Jo Galvin. Our eighth grade award winners include Audrey Cen, William Odal, Scarlett Johnson, and Lucy Kugler. One of our eighth graders, Sarah Lewis won first place in the Kids for Conservation competition, as well as a 3rd place award and an honorable mention for Mary Morales Roberlo and Moxie-Jo Galvin. Our middle schoolers also competed in scholastic and were very successful. The eighth grade 1st place winners were Audrey Cen and William Oldal. We also had several honorable mentions go to Priya Cardella, Scarlett Johnson, Audrey Cen and William Oldal. Lastly our annual Duck Stamp Competition came around. The eighth grade 1st place winners include Audrey Cen and Gillian Liegle. Followed by honorable mention winner Fenya Connor. Our sixth grade first place winners were June Prause and Verde Vasilevski. Second place winners include Zoe Place and Mary Morales. Third place winners were Brooklyn Leberknight and Sarah Till. Finally the honorable mention winners were Piper Brunson and Mallie White. Congratulations to all our Middle school winners, we are very proud of the effort you contribute to our major. We had a very successful and exciting year and hope for many more to come!



High School Recap

by Braeden LaRoche

This year's high school Visual Arts classes continued a legacy of exceptional performance, bearing home dozens of awards from local competitions, hosting numerous art shows, and studying under renowned guest artists and dedicated major teachers Ms. Richardson, Mr. Colie, and Ms. Potter.

From the freshmen to the seniors, Visual Arts students also delighted in several field trips and a visit from a traveling petting zoo.

The account of prizes claimed by Visual Arts high schoolers is impressive in both raw numbers and monetary earnings. Five seniors accrued a total of 6,400 dollars in a contest hosted by the Charleston Artists Guild.

Cash prizes were also associated with the works chosen by the city of Goose Creek to be featured on traffic boxes and sanitation trucks.

In the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards competition SOA Visual Artists claimed the vast majority of local awards for their respective categories, with some students' work advancing to be considered for national prizes. Many students won ribbons, including top prizes, in the Coastal Carolina Fair's Fine Arts Show.

The sophomore class made abstract paintings to donate to Roper St. Francis hospital, and some students participated in the Federal Duck Stamp Contest. Others had their work eligible for prizes in the prestigious local ArtFields competition.

Other contests Visual Arts high schoolers participated in include the SEWE Junior Duck Stamp Competition, the SEWE Wildlife Photography Competition, the Kids for Conservation Birdhouse Competition, and the North Charleston Arts Fest.

Visual Arts took exciting field trips to the Savannah College of Art and Design, Edisto Beach, and Bulls Island. Visual Arts high schoolers had the opportunity to create studies from live animals when a traveling petting zoo, complete with chickens, pigs, and goats, visited in March.

Students painted watercolor portraits with direct instruction from the nationally celebrated Mary Whyte, and others practiced spray painting with Patch Whiskey, whose bright and unique murals decorate many local facades.

Under the guidance of Ms. Richardson, the seniors completed another successful year of AP Art, with students submitting AP Drawing or AP 2D portfolios. Ms. Richardson has high hopes for the scores these students will receive, as this is the same class of seniors that already boasts two perfect scores, achieved by only around one percent of portfolios, from the previous year. Seniors displayed and sold their thesis artwork on May 23 in the cafeteria.

Whether they choose to pursue the arts in college or not, SOA's Visual Arts seniors are grateful for the valuable education they have received, and for the experiences SOA's excellent Visual Arts program has afforded them. The Visual Arts underclassmen look forward to continuing to improve their artistic abilities in their next year at SOA.



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Piano

Middle School Recap

by Ashley Peterson

The Middle School Piano Department has had a successful 2023-24 school year with amazing concerts, nerve wracking competitions, and fun field trips. They have grown not only as musicians but closer together this year through these exciting events.

To start off the year, they had both a classical and jazz concert including some of your favorite holiday songs to get in a jolly mood. In the middle of the year, the jazz program would have another recital but this time featuring a guitarist named James Slater to give them a hand at some accompaniments with other instruments. The school year ended in a bang where they had another classical concert similar to the one in the beginning of the year along with another jazz concert. These pianists worked many hours along with their technique and theory skills to perfect their pieces for the big stage.

In the midst of the many concerts put on by these middle schoolers, they also participated in the many competitions going on during the school year where they excelled. In the SCMTA District and State Auditions, fifteen students earned outstandings and nine advanced onto State. At CMTA Achievement Day, twenty-five students earned outstandings and fifteen students were chosen to perform in the Honors Recital or alternatives. In the South Carolina Piano Festival, a Middle School Piano major won the competition along with another winning second place. There were also a few scholarship winners in the CMTA Louise Mathis Scholarship and the CSOL Scholarship.

The Middle School Piano Majors had the opportunity to explore other arts outside of their own on their field trip to the Gaillard to see the show "Show Way, the Musical". This allowed for them to sit back and relax away from the concerts and competitions to watch someone else perform and they had a blast.

Overall, they had a very busy yet exciting year and can't wait to grow more as pianists here at SOA!

High School Recap

by Ashley Peterson

High school Piano Majors have excelled this year in their musical ability. Through concerts, field trips, and competitions, these pianists have been quite busy this year.

The year kicked off with the Fall Classical Concert which included both solos and ensembles from ninth through twelfth graders. They would later have a similar spring classical concert that proved to be excellent. Along with these classical concerts, Jazz Piano also had four concerts this year, including one where juniors and seniors accompanied vocalist Ms. Anderson. Both the audience and students loved it.

Along with concerts, many piano majors participated in various competitions such as Achievement Day, District and State Auditions, and the SC Piano Festival. Eleven



students received an "Outstanding" rating in Achievement Day and six students performed in the Honors Recital or were chosen as alternatives. Five students earned a rating of "Outstanding" in District and advanced to State. There were also several scholarship auditions that piano majors placed in including the CMTA Louise Mathis Scholarship and CSOL Scholarship.

In between concerts and competitions, Piano Seniors continued to work diligently on the first part of their senior thesis that would be approaching in February. This included every student performing at least one solo and ensemble piece. Thesis came with many performance seminars and a master class with Dr. Yun from CSU, which allowed for these seniors to progress even more on their theses. After the performance was finished and seniors moved into their second semester, they began to work on the teaching portion of the thesis, where they either tutored a sixth or an eighth grade piano major. They helped students with scales, pieces, and theory, giving them a little insight into what it is like to be a piano teacher and what methods are the best to help your students.

After the majority of performances and competitions were out of the way, the high school Piano Majors visited Universal Studios to allow them to relax and have some fun away from music. There they went on rides, swam, and got to know each other better outside of the classroom.

Strings

Middle School Recap

by Riley Borkowski and Ms. Mears

As the school year comes to an end, the Middle School Strings program can look back and agree this year was full of successes. The year has been filled with many accomplishments that show off the talent and dedication of the MSO students. Out of fifty MSO students that auditioned for Region Orchestra, an impressive forty students were selected for the event. Additionally, fifteen MSO students earned seats in the 2024 SC All State Orchestra.

Throughout the year, the program held many exceptional performances such as "It's Fall Y'all," "Holiday Magic with Singers," and "Spring Strings!" The eighth grade students were also honored with an invitation to perform at "Holidays in the Park." From participation in the Charleston Symphony Youth Orchestras to an exciting opportunity at the Universal Studios Sound Design Performance and Workshop, our students have had a jam-packed year full of unforgettable experiences. The MSO has put in an incredible amount of work this year, and congratulations to all of the students!



High School Recap

by Riley Borkowski

The SOA Strings Program had an amazing (and busy) year filled with so many memorable experiences and achievements. We kicked things off in the fall with an annual workshop led by world-renowned violinist, Francisco Fullana. Mr. Fullana doesn't only inspire the students but also strings director Doctor Selby. The week-long workshop can be summed up in one sentence stated by Dr. Selby: "I never stop learning from him." Our holiday season was also nothing short of fantastic. We performed three concerts at the Gaillard

Center, with one performance having an audience of 1,800 elementary schoolers. It was a joy to see the high school and elementary school students light up when “Sleigh Bells” started playing.

Arguably the most exciting moment of the year was our trip to New York City to compete in the National Orchestra Cup. This prestigious event drew top young orchestras from across the country (Texas, New York, and California), and we were thrilled to take third place. Performing at Alice Tully Hall was an unforgettable experience that provided our students with valuable lessons and lasting memories, and much like the NOC, brought the Strings majors much closer together. In addition to these highlights and other concerts, the SOA Symphony and Sinfonietta had the privilege of performing five different concertos featuring different student soloists throughout the year. The 2023-2024 school year was one of the best on record, and while we will miss our seniors deeply, we are so excited to see what next year has in store for us.



Band

Middle School Recap

by Jovanny Silva-Velasquez and Ms. Aldredge

SOA Middle School Band welcomed in a new band director, Ms. Aldredge, along with twenty-five new sixth grade band members. The first semester was busy getting to know each other and preparing for upcoming concerts. The students' first concert was the Spooky Tunes Concert. This concert featured students wearing costumes and playing scary music. The event was well received and so much fun! In December, we performed our Winter Concert with the SOA High School Bands. It was a treat for our students to see the high school students perform and work together to bring holiday cheer to our families and friends.

The second semester was filled with SCBDA events. We had forty students selected for Region Band and three students for All-State Band. The MS Jazz Band, seventh and eighth grade Band and sixth grade Band all earned Superior ratings at their performance assessments this year. Fifty students participated in the solo and ensemble competition, and the success at state band events helped our band earn the SCBDA Outstanding Performance Award, the highest award given to band programs in South Carolina.

After spring break, the seventh and eighth grade band members traveled to Orlando, Florida and participated in the Disney Imagination Workshop. They also enjoyed free time in Disney World, Hollywood Studios, and Animal Kingdom. Our sixth grade band traveled to Carowinds to perform in the Carowinds Music Festival. The year ended with our spring concert and band awards, a wonderful night to celebrate all the accomplishments of our band students.



High School Recap

by Jovanny Silva-Velasquez

The SOA high school band department had a great school year, boasting a litany of different performances, achievements, and awards! The Jazz Band was once more the host of JJW and received a fan-flippin-tastic superior rating at the Newberry JPA, alongside the Jazz Lab Band. The Wind Ensemble band saw first place at the Smoky Mountain Music Festival (alongside a nice trip to Gatlinburg), a performance at WCU, and a super rating at Charleston Music Festival. Lastly, Symphonic Band received a stellar superior rating (with distinction!) at CPA and performed at the State Concert Festival. In addition, three students were featured in the all-state orchestra, ten were in the all-state band, forty-three were placed in the region band, and ten students were selected to the University of South Carolina Band Clinic.



Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Middle and High School Recap

by Kendra Lancaster

The SOA Deaf and Hard of Hearing Department had an incredibly exciting school year! Although there are only four students, two teachers of the Deaf, and two sign language interpreters in the Deaf Program this year there was so much that was accomplished and a whole lot of fun was had. This year American Sign Language two and three were both offered at SOA. It is exciting to have so many hearing students learning to communicate with their Deaf Peers. ASL club was also held monthly. The Deaf Team used their video phone with SOA alumni, AJ White and Rio Dong, about beginning their college career with the National Technical Institute of the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology. The students also use the video phone to keep in touch with retired teacher of the Deaf Dean Walters. In November the SOA Deaf Team saw Percy Jackson's: The Lightning Thief, at Dock Street Theater with two community sign language interpreters. Then in January the SOA Deaf Team joined the North Charleston Elementary Deaf Team and went to see Junie B. Jones: Toothless Wonder, where there were also two community interpreters. SOA students were ASL role models for the Deaf elementary students. In December SOA had their Holiday Spectacular Concert with Vocal, Symphony, and the Deaf students all signing “Silent Night” at the Galliard. Many observers say that “Silent Night” is one of the many favorite parts of the show. During the second semester of the year, teacher of the Deaf, Tracy Duffy, applied and received a STEM grant from Bosch. The money was used to study how our food grows. Mrs. Duffy purchased a Gardyn hydroponic system. The students helped assemble the Gardyn and also helped clip the fresh food to take home to eat. Middle schooler, Deonta Nelson, is finishing off his 8th grade year strong with the eighth grade class trip to the mountains, signing the Pledge of Allegiance at Awards Day, and a super fun field day. Underclassman, Kate Figueroa, was an active member of the Hispanic Student Union and the ASL



club. She will be attending Camp Wonderhands (a summer camp in South Carolina for Deaf youth) this summer. Marquis Larry, an upperclassman, tried out for the Academic Magnet golf team. Although he didn't make the golf team, Coach Stackhouse really encouraged him and said he wanted Marquis to try out again next year. Stackhouse said, "Marquis is a natural athlete." Marquis will be attending Cooper River Center for Advanced Studies next year and starting the beginning of his technical career. At the beginning of the year, Karolyn Figueroa, began her Automotive Collision Repair journey at Cooper River Center for Advanced Studies. Not long after she began her studies, she received the Student of the Month Award in October. In the first semester she received her OSHA completion and twenty-four different certifications in the iCar program and was recognized at the CRCAS school Winter Showcase. When the second semester began she won Student of the Month a second time in February. She was also nominated and accepted into the National Technical Honor Society as the first Deaf member of the Charleston County chapter. She then received Stop the Bleed certification from CRCAS and was recognized at the second CRCAS Spring Showcase. Karolyn has really enjoyed Automotive Collision Repair and is excited to go back next year for her senior year and plans to find an internship fixing cars in Charleston. This summer she will be a camp counselor for Camp Wonderhands. The Deaf program is thrilled to be a part of the SOA family, the students and the staff ensure they are truly included and valued.

Theater

Middle School Recap

by Mr. Younts

The SOA Theater Department is one of the busiest of all SOA Arts majors when it comes to output. So, it stands to reason that its Middle School Division was no stranger to performing this year. Over forty performances in the old Black Box were created by those sixty students. Let's take a look at the titles. Sixth Grade did *Everybody Gets Eaten by Sharks*, *Robin Hood- Naught in Nottingham* and *Dionysia*. seventh Grade did the *Main Event Improv Show*, *The Day the Internet Died* and *USERNAME*. Then not to be outdone, the eighth graders did *Soundscapes*, *Bard in a Box* and *I Don't Want to Talk About It*. The year wrapped up with the annual MS Adjudications in the RMMT and a fun picnic. Thanks for another great year Middle School Theater majors!



Vocal

High School Recap

by Isis Hanna

High school Vocal majors had a busy, but incredibly successful school year! The concert season was kicked off in October with the Fly on the Wall Concert, which allowed parents a glimpse into the daily routine of the Vocal class. Later that month, the students took a trip to Camp Greenville for a morale-boosting retreat. In November, several choir students were selected to sing alongside Foreigner at their concert, which was a once in a lifetime opportunity! With December came the annual Christmas Spectacular, where the Vocal and Strings majors come together at the Gaillard and put on a wonderful holiday

show. After Winter Break, the Vocal program began preparations for their yearly musical, this year's being *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. They put on five wonderful performances throughout the month of February. At the end of February, middle and high school students headed to Louisville, Kentucky for regionals and performed with other choir students from around the Southern US. In the beginning of March, qualifying Vocal majors performed for All State Choir at Winthrop University. Senior Thesis began in mid-March and continued throughout April, where Vocal seniors are given the opportunity to showcase the skills they have acquired during their time at SOA. Also in April was the Vocal Ireland trip, where a handful of students had the amazing opportunity to travel to Ireland and perform in several churches, along with seeing the sights in Killarney, Dublin, and Galway. They concluded the year as they always do, with Music Down in my Soul, a celebration both of soul music and food and the graduating senior Vocal majors.



Dance

Middle School Recap

by Cate Traywick

Middle school Dance kicked off this year by taking a all grades field trip to Wild Blue Ropes, where they participated in team-building exercises and the high ropes course! The seventh grade collaborated with the seventh grade Creative Writing class, the dance majors interpreting a piece written by the Creative Writers for performance. As per tradition, the eighth graders performed their 8th grade solos, where they choreographed their own pieces and performed them for an audience of their perrs and parents. In addition to their numerous trips and performances, the middle school Dance majors were visited by guest artists ranging from Anuradha Murali who taught them Indian dance styles to James Jiang who taught a class on ballroom dancing. Lyla Mae Malone recieved a summer study scholarship! All in all this has been yet another successful year for the middle school Dance department.

High School Recap

by Cate Traywick

This year the high school Dance department had vet another year of successes! They took a field trip to Disney where they participated in a masterclass and enjoyed all Disney had to offer! The junior Dance majors choreographed and performed their "Junior Compositions" early this calendar year, and each piece proved to be thought provoking and unique and the seniors composed their senior theses. In addition to their performances, the Dance majors were visited by Stephen Duane who led a class on swing dancing, Jordan Giancursio who taught contemporary jazz, amongst others. The Dance department as a whole performed their Holidays Around The World winter showcase in December, and in April the department performed their famous "Dance Departmental."



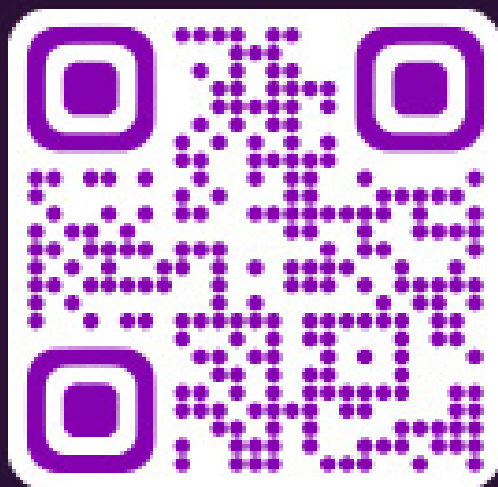
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Applause presents SOA's Class of 2024 in their own words...

Applause asked the graduating class of 2024 to reflect on their time at SOA through a short essay responding to one of the following prompts: *What would you do differently if you were entering sixth grade again? What do you hope to be doing in 2034? Which teacher has impacted you the most? Reflect on any aspect of your years at SOA. Reflect on the value of an SOA education.*

Greyson Aldredge

I am a firm believer that being involved with the arts is one of the greatest ways to enhance one's self. Coming to SOA for my senior year of high school, I have proven my hypothesis. Being at a school like SOA helps to foster creativity and innovation. Students learn how to think outside of the box and develop new and original ideas that could one day change the world. The lessons learned at SOA can be applied to a wide range of professions, not just fine arts. Critical thinking and problem solving are used extensively whether you are composing music, choreographing a dance, or designing a sculpture; you must make decisions that involve reasoning and complex problem solving abilities. Engaging in the arts is proven to enhance emotional intelligence, while also exposing students to diverse cultures and perspectives. SOA teaches discipline and perseverance through mastery of your art. To be successful at SOA you will also need to be a team player. Many art forms include teamwork, whether in a musical theater production, a symphony orchestra, or even a chamber ensemble, you must rely on one another to succeed. SOA has a strong community, and I enjoyed having the opportunity to attend this wonderful school for my senior year. Thank you to everyone who has made it a blast!

Leilah Baird

SOA is a very competitive school with very competitive students. I believe that SOA's education is very good, but what pushes it over the top is the competitive school's nature. Everyone is motivated to do their best and be at the top of their class. Thinking back on my seven years, I learned a lot, gained friends, lost friends, struggled in classes, but I wouldn't change anything. Mrs. Johnson, my geometry, Algebra 2, and pre-cal teacher, had the biggest impact on me, someone who has never been confident in math. Mrs. Johnson allowed me to feel comfortable enough in her class to ask questions no matter what. She also

gave countless tutoring options and lots of opportunities to increase my grade. After I graduate I will be attending the University of South Carolina. Then I want to find a successful job after traveling the world for a little, and maybe get married. After that I will probably come back to live in Charleston. Although I am excited to leave high school behind, there are definitely many many things I will miss about SOA.

