

Taylor Smits: The Life and Thoughts of a Technology Entrepreneur

An interview with Alice Hancock

By Alice Hancock
Retired Canterbury English Teacher

With forty years of teaching behind me, I can now reflect upon some wonderful memories, some thought-provoking memories, and some very humorous memories. One such memory is from a particularly frustrating study hall. I couldn't supervise it in my own room, so it was moved to the library, and I had to contend with trying to get work done, while being supremely aware that study hall students were scattered all around the room. I couldn't keep as close a watch as I was used to on students needing a prod to stay focused on homework and study. It was around 2005, and the cell phone was just becoming a nuisance. Some students had them, but they were not something that was part of each student's appendage. I looked up from my work and saw a student fiddling with his phone. I asked him to please put it away, and he said, "Why?" As I felt myself getting a trifle irritated, my Senior Leader (a student assigned to assist me with crowd control) stood up, climbed up on the library table, and began to recite the poem he had memorized as a class exercise his freshman year, "The world is too much with us, late and soon/ Getting and spending we lay waste our powers/ Little we see in Nature that is ours/ We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon..." Except for those beautiful words of William Wordsworth, the library was silent, but as Taylor Smits ended with the final words, all the students clapped. And as he climbed down from the table, he said to the student: "what Mrs. Hancock is trying to tell you is that



technology is getting in the way of living and feeling". I was impressed that after 3 years, he still remembered all the words of that beautiful sonnet, but even more importantly he knew what those words meant—the reason I had always had students memorize a sonnet—so they could pull it up in a critical moment, showing their understanding of the experience.

I was interested when Taylor told me that after going to Canterbury for six years and graduating in 2005, he went to Syracuse University and graduated with a major in Entrepreneurship and Emerging Enterprises but with a minor in English and Textual Studies. Many who graduated from university in 2009 had it tough—it was the height of the recession. Taylor admits that he spent the next six months at his parents' house, desperately trying to find a job. When he came home

from a fruitless interview in New York, he told a friend of his father that it was because of the economy. The response of "That's Nonsense" changed his mindset—he realized that when it comes in Taylor's words to "jobs, romantic partners, or living in a city you love...you only have to find one." That mindset reframed the task at hand and soon he was employed. Taylor became a recruiter, "I was first an agency recruiter and then I went in-house for a women's media company called Refinery 29...by most people's standards I was successful, but I realized that I was actually miserable on the inside. I wanted to find a position where my input, ideas, and decisions mattered." Fortunately, in retrospect, Taylor got laid off, and he promised himself that he wouldn't interview anywhere for 6 months. "That was my opportunity to finally start my own business and that's when I got into e-commerce and selling on Amazon."

Presently, Taylor is the co-founder of MyFBAPrep.com. The company has a network of over 50 warehouses internationally and handles prep and logistic services for e-commerce companies. In other words, the company's warehouses take the clients' inventory and checks it, packages it appropriately, and sends it to Amazon or a retailer or directly to a customer who ordered online. "We do this for e-commerce companies, mostly in the U.S. but also in Canada, Mexico and six other countries around the world." Taylor is also diversifying to the "natural soap business for men." Called Right Wing Naturals, this hobby turned business "has taught me how to build a direct-to-consumer online business that can be run from anywhere in the world."

Taylor admits that when he got into e-commerce, he wanted a job that was location independent. Earlier he was able to travel the world while working remotely as part of a program called Remote Year—"we did a different country every month for a year and that was certainly a trip that changed what I wanted out of life." When pushed on what is his favorite part of his job, he wrote that it was "communicating how we help our clients...for the last 5 years in e-commerce, influencers with a large following have been rewarded for their community numbers. With the emergence of TikTok and now Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts, anyone can go viral, and the rewards are given to those who produce the right content for their target audience."

What Taylor credits his Canterbury education with is "the confidence that it was always possible to succeed doing hard things. The High School curriculum was wide in its scope and quite demanding for me, but after each semester when you finished the last final, you could rest well knowing that you got through it. You did hard things.

You figured it out. You learned a ton. Business is often demanding in a similar way, and most problems can be solved with the same level of dedication and force." The advice that he would give to students considering a career in business he calls "several golden nuggets." The first nugget: figure out how you'd like to spend your waking hours. "I used to believe that you just needed to take the opportunity that was in front of you and that success would turn into passion. But now I've found an industry that nothing compares to risking your financial future on an idea you've become fascinated with." The second nugget: "the riches are in the niches. Do something specific, unique, or even weird...become excellent at that little-but-achievable thing first...then allow serendipity to take you from there." The third nugget: "business growth is a direct reflection of personal growth. You must first become the capable person and then the capacity and ability to manage the task appears... so what should drive you on your professional adventure is the long list of personal skills you will develop as you conquer the inevitable tasks ahead of you on your professional journey."

