

# A Health Advocate for All



Ronnys Rutledge '08  
takes her passion for  
people to the health field

By Alice Hancock  
Retired Canterbury English Teacher

As adviser to *The Untitled Paper*, I distinctly remember getting back from Columbia Scholastics a review of the year's eight issues of Canterbury's student newspaper. One of the judges commented on the Opinion section, remarking that she felt that some of the opinion pieces were too esoteric for high school students. I was puzzled, and then she highlighted an opinion piece by the Opinion Editor, Ronnye Rutledge, about the inequality of emergency ambulance care for the poor of Fort Wayne. I shook my head, knowing that this judge didn't understand the concerns that were paramount to my editors and especially Ronnye.

Ronnys attended Canterbury for 14 years and is a proud member of the 13-year club. She graduated in 2008 and matriculated to Harvard where she achieved a degree in Human Evolutionary Biology with a minor in African American Studies. She received her M.D. and

a Master of Health Science from Yale Medical School and completed her residency at the Combined Brigham and Women's/ Boston Children's Residency Program in Internal Medicine and Pediatrics. And during those long years of schooling, Ronnye never seemed to forget the concerns that she so often expressed as a Canterbury student and to zero in on what she cared most deeply about.

In her own words, Ronnye wrote that she was guided by "my interest in learning more about the social determinants of health." In her time between Harvard and Yale, she spent an additional year as a Harvard University Richardson Fellow "to begin a community-based program

in Boston that focused on healthcare navigation for new moms who were recent immigrants to the U.S." In medical school, Ronnye once again took an additional year to receive her Masters, which entailed a research project related to assessing HIV-related health interventions among women who are involved in the criminal justice system."

Now in her role as an academic hospitalist at Emory School of Medicine, Ronnye works at both an adult safety net hospital alongside fellow Canterbury alum Dr. Wyatt Wilson, and at a pediatric hospital in the Atlanta Metro area. Ronnye feels very strongly that her role as a doctor is to serve as physician advocate at both the patient and institutional levels. "I went into medicine because I witnessed inequities in health in my surrounding community. I wanted to use my position to elevate the voices of those who were

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fighting for better health outcomes in marginalized communities.”

Ronnye characterizes her role as a Med-Ped because it is a medical role for those who “never want to be tied down by a specific career path...I love the flexibility and novelty that comes with every part of my week. I get to take care of adorable babies and chat with retired schoolteachers about their insulin. I get to teach residents about physiology and work with my colleagues to launch projects related to increasing voter turnout among hospitalized patients. I have the opportunity to do research, create curricula and learn from some of the best minds in medicine. It is exhausting but exciting!” Ronnye credits all the incredible science teachers at Canterbury from Lower School, to Middle School, to those she worked with in High School for her passion for science. “I took that love of science and integrated it into my current work with patient advocacy.”

Ronnye believes that healthcare in a post-COVID world is radically different from before. To Canterbury students interested in a career in medicine, Ronnye warns that “we as a country are generally less healthy than prior to the pandemic, and the core work of a community physician is to manage conditions that are rooted in environmental, social, and structural issues that a pill or surgery cannot address.” Her advice to blooming doctors is “to explore the diversity of medical and health-care related careers—careers in public health, health-care non-profit work, medical technology development, etc.— being a physician is only one of many ways that you can improve the health of your community.”

When thinking through her Canterbury days, Ronnye says that the biggest gift that the Canterbury curriculum provided her was a strong foundation in how to effectively problem solve. “In my daily professional work, I am confronted with

situations that require me to translate my book skills into medical interventions. In every Canterbury class there was an emphasis on understanding the why and the how behind the steps to a correct answer. This has been an invaluable skill that has stayed with me beyond graduation.” She also felt very well-prepared for Harvard’s notoriously challenging liberal arts curriculum. “During the first week of my college writing composition course, I distinctly remember that the small group discussion format, critical thinking expectations and workload were nearly identical to those of my Canterbury AP English course. I felt at ease.”