Savannah Barnett

An SOA education is so much more valuable than one you might've gotten at any other high school. I came to SOA in ninth grade, and in the four years that I've been here, I've had more life experiences than ever before. When I started, I didn't know much about the SOA Orchestra, so I didn't know what the upcoming school year would be like. This was the first time being back to school after Covid, so the year already started off weird; ninety percent of the orchestra was at home on Zoom. The more people that came back, the more normal the year became.

Sophomore year went about the same, but I missed a lot more school that year. I was starting to read and learn new levels of music and technique that I had never seen. It was super hard at first, but I got better as the year went on. By the time I was a junior, I became Concert Master of the SOA Chamber Orchestra. This was a really cool experience for me because although at my old school I did experience being "first chair," it was never anything like what I experienced at SOA. I earned the opportunity to lead an orchestra without a conductor, and how to work as a team even when playing music.

During my Senior year I finally got to experience the Symphony Orchestra. The best experience I had at SOA was this year. We traveled to New York City and participated in a national competition at one of the world's leading performing arts centers. Attending SOA is one of the best decisions a student can make. It opens you up to a world of new opportunities. Take the risk.

Max Besta

At SOA I have learned who I am. I've met so many people here, and shared all types of moments with them. Whether those moments are good or bad, I've learned and I've grown into the person I never thought I'd be. I have learned to stay true to myself, and just do what I love at full throttle without caring what people think or say about me. In the arts, there are so many "unrealistic dreams to chase" as they say. But I say, "I don't believe you, because I'm already chasing them." I have reached so many of my goals here, and made lifelong memories and friendships. I've learned to leave the people that bring me down, and stick by the ones that believe in me and lift me up. Who I am right now is a musical artist, songwriter, and a dancer. I am proud to refer to myself with these titles. I would say I did it all myself, but that truly would be the biggest lie I've ever told. The SOA community has inspired me and motivated me to accomplish things I didn't know were possible. Learning who I am is quite a broad statement. But all that went into becoming the version of myself I am today is what I value most and what I'll remember forever. Thank you, SOA.

Ollie Brice

Mrs. Mortensen definitely had the strongest impact on me during my time at SOA. I had her for marine science as an underclassman, where I solidified my passion for aquatic life. She always had various animals in the classroom, from snakes and geckos to tortoises and baby chicks, with whom I was able to form



personal relationships. I had her again for anatomy in senior year, where I asked for more info on aquatic life as I worked on my book for my senior thesis. She heavily inspired my collection of short stories and essays through her classes and all the opportunities I got to spend with animals.

Jordan Cantle

In 2034, I hope to have established a side business in art. I have a deep passion for illustration and comics. Art and stories have always had a profound impact on my life, bringing me fascination, joy, and a sense of community. Stories have a unique ability to explain life's abstract situations that simple words cannot articulate. While it's hard for me to envision visual art as my primary job, I also can't imagine not pursuing art at all. Therefore, I plan to focus on art for two years in college and explore opportunities to further pursue my interests in the future.



Hailey Carnagey

Wow, 2034! I hope to be teaching, sharing my knowledge in music and how the singing voice can be used in wondrous ways. I hope I am successful and confident in my choices. By then I will be 28 years old so hopefully I will be settled down and ready to start a family. You already know those kids will be put in music classes ASAP! I hope to be able to support myself in all my needs, wants, and goals. I am going to be a hard worker, for sure! The only thing that will come before my own success is my family's. I plan to teach voice lessons on the side as well as in a high school classroom, while still attending school to become a music professor. I want to be proficient on the piano and with chord progressions. I can't wait to see what I am like in 2034. Here's to goals and wishes!



Ella Charette

Out of all the teachers I've had these past four years, my theatre teachers, Mr. Younts, Mrs. Horn, and Mr. Pickens have been the most supportive and impactful. I was a very quiet kid in freshman year. I had a hard time adjusting to moving to a new school, getting used to online classes since Covid was still rampant, and I had a hard time making friends. My teachers, and frankly the theatre class in general, helped build my confidence. Everyone I've met in theatre, especially the teachers, have been nothing but supportive of me. They gave me a place where I could be myself and make memories, and when they gave critiques, they were always kind and considerate. I'm proud to say I've grown not only as an actor, but as a person, and it's all thanks to them. Thank you to my theatre teachers, and everyone I've met in theatre these past four years. I'm so happy to have met all of you!



Carle Chisolm

If I were entering SOA as a sixth grader again, I wouldn't be as quiet and shy as I was. I would be more outgoing and eager to make new friends, so I could feel more comfortable expressing myself as time went on. Being yourself around the people you enjoy spending time with makes coming to school a better experience. I would have also told myself that you get to learn to love your major. When I came to



SOA for strings, I didn't have the passion to focus on the violin or the urge to practice every day. But over time, you start to see yourself enjoying music and immersing yourself in it. Without art teachers like Dr. Selby, I don't think I would've liked the violin half as much as I do now.

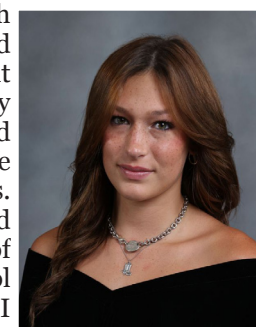
Madeline Church

If I were to enter SOA as a sixth grader again, I would tell myself to be more carefree and not worry about the little things. Instead of constantly being nervous about small assignments that truly did not impact GPA, I would want myself to stay more in the present and be excited to learn. The opportunities at SOA are endless, and it is all about what you make of them. Since middle school, I have been focused on school and extracurriculars, which have caused these seven years to fly by. If I could do it again, I would ensure that I take in every little moment with my friends and family because this chapter is soon closing. Graduation seemed so far away when you were in sixth grade, but now it is here and I am grateful for all the connections, knowledge, and experiences that I have gotten the privilege to endure at SOA.



Gabriella Citrolo

How would I reflect on my four years of high school? They were filled with so many memories and experiences. I had a lot of fun exploring different subjects, and making lifelong friends. It was definitely a time of growth and self-discovery for me. I learned a lot academically, but I also learned valuable life lessons about friendship and finding my passions. Looking back, I'm grateful for the opportunities I had and the memories I made. High school is a chapter of my life that I'll always cherish: my four years at School of the Arts and all my teachers and my friends that I made along the way!



Sierra Coleman

I've grown so much since I first arrived here at SOA in the 7th grade. I rekindled friendships from childhood and made so many new friends over the years. I am so appreciative of my Dance class specifically. We've made so many memories that I will cherish for the rest of my life, from singing in the locker rooms and getting our own dressing rooms, to hanging out and just having fun in each other's company. I am so grateful and happy to have experienced growing and maturing with my amazing friends. I am moving onto the next chapter. It feels bittersweet, but I know that I will always have great memories and friendships that I made at SOA.



Tulah Cramer

I remember coming into sixth grade so excited, with painted pencils and decorated notebooks, so eager and nervous to start. I had a rose gold mermaid phone case, wore bright yellow pants frequently, talked too loudly on the bus, and made musicallys to Taylor Swift's then brand new album, Reputation. I would only do a few things differently, I would focus on my major more, because that's why we are here and you get out what you put in. I also would know that it is okay to drift in and out of friends and friend groups. I would talk to my classmates more, I



never would have guessed the connections I would have made. Also, instead of complaining how SOA is different from other schools, I would learn to appreciate the unique, kind, artistic and encouraging atmosphere here. I can't imagine the person I would be without the opportunities given to me here, mostly by Mrs. Richardson. I have been surrounded by creative and hard working artists and musicians that motivate me to do my best. I will always treasure the memories and friends I've made over the past seven years.

Lucy Cromwell

I am an extremely nostalgic person by nature, and taking the time to reflect on my past here has left my mind spinning. I can vividly recall being confused when kids in middle school complained about SOA, about how they wished they could go to school somewhere else, or how they hated their classes. For one, I cannot speak for those students, but what I can say is that I believe the education I have received here has more than fully prepared me for college and the real world. Essay writing, government, finance, empathy, and analytical grit, as well as a greater understanding of the world at large, have been the most useful things I have learned here. Especially soft and hard skills in my major, I have fostered communication abilities and integrity that can only come from an art class. If I could do it all over again, I would try to develop these skills even more, and maybe even sit through a wind ensemble concert while I'm at it.



From my first failing grade to two years of AP Art, to Bulls Island to Thesis, I will definitely cherish the memories and skills I have gained from my Visual Arts classes, wherever I plan on going, and whatever I plan on doing. I have understood the privilege of going to a school like SOA since day one, and I have so much to be grateful for. There is obviously a more eloquent way of wording it, but all I can say is that I will miss SOA, as I have never known anything else.

Christian Curran

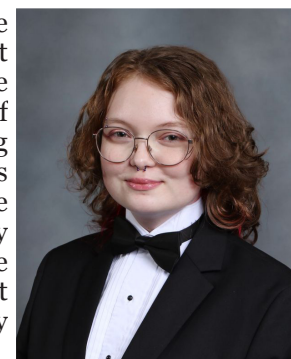
It wasn't until about halfway through my highschool career that I found such a genuine love for the viola. During the summer prior to my junior year, I decided that I absolutely wanted to pursue a career as a violist, and this passion was what guided me to come to SOA. I enrolled at SOA as a junior and joined the Sinfonietta, but it wasn't until we really began rehearsing that I realized how special the group I had just joined really is. Being able to play with such a high level, dedicated, and expressive group of individuals was something I did not see as possible in a high school orchestra until I came to SOA, and I truly feel that my future would look much different had I not become a part of it.



James Davenport

The most impactful class I took was AP Psychology with Mr. McCauley during my sophomore year. I had wanted to drop that class, fearing that it would be too much work and that I wouldn't be able to do well. It turned out to be too late to drop it, so I was stuck with either taking the class or having a withdrawal. Mr. McCauley not only encouraged me to try and stick with the class, but made me feel like I really could succeed. And that I did. I kept the class in my schedule, and ended up with an A for

the year in AP Psych. It was my first AP and gave me the confidence to take more AP classes the next two years, mostly social studies. All of those have been my favorite classes that I have taken in all of high school, and psych especially. I loved having class discussions. I loved taking weird detours during notes where we'd go down some strange topic as a class. This class, along with being very fun and interesting, gave me what I needed to be successful in my later classes, alongside a great experience to look back on, and a pretty heavy binder.



Ava Dawson

Over my seven year career at SOA, I have been given an education that I wouldn't have found at any other school. Despite the sometimes enticing idea of attending a more typical highschool, I couldn't be more happy that I decided to continue my schooling at SOA. I have been beyond lucky to get to explore my passion for art every day since I was eleven, and it has truly made me into who I am today. I cannot thank my teacher, Ms. Richardson, enough for the numerous opportunities and experiences she has presented to me and my classmates over the years. Throughout these experiences, I have grown extremely close with my classmates and have learned many important lessons about integrity and creativity, which I will take with me into my future. School of the Arts has given me a unique basis and a platform that has allowed me to explore creatively for most of my life so far, and it has set me up for success in college and in my future career.



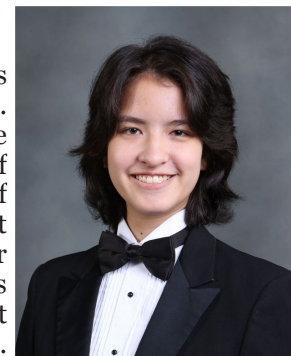
Grace Dennie

In 2024, I hope to be in my second year of Emergency Medicine Residency. I'm not sure where I'd like to complete my residency, but I'd love to move back to Charleston after Medical School to work at the Medical University of South Carolina. I've always had a passion for helping people and making an immediate difference in the outcome of someone's life, particularly in medicine. Completing ride-alongs with Berkeley County EMS for the past four years has only reaffirmed this passion. I've come to appreciate my role in the public health and emergency response system, and I'm excited to see how a busy city with a large EMS system like Columbia, SC, will help further my dream of becoming a Doctor of Emergency Medicine.



Mayson Dillard

I've learned a lot over my past seven years at SOA. Vocal gave me connections and friends. But Fashion was like a family to me. There are so many different people in our senior group of Fashion majors, all brought together by our love of designing and sewing; it's truly wonderful. I want to be a successful fashion illustrator and dancer in the year 2024, and I plan to accomplish this by continuing my education of fashion design at SCAD and dancing at various studios in Savannah.



Sully Eppes

If I went into SOA as a sixth grader, I would try to focus as much as I could on getting better work habits. Being homeschooled for most of my school career led to my having a very lax schedule that wasn't defined by any mandated deadlines, so it was a bit overwhelming coming in as freshman. In my years at SOA, I have learned that in order to get along, you have to be willing to talk to people and be understanding. It was a rare occurrence when I sent an email to a teacher as a homeschooler, because my teacher lived in my house..

One thing that I have loved about SOA is that it was exactly what I needed to sharpen my skills as an actor. By the time I started attending, I had already been in five productions at the Dock Street Theater with Charleston Stage. But I wasn't truly harnessing what I was capable of in my choices and characterization until I started working with Mr. Pickens, Mr. Younts, and Mrs. Horn. They showed me what it means to be an actor and made me love acting more than I thought I could.

Now I'm graduating and I am so excited to start my career and pursue something that I love to do. I will never forget SOA and all that I have gained from it

**Grace Ervin**

I was a junior when I first joined SOA. I came from a high school in Berkeley County- Philip Simmons. Although it was definitely a challenge to adapt to the new school environment, SOA has given me so many opportunities that I wouldn't have had if I had stayed at my old school. For starters, the education here is amazing. All of my teachers really care about the subjects they are teaching and the success of their students. I definitely felt pushed harder to exceed academically, as well as artistically. My classmates are all so incredibly talented and brilliant as well, and I've loved getting to know some of them and feeling inspired by others. This school has taught me how multi-disciplinary the arts can be. My classmates in creative writing are not only talented writers, but visual artists, musicians, mathematicians, scientists, etc. They inspire me to keep making art, and their ambition is something I look up to everyday. Everyone here has something to contribute, and I'm so grateful to have been a part of something so big at such a young age. Thank you for everything class of 24-- to more amazing future endeavors!

**Law Fox**

I focus on the negatives in life too much. I've been working on this, but it still happens, internally, unspoken. I often excuse my thoughts by deducing it to "it's okay, I'm human," but I can't keep telling myself this. That's no way to live. But these thoughts consumed me when I looked at everything that was wrong with my eighth grade year at SOA, where I convinced myself that this school was not for me... so I left. I went to Lucy Beckham for my freshman year at the height of Covid. I was also virtual the entire time, and I barely did anything creative. I was so stagnant... I'd never felt this gray before.

Movies soon became my vessel to feel things. I appreciated storytelling more than ever, and more than anything, they were an escape from my situation, and myself. And when



I looked at my life, I would see this kid with 10+ hours of screen time a day, mindlessly looking up all his homework answers to get his work done, and somehow still going to bed well past 3:00 in the morning. I wasn't proud of this- I didn't like this. And I felt gross. And I wanted to change. So, I finally got my bearings straight and reauditioned back into SOA.

That line "it's okay, I'm human" is no excuse, but it is human- trying to justify your thoughts and actions. What I felt at that time about my eighth grade year may have been true, but I learned something from my experience; it is good to be wrong. If I hadn't left, I would have never truly appreciated this school, its people, and how much performing nourishes my soul. I think this was a quintessential turning point in my life, realizing how much I value the arts. I recently watched an Ethan Hawke interview that's been etched in my brain for awhile now, and this one thing he said stuck with me- "Art's not a luxury, it's actually sustenance. We need it."

There really is no other place like SOA. I often find myself forgetting how lucky I am to be going here, at a school this inclusive and arts-focused, and with so many incredibly gifted people- people more talented than me, and who I look up to. So, thank you to all my theater teachers for believing in me, and for all the lessons I've learned from you. I would not be who I am today without your love for the arts, and I am forever grateful.

Kiyah Garten

The teacher that has had the strongest impact on me would have to be Mrs. Mortenson. I had her my sophomore and junior years, and she really helped me grow as a person. I was struggling a lot academically and was very stressed with school and life in general. She really helped me acquire a good work ethic, better time management, and she kept me from stressing myself out too much. She helped me to get out of my shell and become more independent and extroverted than I was and has really had an impact shaping me into the person I am today. I am so happy I got to experience her class and her as a teacher, and I will forever be grateful to her for the help she gave me the two years of having me in her class. I will truly miss being her student and the happy environment she creates for her students.

**Linda Garziera**

SOA is a school for the brave. I'd love to ask the kids in other schools if they've ever pulled a show together in three weeks, written so much their "t" key stops working, stayed up sewing beads on a dress at midnight, all while keeping up with the regular responsibilities of school. It's only in SOA where kids are balancing math homework and a volleyball tournament on two ends of a clarinet. But that's exactly what makes it the school it is, or more accurately, what makes us, the SOAIans (the pegasai?) who we are. Look, if you remember nothing of your time here, and this Applause is lying dismally under the rain right by Pennnywise's gutter, know at least that you'll have your art forever. SOA is a school for the brave because despite the challenges and frustration and all that life throws at us, we still perform, and what a great show we put on. When we're all grown up and looking back, I hope we view this time kindly, with a special ache for the geese and the hallways and the constant clashing noises coming from the band room (sorry!). And hey, if anything, we have the coolest graduation.

**Kayley Genova**

A teacher who has had the biggest impact on me is Dr. Selby. Over

my four years at SOA, he has taught me his ten rules that not only relate to orchestra but to life. He has been one of the most kind, respectful, caring, and understanding teachers I've ever had. He has not only taught me music in a very intricate way, but he has taught me that there is no excuse for me to not be treated as an equal and respected. He truly values the opinions and lives of each of his students, and it's raised my respect for him and expectations as a student. I will never forget these past four years studying under him, and I'm forever grateful for being his student and for all future students who will work with him.



Iris Gomez

The person who had the strongest impact on me is Ms. Galizia. She has helped me with more than just school. She cares about all her students, when she asks about your day, you know she genuinely wants to hear about it. She is one of the most kind-hearted and loving people I know. She has helped me and was there for me when I was having a hard time this year, she always made sure to check up on me and see how I was doing. She is probably the only teacher that I trust to come to for anything. I am so grateful to have met her, I love you Ms. G.



Vivian Gordon

You begin to see the impact something or someone had on your life, once it's gone. The person I was four years ago needed SOA, and she didn't even know it. SOA has taught me how to be a kinder person, how to support others no matter who they are, how to prioritize, how to love the arts and academics, and how to have genuine friendships. The person I am today is so thankful for the experiences, relationships, and lessons that SOA has given me. A large thanks to the vocal program for the many performances and trips that will never be forgotten, to Leilah Baird for being my person, and to my teachers for keeping up with my unexpected swings in mood and effort. You begin to see the impact something or someone had on your life, once it's gone. Once we graduate, SOA will not leave because it's print is everlasting. Love, Viv



Joey Gritzuk

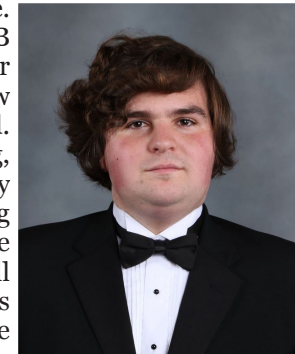
Many different traits set an SOA student apart from the average high schooler. The largest and most valuable is the level of education one receives at SOA. As the number two public high school in the state and within the top 100 in the country, it is unarguable that SOA is no slouch. With all this being said, what exactly sets SOA apart from the average high school education? First, many of even the lowest level classes at SOA provide an equal if not higher level of enrichment when compared to even the highest level courses at other public schools. With a variety of honors, AP, and accelerated classes, SOA offers a variety of challenging and enriching courses, ultimately leading to a higher level of learning. For me, the curriculum is what has aided me the most, especially in the college



application process. Many classes I took allowed me to complete first year college credits early. Also, many colleges look at the ranking and difficulty of a school's curriculum, and a solid GPA at SOA heavily increases your chances of acceptance to many colleges due to the reputation of the school alone. Ultimately, I feel that SOA has provided me opportunities and helped me grow more as a student than the standard public high school could have done.