When thinking over his Canterbury days, Taylor mentioned two things that he hopes are never lost—The first is "the weekly 5-paragraph essay in freshmen English—one of the worst/best things to ever happen to a 14-year-old! Learning how to organize your thoughts and clearly communicate them—with evidence—are skills that everyone should want to develop and not a day passes where I'm not writing something up for colleagues or clients that requires those skills." And the second thing he hopes remains forever is May Term. "When done correctly, it allows one to explore and pursue interests outside the typical swath of a high school education." Taylor admits that he has had 3 or 4 professional May Term experiments in his post college career, and they have all turned into

hobbies, businesses, or a bunch of laughs.

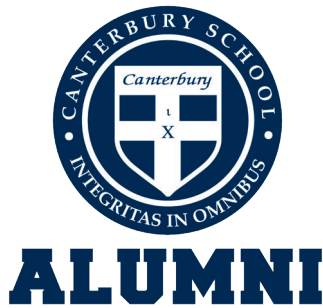
Some of Taylor's fondest memories of school days go back to trips...the two-week backpacking trip out West led by Mr. Brothers and Mrs. Karr. He laughs about how often he thinks about the trip more than 20 years later. He adds that the same is true of the History and Literature trip to England he took with Mr. Schantz and Dr. Wehrli—"I can't help but think these early experiences lit the spark in me to go see the world."

The Smits' family has been at Canterbury for 26 years. Taylor's brother Brandon (2002) runs his own Facebook advertising agency for solar companies. Ashley (2004) works in Global Events at Hewlett Packard. Sean (2017) works in cyber security for the Federal Government, and Maile (2022) is a junior at Washington University in Saint Louis.

Reflecting on his experience and his siblings' experiences, Taylor concluded with the hope that "Canterbury will continue to challenge students and continue to be an academically demanding environment. "There are so few institutions that make excellence the standard...we are so lucky to have that in Fort Wayne. I was an above average student...having all those really smart kids ahead of me made me better...I owe them the difference from who I was in 2005 to whom I might have been...I think Canterbury would do well to live or die by its academic curriculum which it has spent nearly 50 years kindling."

And in my retirement from teaching, I only hope that Canterbury alums will always remember the advice Taylor so memorably quoted almost 20 years ago, and "have glimpses that would make me less forlorn/Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea/Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn", a world of ideas, imagination, and exploration.

Alumni News & Notes



By Alice Hancock
Retired Canterbury English Teacher

It's funny what time does – when I send out notes to alums through email addresses, or text messages, or LinkedIn requests, I am remembering the students I knew –the 14 through 18-year-olds. I even have the bad habit of thinking of them still as teenagers. So it truly takes me aback to realize that they are adults, making their place in the world and doing some truly fascinating things. I am completely surprised by what some are doing; others, not surprised at all. I am truly grateful for how many alums respond quickly and positively, and how many more respond several weeks later, with regret that they were so busy that they forgot to get back to me. It is a real pleasure to hear from them, and to realize that they are flourishing in so many different areas, some in areas that weren't even imagined when they began school. The following are students who might have gone through every single grade that Canterbury has to offer, who might have gone through several grades, and even one who was at Canterbury for only one year. But each has important memories of the impact the school had on them as they have moved on to colleges, careers, and families.

Find out what your Canterbury classmates are up to! If you'd like to be a part of our next issue, please send an email to Alice Hancock at ahancock617@gmail.com.

the 1990s

Michaela (Karr) Baldwin '97

B.S. (Accounting)
M.B.A. (Accounting)
Indiana University.
Controller at
Blueprint Test
Preparation, LLC.



Michaela's company provides test preparation courses and materials for the MCAT, LSAT, NCLEX, PANCE, NP Exam, and various tests taken during Medical Residency. Her department's job is "to synthesize large amounts of data into digestible reports that the executive team can use to make decisions." But what she likes most about her job is "facing a large data set and needing to dig into it to find out what story it can tell us about how the business is functioning." She told me that what she has kept from her years at Canterbury is a curious mind. She believes that it has served her well in her profession as she looks to the why's behind how things get done. "The deeper understanding has helped me to implement more efficient processes and to have a more fundamental understanding of the drivers to a company's success." Michaela has two children at Canterbury in Middle School, and it reminds her of her own experiences, especially the family atmosphere. She was reminded this year there that had been another solar eclipse while she was in High School. "Mr. Chiang was so excited about it that his enthusiasm spread to all the students, and I remember it being such a fun experience."

Melissa King '99

B.A. (History)
Clemson, M.A.
(Journalism)
Indiana University.
Manager of
Financial Analysis
at NMG Aerospace.



Digging into variances, financial statements and budgeting, Melissa writes that her days are never the same, because there is always new data that needs to be gleaned and analyzed to help drive business decisions. "We make all of the components for the emergency escape slide mechanisms you see on every airplane you board; it's neat to have the knowledge of how they work, giving me a bit of pride every time I see one when traveling." What she credits her Canterbury education with is her overall problem-solving skills. She admits that she fears many of the things she hopes will never change at Canterbury "probably already have." But what she remembers of her days with real fondness is "sitting around the locker room just talking and enjoying the company of my group of friends. The freedoms we had then I appreciate much more now."

the 2000s

John Callen '03

B.S. (Aeronautical
Technology for
FAA Airframe
and Powerplant
License) Purdue,
Graduate
work focusing
on Human
Factors in Aviation Safety. Aircraft Line
Maintenance Manager with UPS Airlines.