Not only does Ronnye appreciate her Canterbury science classes and the school’s strength in creating problem-solving students, but she also truly enjoyed her diversity class. “I think now more than ever we need to have discussions about social equity, the impact of systemic racism, homophobia/transphobia, classism, gender discrimination and how to combat the impact of these dynamics. Though I have heard that both the Canterbury student body and staff have become more diverse, during my time there everyone was pretty homogenous. I didn’t often feel like I had a space within the walls of Canterbury to discuss how to navigate these identities. Diversity class was a welcomed opportunity to discuss these issues, and I hope that over the years it will be continued.”



Besides her appreciation for the strong academic background she brought to her university work, Ronnye admits that some of her fondest memories were not in the classroom but out on the road as a member of the Canterbury Speech Team. “There is truly nothing as fun as gathering a group of burgeoning thespians into a van at 5:30 in the morning to travel across the state to watch fellow students perform their craft...the high school forensics community is such a warm and supportive space, and it was an honor to be part of it.” Her thankfulness extends to the dedicated coaching and support that she received from all the hard-working speech coaches that she worked with during her years as a Speech Team member.

Although she smiles when she remembers her school days, Ronnye now takes special pleasure in quieter pursuits, from walking along the Atlanta Beltline or hiking in one of the nearby state parks, to attending a monthly book club at Charis Books, and allowing for a small obsession with tea by spending weekends exploring the various tea and boba shops in Atlanta. Her final thoughts about Canterbury are very typical of the young woman I knew. “Canterbury has a reputation for being at the forefront of education innovation in the state, and I hope that it will continue to be fearless in providing spaces to allow students to learn, discuss, and engage with historic and present-day issues that impact our global community.”

# Alumni News & Notes

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](mailto:ahancock617@gmail.com).

A few weeks ago, I was browsing the produce section of Meijer's when I heard a voice say, "Hey, Mrs. Hancock—so nice to see you." I looked up to a bearded young man with some produce in hand. I said hello, but the quizzical look on my face told him I had no idea who he was. Graciously he introduced himself and we caught up on what he was doing since I last saw him at high school graduation in 2014. Nine years can certainly change one's looks, but his wholehearted hello reflected the same Canterbury tone I so often get when exploring where alums are now and how their journeys reflect what they experienced while students at Canterbury. Twenty-seven Canterbury alums responded to my request and to my questions, and I feel grateful for all their thoughts and observations, including this young man's, which are featured in one of the pieces below.

## the 1990s

### Cynde (Bierman)

#### McInnis '90 is

finishing her 30th season working aboard whale watch boats in MA. "It's amazing to see the same whales year after year for that long!" She also owns The Whalemobile. Cynde takes the life-sized inflatable whale to schools and libraries in the NE quadrant of the United States. She has done programs (either virtually or in-person) in 23 states and counting. "If you have contacts with schools that are interested in learning about whales, I'd be so excited to talk with them!" Her website is [www.thewhalemobile.com](http://www.thewhalemobile.com).



### Susan

#### Hayhurst

'92 (13 years)

B.S. Stanford (Biology), M.S. University of Maine (Marine Science), DVM Tufts. Veterinarian Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland.



What Susan loves about her job is "having a pet come in, a stray or a surrender, matted and thin with skin

wounds or other issues, and then being able to see it transform over a week or two with good nutrition and medical care, and finally move to a new loving home." Besides working at the shelter, Susan also volunteers regularly in the wildlife world, "helping care for injured or orphaned seal pups and doing necropsies on loons." In a few months, she will go to the mountains of Ecuador to help treat and spay/neuter pets in an indigenous region, and to mentor vet students traveling there with her. What she credits Canterbury with is "a strong work ethic and a solid foundation in writing, public speaking, and research. "Working as a veterinarian...involves communication with owners, co-workers, and the community, as well as creative problem-solving. To be a veterinarian, you also need to be a lifelong learner." What she hopes remains at Canterbury is "sitting in the springtime under a tree outside for a class discussion, the school musical, freedom for students to try out all kinds of sports and activities regardless of experience level, hands on classes, lots of interesting field trips, and teachers that the students feel like they know intimately." Her fondest memories revolve around the All School (K-8) Musical held just before spring break where her family and others drove directly from school down to Florida for vacation.