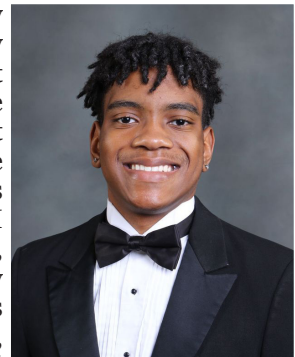
Sebastian Grow

Over my time at SOA I had many teachers who heavily impacted me, but the one who did the most was Mrs. Whittemore. She was my precalculus and AP Calculus A/B teacher, and during the two years I spent in her classroom, I learned so many skills that I know will prepare me for college and the world beyond. As someone who will be majoring in Engineering, the foundation set for me in Calculus was very important. And not only did she teach me everything I know, but she went beyond that by teaching me analytical skills and even writing skills, which I will be able to take with me to college. She also always made her classes fun, no matter how hard the subject was with Kahoots, Gimkits, or even using balloons, pound cake, and Play-Doh to represent complex real world calculus situations. She did everything that a great teacher would do to help me and my classmates, to teach us, and most importantly to me, allowed us to have fun in the most difficult class I have taken. Mrs. Whittemore is a teacher I will always remember for all of the hard work she put into helping me succeed, and so much more.



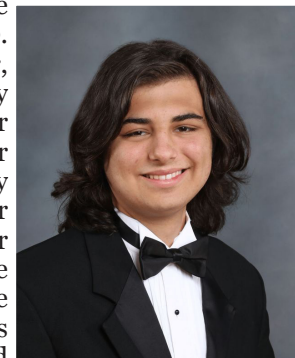
Isaac Hilton

My education at SOA has been excellent. The environment that surrounded me here was amazing. Among so many like-minded people, I knew I was going to enjoy my time at this school. The class that had the greatest impact on me was my major, Band. Before I came to SOA, my raw talent was enough for me to coast by for a little bit, but SOA motivated me to practice harder. I have made incredible friends and my skills have improved massively since I was a freshman. I have no one to thank except Mr. King, Mr. Foberg, and Mr. Turner because of the lessons that they taught me, and it's now a part of who I am. SOA is a very special place that I hold dearly to my heart, and I appreciate everything that this school has had to offer me.



Henry Hipp

In ten years, I want to be straight rolling in dough. I also want to be famous. I intend to do this by taking over *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon*. When I'm starring in it, it will be called *The Tonight Show Starring Henry Hipp*. This is a lofty goal, so let me walk you, the reader, through my plan. I will attend DePaul University for Comedy Arts. I will immediately become the star pupil because I'm so much funnier than those other posers. I will also start a TikTok page for my comedy which will quickly blow up because of my killer crowd work. Because of my DePaul status and Four Million Followers on TikTok, I will quickly be able to get a job working at SNL. At SNL, I will become close personal friends with Lorne Micheals. It is now 2030 and Jimmy Fallon has gotten canceled



for saying inappropriate things on live television. This is my chance. I will go to my friend Lorne Micheals' house for Taco Tuesday. I will hint over dinner that I would be perfect for the hosting job. At the end of dinner, he will offer me the job, but I will decline. Instead, James Franco takes over the hosting job. I will get canceled for punching a fan and go out of the spotlight for one year. In the year 2034, I will make my comeback. James Franco's ratings are low, and they need a new host. Lorne offers me the job and, this time, I accept.

Macie Hoffman

I joined SOA in the midst of a pandemic, and it was one of the best decisions I ever made. Before SOA, I had never auditioned for anything. I had terrible stage fright and so much anxiety over being rejected that I almost didn't audition. My parent's advice, "the worst they can say is no," had little impact on how worried I was then. But now, after being at SOA for four years, I can safely say that was the best advice ever given to me. If there's anything that I learned from my time at SOA, it's that trying doesn't get you anywhere. It seems like common sense, but for a long time I was expecting opportunities to fall into my lap because I was too scared to find them myself. Whether it was pushing to finish a garment for the fashion show, giving a presentation in Madame Bednarzyk's class, or asking teachers for recommendations, SOA helped me learn how to go for it. Now, I do things and I try things because I know that if I don't, I will never be where I want to be. I also owe a lot of thanks to my parents for constantly reminding me of this lesson while I struggled to overcome my hesitation. Learning this was not quick or easy, and even now I can't say I've mastered this lesson, but I am way farther along than I was when I started.



Lily Hollis

Mr. Pickens had the strongest impact on me during my high school life. I have had him for a semester each year of high school so we got to know each other very well. We think alike a lot when it comes to assignments and problem solving, which made us work together very well. He's fun to work with and strict too, which is the teaching I can handle. I enjoyed his humor and kindness throughout high school. I know he loves my sense of humor, and I'm not a student that he will forget, EVER! The same goes for his being a memorable teacher for me, too.



Jessie Johnson

The creative writers, every junior and senior year, take a soft busride up I-26 to a campsite buried deep in the North Carolina mountains. It's a chapbook of a trip, a short three days in between October and the eve of winter, but, god, is it gorgeous. There's a point on the drive right near Spartanburg when you can look out the window and all you see is red—trees rushing by, convexing with the land, and the bus lifts up and you feel, suddenly, that you've left the South in your wake.

The retreat is called "The Thesis Trip," and the main points include book readings from the seniors and an introduction to the big bad thesis for the juniors. There's a guest writer, usually a poet, and a hike, during which at least three people take a wrong turn and



end up two miles too far down the mountain. We get some work done; we take time to not. But my favorite part, hands down, is the cold. Sometimes, in the coastal region we live in, it feels like winter isn't winter at all, but an absence of heat; without the humidity, the atmosphere has something missing from it, a hole in the sand that keeps being emptied but that fills with water still. But the first morning of the creative writing retreat, I step out of the cabin and everything stops: the trees are louder, the sky is sharp, and the birdsong demands the type of crisp attention that only comes from a freeze. It's a lovely place to be, even if only for three days.

I would eventually write about this place in my thesis. And in what seemed like a snap, I would publish that thesis. I would hold it in my hands, too, feel the soft matte of its spine, the surreal truth of my words being given a body of their own. It would be an end to an era, seven-years long, long-coming. I'm off to bigger things; we all are. But what I want to tell myself, after having spent years in this building with these people, is this: you were an artist first. No matter how different you grow to be, no matter how unfamiliar things may feel at times, you have a place to come back to. You have a people and a purpose as steady and seminal as the tide.

Jasmine Jones

Within the next ten years, I want to establish a life for myself in Chicago. When I get there, I want to embrace the culture and lifestyle as much as possible while exploring the possibilities that my career in interior architecture can offer for me. I hope to grow and prosper in every aspect of life, whether it's my style, artistic ability, or compassion for others. As I approach 2034, I envision myself starting my own business and making connections with different types of companies, to ensure that I'm designing the most magical and eclectic households for my lengthy list of clients—and possibly start my own decor line with a company. But most of all in these ten years to come, I hope I give myself the grace to make mistakes.



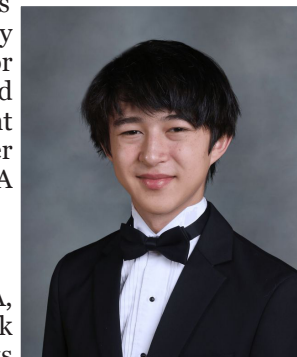
Kylie Kothera

Before SOA I went to a tiny Catholic school. When I came here I was very closed off and didn't even know what Google Classroom was. I have come so far since then, and I've been able to meet lifelong friends along with gaining so many experiences I would not have had at any other school. Being a senior, walking through the halls brings back so many memories from the past seven years. When I see middle schoolers I am almost envious of them because I wish I could do it over again. I still think about Egypt Day all the time. If I were to do it all again I would definitely make more of an effort to be more social and not be as scared to talk to people in my classes. I would say I didn't really hit my stride at SOA until my junior year. I spent a lot of my time here, resenting it and wondering how my life would be different if I went to a "normal" school. If I had any advice to younger students it would be to embrace your time at SOA because it is an experience like no other.



Adam Kremer

While I only spent my senior year at SOA, part of me feels like I was here all along. I think it has to do with the school's power to shape its



students and allow them to explore their passions. Being able to play the cello two blocks a day was such a valuable part of my experience, and I am endlessly grateful for the opportunities my major classes provided me. I also never imagined how impactful my academic classes could be on my personal identity and my overall view of the world. SOA is such a unique place that it sometimes makes me wonder what it would have been like to have spent three more years here.

In the end though, if I could go back and decide to come to SOA as a freshman, I don't think I would. I've always avoided comparing Magnet and SOA based on overgeneralizations and stereotypes, even when I was a student on the other half of the Bonds-Wilson Campus. But I've come to the conclusion that Magnet was a better place for me as a freshman, sophomore and junior, and SOA was a better place for me as a senior. And I couldn't have hoped for a better senior year.

Maggie Largent

I don't know if I'll ever fully know the value of an SOA education, but I do know it's changed my perspective. When I started at SOA as a freshman in vocal, I was petrified. I didn't know a lot of the things the teachers assumed we did, and felt like I couldn't keep up. I dreaded every time the vocal teachers made me sing and was so scared of asking for help. Starting in tenth grade, though, I felt like I understood the system better. I started trying out for solos, getting out of my shell a bit, and it taught me some things. I realized that it was perfectly fine to be confused, and everyone was a little bit sometimes. The people around me, especially those who I looked up to (shoutout to the senior who let me watch scary movies with her pre-audition), helped me to loosen up a bit and try things that were a little uncomfortable. They taught me that to learn, you have to be a little lost sometimes - lean on the people around you, and you'll get there! As I get ready to leave SOA, I'll take with me the perspective that, yes, maybe I'm not sure what's going on, but the people around me can help me figure that out (or at least be confused alongside me). This is going to be invaluable in the future, allowing me to feel comfortable being uncomfortable.



Braeden LaRoche

Receiving an SOA education has been valuable for me because of how it simultaneously facilitated both my artistic and academic development, something made possible by the combination of excellent teachers, students, and programs I had the opportunity to engage with in my time here. The generous Visual Arts Department provided ample resources from which I benefited. And I am grateful to have been taught by many teachers who are genuinely invested in their students' education and whose perspectives and dedication ensured that I learned not only what was promised in the syllabus, but also much more. I am, furthermore, grateful for the intelligent and devoted body of students I have been able to study alongside, who have allowed for my personal development and made my time here enjoyable.



Jack Lindsay

My parents sent me to SOA kicking and screaming. I was afraid to leave my smalltown charter school and start from scratch. It was the best thing to happen to me. Coming to SOA and majoring in Creative Writing shifted my perspective. I made new friends, went to new places, did new things. Writing forced me to learn about myself, who I am, and what I want

to say. Coming to SOA played a huge role in who I have become, and who I want to be. I came in as a freshman, at the tail end of Covid. If I could start again, I wouldn't. But if I had to, I would listen more to the things that lie in between the words that people speak. I would work even when I didn't want to. I would not wait. I would love the people who were kind to me. I would say what I meant. I would write what I felt. I would be less afraid to speak. I would be less afraid to be silent. I would be less afraid to close my eyes, to lie down in the grass and feel the sun.

Kennedy Mack

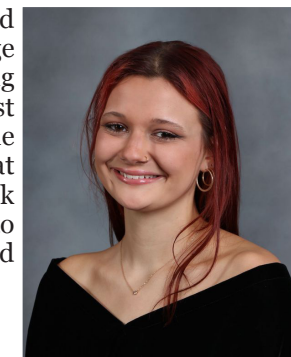
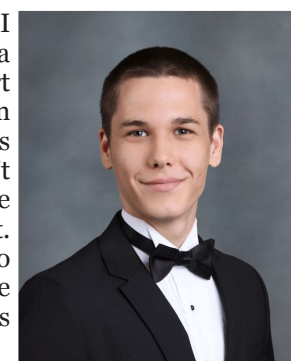
If I could change anything about my last six years at SOA it would be to ensure I was soaking it all in. There are so many opportunities that this school gives you that you just brush off, but in reality, you wouldn't have those if it weren't for the education you get here. In my SOA years, Dr. Selby always made it clear how much he cares about his students. Dr. Selby shows that teachers do what they do for the kids, which made my SOA years a whole lot better.

Helena Meloy

Growing up I was never influenced by my parents or other family members to play an instrument or take an interest in the arts. As long as I maintained good grades and good behavior I was fine. I realized at a young age that I had a passion for music and especially string orchestras and symphonies. My parents were just as shocked as I was when I made it into SOA in the eighth grade. The difference from the school I was at before and this school was very noticeable and took some time to get used to. But once I did, I came to the conclusion that everyone who was here wanted to be here and they loved what they did here.

Kamrin Mungin

Being at SOA for the past six years has made me the person that I am today. When I finally entered high school, I started to regret choosing to try out for SOA in middle school, because I knew I was stuck here for the rest of my high school years. I always felt like I was missing out on attending a "normal" high school, especially when it came to football games and homecoming. I remember begging my mom one day to let me transfer to my zoned school, back when I couldn't take "no" for an answer. I thought this was her being strict and looking out for my safety, but in reality, she was just looking out for my future. Now looking back, I would have missed out on plenty of opportunities that SOA has brought forth to me. I am forever grateful for being able to receive a top-tier education from this school. I am glad to have been a part of many school-wide activities, and other events that many other "normal" high schools don't have. Attending an arts school has taught me how to balance out my major and my academics, and has helped me prepare for the real world, where multi-tasking is crucial. Being at SOA will always be the most memorable moment of my life, though I have so much more to experience.



Sofia Page-Simmons

I've been at SOA since sixth grade, so if I were entering all over, I'd do many things differently over these 7 years. One thing I would change and improve is my time management; it's challenging meeting new people and growing with these people, so I'd fix the balance of my time with my friends and my work. Next, I'd change the way I dealt with the significant change from elementary to middle school. It was difficult and took away my priority from my work. The last thing I'd change is joining and showing up to additional clubs. SOA offers numerous beneficial clubs, with something for every student. It helps you socialize, gain education, and at the end of the day have fun and take your mind away from stress you may be dealing with. The students here are driven; you can always find a way to connect with a broad span of diverse and similar students.

**Jolin Pan**

There are so many memories that I want to remember from SOA. From Powderpuff to Thesis all the way to doing Michael Jackson's "Thriller" dance in the courtyard, there is so much to remember. If I were to choose, one aspect of SOA to reflect on during my time here is the friends and people. Though it's cliché, it's the truth. All the people and friends I have met during my time at SOA have been wonderful. I truly believe that I have never seen so many talented people. I am beyond glad that I was able to attend this wonderful school. These three years will be a core part of my life, and I will never forget them. I am truly thankful for all the people that have helped me not only become a better student but also a good person.

**Ashley Peterson**

Forensics with Ms. Greig in my junior year was my most influential class during my time here at SOA. I had heard about the many fun stories about how great the class was and the exciting activities you get to participate in, so I knew this was going to be one of my favorite classes. Before I took the class, I had no certain idea about what I wanted to do in the future. I knew that I wanted to pursue a career in psychology, but I didn't have my heart set on being a therapist or neuroscientist. There is a wide range of career paths that relate to forensics, I learned, and in that class, we explored many of them. I loved how hands-on and interactive the class was; it made me feel more involved rather than sitting through a lecture every day. I could tell that Ms. Greig put so much effort into the class and wanted us to gain something from it. From splatter tests to criminal profiling to eventually building our own crime scene for our final, forensics opened my eyes to what I wanted my future to look like. I realized that forensic psychology was what I wanted to study in college and while I may not know what job I'd like to pursue yet, I'm very thankful that I'm more certain than I used to be. Whatever job I decide to take, I'll know that Forensics with Ms. Greig led me to it, and I can't wait to see what the future holds.

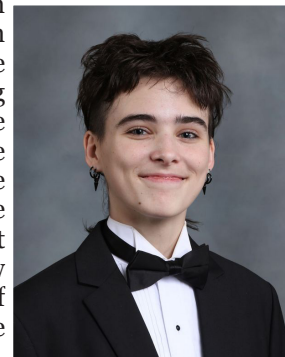
**Lydia Plante**

Dr. Selby had an incredible impact on me that started even before

I transferred to SOA. When I moved to South Carolina and went to CCMI, I had him as a conductor and an ensemble coach for my first time playing more serious classical repertoire. After I had been slowly moved through Suzuki books and barely even made it to book five, I was launched into a much more difficult chamber and orchestral repertoire. During that week, I learned an incredible amount, not just about the general ideas of playing in a chamber ensemble and listening within an orchestra, but about what I had the potential to do and how far I could go with music in high school. Although I wasn't able to go to SOA that year, it motivated me to explore new ways of practicing, continue chamber music outside of school, and eventually transfer to SOA after my second year of CCMI with him. I remember the first days of school feeling surreal as I played the Moorside Suite with sinfonietta for the first time. It was incredible to experience such a fast pace of learning repertoire and work at such a high level of ensemble communication and attention to detail. I'm eternally grateful to have been able to work in an orchestra that had a tight sense of community, and at the leadership of an incredible mentor who taught me so much, was there to talk whenever I needed help, and allowed me to be myself.

**Shawn Pupke**

The classes that had the biggest impact on me were Mr. McCauley's psychology classes, both honors and AP. Mr. Mac is a great teacher, hence why I went back for another year. His storytelling made what we learned easier to remember, plus the stories themselves were always entertaining. For me personally, he introduced me to what would become one of my biggest interests: psychology. Before taking his class I was going to be a hairdresser (not that there's anything wrong with that), and now I'm going to college to research the intersection of art and psychology. Mr. Mac's class had a genuine impact on me. Thanks, Mr. McCauley :]

**Presley Rhodes**

The experience and community that SOA has provided me are things I could have never gotten from any other high school. Having a space where I can explore making art under the guidance of a talented, wonderful teacher is something that I will forever be grateful for. I was so lucky to find friends whose beautiful creative minds continue to amaze me. My visual arts teacher, Ms. Richardson, has been a constant presence in my time at SOA. Her room is where I spent the majority of my time and is the physical space I will miss the most when I graduate from SOA. There I grew alongside my fellow visual artists and found a unique community. This could not have been possible without Ms. Rich, who was always there to answer any question about art and listen in bewildered concern to the craziness guaranteed by visual art students. The amount of drive Ms. Richardson brings to teaching art is truly amazing and inspires me to be more enthusiastic about my work, as she is always working on some huge art project while in the classroom. My time spent with her in the art room is indispensable to my ongoing skill and passion for art. My time at SOA has also connected me with the most incredible group of friends I have ever had. I will always treasure the time spent with them and am so excited to follow them in their future endeavors.



Marisa Rivera

Mrs. Johnson had a strong impact on me during my years at SOA. I had the privilege of being in Mrs. Johnson's class for three years, and her positive attitude and willingness to engage with her students made a lasting impression on me. She always found humor in my jokes and created a classroom environment where learning was fun and easier to understand. During my junior year, when I was upset about a situation, Mrs. Johnson showed her kindness by bringing me a brownie and offering her support without prying into my matters. I will always be grateful for her compassionate and understanding nature.