John oversees operations on the UPS 747 Hangar in Louisville, Kentucky. With forty-one 747 aircraft as part of a 291 aircraft fleet, the 747 hangar is the “tentpole to the 747-maintenance program for UPS. We do engine changes and large component changes...we utilize the unique capability of the hangar to support the aircraft today and for years to come.” Ever since he was a child, John has wanted to be involved in aviation, and worked earlier as an aircraft maintenance technician at Eagle Creek Aviation Services. UPS gave John unique roles from “aircraft routing and maintenance planning to electronic logbook development for ACMAX.” And the favorite part of his job is seeing “Our aircraft launch out from SDF (Louisville International) flight.” One of his fondest memories was “being on the flight line when the first COVID vaccine was flown in and sorted. We got to be part of the first distribution of the vaccine.” When thinking about Canterbury, John writes that “I wasn’t the most cooperative or gifted student in High School, but I did learn from my classmates and faculty that your life experience is your own doing. Effort drives much of the success you will have later in life. Moreover, the work ethic that was required for the rigorous academics was also expected in a way that conditioned me to have that same expectation in college and in my professional career...that has paid off in spades for years.” What he hopes stays with Canterbury for years is the message, “be better and make folks around you better.” He remembers with fondness May Term and also Mr. Ramage allowing him to take AP Chemistry without the prerequisites as long as he agreed to take organic chemistry—he did, and it allowed him to test out of chemistry at Purdue.

Crystal “Nikki” (Duncan) Dube ‘05

B.A. (Biology with a minor in Music Performance)
Denison University.



Licensed Mental Health Counselor Associate specializing in trauma and biblically integrated clinical counseling.

As a counselor, Crystal finds that the favorite part of her job is watching the transformation that happens in a person’s life as he/she does the work of therapy and/or heals from trauma. “Seeing true healing is like watching the hand of God move before my very eyes. Seeing the relief someone receives after months or even years of suffering is unlike anything in the world.” What she credits her Canterbury education with is perseverance, scholarship and tenacity. “I learned I was capable of a lot and that I really was an intelligent individual. I remember feeling very prepared for college compared to my peers especially when that first essay was assigned in my freshman English class...I could write it in my sleep.” What Crystal hopes Canterbury will always have is “the expectation that students take charge of their learning with the support of highly qualified professionals”. Her fondest memories center around Orchestra with Ms. Morse and her passion, care and dedication to students. She also loved the advisory process and support through advisory meetings... “and the donuts weren’t bad either.”

Jon Ross ‘06

B.A. (Sociology/ Anthropology with minors in Cello Performance and Music Composition)



Denison University, M.A. (Music

Education and Teacher Certification) Western Washington University. Teacher 7th-12th grade Band outside of Bellingham, Washington.

What Jon loves about his job is his students, “they make me laugh; they’re creative, and they have amazing energy. This allows us to make some pretty incredible music together.” What he credits Canterbury with is giving him the ability to think rationally and to communicate clearly both in writing and speaking. “My job requires a great deal of public speaking in front of large audiences, and thanks to Canterbury’s robust theater program, this has come to me very easily.” What Jon hopes will always be a part of Canterbury is the close-knit community feeling, “where students support one another, have close relationships with faculty, and feel supported in all their endeavors.” Some of his fondest memories center on Mr. Chiang’s ability to always have chalk on his pants (until, of course, the entry of white boards), and “he would be lecturing on a subject and in the middle of a sentence, he would walk out of the room, only to return 5 minutes later at the exact point in the sentence he left off.” What Jon also hopes will always be a part of daily life are assemblies... something unique. “I think it’s a key part of what made the community so close knit. It provided an extra layer of connection with the teachers and others that most schools don’t provide.”

Got married? Had a baby? Got a promotion? Get together with Canterbury classmates?

If you’d like to be a part of our next issue, please send an email to Alice Hancock at ahancock617@gmail.com.

Laura (Ardington) Schweir '07

B.A. (Educational Studies) DePauw University. Event Planner.



Laura, as an Event Planner, loves creating. "Every event is new; no two are the same. I love researching and brainstorming ways to make events highly personalized and also current and fresh." She claims that Canterbury's emphasis on study skills, "using your planner and effective notetaking helped my high school, college, and professional life immeasurably." What she hopes remains at Canterbury forever is the relationship between students and teachers. "I had some wonderful teachers whom I respected and who respected me. I think that created such a healthy relationship for me with school and academics." And reminiscing about her time in the high school she admitted that many moments come to mind, "laughing hysterically with friends, doing sudoku puzzles in advisory, pitching article ideas at newspaper, chatting with teammates on long runs during cross country practices, listening to new music from burned CDs during lunch, and working on assignments in the sunny hallway during free periods."