After staying at home raising five children since 2006,

### Angie

#### (Fesler)

James '95 was been given the opportunity to work full time with the Illinois Early Intervention program. Her family feels blessed to participate in the program as their youngest son (born with Mosaic Down Syndrome) required many therapies at an early age. "I enjoy helping families in my community receive the support they need, and I really love working with a team who share the conviction that people of all abilities have dignity."



### Ronak Shah

'96 (13 years)

B. S. (Computer Science), M.B.A., University of Michigan.

Director of Product Management responsible for Internet Technologies at Apple.

Ronak leads a team responsible for some of Apple's most used and loved apps including Messages, FaceTime and Safari, along with many popular features including AirDrop, SharePlay, and Memoji. Ronak "is also responsible





for user privacy and security across all of Apple's products, working to deliver features and technologies that give users transparency and control over their personal information." He and his team helped conceive and launch some of Apple's best received advancements. Ronak found that "Canterbury's emphasis on writing and public speaking" were pivotal in opening leadership opportunities throughout his career and the school's willingness to let him explore Canterbury's computer network helping him gain educational experience. Finally, he mentioned his gratefulness for "the life lessons he learned riding Basil Bowley's #5 bus every afternoon."

## the 2000s

**Erica (Sorg) Langsen '04**  
(13 years) B.A. (Economics and Managerial Studies) Vanderbilt, J.D. Northeastern University School of Law. Lead Senior Counsel for The Kraft Heinz Company.



What Erica loves about her job is the collaborating that has to happen "to make sound decisions that drive growth." She believes that it is not dissimilar from her time on a sports team. "Everyone working together to achieve a goal—in business, sustainable growth and profitability." Although she admits that there are too many things to mention that Canterbury gave her that she uses in her profession, Erica zeroed in on "Integritas in Omnibus. That foundational principle is one of the things that drove me to law. It has stuck with me throughout my life, and I strive

to live by it and hold myself to it every day." What she hopes will always stay at Canterbury are the Lower School Musical and Thanksgiving Feast, along with being able to learn French for 13 years, and "instilling from an early age the value of connecting with and contributing to your community." Erica added that some of her favorite memories involve roll call at the Thanksgiving Feast; trips and tours and exploration; 2nd grade Pilgrim unit, all the sports that she played, and AP French class "specifically dinner at Madame Summers' house—we had a great dinner and spoke exclusively in French all evening."

**Jim Dusman '07**  
(14 years) B.S. Indiana University (Outdoor Recreation and Resource Management with a minor in Parks and Recreating Administration), M.S. University of Denver (Curriculum Design and Instruction with an emphasis in Special Education). Colorado Teaching License for K-6, M.S. University of Denver (Educational Leadership and Policy).



Assistant Principal at an elementary school in Durango, Colorado where previously he taught 3rd grade for two years and then special education for 7 years.

What he loves about his present job is helping teachers and students with daily school life. "There are so many different resources and opportunities available for students nowadays, and it's been really fun to design content and programing around technology and new teaching styles that can help students with real world application...I really enjoy problem solving with students and families around behaviors that are negatively affecting school life

and helping implement strategies for student success." Jim credits Canterbury with being a model school—"new ideas I incorporate into my job are often influenced by what we did at Canterbury." What he hopes will always be a part of Canterbury are foreign language starting in Kindergarten, and May term for high school students; "Mr. Chiang's Superstring Theory course was incredibly interesting and confusing all in one package." His fondest memories center around Thanksgiving Feast—"a really fun and memorable experience."