**Autumn Rouse**

To be honest, I never thought I would make it past my first semester here at SOA. I was planning on just making it to Christmas and then running away as fast as I could. I never thought that four years later I would be sitting here, typing this up, and feeling a little wistful. I think that's partly because these last four years have had such an identity. With the rest of my class, I've been through COVID, drama, fatigue. These years have also been full of so many wonderful teachers. My life has been so touched by people like Mr. Pickens, Ms. Johnson, Mr. Mac (and so many others, but the list is too long) who were always there and cared even though they didn't have to. Early mornings, late evenings, sipping warm herbal tea on the bus while watching the sun rise have all been part of the journey. I'll miss the many stairs, the loud happy lunch periods, the posters that plaster every wall and door that represent the busy and colorful lives we all have led here. I'm happy we reached the finish line, but it comes with gratitude for everything that has passed and respect for the future understanding that I'm facing it with the knowledge I've gained here.

**Lesly Salgado**

The teacher that had the greatest impact on my life was Ms. Mortensen. She was the most relatable. She explained the obstacles of life in ways that I could actually understand, as young as I was. Any time a student needed help she would go above and beyond to accommodate us as much as she could. Ms. Mortensen is a teacher who is very easy to talk to and, no matter the issue, I felt like I could go to her without judgment. She is always there to support students and their performances or events whenever she had the time. And if she couldn't make it, she would always ask how it went. She genuinely cares about her students and that fact is never in question. Thank you Ms. Mortensen :)

**Kenny Schaffer**

Being at SOA for six years has taught me so much. Having access to an SOA education shows you the power behind learning. I've realized the importance of learning fundamental things but have also been able to create art. Our school shows you that if being artistic and creating is your passion, you must spend just as much time honing your craft as you do on academics. Ms. Fairchild had the biggest impact on me during my journey at SOA. She helped me during such impressionable years. First having her in

eighth grade, she taught me how to be an academic scholar, and years later when she became my vocal teacher, she taught me how to be confident in my art. I'm so thankful for the opportunity I've had to attend SOA. I've learned so much, met so many amazing people, and gained lessons that I couldn't gain anywhere else. I'll always love my Vocal family and cherish all the amazing moments I've created as a performer.

Jonathan Sessions

In 2034, I plan to be involved in the aviation industry in some way. I could be in the Air Force, work as an airliner pilot, or even be an aerospace engineer. I don't exactly know what I want to do, but I know that I have a serious interest in aviation, and I plan to pursue that. I plan to study and earn my bachelor's degree in aerospace engineering at the University of South Carolina and go from there. I may join the Air Force ROTC during college if I decide to go the military route, although I am not set on anything yet. I am very excited for whatever the future has for me.

**Harper Sharpe**

An SOA education is definitely a unique experience. I am lucky enough to have had one for seven years. The school in many ways is not like a normal high school. It consists of the arts being included every second of the time you are at school. Whether it's being in your major for 90 minutes everyday or performing at convocations in front of the whole high school, you will get to experience and immerse yourself in the arts. It makes the whole high school experience that much more memorable and helps prepare you for a bright future. While the arts are a big factor at this school, the academics are extraordinary as well. Many AP classes are available and other interesting and challenging courses are offered to better prepare you for college and beyond. This school has changed my life, and I wouldn't want to have gone anywhere else for a majority of my school years. I will take the lessons and memories that this school has given me with me for the rest of my life.

**Jovanny Silva Velasquez**

In 2034, I intend to have already made it big as the musician "Trepidatious Bogart." All my time at SOA has led me to find my true passion for producing, recording, and mixing my music. The influences I've received from classmates and teachers have tied themselves into a nice mish-mash of ideas inside of my brain, and I can just jump right into it whenever I find myself looking for inspiration. I do not doubt that within the next ten years, I'll use the experiences I've garnered alongside further education, culture, and pizzazz to create remarkable works of art to inspire future generations through the power of music. Free Palestine.

Aveh Singletary

Ten years from now I plan to be traveling the world while teaching. I want to go to Bali, South Korea, Africa, Rome, Tokyo, Tahiti, Italy, Germany, and Antarctica. To achieve this, I plan to continue expanding my expertise in diverse subjects, ensuring I have a wide array of topics to teach. Additionally, I aim to establish connections with educational institutions, organizations, and communities globally to facilitate opportunities for

teaching engagements. Experiencing the world and learning about different cultures is a deeply enriching journey that fosters personal growth and understanding. In my quest to explore diverse cultures, I aim to immerse myself in local communities, embracing their traditions, languages, cuisines, and customs. By engaging with people from various backgrounds, I hope to gain insights into their perspectives, values, and ways of life, thereby broadening my own worldview. Traveling allows me to step outside my comfort zone, confront preconceptions, and cultivate empathy and tolerance. Moreover, I aspire to participate in cultural exchange programs, volunteer initiatives, and homestays, fostering authentic connections and forging lasting friendships across borders.

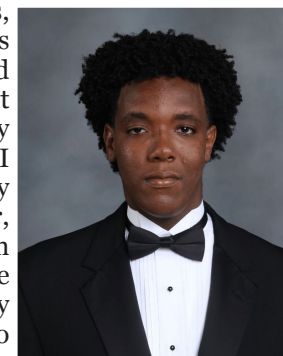


Wade Sjoström

Charleston County School of the Arts is genuinely one of the most enjoyable places to learn over the course of my thirteen years of education. It is a great environment with teachers that really care about if you understand a topic or not. The first thing I would do if I was a sixth grader again was come to this school! But while at this school the teacher that has the biggest impact on me is definitely Ms. Miller, just due to the pure fact that she has really helped me understand probability and statistics. Hopefully, I will be using these skills when I enter the world of business and finance as I go to college. Finally, the best aspect of SOA is the creativity, not only in the curriculum, but the students. I thank all the staff and students at this school for such a wonderful experience as I close out on my high school career.

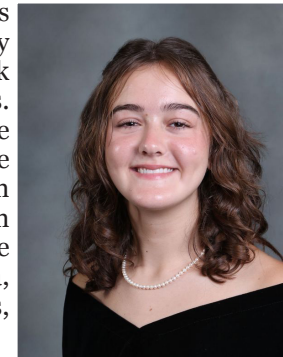


but SOA gave me that chance to work on plays, technical theater, and staging. Of course Soa has also given me many memories and friendships, and an education I wouldn't change for anything. But when I was younger I had tunnel vision, I was only focused on one thing surrounding my passion. I guess to speak to that, I would have changed my balance in life. I wish I balanced school, theater, social life, and health better. The biggest lesson you end up learning here is mistakes are inevitable but it's the little habits you pick up along the way (good or bad) you have to learn to adjust. I also wish I respected my teachers more and took my education more seriously. It was always the little things like that I would notice every successful student had. If I could go back and redo I would, but I am grateful for my time here and am ready for my next step.



Annie Sterba

With an SOA education, I'm prepared to take on any challenge. This education has taught me endless lessons and instilled in me values that I will always carry with me. Dr. Selby taught me that hard work and preparation are precursors to success. Mrs. Orchard showed me stories and how to see the bigger picture. Strings taught me the importance of community, teamwork, and how to operate on little to no sleep. My friends taught me to cherish every moment together and to appreciate the people around you. I am not just getting a diploma, I am getting seven wonderful years of memories, wisdom, friendships, and so much more.



Alajah Thompson

In ten years, I want to have graduated from MUSC and Trident and be a registered nurse working with babies. I want to buy my own house and be financially stable in 2034. I intend to make this happen by having confidence in myself. I need to get that situated before I hit reality and the real world. And I know I will; it will just take time. But I look forward to starting my nursing journey right out of high school. For school, also, I have a program I'm going through that can pay my full college tuition! And that's the most exciting thing I'm looking forward to, that and the infants and mothers! I'm off to be a nurse!



Pagelyn Smalls

The past four years have brought so many experiences and lessons that have made me into the person I am today. All of the decisions I have made have led me to this point, and in 2034, I hope to have accomplished the many things that the 2024 me has planned. In ten years, I hope to have obtained a Political Science Degree, Masters, and Juris Doctor via the Accelerated Pre-Law program at the University of South Carolina. I will have created meaningful connections and maintained some as well. I pray that in ten years, I will be well-traveled to many countries, immersed in a variety of cultures, and have had the great opportunity to meet some change-makers such as Stacey Abrams and Jasmine Crockett. In the next decade, I predict that I will be back in Charleston, preparing to announce my very first campaign for the South Carolina House of Representatives. All in all, I hope and pray that in ten years, my life will have an unexplainable amount of joy, I will be in good health, and my family will thrive and continue to be great.



Reagean Villegas

The teacher that had the strongest impact on me at SOA was Ms. Galizia. She has been my biggest supporter and always been there to listen and give me advice. Her hard work and dedication to helping students is one of the many reasons why I look up to her. She has taught me many life lessons that I can carry with me throughout my life. She has helped me so much these past few years and I will be forever grateful for her. I love you, Ms. G!

Agegnu Stanfield

Looking back eight years, when I came to SOA as a sixth grader, I wasn't half the person I am now. I guess it wasn't because I was obviously younger or just an immature kid trying to get through middle school. I was like everyone else trying to get an education, make friends, and perform as much as my little sixth grade heart could. I had no prior performing experience,

Skyler Waddell

I remember the impromptu Church Praises we held during Jazz Band flex-time. Suddenly, I could hear the drums start to chop up, as the keys blasted through gospel progressions. Some of us would begin to clap as we gathered around Jamar Simmons— mic in hand and ready to shout over the chorus. He would lead us in call-and-response melodies as the bassist

and tambourine joined the band. Sometimes, if we cooked hard enough, Mr. Turner would step out of his office, watch, and smile. When he was ready, Jamar would wave his hands to quiet the band and begin his improvised sermon. It was just something we came up with to kill those thirty-minutes at the end of class, but looking back, it affirms why I love this school. Even as I'm writing this, I am reminded what a great four years this has been.



Jason Wan

Man, what an awesome four years it has been at SOA. Choosing SOA was a great choice for me. If I chose another school, I wouldn't be able to show my band talent as much. Going to SOA made me learn a lot of valuable lessons for the future. The teachers that impacted me the most are Mr. King and Mr. Foberg. They shaped me as a musician. Going on trips and to clinics help me become more open minded about new things. I made a lot of new friends and I got to gig with them. These experiences helped me learn leadership skills, helped me try out new things, and not hesitate to seize new solos. All of these made me a good saxophone player. Since my arrival at SOA in ninth grade, things have definitely changed a lot. Directors have changed. Friends have moved to college, and new people have moved in. I learned that life moves on. Despite the inevitability of change, SOA continues to be a great school to attend for its outstanding arts and academics. Without the band I wouldn't be the person I am now. So I really appreciate my teachers, friends, and family for supporting me along the journey.



Shelby White

If I were to enter sixth grade at SOA again, I would not do anything differently. I believe that everything happens for a reason, and the decisions you make reflect the outcome of your situations. Throughout middle and high school, I made mistakes along the way. But with each mistake, I learned a lesson that allowed me to progress to a better place. I would wish to meet the same people, for they play a big part in who I am today. I would take the same courses, as they have built on my character and knowledge; and I would strive to be a happy and healthy child who took risks. As a sixth grader, all I wanted was to pass my classes, and meet lots of people. As a senior, I believe that I accomplished that goal, and I wouldn't change anything about the path that I took to get to this point.



Jade Williams

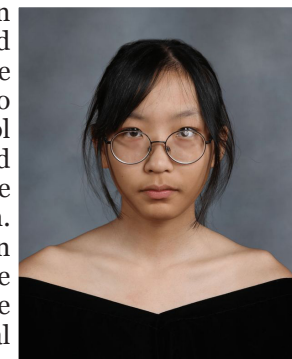
The two teachers who have had the strongest impact on me were Dr. Selby and Mr. Martin. I've been a part of Dr. Selby's class for four years, and he has been one of the most supportive teachers I've ever had. He has pushed me to be a better student and person. He motivated me to work hard as a cello player and a leader. When I joined his class freshman year, I never expected to build such a supportive and kind community. I'm so grateful to have been his student for his advice



and wisdom in the music world. Since I joined Mr. Martin's class, I have enjoyed learning from him. His teaching style has taught me how to be a better writer and pushed me to test the limits of writing essays. I went to him for help with my college essays for the entire first semester. I will always be grateful for his help, as he was always welcoming and available whenever I needed him. All in all, both of these teachers were amazing influences on me and truly changed me for the better.

Jasmine Zheng

Looking back at these past four years at SOA, I feel nostalgic and bittersweet. Some people say they look back on their high school experiences through rose-tinted lenses, but I genuinely think I had some valuable experiences during my time here. I'm so grateful to the friends I've made and the teachers at this school who've built a rigorous academic experience fueled with passion. I am especially appreciative of the impact of the Fashion Department on my growth. Ms. Chesborough is simply a delight and has been an amazing mentor and teacher. Not only did the program call for me to constantly strive to create and improve, but also challenged me in essential skills such as time management and commitment. I will remember my time here as a fashion major fondly as I look to the future.



SOA Says Farewell to Dr. Byrd

Applause writer, Isis Hanna sat down with retiring piano teacher, Dr. Happy Byrd to reflect on her time teaching, her artistic pursuits, and her plans for the future.

Isis Hanna: How did you decide you were going to get your doctorate? What was that process like?

Happy Byrd: I decided to pursue my doctorate in piano pedagogy after graduating from Boston University with a master's degree in vocal accompaniment. I wanted to teach at the college level. So I went back to USC for my Doctorate Degree in Piano. I spent 3-7 hours a day practicing piano, playing recitals and chamber music, and teaching. During the time I was working on my Doctorate degree, I married my husband Ashley, and we had our two sons.

IH: What were some of your favorite things about your teaching career?

HB: First Recital Performances: Witnessing a student successfully perform at their first recital, overcoming nerves and demonstrating what they've learned, has been incredibly fulfilling. Student Success Stories: Hearing about my former students who have gone on to pursue successful music careers, whether as performers, teachers, or in other music-related fields. International Performances and Traveling which offers cultural exchange and the experience of visiting other countries. Teaching Special Needs Students: Helping a student with special needs discover the joy of music can be incredibly moving and a testament to the universal language of music.

IH: Was there anything specific that made you want to teach piano? Do you have a particularly strong passion for music?

HB: While I was growing up, I thought I wanted to focus on piano performance, but I took piano pedagogy classes during college where we were assigned several young students in private lessons and theory lab classes each week. I loved the children and it felt like I had found my purpose. I decided to major in piano pedagogy and have taught ever since.

IH: What are your plans after you retire?

HB: I plan to spend time with my family and friends and exercise a lot. I want to be able to keep up with grandkids!

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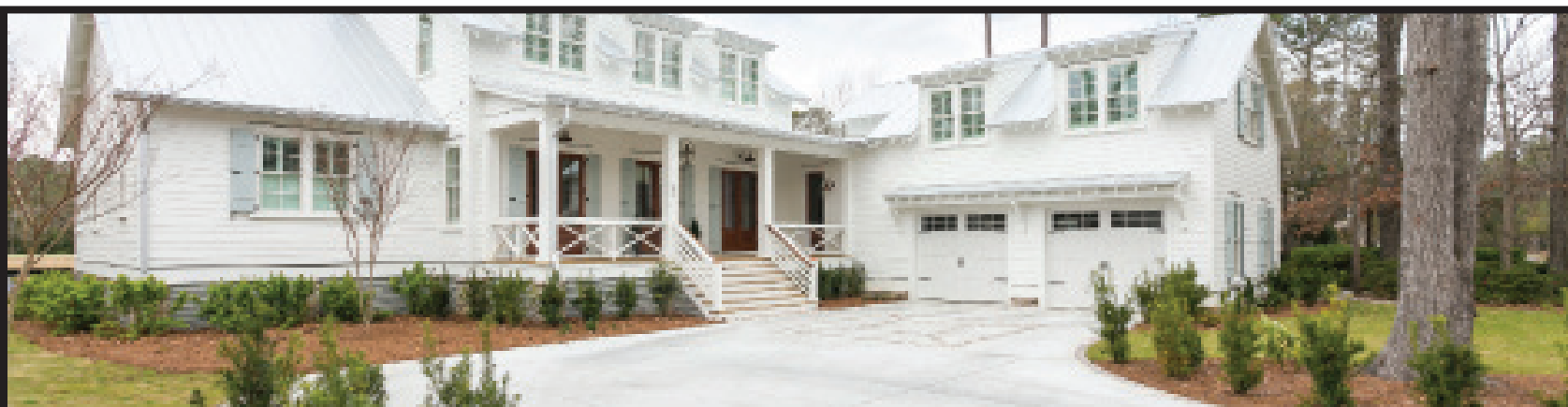
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What is the most important thing you've learned at SOA?

Amani Affonso: The most important thing I've learned at SOA is to provide a good balance between schoolwork and artistic activities and leave room for fun!

Greyson Aldredge: I have learned that many people from different backgrounds can all connect through their art.

Leilah Baird: I learned how you can grow and change as a person and still be accepted.

Savannah Barnett: "You are innocent until proven guilty" - Mr. White

Max Besta: I've learned to be patient and appreciate every day and moment in the present tense.

Ollie Brice: Do what makes you happy.

Jordan Cantle: The importance of community and education. How it affects our decisions and opportunities.

Hailey Carnagey: Everyone is different! We all have our own quirks and personalities. Everyone expresses themselves in unique ways. I think the most important takeaway is just to accept people how they are!

Ella Charette: How to take criticism. When it comes to any form of art, whether that be writing, acting, visual art, or music, there will always be room for improvement, and you have to learn how to take constructive criticism without taking it to heart and letting it get to you.

Carle Chisolm: How to get all your work done at the last minute.

Madeline Church: Any words that came out of Ms. Honeycutt's mouth.

Sierra Coleman: The most important thing that I learned at SOA is that everyone expresses themselves in different ways.

Tulah Cramer: I have learned to be kind to everyone.

Lucy Cromwell: People value and believe in different things from you. What you believe is just and fair may not be the same in another's eyes.

Christian Curran: The most important thing that I've learned at SOA is the importance of putting in time into the work you do and really understanding what you are learning.

James Davenport: Time management is important. Doesn't mean I actually learned to manage my time, just that it's important.

Ava Dawson: By far the most important lesson I've learned here is to not restrict myself based on the expectations set by others. If

there's something you want to do, just do it.

Grace Dennie: The most important thing I've learned at SOA is that I belong. I've struggled in my major, particularly in middle school. Sometimes I didn't feel like I deserved to be at SOA, but as I've progressed in my time here, I've grown a deep appreciation for the people and environment at SOA. It's a place I'll never forget.

Mayson Dillard: The most important thing I've learned at SOA is that nothing lasts forever and to not be embarrassed to do something just because of other people or societal standards.

Fallyn Dunmeyer: I learned how to get better at time management.

Grace Ervin: The most important thing I've learned at SOA is if you have a dream or passion



for something, trust your instinct and follow it and it will lead you somewhere good. I was hesitant to audition my sophomore year, but I followed through with my decision to audition, and got in as a junior. Now, I have had this incredible opportunity to do something I've always wanted to do everyday, and I never would have had this opportunity if I didn't follow my gut or chose to be lazy. Anything is possible if you have the ambition and the strong desire to achieve it, and my classmates are a prime example of that.

Isobel Foggon: I learned many new techniques which have helped me to become a better actress and hopefully more successful in my future career.

Law Fox: Surround yourself with good people who really care about you. Life is too short not to feel loved.

Kiyah Garten: The most important thing I've learned at SOA is that constructive criticism isn't mean, it's helping me to grow as a person.

Linda Garziera: When you're a senior, you either run to your car and get out or you'd better spend the night in the parking lot.