Carly Mannes '07

B.S. (Biology) University of Tampa and Purdue/Fort Wayne. Financial Advisor & Insurance Agent.



As a financial advisor, Carly enjoys working one on one with people to help them in their retirement planning. "Many times, this is the first experience people have in directing their health care coverage, specifically Medicare...

navigating through options can be daunting." And she enjoys the fact that everyone has different long-term solutions, making her job interesting. What she credits her Canterbury education with is helping her to create "habits that drive a productive work ethic." The skills of public speaking, critical thinking/analysis, and writing are things she still uses every day. "I see the benefits while collaborating with coworkers, analyzing product benefits/specifications and effectively communicating with clients." What she hopes remains a staple at Canterbury is May Term. "It was a fun and relaxed time, experiencing new areas that I would not have pursued on my own." And what makes her smile about her school days centers around the athletic programs, "soccer and basketball were highlights of my time...the lasting friendships I gained are still a large part of my life today."

Emily Tsai '07

B.Mus (Oboe Performance) Eastman, B.S. (Ecology and Evolutionary Biology) Rochester University, M.Mus (Oboe Performance)



University of Maryland. Assistant Principal Oboe at Washington National Opera Orchestra/Kennedy Center Opera House Orchestra, Lecturer of Oboe at University of Maryland School of Music.

Emily loves to collaborate and perform with her colleagues. "Playing some of the most amazing pieces of music at the Kennedy Center has been a truly wonderful experience." But she also loves teaching. "I couldn't ask for a better studio than I have at Maryland...seeing students' progress from week to week is extraordinary and hearing them perform

makes me so incredibly proud." What she credits her years at Canterbury with was "keeping an organized schedule and managing my time well...my high school years were filled with AP courses, running cross country and playing lots of music on both violin and oboe." She reminisced about the band that she and friends started, and she added, "Canterbury was a welcoming and safe place for us to have fun and experiment with what we enjoyed doing outside of classes...I learned to be very efficient with my time so I could succeed in all of the activities I participated in." What she hopes will always be at Canterbury is the supportive faculty. "All of the teachers went out of their way to make sure I succeeded even outside the classroom." One of her fondest memories was playing music that she had written for her senior chapel. "I wrote a song for a boy whom I had a secret crush on, and then I performed it at that chapel, but never told him. My teenage years were definitely funny."

Mitch Stein '09

B.S. (Finance & Accounting, minor in Spanish) The Wharton School of Business at University



of Pennsylvania. Head of Strategy for Chariot, a charitable payments company.

What Mitch loves most about his role in this start-up is that it "merges my experience in finance with my passion for nonprofit fundraising. I have built a strong network of folks in the nonprofit fundraising and technology ecosystem, and it's a lot of fun figuring out creative ways to engage with everyone to move the whole sector forward." What he credits his Canterbury education with is "fostering and celebrating intellectual curiosity." Mitch writes of how it was cool

to learn at Canterbury. “You weren’t a nerd if you cared about school and that positive reinforcement has made me a lifelong learner.” He also credits his 9th grade English essay a week which as a student he believed was ridiculous, with making him a confident writer—one of his greatest strengths. What he hopes students can always count on at Canterbury is that it will be a safe space for all kinds of kids. “And those fresh chocolate chip cookies they’d have in the cafeteria during morning break that you could smell all through the building.” The memories that he has of his senior year and his joining (along with a group of fall athletes) the swim team always brings a smile to his face. “Mr. Stroncsek, Mrs. Treleven and Dr. Lombard were amazing coaches...we actually did pretty well but spent so much time laughing; it’s hard to believe we spent much time in the water.”

Hannah Stroup
’09

B.S. (Psychology)
Furman
University, M.A.
(Psychology)
Wake Forest
University.
Pediatric Sleep
Consultant/Coach and owner of Great
Lakes & Great Dreams Sleep Consulting.



As a child sleep consultant, Hannah uses her knowledge and expertise to help families one on one. “I know the importance of sleep, both for the child’s growth and development and for the parent(s)’ sanity. When everyone in the house is able to sleep well, the parent(s) have the energy and mental capacity they need to be the best they can for their child.” What she credits her Canterbury education with is her love of learning. “My first real taste of research was a literary research project in Ms. Crupi’s English class in 10th grade” and an Independent Project in 11th

grade. “I became involved in psychology research quickly in my undergraduate career, continued to a master’s program, and worked at University of Rochester and Northwestern University in child development labs.” What she hopes will remain forever at Canterbury is the tight-knit community that is supportive of each other and the teachers who really want to invest in their relationships with students, cultivating learning and understanding. Those relationships helped her advocate for herself in college. What always brings a smile to her are memories of the Thanksgiving Feast, Cav Games, Reading Buddies, Williamsburg dress days, fun orchestra performances with Ms. Morse, and musicals with Ms. Butler and Mrs. Coulter, May Term, and “Mrs. Tunis taking me out to McDonald’s for lunch after I finished all my times table tests.”

the **2010s**

Sam (Hoffman)
Schouweiler ’10

B.S. (Science
preprofessional)
Notre Dame;
P.A. (Physician
Assistant Studies)
Indiana University.
Physician
Assistant at
Parkview (on leave).



Presently taking time off from being a Physician Assistant, Sam is at home with her son where she takes great pleasure in watching “his curiosity grow as he has new experiences.” What she had enjoyed about her previous job as a PA was establishing a rapport with her patients. “I enjoyed sitting with patients and discussing their concerns, then creating a plan and following through the process.” What she credits Canterbury with is fortifying her strong work

ethic that “helped me through higher education and my career in medicine.” What she hopes will always remain at Canterbury are the excellent teachers. “I was fortunate to have excellent teachers who brought expertise and unique experiences to the classroom.” Some of her favorite memories were meeting with the yearbook staff in Ms. Crupi’s room during May Term to assemble the yearbook. “I loved reliving the events of the year—athletic games, musicals, school dances—as we organized the photos into a highlight reel for the student body.”

Tyler Huber
’10

B.A. (Economics
and
Mathematics)
Vanderbilt
University.
Chief
Investment
Officer
at Equity
Investment Group.

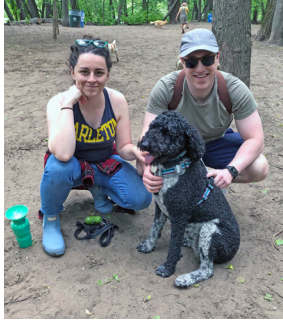


Tyler writes that the favorite aspect of his job is finding and working with new partners. “We often invest with founder-led businesses when they’re looking to expand in some way...we have a no time-horizon in which we need to exit an investment, so when we make an investment, we need to feel confident it’s a founder we want to work with for the long-run...there’s a significant interpersonal aspect to our investing approach.” He believes that what Canterbury gave him was independence and a self-driven mentality... “the autonomy students have over their curriculum, the teachers’ approach to teaching and the freedom outside of the classroom all set its students up to succeed later in life.” Therefore, what he hopes remains at Canterbury are free periods. “The freedom afforded to Canterbury students outside the

classroom was an integral part of why Canterbury builds such great communities within its student body." A memory that brings a smile to him was when he was part of a group which delivered singing telegrams which no one ordered to the community. "I believe we sang 'Afternoon Delight' to Mr. Ramage during one of his Chemistry classes.

Will Salon '11

B.A. (Mathematics and Economics) Carleton College, M.B.A. Fuqua School of Business



at Duke University. Senior Technical Product Manager at Amazon Air.

As a Product Manager at Amazon Air, Will oversees what his team builds. His favorite part of the job "is seeing my product visions come to life, get used, and have real-world impact. In my role at Amazon Air, it's particularly rewarding to see the effect my products have on shipping speed and on-time delivery, as delays could be the difference between getting medicine when needed or receiving a gift in time for a holiday." Will credits Canterbury with his outstanding education in math. "Through both fostering interest at a young age and providing college-level courses that went beyond the AP curriculum, I left Canterbury with a solid foundation on which to build in college and graduate school. Every day in my profession I use data to inform decisions--without my math education I would be far less effective." What he hopes remains forever at Canterbury are teachers willing to push students beyond what is comfortable, "even if it brings some short-term discomfort." What he still remembers about his Canterbury days

with real fondness is getting to semi-state in baseball his 10th grade year... "beating Blackhawk along the way was a highlight in my baseball career."

Sarah Walbridge '11

B.S. (International Business with minors in Spanish and Supply Chain Management) University of San Diego. Business Operations Manager for Amazon Web Services.



Directly after graduating from San Diego, Sarah worked for seven years in the Defense Industry. Presently, she works remotely for Amazon Web Services from Virginia Beach where she supports the professional services organization, which in turn supports the Public Service/Defense Industrial Base customer as they pursue adopting their business to the secure AWS cloud. Sarah enjoys managing Profit & Loss for a \$400 million dollar business that mostly serves the federal government in its "quest to adopt the cloud... indirectly I support the warfighter." What she writes Canterbury gave her is the quest for a sense of community in her job--"being surrounded by people who are happy to be where they are makes all the difference in job satisfaction." What she hopes Canterbury will always have are small classes. "Thirteen years at Canterbury has left me with several lifelong friends that I've been able to visit in various cities." What still brings a smile are memories of "the Thanksgiving Feast where the entire community, regardless of age, came together."



Anne Canavati '12

B.A. (International Relations, Arabic, and Middle Eastern Studies) University of Michigan, MPA (Environmental Science and Policy) Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs. Manager in Deloitte's Government and Public Sector Practice specializing in energy, climate, and natural resources.