Kayley Genova: How to assimilate with so many different people and perspectives.

Iris Gomez: To be yourself, for most of my schooling before SOA I was bullied, so I never really expressed myself or put myself out there, but everyone at SOA is proud of their differences and expresses themselves.

Vivian Gordon: It's not about the mistakes you make, but how you come back from them.

T.J. Griffin: Possibly my passion and love for writing and film.

Joey Gritzuk: How to connect and work with many different people from a variety of backgrounds and cultures

Sebastian Grow: The most important thing I have learned at SOA is never stop trying. No matter how many times you fail you will eventually succeed so keep trying until you do.

Isaac Hilton: The most important thing I learned is how important some friendships really are.

Henry Hipp: I've learned the important skills and tricks to make me a much better actor.

Macie Hoffman: There is a time for everything. There is a time to buckle down and get the work done; there's a time to step back and hang out with your friends and family; there's a time

to spend time on your own. There will be time for it all.

Lily Hollis: I learned that there should be a good balance between the academic side and artistic side for everyone.

Jessie Johnson: How to be passionate about something. I didn't find my thing here, per se; I had found it before. SOA taught me how to fall in love with it. It taught me how to take my obsession and use it to make a difference.

Adam Kremer: I've learned that I'm not always right.

Maggie Largent: How to take criticism, for sure. Before coming to this school, I was so nervous about being criticized, and so I tended to not take risks in my singing. Now I realize that criticism is really the only way to learn and grow in any art form, because it helps you to know what you need to work on.

Braeden LaRoche: Social and communicative skills.

Grace Lawrence: The most important thing

What is the most important thing you've learned at SOA?

I have learned at SOA is how to manage my dance and work.

Autumn Lawyer: I've learned that there's so much that goes into a production and how to problem solve quickly and effectively in the nick of time. I also learned that I'm capable of so much more than I thought because of my teachers both academically and performance wise

Parker Legette: I learned a lot from my peers, mostly about how not to waste the time you've got.

Kennedy Mack: "Pump the breaks when your car is hydroplaning" - Mr. McCauley

Ella Kate Marcy: The most important thing I have learned at SOA is not to stress out over homework and little things. It will all work out, and it's ok to take time for yourself or to hang out with friends.

Helena Meloy: The most important thing I've learned at SOA is how important it is to celebrate each other and our accomplishments. We've done this by doing convocation once every quarter.

Kamrin Mungin: Express yourself however YOU want to, and use your time wisely.

Camille Ollard: The most important thing I've learned at SOA is drive fast, take chances, and don't talk to strangers unless they're cute (thanks Ms. Honeycutt!)

Sofia Page-Simmons: The most important thing I've learned at SOA is that everyone is unique in their own way.

Jolin Pan: I have learned the importance of dedication and connection. I have met so many wonderful people during my time at SOA, and I am grateful I was able to do this.

Ashley Peterson: I learned that you can't please everyone all the time.

Lydia Plante: I learned the importance of confidence and assertiveness in being a leader.

Jesse Price: I learned that being interdisciplinary is better than being single toned.

Shawn Pupke: You will be judged for your actions, but other's opinions don't matter as much as your own.

Presley Rhodes: How the people you surround yourself with can change any situation for the better.

Marisa Rivera: During my years at SOA, I learned the importance of being organized. Being a Vocal Major is a time-demanding job

that takes a lot of responsibility along with working and other responsibilities.

Autumn Rouse: The biggest thing I've learned from my four years at SOA is that with a lot of prayer and grit it's possible to do things that seem absolutely impossible at first. These last few years have been exhausting, but I've learned to adapt in ways I never could have anywhere else. I've learned that no matter how hard the week, or the month, or the semester, it will always pass. Drama will always subside, tests will be passed, shows will be performed and finished, and if it doesn't go well, you get the chance to toughen up for next time. Have hope in the future and be grateful for the past, no matter what it holds.

Lesly Salgado: The most important thing I



learned is that it's okay to be weird.

Kenny Schaffer: The most important thing I've learned being at SOA is balance. Learning how to balance everything has helped me as a performer and a student. When you can manage your time and create a balanced schedule you'll be able to finish everything that's a priority and not feel stressed.

Jonathan Sessions: I have learned that being yourself is one of the most important things you can do. Trying to be someone else never works.

Harper Sharpe: I learned to be creative and to incorporate music into my life.

Jovanny Silva Velasquez: Geese are nasty, filthy, mean, cruel animals.

Aveh Singletary: The most important thing I learned is to open yourself up to others even if you think you're not gonna get along with them; you would be surprised.

Wade Sjostrom: I've learned to trust and respect the people around me. This has led to my being able to open up and create some friends I think I will have years from now.

Pagelyn Smalls: What I will take away from the past four years at SOA is that creating opportunities and relationships for yourself with true authenticity will get you very far in life. I truly believe that my four years became even more memorable when I started making friendships where I was my authentic self and I found my passion when I created an opportunity that was not there before.

Annie Sterba: In my time at SOA, I learned the value of a strong sense of community. The connections I've made here have shown me who I am and I know they will last a lifetime.

Alajah Thompson: I've learned that no matter what, be yourself, unique, and confident.

Xander Villegas: Hm, So many important things I have learned. I honestly learned so much more out of school. Learning to be alone and content was vital to my senior year, and pushing for the things that I want my life to look like.

Reagan Villegas: The most important thing I learned at SOA was to have as much fun as you can with your friends because time goes by so fast.

Jason Wan: The most important thing I learned at SOA is to always work harder than anyone else, to be the best no matter what they say about you, and treat others the way you want to be treated.

Shelby White: The most important thing I've learned at SOA is to never beat yourself up over small things. As a freshman, I used to always get worked up about the littlest things, and I took the time to learn that it is okay to fall back, and to breathe. This life lesson has been so beneficial to me, and I have grown as a person because of it.

Susan White: Communication with your teachers is really important, and advocating for yourself will never hurt you. You think you need an extension for an essay? Ask for one. Best case scenario: you get an extension. Worst case scenario: you don't get an extension. I feel like it's easy to forget, but your teachers really do care about your wellbeing and they're willing to work with you if you express your needs to them.

Jade Williams: By playing with the SOA symphony, I have learned teamwork and leadership.

Jasmine Zheng: Don't be afraid to ask questions and communicate your needs.

What quote do you want to be remembered by?

Amani Affonso: "Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success. If you love what you are doing, you will be successful." - Albert Schweitzer

Greyson Aldredge: "Music can change the world because it can change people." — Bono

Leilah Baird: "I'm more awesome than Kylie."

Savannah Barnett: "Sometimes you never know the value of a moment until it becomes a memory." - Dr.Suess

Max Besta: "Anything is possible if you have faith."

Ollie Brice: "Always have something you want to get to."

Jordan Cattle: "Fear brings boredom, boldness brings excitement."

Hailey Carnagey: "You are braver than you believe, stronger than you seem, and smarter than you think." -Winnie the Pooh

Ella Charette: "Always strive to be the best version of yourself."

Carle Chisolm: "Enjoy the little things, for one day, you may look back and realize they were the big things." - Robert Brault

Madeline Church: "If you ain't first, you're last." -Ricky Bobby

Gabi Citrolo: "Embrace the adventure of life, and let your curiosity guide you to new horizons." For me, this quote reflects my belief in the importance of embracing new experiences and staying curious. Life is an adventure, and by approaching it with an open mind and a sense of wonder, we can discover amazing things about ourselves and the world around us. It's all about embracing the unknown and being willing to step outside of our comfort zones. So, this quote really captures the essence of how I want to live my life.

Sierra Coleman: "Never change yourself for anybody and always know your self-worth."

Tulah Cramer: "If you truly love nature, you will find beauty everywhere."- Van Gogh

Lucy Cromwell: "One must imagine Sisyphus happy." -Albert Camus

Christian Curran: "To play a wrong note is insignificant; to play without passion is inexcusable." - Beethoven

James Davenport: "Mindset is everything- if you believe that you can accomplish something, you will be in the headspace of success and you'll do great."

Grace Dennie: "Never underestimate the power of a girl with a book." -Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Mayson Dillard: "Embarrassment is a state of mind."

Fallyn Dunmeyer: "I love you, Frank."

Grace Ervin: "All of life is a dream and dreams themselves are only dreams" - Anna Karina

Isobel Foggon: "How lucky am I to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard."- Winnie the Pooh

Law Fox: "Art's not a luxury, it's actually

sustenance. We need it." -Ethan Hawke

Kiyah Garten: "Wait... We have a test today? Since when?"

Linda Garziera: "Vote me for President."

Kayley Genova: "There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow man; true nobility is being superior to your former self."

Iris Gomez: "Success is not the key to happiness. Happiness is the key to success" - Albert Schweitzer

Vivian Gordon: "It's easier to be weird than it is to be normal," said Vivian with full seriousness junior year. Her friends will never let her forget it!

T.J. Griffin: "Ahh, wire."

Joey Gritzuk: "Work smarter not harder."

Sebastian Grow: "Never, never, never give up" - Winston Churchill

Isaac Hilton: "If it is to be, it's up to me."

Henry Hipp: "Fasten your seatbelts. It's going to be a bumpy night." - *All About Eve*

Macie Hoffman: "Talk nonsense, but talk your own nonsense, and I'll kiss you for it. To go wrong in your own way is better than to go right in someone else's." -Dostoyevsky

Lily Hollis: "Don't be afraid to look silly." - Tara Strong

Jessie Johnson: "People do not seem to realize that their opinion of the world is also a confession of their character." — Ralph Waldo Emerson

Adam Kremer: "I feel the capacity to care is the thing which gives life its deepest significance." -Pablo Casals

Maggie Largent: "People believe, thought Shadow. It's what people do. They believe, and then they do not take responsibility for their beliefs; they conjure things, and do not trust the conjuration. People populate the darkness; with ghosts, with gods, with electrons, with tales. People imagine, and people believe; and it is that rock solid belief, that makes things happen." -Neil Gaiman, *American Gods*

Braeden LaRoche: "The sky looks nice today."

Grace Lawrence: "GPS says it's my turn."

Autumn Lawyer: "Fight for what makes you optimistic about the world. Find it, insist on it, dig into it, go after it" - Jennifer Garner

Parker Legette: "Don't be pushed around by the fears in your mind. Be led by the dreams in your heart." - Roy T. Bennett

Jack Lindsay: "What do you do when it rains?" "I get wet."

— Joseph Heller, *Catch-22*

Kennedy Mack: "When things get hard remember your why." - Misty Copeland

Helena Meloy: "Get yo money up not yo funny up"

Kamrin Mungin: "That's not my problem"

Camille Ollard: "It's literally not that serious."

Sofia Page-Simmons: "Life is too complicated to be taken seriously."

Jolin Pan: "Xue hua piao piao." -Fei Yu-ching

Ashley Peterson: "Rivers know this: There is no

hurry. We shall get there some day." - Winnie the Pooh

Lydia Plante: "Just remember that we had that donut three months ago"

Jesse Price: "Is it an A day or B day?"

Shawn Pupke: "Don't say swears" -Jerma985

Presley Rhodes: "I'm such an incredibly, stupidly sensitive person that everything that happens to me, I experience it really intensely. I feel everything very deeply. And when you feel things deeply and you think about things a lot and you think about how you feel, you learn a lot about yourself."-Fiona Apple

Marisa Rivera: "She never gave up, no matter how hard they pushed her, she always got back up."-Marisa Rivera

Autumn Rouse: "Don't be afraid to have hope. Are there bad things in this world? Yes, but please don't forget the reasons we have to look to the horizon and see better things up ahead."

Lesley Salgado: "Never memorize something that you can look up"

Kenny Schaffer: "Do It For You"

Jonathan Sessions: "Just Do It"

Harper Sharpe: "Good morning, and in case I don't see ya, good afternoon, good evening, and good night!"-The Truman Show

Jovanny Silva Velasquez: "The revolution will not be televised" - Gil Scott Heron

Aveh Singletary: "That's an issue for later, Aveh"

Wade Sjostrom: "When in doubt, look intelligent" - Garrison Keillor

Pagelyn Smalls: "Be the change, seize the moment".

Agegnu Stanfield: "Everything you've ever wanted is sitting on the other side of fear."

Annie Sterba: "Sometimes the smallest things take up the most room in your heart." - Winnie the Pooh

Alajah Thompson: "Your life is your story, and the adventure ahead of you is the journey to fulfill your purpose and potential."

Xander Villegas: "Maybe I will never be, all the things that I want to be, Now is not the time to cry, Now's the time to find out why." -Oasis

Reagan Villegas: "If there's a will, there's a way"

Jason Wan: I want to be remembered by T.J Miller and Muhammad Ali's quotes because they exemplify hard work and success.

Shelby White: "Make every effort to change things you do not like. If you cannot make a change, change the way you have been thinking. You might find a new solution."- Maya Angelou

Susan White: "I am the wisest man alive, for I only know one thing, and that is that I know nothing." -Socrates probably

Jade Williams: "Sometimes the right path is not the easiest one" - Grandmother Willow, *Pocahontas*.

Jasmine Zheng: "Those who believe in telekinetics, raise my hand." -Kurt Vonnegut

What will you miss most about SOA?

Amani Affonso: I'll miss being surrounded by my amazing friends and all the vocal performances I've been able to participate in over the past seven years at SOA.

Greyson Aldredge: I will miss my teachers who have helped me be successful as a student and person.

Leilah Baird: I will definitely miss the very honed in community and the class of 2024.

Savannah Barnett: The bonds I made over the years.

Max Besta: The people I have met and shared some of the best parts of my life with.

Ollie Brice: My favorite teachers and friends

Jordan Cattle: The community, familiarity and all the visual art.

Hailey Carnagey: I will miss the atmosphere the most. I have never felt so welcomed in a place. I never felt so at home. I am happy I spent my high school career here. It has made me feel so special and talented.

Ella Charette: All the events that happen during lunch, like bands, or flash mobs, or even when someone randomly starts playing the piano in the cafeteria. I think it's fun.

Carle Chisolm: I'll miss getting to see my friends almost everyday and laughing with them in class.

Madeline Church: Seeing my best friends everyday.

Sierra Coleman: I will miss all my amazing friends from SOA.

Tulah Cramer: I will miss the infectious laughter and support of my art class, and cheering for Connelly when she comes into school. I will also miss seeing my best friends everyday, who are extremely dedicated and passionate people.

Lucy Cromwell: The familiarity and security of SOA, my time spent in my major, and every friend I've had the pleasure of knowing from sixth grade to now.

Christian Curran: I will miss being with all of my friends from different arts majors.

James Davenport: The art room. It has been my favorite place throughout high school, and it feels almost like a refuge from everything else happening in life.

Ava Dawson: I will miss the resources and support of my class and teachers the most.

Grace Dennie: I will miss SOA's welcoming and collaborative atmosphere. I've made so many friends in lots of different majors, and something I love about SOA is how friendly everyone is, and everyone's passion for their respective art area.

Mayson Dillard: I will most definitely miss the people here. It's such a diverse group of people brought together by art forms.

Fallyn Dunmeyer: I'll miss my friends and all the things we have shared

Grace Ervin: The thing I will miss most about SOA are the people I have met. Everyone here is so talented and brilliant, and I feel so lucky to have gone to a school with all of them. I know everyone will go on to do great things.

Law Fox: My friends (duh!). This year I've gotten a lot closer with such thoughtful and hilarious people, and while it's bittersweet for us to all disperse on our paths, I'm grateful for the time we've had together.

Isobel Foggon: The environment at SOA is definitely the thing I will miss the most, most of the time everyone is very happy here, and it's always nice to see. There is such a strong sense of community that I will miss.

Kiyah Garten: I will miss the experiences of performances and meeting new people who have the same artistic talent as me

Linda Garziera: The conversations and laughter during lunchtime with my friends, the shows and the spirit, popart runs to my locker. Oh, and of course the geese.

Kayley Genova: I will miss the musicality and artistic environment and great teachers.

Iris Gomez: All the friends I've made throughout the years.

Vivian Gordon: Compared to other highschools, I will miss SOA's kind, genuine, and supportive student body.

T.J. Griffin: The feeling of pure joy when the vending machines were both stocked and functional.

Joey Gritzuk: My major.

Sebastian Grow: The thing I'll miss most about SOA is being able to hear all the amazing music played by everyone from our Symphony Orchestra to our SOA Jazz Band.

Isaac Hilton: The friends I made. I hold them dearly to my heart.

Henry Hipp: The people.

Macie Hoffman: I will miss the people here. The friends I made here are many of my closest friends, and I could not imagine going through high school without them.

Lily Hollis: I'll miss the fun I had with my friends and classmates throughout the easygoing schedule with all the positivity added to it.

Jessie Johnson: The teachers. "Mentorship" isn't an uncommon word here. And, in some strange, vengeful way, the geese.

Adam Kremer: The thought-provoking discussions in AP Literature.

Maggie Largent: For sure learning new music in vocal. When we're learning something hard, it always goes through an ugly stage, where

we aren't sure how to fit together. Eventually though, we hit a run where everyone is ready, it sounds good, and Mr. Rogers gives us his little nod. That's one of the best feelings, being in such a good blend with everyone around you.

Braeden LaRoche: My friends, and an environment wherein my ambitions, both academic and artistic, are facilitated by kind and intelligent students and teachers.

Grace Lawrence: I will miss the environment of SOA and seeing my friends everyday.

Autumn Lawyer: The people that I've met and the friends that I've made.

Parker Legette: I will miss the positivity of the people around me.

Jack Lindsay: The lunch ladies, geese, and the quiet of the courtyard after school.

Kennedy Mack: Seeing my friends every day.

Mary Maniscalco: What I'll miss most about SOA are my friends and teachers.

Ella Kate Marcy: I will miss all of the activities and school spirit things we do like powderpuff and convocation.

Kamrin Mungin: The concerts and major trips.

Camille Ollard: Definitely my friends, and knowing I'll see them in class the next day.

Sofia Page-Simmons: I'll miss the family I've made with my friends in dance.

Jolin Pan: The people and the teachers.

Ashley Peterson: I'll miss seeing my friends everyday.

Lydia Plante: I'll miss the incredible community in strings, the funny moments with Dr. Selby, and my incredible friends who let me open up and be myself.

Jesse Price: I will miss being able to walk around campus and hear or see beautiful art all around.

Shawn Pupke: The people, both friends and strangers. Everyone's so interesting.

Presley Rhodes: Ms. Richardson's art room and seeing my friends every day.

Marisa Rivera: I'll miss all of my connections with teachers along with all the great friends I've made. I'll also miss the fun events and courtyard concerts we have.

Autumn Rouse: I'll miss the environment. I'll miss theatre. I'll miss all the lovely friends I've made along the way... also guys I'm gonna miss the big windows. Why isn't that a thing at college? Is it bad that that's been making me sad?

Lesly Salgado: I'll miss the freedom of being myself without being judged so harshly as at other schools or out in public.

Kenny Schaffer: The thing I'll miss most about SOA is performing. Over the past six years, the

What will you miss most about SOA?

biggest joy I've felt is getting to participate in so many different activities and performances with my friends and classmates.

Jonathan Sessions: I will miss all the friends that I am leaving behind.

Harper Sharpe: I will miss all the amazing performances and all the people who make this school what it is.

Jovanny Silva Velasquez: Not the goblins.

Aveh Singletary: The teachers and my younger friends.

Wade Sjostrom: The amazing and supportive atmosphere that surrounds me as I thrive in the thing I love most.

Pagelyn Smalls: My friends and my favorite

teachers.

Agegnu Stanfield: My old middle school teachers and working in the RMMT.

Annie Sterba: I will miss arriving in the parking lot every morning next to my best friends, Jade and Tulah, knowing that I am about to spend the day surrounded by the friends I've made here.

Alajah Thompson: My favorite Teacher, Coach Butts :(

Xander Villegas: The thing I'll miss most is the blend of independence and comfort. Being in charge of my schedule but still being able to come home at night and sleep in a bed under my parents' roof. Oh what a joy.

Reagan Villegas: I will miss my friends and

our classes together.

Jason Wan: I will definitely miss the band and take that talent into the outside world.

Shelby White: The thing that I will miss most about SOA is the people. I will miss all the friends that I have made, and all the memories that came with those people.

Susan White: Probably everything. I really love this school. I think I'll miss getting to perform with a full symphony the most though.

Jade Williams: I will miss playing in the Sinfonietta the most.

Jasmine Zheng: I will miss the people here, especially all of the special individuals involved in the amazing fashion program.

Do you have any advice for underclassmen?

Amani Affonso: Surround yourself with people who lift you up, and take any opportunities that come your way- you never know what they'll end up leading to!

Greyson Aldredge: Be yourself, follow what you love, and try new things. These years are for learning and growing, so enjoy them.

Leilah Baird: Don't let the stress of college overwhelm you so much, at the end of the day it will all work itself out.

Savannah Barnett: Show up.

Max Besta: Take your time, change your mind, live your life.

Ollie Brice: Don't take APs for fun.

Jordan Cattle: Don't stretch yourself thin trying to overachieve on small goals. Focus on the true goals.

Hailey Carnagey: Just live, don't let your school work get in the way; don't let your after school job take over your life. LIVE, yes, keep up with your stuff but don't let it interfere with how you want to live your life. These are the years!

Ella Charette: I know it might seem daunting, but you got this. Study hard, make memories, and most of all be unapologetically you.

Carle Chisholm: Unless you want to take multiple finals, keep your seniors grades up.

Madeline Church: Junior year is hard and senioritis hits harder. Good luck.

Sierra Coleman: Manage your time well, keep your grades up, and go to as many highschool events as possible.

Tulah Cramer: Don't compare yourself to anyone. At SOA there will be people that are better at your major, smarter, friendlier, and have better grades than you. Remember it is good to be the dumbest person in the room, and to just focus on yourself.

Lucy Cromwell: Stay in the know.

Christian Curran: Find a way to enjoy the work you do. If you don't, it will be miserable.

James Davenport: Don't take a ton of hard classes because you feel like you should. Enjoy your time in high school. And most importantly, be nice to yourself.

Ava Dawson: Make good, reliable friends who are supportive and actually care about you- don't waste your time on people who don't lift you up.

Gracie Dennie: When your Junior year comes to an end, dedicate the summer before Senior year to writing your Common App essay. I know the underclassmen and even middle schoolers reading this will likely disregard my advice, and do so at your own risk, but let me leave you with a word of warning: I have never, in my life, felt as much panic as I did when trying to finish my essay at 11:57PM, two minutes before the application to one of my top schools closed. 10/10 do NOT recommend.

Mayson Dillard: Stop caring about what other people think of you or your actions. Don't look for yourself through other people. You will never find who you are that way.

Fallyn Dunmeyer: Always just try to have fun no matter what.

Grace Ervin: Enjoy your Senior Thesis. I know it seems really hard and intimidating, but it's so worth it in the end. This is your chance to really put yourself out there and create something you've always wanted to create. Don't put yourself in a box- it's not that serious. Have fun with it.

Isobel Foggon: Just enjoy your time while you are here. If you spend your entire time wishing you were done you will miss it when you are gone.

Law Fox: Find your people! And if you can't find your people right now, that's okay. We are so

young, and the world is so incredibly big. There are countless talented, beautiful people out there for you to meet.

Kiyah Garten: Don't let stress consume you, let yourself have fun and enjoy your high school years, because these are the years that set you up for your future and can be some of the most fun times of your life, if you let yourself have fun.

Linda Garziera: Make so many memories you run out of camera storage. Then do it again.

Kayley Genova: Just keep pushing through classes and managing your time. Senior year will be well worth the wait.

Iris Gomez: Dr. Selby's #1 rule: "Show up, and don't procrastinate."

Vivian Gordon: Stop worrying about what others will think about you. They are more worried about themselves.

T.J. Griffin: Get all of your classes out of the way your first three years so your senior year can be chill.

Joey Gritzuk: Finish your credits early so you have an easy senior year.

Sebastian Grow: Never give up and reach for your dreams as they may seem unattainable now, but if you work towards your goals, you will reach them one day.

Issac Hilton: Learn how to use your time wisely. Balance is a very important thing when it comes to life, especially in high school.

Henry Hipp: Take Mr. White's Honors Gov. class.

Macie Hoffman: Do one thing at a time. Work will pile up, but try not to let it overwhelm you. Start with the thing due the soonest, then move on to the next thing, one at a time.

Lily Hollis: If you think you won't make it to graduation, you will in one way or another. You'll make it no matter what happens in this world.

Do you have any advice for underclassmen?

Jessie Johnson: If you want to take magnet classes, fight for them! It's worth it.

Adam Kremer: Try to find a way to enjoy little things about the classes you don't like. It'll make the experience a lot more tolerable.

Maggie Largent: Please don't take too many classes your senior year. You'll be applying to college, you do not want to have three hours of physics homework every night.

Braedon LaRoche: Talk to people even if you don't particularly feel like it.

Autumn Lawyer: Right when it seems like everything is going downhill, that's when you need to make it your business to keep going. You'll be okay, I promise. Just make sure you take care of yourself and don't get lost in self-doubt.

Parker Legette: Don't take anything for granted.

Jack Lindsay: If something is simple to you, you probably don't know as much as you think you do.

Ella Kate Marcy: My advice for underclassmen is to keep your GPA up. It might not matter now, but it will soon!

Helena Meloy: Don't grow up too fast.

Kamrin Mungin: Stay out of trouble and don't get on your teachers' bad side.

Camille Ollard: Junior year is very important. Push through and work as hard as you possibly can. Your senior self will thank you.

Sofia Page-Simmons: Just keep going. You'll get there one way or another.

Jolin Pan: You got this! Don't give up!

Ashley Peterson: Make friends and reach out to people! Don't isolate yourself because you're so focused on academics. Your social life is just as important as an A.

Lydia Plante: Don't stress about piling up on AP classes- Just take the ones that will help you the most in the future and do your best!

Jesse Price: Find ways to relax that don't hinder your ability to get work done.

Shawn Pupke: Have a good excuse lined up for when you skip class.

Presley Rhodes: Don't take everything so seriously, and do not be afraid to put yourself out

there. Your school experience is what you make of it.

Marisa Rivera: My advice for underclassmen would be never give up until you've run out of time. This advice can be taken in the real world or during a test. Never give up until you've run out of time, even if you have three minutes left, those three minutes can be spent fighting for your future.

Autumn Rouse: Try to do good work while you're here, but remember there is so much life outside of high school drama... Also, don't take a dual credit class unless you have a lot of



bandwidth and lots of chocolate to snack on.

Lesly Salgado: Mind your business. Sometimes having a filter is okay.

Kenny Schaffer: Take time for yourself. You should work hard but also reward yourself for your hard work. Going to our school drains you and takes up lots of time. With that being said, you must use the quiet moments to do things you love: it's crucial.

Jonathan Sessions: Enjoy your senior year; it goes by fast. Stay in the moment and don't think about graduation and going away but, more so, just enjoy yourself.

Harper Sharpe: My advice is to not take more AP classes than you can handle and to cherish your time here.

Aveh Singletary: Always do your work ahead of time. Rushing in your car on the way to school is not worth it.

Wade Sjostrom: Enjoy it while it lasts, because

one day you will be in my position.

Pagelyn Smalls: These four years are some of the most formative years in your life. Make memories, go out, and experience new things. The best thing that you can do for yourself is to have a healthy work-life balance. Get your work done and stay on top of assignments, but know when to take a break. Unfortunately, I didn't realize this until my junior year, and when I did, my experience changed for the better.

Agegnu Stanfield: Figure out what interests you as early as you can; work hard.

Annie Sterba: You don't have to know everything all at once; take your time.

Alajah Thompson: Remember, try your hardest no matter what, and no matter how hard it gets, don't give up on yourself because, at the end of the day, you only have yourself.

Xander Villegas: Find a passion and stick to it, and be weird. It's more fun that way.

Jason Wan: Never give up on your dreams.

Shelby White: The advice that I would give to underclassmen is simple: have fun. As a freshman in high school, I was very anxious about being a perfectionist, and doing everything correctly. I quickly

began to learn that nobody cares whether you are perfect or not, and it's okay to make mistakes. There are going to be days when you over stress yourself, or you feel under pressure 24/7, but none of that matters. Go out, have fun, and make the most of your high school years. As a senior in high school, you will look back, and reminisce on all the fun things you've done over the years. So my advice to you is to breathe, succeed, and live every day like it's your last!

Susan White: Take the teacher cadet class, even if you don't want to be a teacher. It's super fun, and it's a free dual enrollment class. FREE. That's college credit that you don't have to pay for. College is expensive; get as many free credits while you still can.

Jade Williams: Try to not procrastinate on your assignments.

Jasmine Zheng: Hang in there! It'll all work out in the end.

What are your plans after graduation?

Amani Affonso: I plan to attend College of Charleston Honors college and major in Arts Management and Vocal Performance! I also plan to study abroad in college- either in France or Spain!

Greyson Aldredge: I plan to go to the University of South Carolina and major in music education with a certificate in performance.

Leilah Baird: I will be attending the University of South Carolina and majoring in Criminology and Criminal Justice.

Savannah Barnett: I will be attending Converse University and will be majoring in Creative and Professional Writing.

Max Besta: To be a successful songwriter, performer, and dancer.

Ollie Brice: Moving to Boston next year.

Jordan Cantle: I plan on going to Trident Tech for one to two years to complete academic classes and then transferring to a university.

Hailey Carnagey: I plan to continue to study vocal performance at Clemson University! I want to be a choir director like Ms. Heather Hammond and Mr. Robin Rogers. Someday I

What are your plans after graduation?

wish to become a College professor, teaching students how to master their voice.

Ella Charette: I plan to go to C of C and continue my acting career!

Carle Chisholm: I plan to go to Winthrop University, graduate in biology, and become a pharmacist.

Madeline Church: I will be attending Clemson University for Nursing. GO TIGERS!

Sierra Coleman: I intend to work as a photographer.

Tulah Cramer: I will go to the beach as much as I can, and then go to the Rhode Island School of Design in the fall!

Lucy Cromwell: Traveling to Southeast Asia, then attending Loyola New Orleans on a full merit scholarship for history and law. Eating lots of sno-balls and shrimp po boys, hopefully. I also plan on securing a stained glass internship to continue my love of Visual Arts. Maybe catch me on College Jeopardy!

Christian Curran: I will be attending Lynn Conservatory of Music to major in viola performance.

James Davenport: Pursuing a B.S. in Biology at College of Charleston.

Ava Dawson: I plan to attend SCAD for 2D animation in the fall!

Grace Dennie: After graduation, I will spend the summer relaxing and trying not to panic at the prospect of leaving my home and being fully independent. After that, I will be attending the University of South Carolina to study Biochemistry and Molecular Biology on the Pre-Med track. Go Gamecocks!

Mayson Dillard: I plan to attend SCAD and major in Fashion Design, but keep my options open for other majors. I want to experiment with what I like in the arts and perhaps dabble in new forms of art.

Fallyn Dunmeyer: Attending Johnson C. Smith to study biology, and then go into dental hygiene.

Grace Ervin: After graduation, I will be attending Bard College in Hudson, NY. As of right now, I will be majoring in film studies with a minor in physics or sociology, but I'm open to anything, so that could change.

Isobel Foggon: I will be attending University of the Arts London for a degree in Acting and Performance.

Law Fox: I'll be attending Pace University to train for my BFA in acting. There's lots of things I want to do in my life... song writing, filmmaking, traveling around the world... I'm open and willing to try it all. Hopefully I wind up in front of the camera, but regardless, I'm excited to be a creative no matter what.

Kiyah Garten: I plan on going to College of

Charleston, majoring in marine biology and minoring in psychology.

Linda Garziera: First of all I want to forget all about school. I want to go to Turbo Cone, listen to too much music and disappear in the streets of Charleston. Then, I'm going to study Economics at Duke University, row for the Crew team, and try to be nice to my sister...

Kayley Genova: I'm going to George Mason's Honors College and majoring in Forensic Science and minoring in French. I will also audition for their Symphony.

Iris Gomez: I will be attending Converse University. I'm majoring in Psychology with a minor in Studio Arts.

Vivian Gordon: CLEMSON! GO TIGERSSS

T.J. Griffin: I'm going to college for film and television, with plans to become a scriptwriter for TV and hopefully create my own shows and movies someday.

Joey Gritzuk: I am going to The Citadel for mechanical engineering.

Sebastian Grow: After graduation I will be attending Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, and I will be majoring in General Engineering with an intent in Computer Engineering.

Issac Hilton: This fall, I'll be attending College of Charleston.

Henry Hipp: DePaul University for Comedy Arts.

Macie Hoffman: I plan to attend the University of Missouri for computer science. My eventual goal is to find a job I enjoy that can get me kind of rich so I can travel and live comfortably.

Lily Hollis: I plan to attend College of Charleston to major in computer science and computing in the arts.

Jessie Leitzel: I'll be studying biomedical engineering and regenerative medicine at Harvard College. You'll find me in a lab and in the library, writing creative nonfiction.

Adam Kremer: Practice. Also I'm going to the Indiana University Jacobs School of Music.

Maggie Largent: I plan to go to the University of South Carolina Honors College, with a major in Biochemistry and a minor in French! Hopefully I'll be able to sing as well, as they have a good choral program.

Braeden LaRoche: I will be attending the University of South Carolina's Honors College.

Grace Lawrence: I am attending College of Charleston.

Autumn Lawyer: Studying Veterinary Technology at Mercy University in New York.

Parker Legette: I plan to enjoy my summer and work to prepare for my move to NYC.

Jack Lindsay: Make money, work hard, learn

a lot, lot more.

Kennedy Mack: I am attending the University of North Carolina at Charlotte and majoring in nursing with a minor in music performance.

Ella Kate Marcy: My plans after graduation are to attend Clemson University for biological science and then go to med school.

Helena Meloy: Opening my own coffee shop.

Kamrin Mungin: Attending Coastal Carolina University to major in Finance, helping people (like myself) how to manage their finances.

Camille Ollard: I will be studying biological sciences at U of SC and hopefully will someday go to vet school!

Sofia Page-Simmons: I'm going to Charleston Southern University. I'm majoring in Criminal Justice with a minor in Psychology to hopefully be a crime scene investigator.

Jolin Pan: I want to go to college, get a good job, and be rich!

Ashley Peterson: I am going to Newberry College as a forensic psychology major with a musical theater minor.

Lydia Plante: I plan to study mechanical engineering through the Clemson University Honors College!

Jesse Price: I am attending Elon University Honors and pursuing a degree in Film and Theater.

Shawn Pupke: College, studying music and psychology.

Presley Rhodes: Attend College of Charleston and major in Studio Arts.

Marisa Rivera: I plan on attending the University of South Carolina Aiken for vocal performance with a certification in teaching. I aspire to travel the world through my voice and gain experience to someday teach the younger generation and help them find themselves just as I did.

Autumn Rouse: I'm going to try to take a lot of walks and go to the places I love before moving out west.

Lesly Salgado: Keep my dog alive and be happy.

Kenny Schaffer: After graduating high school I'll be heading to Winthrop University with a major in psychology and a minor in vocal performance. Go Eagles!

Jonathan Sessions: I am going to study at USC with a major in aerospace engineering.

Harper Sharpe: My plans are to attend Wofford College.

Jovanny Silva-Velasquez: Make epic music and eat bomb food.

Aveh Singletary: I'm going to College of Charleston to Major in Education with a minor in Business and Fashion and design.

Wade Sjostrom: I'm going to college to study

What are your plans after graduation?

finance and hopefully to participate in some community theater as I continue to expand on my knowledge.

Pagelyn Smalls: I plan on attending the University of South Carolina where I will be in the Honors College, the nation's BEST public honors college! I hope to be a part of the accelerated 3+3 program, where I will spend three years in undergraduate and three years to pursue my Juris Doctor. But before all of this, I look forward to a great summer full of memories with my favorite people.

Aegnu Stanfield: Joining the Fire Academy

to be a firefighter, and enlisting in the military reserves.

Annie Sterba: I'm going to Tufts University in Medford, MA to study Math and Music.

Alajah Thompson: Become a Registered Nurse and work with the mothers and babies.

Xander Villegas: See where music takes me, go to college and GRIND.

Jason Wan: My plans after graduation are currently undecided, but I want to minor in music.

Shelby White: I plan to attend Wofford College next year, and I am majoring in either

Psychology or Biology to pursue Neuroscience and minor in music.

Susan White: I'm going to attend the University of South Carolina in Columbia as a Mathematics major. I'd like to explore my career options while I study math, but currently I am pretty dead set on becoming a high school algebra teacher after I get my degree.

Jade Williams: I plan to attend Rochester Institute of Technology as a Chemistry major.

Jasmine Zheng: I am going to be attending Clemson University.

What was your most memorable moment at SOA?

Amani Affonso: My most memorable moments at SOA were all the "Music Down in My Soul" concerts at the end of each year. They would always bring us closer together and the overall atmosphere was amazing.

Greyson Aldredge: My first and only "Jump, Jive and Wail" was a great memory from SOA.

Leilah Baird: My most memorable moment was definitely all of the "JJW" concerts I attended as well as all the proms.

Savannah Barnett: Traveling to New York and participating in, and placing in, a major competition.

Max Besta: Playing guitar and writing songs under the trees out in the courtyard with Xander in junior year.

Ollie Brice: Eating lunch in the art room.

Hailey Carnagey: My most memorable moment at SOA is the Music down to my soul concerts. Nothing can compare to how close it makes the vocal program at SOA. We all come together as one to sing and it is so pure. I will definitely be coming back as an alumni to sing in the following years.

Ella Charette: During the 2023 haunted house, a chainsaw started to smoke and the fire department had to come. We continued the haunted house, but that sure was memorable.

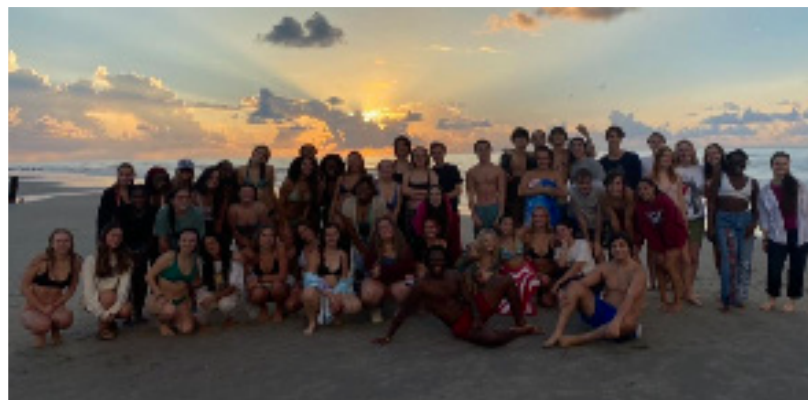
Carle Chisholm: All of the strings trips that we got to go on with my friends.

Madeline Church: Absolutely dominating powderpuff this year. 46-18 Jaguars whooo????

Sierra Coleman: The most memorable moment is our senior class getting to walk around the school with our caps and gowns one last time.

Tulah Cramer: In Mr. V's seventh grade algebra class, Annie and I were asked to roll a chromebook cart to another classroom, and we pushed it too hard out of the doorframe and it

hit and bounced off the lockers. Also walking into Ms. Orchard's APUSH class and seeing WWI trenches and throwing markers at each other for extra credit.