What Anne loves about her job is that she travels a great deal on "international assignments to implement climate or energy programs/projects." Anne travels to emerging economies, such as Vietnam, Egypt, and Nepal to support foreign governments with energy and climate programs or policy design, where counterparts ask tough questions on some of the world's greatest challenges. "I love the challenge, cultural exchange, and interpersonal elements of these field assignments." What she credits Canterbury with is "the ability to lead projects and people; great writing skills; an entrepreneurial spirit to pursue my passions in so many different areas; and great time management skill." What she hopes will be a part of Canterbury forever is "chapel every morning to bring the community together." When considering a favorite memory, Anne had some from every level of her school time: "riding tricycles around the NOG in JK, to winning a Razer Scooter at the Sock Hop in Lower School, to the food drive and Mrs. Bates' brownies in Middle School, and to acting out stories in AP Spanish." As she said so succinctly, "Canterbury made me who I am today."

Alice Anders '13

B.A. and M.A.
(Architecture
and Modern
and Medieval
Languages)
University of
Cambridge. M.Sc
(Environmental
Policy and
Regulation)



Sciences Po Paris and London School
of Economics. Consultant with the
United Nations Environment Programme
Finance Initiative.

As an ASSIST student, Alice only spent a year at Canterbury, but she wishes it had been longer. Presently she works with the banking sector on climate topics, leading the work on climate adaptation. Previously she “developed the accountability mechanism for the Net-Zero Banking Alliance.” What Alice likes most about her job are the people she works with. “While the banking sector may not be the first thing that springs to mind when talking about making progress on climate change, there is a lot of potential in creating lasting impact through financial institutions.” Alice admits to being a skeptic about tackling climate change at the global level, but knows that her job allows for a more personal impact. What she writes that Canterbury gave her was the belief that “elite universities were an option...giving me the confidence to knock on doors I may not have thought were open to me.” Canterbury pushed Alice academically but also through extracurricular options, she was allowed to explore. She hopes that curiosity and its welcoming nature will remain at Canterbury forever. One moment of her year at Canterbury that stands out was when she was awarded the Faculty Prize. “I think that sums up how excited and happy I was about all the opportunities that Canterbury gave me!”

**Davis Huber '14**

B.S. (Environmental Science and
Health with a minor in Marine Biology)
University of Southern California.
Documentary Filmmaker and Freelance
Cinematographer.

One of the key things that Davis loves about his job is having the opportunity to travel to unique parts of the world, exploring a variety of topics. “I’ve made films about 3D printing houses in Mexico, oil pipelines in the Great Lakes, endangered giraffes in Kenya, coral restoration in the Florida Keys, humpback whales in Tonga, and the best taco restaurants in Oxnard, California. It’s a constant hustle, but the range of subjects I get to immerse myself in keeps me engaged and wanting more.” What he credits Canterbury with is providing him with a writing foundation. In his profession, “being a proficient writer helps not only on a day-to-day basis writing emails and general communication, but also with writing pitches, decks or proposals for new projects. The weekly essays freshman year was a truly effective evil.” What he hopes remains at Canterbury forever are the tennis courts. “So many memories from Canterbury make me smile, but going to State with the tennis team freshman year was a definite highlight.”

Jimmy Schantz '16

B.A. (English
Creative Writing
with a minor
in Psychology)
Taylor University.
English
teacher at Heritage Christian School



in Indianapolis and a budding writer with a manuscript in hand concerning basketball and the Pine Ridge Reservation.

As a sophomore World Literature teacher, Jimmy had to think about what the favorite part of his job was—this is his first year, but his answer would certainly resonate with good teachers. “What I really love about teaching are the ‘actually moments’ with students... ‘I actually read that entire book’... ‘that was the first book I read in school that I actually really enjoyed’... ‘That was actually really cool when...’ We’re in a bit of a literary crisis in education at the moment...there are so many resources for students to get away with not reading, and so many distractions that keep kids from reading. So, when I hear an actually, I get excited that they have actually made the willing step to activate that part of their brain that reading a good book activates.” What he credits his Canterbury education with is its introduction of good books to him from Lower School to High School, teaching him how to think, not what to think, and helping him learn how to put his thoughts on paper to make sense to the reader. What he also appreciates greatly was Canterbury teachers’ availability--“it wasn’t until I got to college that I realized this was a really unique thing.” What he hopes will remain at Canterbury forever are “smart students...I hope Canterbury remains a place where the top students in the area come in search of the best education available.” What Jimmy remembers with real fondness are trips that he took with his class, from standing on the battlefield at Gettysburg after reading *Killer Angels*, to the different camps and museums. “Some cherished memories are simply the time together with classmates while traveling.”

Michael Talaga '16

B.S. (Business Administration)
Oglethorpe University, M.S. (Computer Science)



University of Kansas. Software Engineer at Zelis Healthcare.