Lucy Cromwell: That time I exempted my class from running the mile in PE freshman year because I correctly guessed a Nirvana album, or when I won best dressed at prom junior year.

Christian Curran: My most memorable moment was when SOA Sinfonietta won the NOF.

James Davenport: I will never forget when I first saw SOA on a tour when I was in eighth grade, walking through all of the rooms in the arts building and seeing how full of life and creativity everything was.

Ava Dawson: Probably when I accidentally left two of my pieces of art outside over a long weekend, in a tropical storm. (Sorry Ms. Richardson. I love you)

Grace Dennie: There are numerous memorable moments I've had in my seven years at SOA, but one of my favorites would have to be Mr. V's seventh grade Algebra I class, where we would endure Starbursts being chucked at us on the daily and the horrors of Algebra Nation.

Mayson Dillard: Car meetups and lunch talks

with friends.

Fallyn Dunmeyer: Powderpuff.

Grace Ervin: My most memorable moment at SOA would probably be Senior Thesis. All of

this year I've had the opportunity to write a book, and just the process of doing that has been the most stressful, enjoyable, rewarding, powerful thing I've ever done. To work really hard on something and then be able to hold it in your hands at the end, is such a rewarding feeling. I will definitely take all that I have learned about this process with me to college in the fall. I feel like it's really prepared me for future work.

Isobel Foggon: This one is very new, but recently we had our first rehearsal for graduation and it was the first time our entire theater class had been

together since January. We went through some of our favorite memories and it made us all realize just how much we have loved our time at SOA. The atmosphere was very happy and everyone was glad to be together again for one of the last times.

Law Fox: The one act performances from my junior and senior year were some of the most memorable bonding experiences I've had with other actors. This emotional, earnest, and incredibly raw energy we all poured into these shows always translated to magic, which I hold very close to my heart.

Kiyah Garten: My most memorable moment at SOA was *Les Mis* preparation and performance because it was the first production like that I had been in and was a fun experience.

Linda Garziera: Ohh that's tough. Possibly playing paranoia with my Creative Writing class in tenth grade. I hope y'all know: I'm still paranoid...

Kayley Genova: Playing *Phantom of the Opera*.

What was your most memorable moment at SOA?

Iris Gomez: The strings New York Trip.

Vivian Gordon: Probably any moment with Vocal. Sorry Theater majors.

T.J. Griffin: Creative Writing senior thesis.

Joey Gritzuk: My first ever "Music Down In My Soul" performance as a sixth grader.

Sebastian Grow: My most memorable memory was the first time I played at "Jump Jive and Wail" with SOA Jazz Band.

Issac Hilton: My most memorable moment here was the JPA concerts and achieving Superiors with my friends.

Henry Hipp: Getting to do the show *Peter and The Starcatcher* in the eleventh grade.

Macie Hoffman: The times that my friends and I (and sometimes my teachers) busted out laughing in class. It's happened a few times, and just thinking about it makes me smile.

Lily Hollis: I really enjoyed all the times I was able to perform as a major rather than a club at a normal high school.

Jessie Johnson: The moment I named my thesis [The Small Hours]. I'm terrible with titles, but this one, I just stumbled upon. It felt so right. It felt like I had finished something, like I was moving on and had found a way to take the past with me.

Adam Kremer: Performing Dvorak's "Cello Concerto" with symphony. Soloing with an orchestra is such a rare and unforgettable experience.

Maggie Largent: Learning the "Music Down in my Soul" pieces for the first time by listening to everyone who knew it and trying to keep up. As tired as I get of it, the first time I sang that music I was so happy. Now that I'm about to have my last "MDIMS," I feel like that memory is even stronger.

Braeden LaRoche: Dr. Cusatis's AP Literature class.

Autumn Lawyer: Powder Puff 2023, it was my first time ever seeing a powder puff game.

Parker Legette: Going to English for my senior year and being so excited.

Jack Lindsay: Accidentally breaking an office window with a rock.

Kennedy Mack: The 2023 "SOA Holiday Spectacular" at the Gaillard Center. Since it was our last one, my friends and I cried at the end. It was so bittersweet. It's a magical event I got to experience twice, and I probably won't be a part of anything like it again.

Ella Kate Marcy: My most memorable moment at SOA was all of the trips I got to take with band. Some of the best times were hanging out by the

pool after a long day and gossiping on the long bus rides.

Helena Meloy: Performing in *Phantom of the Opera!*

Kamrin Mungin: Two others and I getting written up in Mr. Grant's office.

Camille Ollard: Winning powderpuff. We smoked the juniors 46-18.

Sofia Page-Simmons: Performing my last departmental with the best people ever.

Jolin Pan: Powderpuff!

Ashley Peterson: Probably the Junior-Senior Piano field trip last year. We got a lot closer on that trip and the juniors and seniors started talking to each other more. Our train ride back to Charleston also got canceled so we didn't get home until about 4 am, and none of us slept.

Lydia Plante: When Sinfonietta played "Strum" in the RMMT orchestra pit during an earthquake drill.

Jesse Price: My favorite memory from SOA was on our SCTC trip for theater this year. After we performed our one act, we all met in the dressing room and had an amazing moment filled with happy tears and laughter.

Shawn Pupke: Falling down the Fashion fabric room's stairs. And the stairs in the middle school building. And the high school building. Not the RMMT stairs though, not as many stairs as the others.

Presley Rhodes: Lunchtime shenanigans with friends.

Marisa Rivera: I was in Ms. Jonhson's Algebra 2 class with my friend Victoria. We would always be laughing and joking around. One time, we were laughing so loud that Mrs. Johnson told us to be quiet. I looked at Victoria and said, "You egg me on." As she giggled she said, "Haha, EGG" That memory lives rent-free in my mind for life.

Autumn Rouse: I think just in general I will always love and remember the mornings before school starts. I love sitting and catching up with my loves, seeing people in the hallways, and talking to teachers. Also, the awesome comradery before shows as a theater class.

Lesly Salgado: My sophomore year fashion show. Watching the collections of all the seniors. The feeling of pride and joy knowing that they put so much effort into those garments.

Kenny Schaffer: My most memorable moment at SOA was helping put together the BSU Jamboree performances and also performing in the Jamboree. I felt so accomplished seeing what results we produced.

Jonathan Sessions: Outside of campus,

"Jump, Jive, and Wail" all the times I have been there. Inside the campus, it would probably have to be Powderpuff senior year.

Harper Sharpe: The most memorable moments were the band trips to Universal and the convocations.

Aveh Singletary: My most memorable moment was my senior Fashion show. It was so crazy to see all my designs go down the stage.

Wade Sjostrom: Performing *Hamlet* in junior year. I got a sense of the people who were in my grade from this experience, and for the first time found some friends that are invested in something more than I was.

Pagelyn Smalls: Who would I be if I didn't say the very first Black History Month Jamboree? The events of the day were so much fun and I enjoyed all of the school spirit that the event brought. I truly believe that it began student-led initiatives, especially since the COVID-19 Pandemic!

Agegnu Stanfield: Playing different theater games in middle school with Mr. Younts.

Annie Sterba: Four years ago, I started playing in the symphony in my freshman year. Dr. Selby sat me down and told me to play like the boss that I am. One month ago, when practicing for my concerto, Dr. Selby told me he was proud of me.

Alajah Thompson: My Senior Thesis Fashion Show. I almost cried, that's how serious it was to me.

Xander Villegas: My most memorable moment at SOA was the moment where I realized the secrets to life and the universe in the back of economics.

Jason Wan: My most memorable moment of the band is definitely "Jump Jive and Wail." The exciting thing about it was playing in front of hundreds of people and the energy was crazy there.

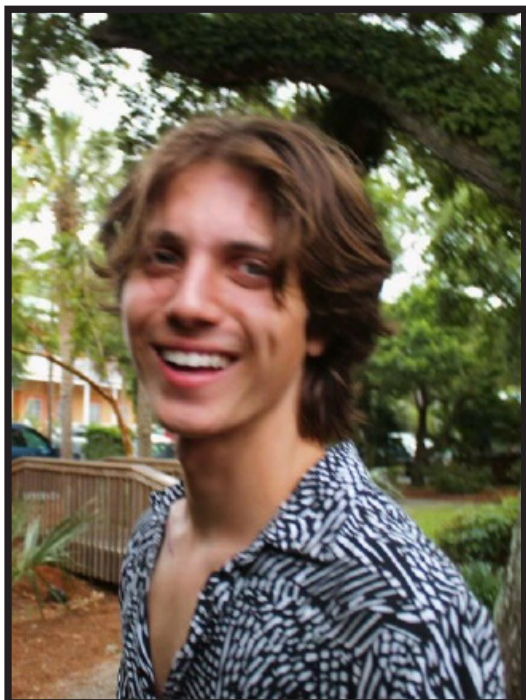
Shelby White: My most memorable memory at SOA would be playing Annie when the Young Americans came and did a workshop.

Susan White: I scored a safety during powderpuff this year. It was pretty cool.

Jade Williams: My most memorable moment at SOA was looking over to smile at my best friend during the NOF winners performance.

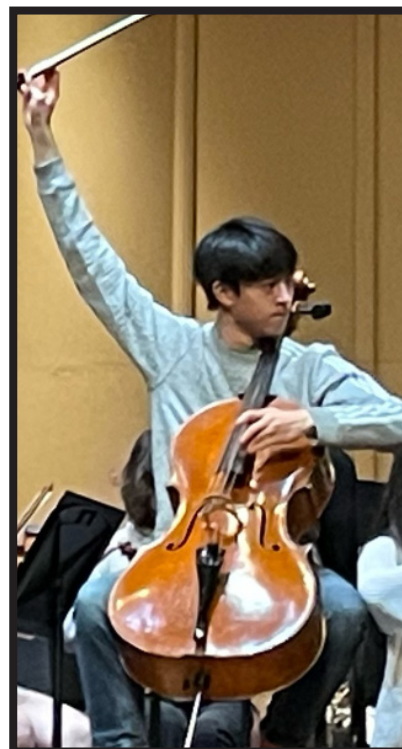
Jasmine Zheng: The most memorable events for me have always been the annual fashion shows! But a close runner up could be that one time I was a body in forensics.

Max Besta



Max, we are so proud of you for following your passions and working so hard to achieve your goals. Your dedication and hard work will take you far. We can't wait to see what your future holds. We love you buddy.
Mom, Dad, Ellore and Quinn

Adam Kremer



Dear Adam: We love you so much, and are so proud of all you have accomplished! Keep walking with God, and when you get to Indiana, remember "Eye of the Tiger!"
Love: Mom, Dad, Erica, Ben, Maggie

Leilah Baird

Dear Leilah,

Congratulations we are so proud of you and all you have accomplished. Graduation is a special day and we will cheer for you as you walk on stage! Live your best life Leilah!

Love,
Mom, Rimmie & Lana





Thomas Gotbeter

Congratulations Thomas!
It has been a joy to watch
you perform over the
years at SOA. Good luck at
Clemson!

We love you! Mom, Dad,
West, Hartley, Molly, Wills,
Nana and Annie.



Agegnu Stanfield



Congratulations,
Agegnu!
You did it! We are
looking forward to
seeing where life
takes you! So proud
of you!
Love,
Mom, Dad, Kibru
(and Jazz)

Mary Maniscalco



Congratulations!
You have worked so
hard for so long and
have accomplished
so much! I am so
proud of you!
Love, Mom

Mason Ghormley



Mason Emma Ly Ghormley

You, my love, are a force to be reckoned with. Caring. Loving. Considerate. Brave. Intelligent. Thoughtful. Worthy. Passionate. Stunning. Kind. So kind. Keep your light shining, baby.

Love you mucho, Momma

Maggie Largent

We're so proud of you, and excited to see the roads you'll travel! We are always cheering for you.

Love,

Mom, Dad, and Kate





Parker Weeks

May your power to
“lock in” continue to
serve you well.
We are super proud of
you and love you tons!
Mom and Dad



James Herring



We are so proud of you, James Herring!
Keep running down your dreams!
Love, Mom, Dad and Maisie

Jonathan Sessions



I am so proud
of the man you
are becoming.
Excited to see
what this next
chapter in life
holds for you.

Love,
Mom

Mary Grace Leatherbury



Mary Grace
Leatherbury, we
love you so much!

“Courage, sacrifice,
determination,
commitment,
toughness, heart,
talent, guts. That’s
what little girls are
made of.”- Bethany
Hamilton

Jessie Johnson



Congratulations, Jessie! It has been a pleasure to watch you grow into the amazing young woman that you are. Spread your wings, change the world and go forth confidently knowing that you will always have a safe place to land.

Love, Mom, Dad and Jake

Isobel Foggon

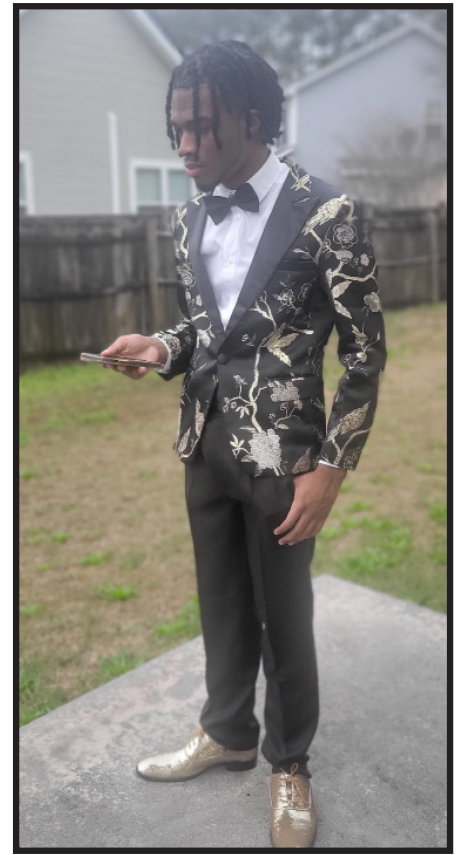


Congratulations. We are so proud of everything you have achieved. Thank you for taking us along with you on this incredible journey, we have enjoyed every minute and cannot wait to see what comes next. We love you to the moon and back, no matter what, always.

Timothy "TJ" Griffin



TJ,
We are so proud of your accomplishments and we know the BEST IS YET TO COME!!! God bless you and remember we love you!



Braeden LaRoche



Congratulations, Braeden! We are so proud of you. May all of your dreams come true. Love you always and forever, Mom and Dad.

Jack Hinske

Jack,
Congratulations!
We can't wait to see where your next adventure leads you – Marquette and beyond!

Love, Mom and Dad



James Davenport

Congratulations to our favorite Duck! We are so proud of you. You're going to do amazing things! Love - Mom Duck, Duck 1, & Duck 2



Sierra Coleman

Sierra,
You are our sunshine! We love you so much and can't wait to see what your future holds! Congrats!
Love,
Mom, Memaw,
and Pepaw



Tulah Cramer

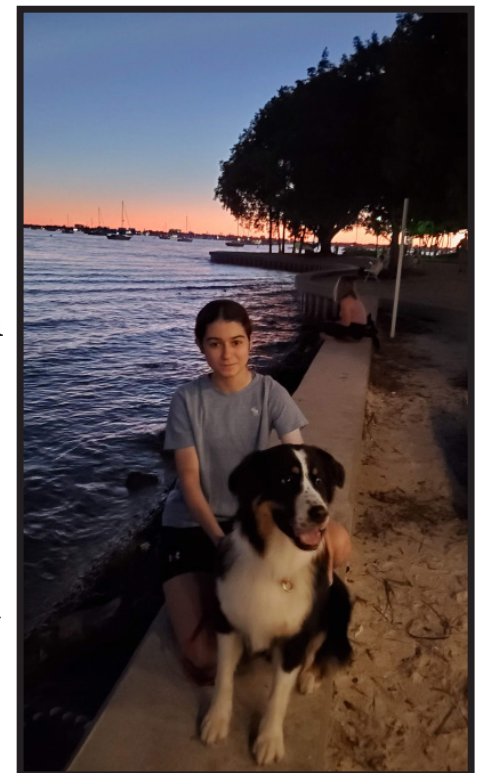


“The dream-child moving through a land of wonders wild and new.”
May your life turn out as good as you are, Tulah. We love you.

Lydia Plante

Lydia,
We're so proud of the creative, talented, thoughtful woman you've become. You're one of a kind,

We love you,
Mom, Dad, Henry
and Kirby





Jesse Price

Jesse, it has been an honor to have a front-row seat to this first chapter of what will be your incredible life.
~ Your Family

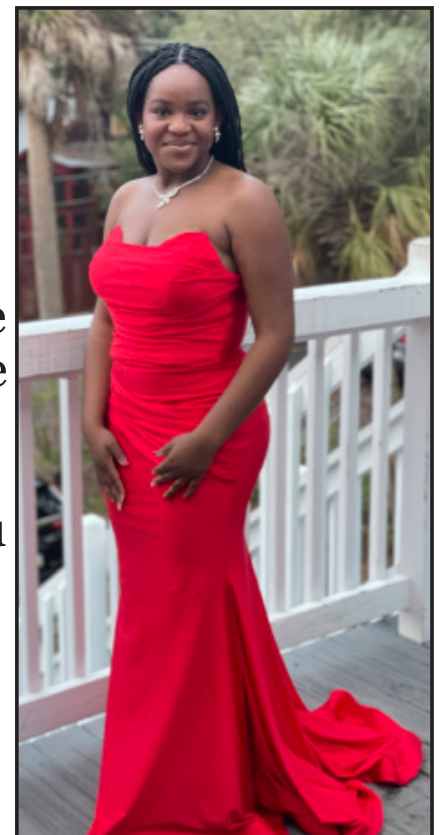


Jasmine Jones

CONGRATULATIONS, Jasmine!! You have demonstrated what hard work and commitment is. You have evolved into a beautiful responsible young woman.

We are so proud of all your accomplishments and we know you will have great success in Chicago as you continue to follow your dreams!

We love you!



Law Fox



Congratulations, Law, on all your incredible achievements at SOA! Over the past seven years, we have watched you grow into a wonderfully kind, insatiably creative, and truly empathetic human being. We are so grateful for the foundation you've built at SOA and the incredible training from Mrs. Horn, Mr. Younts, and Mr. Pickens, which has opened so many opportunities for you. We are excited to see you continue to grow on your next journey to NYC. You are dedicated, passionate, brave, intelligent, witty, and hilarious. Always stay true to who you are! We are profoundly grateful for the love and kindness you bring to our family and to everyone around you.

“No way, José!”

We love you with all our hearts!

Xoxo,

Mom, Dad & Ellis

Kayley Rose Genova

Our dearest Kayley, continue to share your strengths, kindness, and music. Keep true to yourself as you always have and know your worth as we know it. Follow your heart and dreams in all you do and you will succeed.

And drink more water. With love from us!



Olivia Rea

You amaze us, you make us laugh, and you fill our hearts with pride. We love you - Mom, Dad, Emmie, and Abbie



Manny Stavrinakis

Manny,
Senior year has been
a roller coaster but
you made it! You and
Burger are going to
make great roommates
at Carolina.

We are so proud of
you!
Baba, Mom, Clara
Anne & Emma



Skyler Theodore Waddell

Congratulations!

Continue to keep your soul deeply rooted in gratitude and your branches wide open to blessings

“The Skye has no Limit”
You are loved!



Helena Meloy



Helena, we are so proud of you, the world is ready for what you have in store for it
Love, Dad,
Mom, Kendall,
Jay and Noah



Annie Sterba

Congratulations Annie!
We are so proud of you and can't wait to watch you continue to chase your dreams in your bright future!

Love,
Mom, Dad, Lilly & Margot





Reagan Villegas

Reagan, we are so proud of you. From the first time I held you, I knew you were destined for great things. To have had a front row seat as you grew into this amazing young woman is one of the greatest blessings. You have a strong will and a heart of gold. Remember we can't choose the music life gives us, but we can choose how we dance to it.

We love you!

Mom, Ricky, Isabella, James, Lucas, Poppie, Nana, and Kaitlynn.



Parker Legette

Parker,

We have loved watching you find your passion and we are so proud of you following your dreams all the way to New York City.

We love you!

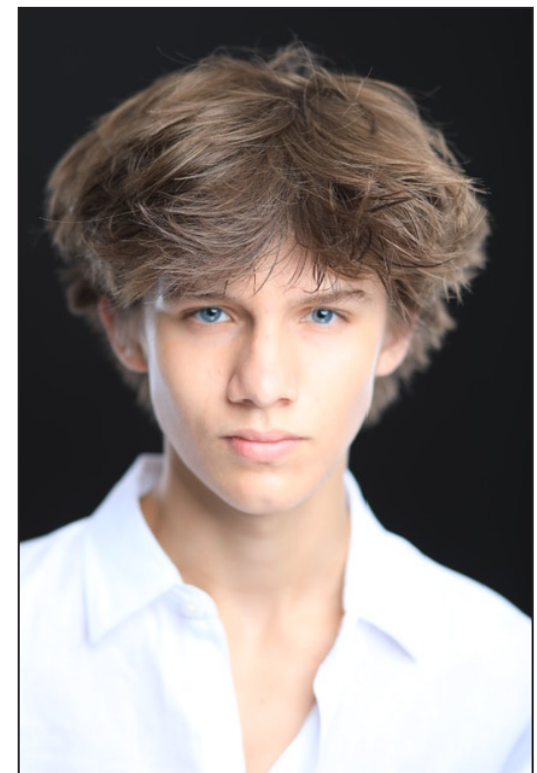
PARKER LEGETTE



The New School



Drama Major





Sebastian Grow

We are so blessed to have you as our son. You are a wonderful person and our wish for you is happiness. So excited for the next chapter at Virginia Tech!



Henry Hipp

“Remember, a heart is not judged by how much you love, but by how much you are loved by others.”

Congratulations Henry! You are so loved, and we are so proud of you and cannot wait to see what you accomplish next!
Love Mom, Dad, and Jack



Elliott Kate Cooper



Elliott Kate,
Congratulations! We love you to the moon and back, and couldn't be more proud of you!
Love,
Mama, Daddy, & John Reid

Madeline Church

“What lies behind us,
and what lies before us,
are tiny matters
compared to what lies
within us.” - Ralph
Waldo Emerson



We are so very proud
of you, Madeline.
Proud of your past
accomplishments, proud
of the future ahead of
you, but more than
anything, proud of the
person you are.

All our love,
Dad, Mom, and Mitchell

Justin Gilliard Jr.



We are so proud
of you and look
forward to what
the next chapter
will bring. Keep
being you,
unapologetically!

Kylie Kothera

Congratulations
Kylie!
We couldn't be
more proud of
you. And we
can't wait to see
what's ahead
in your next
chapter.
Mom, Dad and
Abby



Ella Kate Marcy



Congratulations, Ella Kate! You have worked so
hard. We are so proud of you! We love you so
much!

Mom, Dad, and Ben

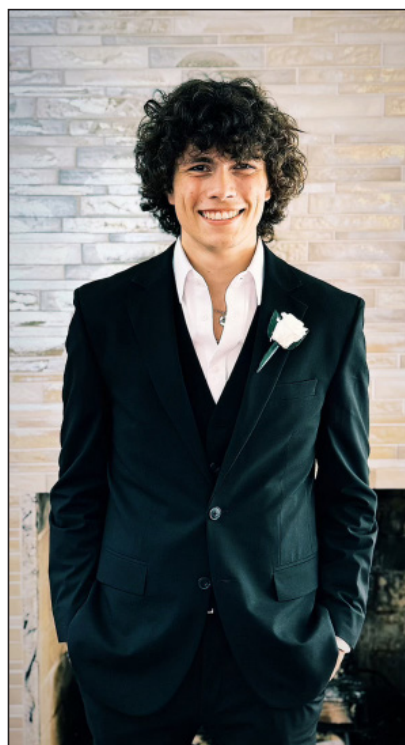
Macie Hoffman

Keep on knocking 'em dead Macie Facie!
 We love you and are so proud of you!!
 -Mom, Dad, Jameson and Colonel.
 (Popsy thinks you're okay too.)



Wade Sjostrom

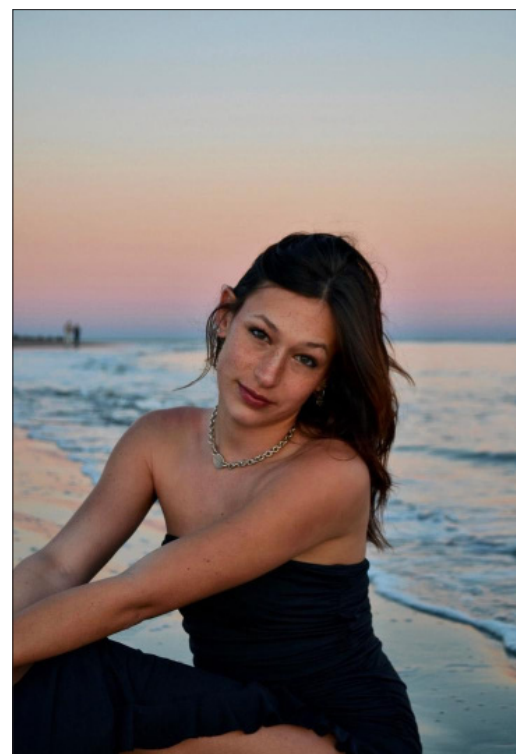
Your talent
 and dedication
 to theatre and
 your school
 work have been
 inspiring.
 We are beyond
 proud of you,
 Wade.
 Love ~ Mom,
 Dad, & Hugh



Gabriella Citrolo

We are so
 proud of you
 & can't wait to
 see where your
 talent will take
 you! Continue
 to dream big &
 work hard!

We love you!
 Mom, Dad &
 Isla



Jasmine Zheng

Congratulations!
We're so proud
of you and all
your hard work
throughout the
years. You did it!



Love, Mom,
Dad, Sophia, and
Jayden

Aveh Singletary

Congratulations,
Aveh! We are so proud
of you! Always set
your goals
high and keep
reaching for the stars.
You are a blessing, and
we will
always love you.
Continue to soar, and
may your dreams
come true!



Dad, Mom, Alexis, &
John

Kennedy Mack

Congratulations
Kennedy!!
You have no idea
how proud we
are of you! Keep
reaching for your
dreams and know
that you can
achieve whatever
you set your mind
to. We know
you're destined for
greatness.
Love you forever,
Mom, Dad and
Nana



Victoria Washington

To my
daughter, sister,
niece, and
granddaughter,
we are so proud
of you. You are
astounding.
Congratulations
on completing
a significant
milestone. We
love you!



Hailey Carnagey

Success is not just determined by grades and money; success is better determined by the mark you leave on the world. Keep shining bright Bean!



Nick Cluver

Congratulations, Nick! We are so proud of you and can't wait to see what the future holds for you! Surely it will be epic!
Love, Mom and Dad



Zion Platt

Congratulations, Zion! You've worked hard and achieved this monumental goal - and we are so proud of you. And now another chapter of your journey begins: remember to stay faithful to God, and show respect, responsibility, and resourcefulness in all your choices!

We love you so much!
Mom & Dad



Alyceah Lawrence

We are so proud of you, and all that you've accomplished. We can't wait to see what's next on your list! Remember just keep swimming.



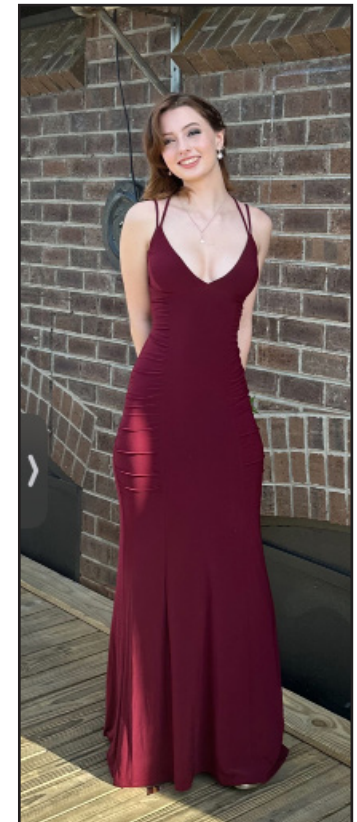
Ava Dawson

Ava, Congratulations on your graduation. You could not have made us more proud. Keep on being you and life will bring you amazing things. We love you, Dad, mum and Cam Xoxox



Evan Sandifer

Congratulations, Evan! We're so proud of you. The next exciting chapter is here. May you always dare to do great things with your life! We love you! Mom, Bill and the fam.





Ashley Peterson

Ashley,
We are so thankful for the gift of watching you grow from our little 'Munchkin' to the beautiful girl you are today. Always take pride in how far you've come. Have faith in how far you can go. Wherever your journey in life may take you, we pray you'll always be safe, enjoy the ride & never forget your way back home.
LOVE, Dad, Mom, and TJ



Rachael Roberts-Seel



Dear RG,
I am so proud of you. You are following your dreams to NYC and I know you will accomplish everything you desire.
Love Mom

Damir Mukhtarov

Congratulations,
Damir!!! We are very proud of you! Keep exploring the world, find new passions, live a full life.

Love you, Mom,
Dad, Rayhona
and Jasmine!



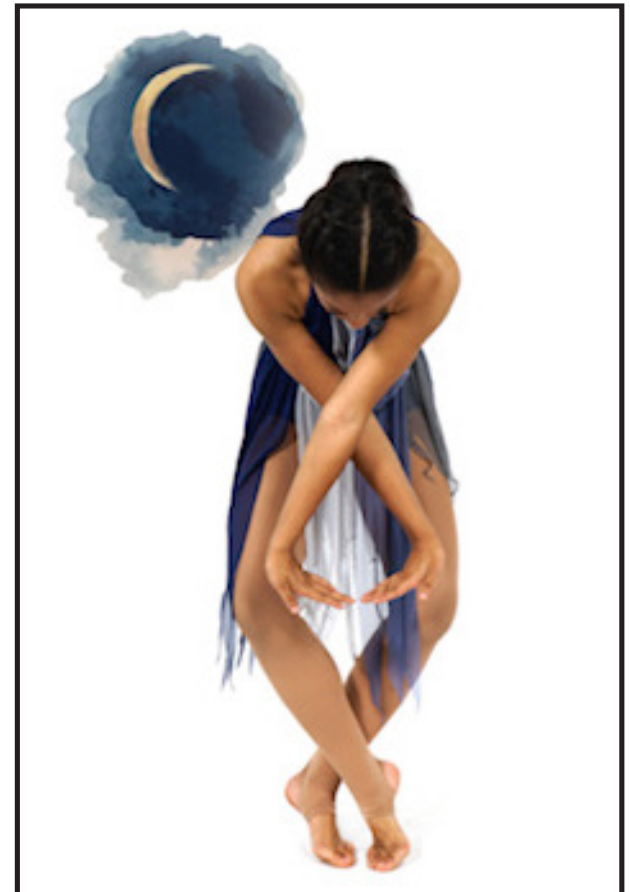
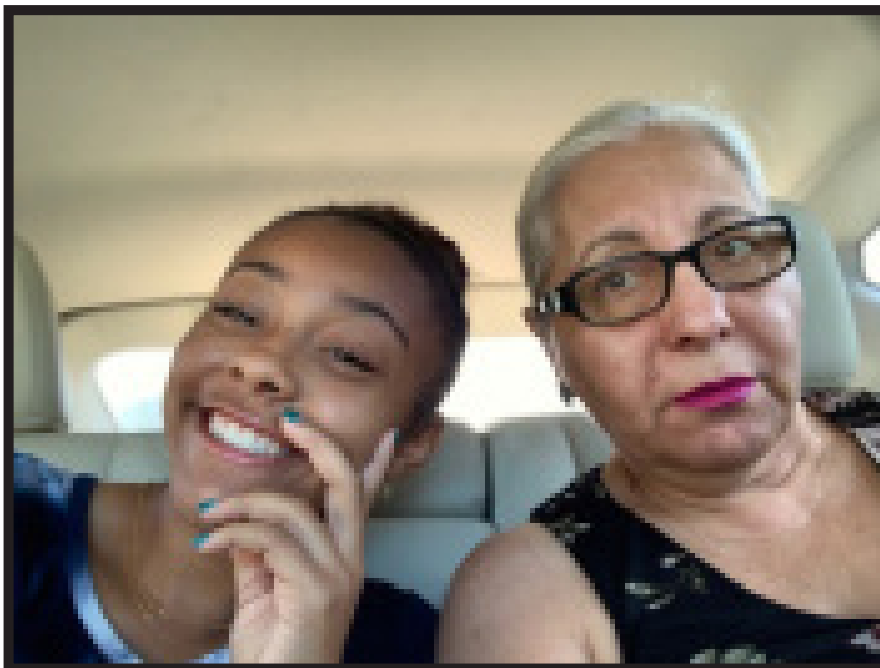
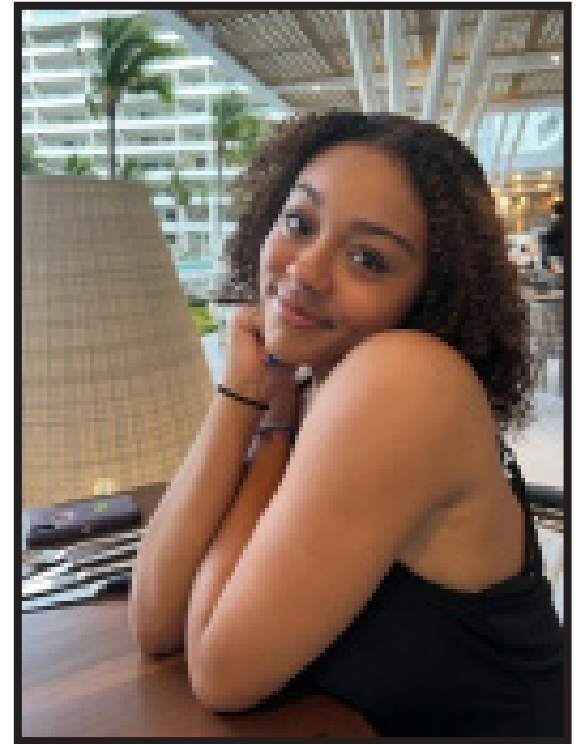
Sofia Page-Simmons



Congratulations Sofia!
We are so proud of you.

Go conquer the world
and enjoy the journey.
May all of your dreams
come true.

Love, Mom, Grandpa
and Uncle Willie



Payton Thrasher

Congratulations, We are so proud of your accomplishments! We are looking forward to your next steps and all of the adventures yet to come. We love you so much!

From Daddy, Mommy, Blakely and Julian



Shawn Pupke

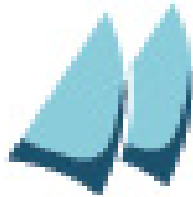
Congratulations on your graduation! You've achieved a remarkable milestone. May this new chapter bring you success, happiness, and endless opportunities!



Greyson Aldredge

Greyson, congratulations on this milestone! You make us so proud. All of your musical accomplishments the past four years are simply amazing! We have enjoyed making precious memories with you and look forward to many more at USC! We love you! Mama & Daddy



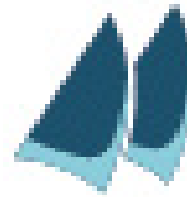


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Where is the Class of 2024 Going to College ?

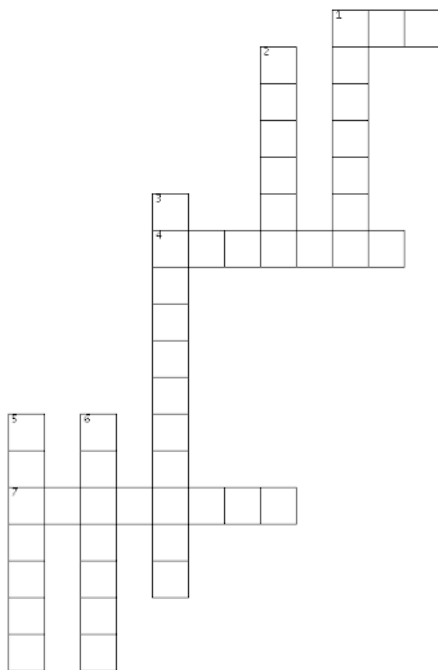
by Lucy Cromwell



5				4		6		8	Called Mr. Clark anything but his name	Played "The Watermelon Game"	Drawn on the water canvas in the library	Joined a club and never went
	4		8		3		5		Had your ID stolen	Known a victim of the buzz cut epidemic	Witnessed the half-time show at Powderpuff	Had to beg for a Chromebook charger
		1		9			2					
				6	8	1		5	Been a victim of bad AMHS drivers	Been to or modeled in the Fashion Show	Heard Vocal majors singing in random places	Beefed with an entire major
4		5	1	7								
	5			8		2			Been disappointed by an understocked vending machine	Been hissed at by a goose	Witnessed a flash mob	Been bribed with candy for school elections
	1		3		2		8					
7		8		1				6				

SOA End-Of-Year Crossword

by Neo O'Dell



Across

- The ___T is an acronym for a certain theater on campus.
- The month when the first SOA Spirit Week took place.
- The offspring of an animal you can find all over campus.

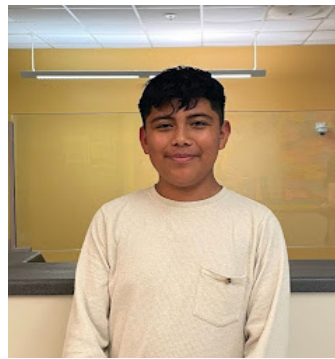
Down

- The first name of the class of '24's class president.
- The theme of this year's SOA prom.
- This takes place once a quarter to show off each majors work.
- The ___ Garden.
- The iconic teacher who runs the best newspaper on the bonds-Wilson campus.



"I'll say Manny Stavrinakis.
He's always on time."

-Alex Lim, 11th grade Strings



"Greyson Aldredge because
he inspires me. He's good at
playing his instrument and I'd
like to be as good as him."

-Jackson Sontay, 7th grade
Band



"Aveh Singletary, she made
all these extra looks for the
fashion show and she works
really hard."

-Eudora Holland, 8th grade
Band



"Autumn Rouse. She always
has a positive attitude and is
always so kind."

-Ms. Foster, High School
English Teacher



"Xander Villegas. He
influences my music and the
way I play."

Dante Criscitiello, 9th grade
Band

Who is an SOA senior that inspires you?

by Riley Borkowski, Isabella
Pineda, and Luciano Cusatis



"Law Fox, he's always in an
impossibly good mood."

-Mr. Clark, Interventionist



"Ramere Kelly, Law Fox, Parker
Legette, and Henry Hipp
because they're very talented and
committed to their craft."

-Nicholas King, 10th grade
Theater



"Our absurd hero, Nick
Cluver."

-Trow Weeks, Kate Selby,
Victoria Hickerson, 11th grade
Strings and Visual Arts



"Jessie Johnson. They're
smart, funny, cool, and they're
a baddie."

-Evan Sandifer, 12th grade
Creative Writing



"Linda Garziera. She's very
inspiring and works very
hard."

-Mr. Morelli, High School
English Teacher