As a software engineer, Michael loves the impact that he can make as he responds to critical issues that his company faces, solving problems “like finding out why payments failed to send or why a website isn’t working as intended. I like making a difference and knowing it is benefiting others and the company.” He credits Canterbury with introducing him to programming—especially “when we made a video game from scratch.” He also believes that Canterbury helped him develop discipline. “I think there is something special about Canterbury where its students embrace the challenge and strive to be their best selves...that mindset impacted me.” What he hopes will always be at Canterbury is the sense of community...that all the future classes feel as much like a family as mine did... and that everyone continues to care for the students’ success and future.” He also hopes that some of the activities that shaped the Canterbury identity will stay, like: Cav Games, Houses, Chapel, May Term, and formal dress with bagpipes at graduation. His favorite memories will always be “baseball season with Coach McMahon and the team...and of course the talent show.”

Neha Agnihotri '17

B.A. (Biology with a minor in Spanish) College of Charleston. Presently Neha is in her third year of Medical School,



and she feels “fulfilled combining my love for clinical science and problem solving with my passion for empowering others.” As a student, she reminds me that she is still in the learning phase of her career, and she enjoys most “the daily challenges that come with balancing clinical knowledge and human connections.” What she believes that Canterbury gave her were excellent reading comprehension, writing, and public speaking skills—“essential to my success as a medical student and eventually one day as a physician.” What she hopes remains forever at Canterbury is the dedication of teachers. “Looking back on my time at Canterbury, one of the most special parts of my education was the teachers. The passion, energy and dedication that the teachers had in the classroom made a big difference in the caliber of my education. Their desire to go the extra mile and push students to be their best is what makes Canterbury special.” Some of her most favorite memories were the Stratford trip over Memorial Day weekend. “Looking back, it was such a unique and special experience that not many people can say they had while in high school!”

Maddie Alvarez '17

B.S. (Human Biology)
Indiana University Bloomington. Clinical Research Coordinator at Karmanos Cancer Institute.



Maddie works with physicians and nurses “to ensure a clinical trial is the right fit for patients and to manage the data for certain trials at our site.” What she enjoys about her job is learning all the new cancer treatments that are being developed around the world. “At any given time, Karmanos offers about 700 cancer-specific trials so there

is always something new.” Maddie along with her team help to organize seminars to teach employees about all the new treatments and promising trials. Maddie credits her Canterbury education with teaching her how to learn in the most effective way. “If I had not been given the freedom and support to find my learning style, I would not be as accommodating in my career.” What she hopes will always be preserved at Canterbury is the community and everything that fosters it. “It always felt like we were one school rather than four different divisions.” What always brings a smile to her face was when she thinks of the day she suggested that Mr. Stephens, 9th grade English teacher, bring donuts to class. His response was only if it were ‘Mr. Stephen’s Day’...so with a sign made of noodles declaring it Mr. Stephen’s Day...the tradition began, and he brought in donuts the next day, continuing the holiday for the next three years.

Rob Greene '17

B.S. (Informatics with minors in Spanish and Music) Indiana University Bloomington. Farm Apprentice at Full Sun Farm in Sandymush, North Carolina.



Clearly going from Informatics in college to farming was not a predictable career path for Rob, but after starting a career as a software developer, Rob moved to farming. “I think there are great ways to mix modern technology with small farming to make local food systems more resilient and productive. I’d love to find a way to mix them together in the future, but for now I find myself using a shovel more than a computer.” Although hard to pin down the best thing about his job, Rob wrote, “I love waking up excited to work towards the goal of producing healthy food for

a local community...I think that small farms have a lot of potential to bring people together and find some common ground...I also love being able to walk outside and pick my meals without going to the grocery store." He writes that his Canterbury education really taught him to write... "the ability to communicate never goes out of style. Working in a farm in Texas, Rob used his Spanish, and what he learned in AP Biology still comes up on the farm in North Carolina when he and his coworkers talk about the plants. What he hopes is that Canterbury will always be a place where students can pursue their interests in all directions. He admits that his memories of the cross-country team and the art room (although he wasn't either a stellar runner or artist) are among his fondest because they helped make him a well-rounded person. But the fondest memory of all was the Middle School tradition of everyone in the cafeteria singing Happy Birthday to all the birthday children in the room.

Steven Chapman '18
B.S. (Optics),
B.A. (Physics)
The University of Rochester,
M.S. (Electrical Engineering)
Purdue University. Optical Engineer at Penn State's Applied Laboratory.



As an engineer, Steven works on research and development of emerging optical technologies, such as high-power lasers and fiber optics for industry and defense applications. What he loves most about his job is that he is learning something new with each project. "I have to familiarize myself with a new cutting-edge technology along with the theory and engineering behind it." He loves that he is learning something and becoming

more skillful every day. What he credits Canterbury with is his ability to write well. "The writing skills I developed at Canterbury helped me write my undergraduate and graduate theses and even the publication I am currently writing." He also felt very confident in giving presentations. "Those years of practice have helped me immensely in my academic and professional pursuits." What he hopes always remains at Canterbury are the Cav Games... "I hope the games are always as chaotic and half-planned as they used to be. The epitome of this is the trash can game—you try to force opposing team members to touch the trashcan without letting your own teammates touch it—crazy!" Perhaps his most cherished memory was his senior chapel. "I chose to talk about news articles that begin Scientists say... and then make outrageous unsupported claims. I got to talk about the rigorous process of peer reviews and how it grinds my gears when news articles misrepresent science to get more clicks."

Sophia Slates '18
Commercial Music Degree with an Emphasis on Music Business and Music Technology, Belmont University.
Worship Intern at Emmanuel Community Church and Music teacher at Emmanuel Christian School.



What Sophia loves about her jobs is getting to talk with people and students. "Music connects people. It allows people to process and feel emotions in a different way from just chatting in a hallway with a friend." What she believes that Canterbury gifted her was the chance "to try on all sorts of hats. I learned to be adaptable, how to be

professional in any business, and how to connect to others. What she hopes will always remain at Canterbury is its value for the arts, academics and athletics. "Getting to try everything and be part of speech, golf, cheer, musicals, plays both as an actor and a director, getting to sing in choir and chamber choir and to play in the orchestra shaped me into the person I am today." Her most favorite memory was playing the role of Wednesday Addams in *The Addams Family*—"this role is very different from my normal demeanor, and I learned so much about the art of acting, stage design, and prop management...I use what I learned from this show every day. You never know what someone has been through in his life until he tells you, and to get the chance to know people at a different level since learning how to sit with some in our differences has changed the way I help minister others."

Sophia was married to Cameron on May 25, 2024.

Owen Bagwell '19
B.A. (Media/Film Production and Studies)
Indiana University.
Associate Producer for PBS Fort Wayne and Video Production Crew for Fort Wayne Tin Caps.



What Owen loves about his job is that every day he gets to do what he loves and is passionate about, plus it keeps him constantly thinking and growing. When considering his job, he says that Canterbury gave him "discipline and communication. Writing weekly essays for Mr. Stephens my freshman year taught me true diligence, and being able to talk with my teachers after and before class gave me great insight into working through problems by talking." What he hopes will always be a part of Canterbury

are the teachers. "I wouldn't be where I am today without them...being able to talk one on one with faculty about grades, homework, or even life was something I truly cherished." What still makes him smile about his time at school was being Smith House leader his senior year. "I loved the friendly competition that Cav Games brought as it tied our whole student body together, and I loved giving back to a community that gives us plenty."

Sean Walulik '19

B.S. (Biomedical Sciences) Xavier University. Researcher at the Volk Lab at Cincinnati Children's Hospital.



Sean has been accepted into the dual MD/PhD program at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine this summer, but he hopes to return to the Volk lab in a few years to continue his research as a PhD student. What he does presently is research chromatin assembly and epigenetic alterations contributing to the development of Acute Myeloid Leukemia. "My work in the lab has been focused on epigenetic alterations driving resistance to standard chemotherapy and proposes a novel therapy to combat the development of resistance." Sean admits that he "has fallen in love with research...seeing our manuscript come together dynamically over time and becoming an impactful work, capable of improving clinical outcomes for children with leukemia has been extremely exciting." He named several gifts that he feels he was given through his Canterbury education from acquiring the ability to think in a complex manner through his science courses, to skillfully conveying ideas in writing through his English classes, to thinking creatively through his art courses. "The ability to write is so essential to every

profession, and I am grateful to have been given the chance to develop this skill...In research, we are constantly pushing beyond the known set of knowledge and are therefore constantly working in abstraction to understand complex biological processes. It requires an extremely creative mind to conceptualize how all of these different processes may be working together... this was developed by my experiences in the arts." He hopes that Canterbury will always have a commitment to "developing the whole person, as artists, athletes, and scholars." Some of his fondest memories are working with Mr. Perfect in the darkroom and running experiments in the biology lab.

the **2020s**

Madeline Hildreth '20

B.S. (Marketing) Indiana University/ Kelley School of Business. Consultant for 84.51.



Although Maddy doesn't start her job until June, she is really looking forward to "the innovative spirit of the company and the vast impact I can make on the retail industry." She also is hoping her ideas will benefit millions of shoppers and "be implemented in stores across the country." What she credits Canterbury for in her life thus far is giving her the confidence "to ask the right questions and vocalize my ideas." "I will go into my job unafraid to ask colleagues and managers questions and share my ideas... Through both the writing and speech practice during my time at Canterbury, I have been able to distinctly explain and defend my ideas even as an intern presenting to experienced professionals." What Maddy hopes will

remain forever at Canterbury is the "collective passion for learning that students and teachers alike share... there is something truly special and motivating about sitting in a classroom surrounded by others who are equally as interested in learning about that topic." One of her favorite memories is the House Games at the end of every semester. "Getting to cheer on other members of my house alongside my friends while laughing at the sight of the bumper ball soccer game was something I will always remember."

Congrats



Abigail "Abby" (Hall) Phillippe '08 won teacher of the year at Maple Elementary School in Avon. She is one of their English language learners (ELL) teachers. Congratulations Abby!

**Update your info,
tell us what
you've been up to,
and more!**