## the 2010s

**Joe Steigmeyer '10** (13 years) B.A. Carleton College (English); J.D. The University of Iowa College of Law. Senior Deputy Legislative Counsel at the Legislative Counsel Bureau of Nevada.



Joe has a direct role in writing and amending the laws of Nevada. "When the bills I draft become law, it's heartening to see just how quickly some of those issues can be remedied." What Joe says that Canterbury gave him was "a persistent drive to think critically about every issue, view everything in historical context—thanks to Drs. Wehrli and Novak—and remember that having an answer to a question is not necessarily the same as having a complete answer. What Joe hopes remains at Canterbury is the freedom of students to manage their time outside of the classroom. "The license Canterbury afforded us to use free periods to walk outside and get a breath of air or gather friends for a pickup game of basketball in the gym

was an invaluable way to get a mid-day mental break before returning refreshed and re energized for our remaining classes." He doesn't have any particular memory, but he admits that English classes were typically "more enjoyable than I thought any academic subject had any right to be...Canterbury's approach to English predominantly asked us to read engaging fiction and break it down through open discussions which felt more like fun than work."

**Nicholas Kolar '11**

(15 years)  
B.S. Indiana University (Business);  
D.D.S. Indiana University School of Dentistry; M.D. University of



Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Resident.

As Nick begins his professional career, what he has enjoyed most is "the life-changing impact jaw surgery can have on a patient." He writes that so often his patients have been waiting years for these surgeries, so he is truly able to deliver "life-changing" care. What he credits Canterbury with is teaching him to write effectively. "I was given the skills by Canterbury to convey my thoughts appropriately and succinctly." What Nick found most special about Canterbury were "the small class sizes which created an environment where teachers truly cared about their students and formed meaningful relationships with them...it was normal and encouraged to succeed academically among students." He reflects that his memories are endless, but that many of the best center around playing baseball with Coach McMahon, and "a two-week spring break...what I would give to have two weeks off right now."

**Alfred Stovall '13**  
(9 years) B.S. Georgetown University (Foreign Service with a minor in Arabic Language and a certificate in Arab



Studies). Officer in the Marine Corps and support research at The Center for Naval Analyses.

Al enjoys service because "it is a tangible way that I can give back to our country, which I believe remains the vessel for the greatest ongoing experiment of liberal democracy and multiculturalism in history." He credits his Canterbury education with giving him a foundation that he developed into "professional analysis and communication skills that I use every day to be a problem solver." What he hopes remains at Canterbury is the junior year independent project, the emphasis at school of "curating student-athletes", and the opportunity for students to go abroad. His fondest memory of his time at Canterbury was winning State with the boys' soccer team his junior year.

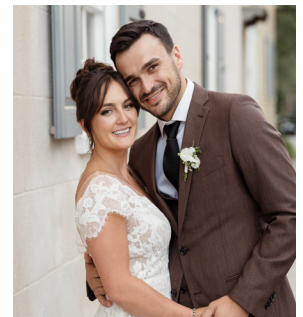
**Michael Walbridge '13**  
(12 years) B.A. Northwestern University (Economics). Financial Advisor.



Michael's favorite part of his job is being able to help people and "make a positive impact on their lives. Building a Financial Plan and investing can be daunting to many people, and it gives me great pride to take something

that can seem so complicated and be able to simplify it for them." He admits that everything Canterbury gave him he uses in his profession. But he centers on Canterbury's motto Integrity in All Things. "It is essential and something I take very seriously. When someone trusts me with their hard-earned money and their financial future, it's imperative I put their interests first in every way, and I hold myself to that standard every day." He added that critical thinking and math skills are what he uses the most, and every teachers' openness to questions and challenges is an important skill to have as an Investment Advisor. "I have access to so much research and differing market opinions that I have to consider as I build a personalized investment plan that I believe is in each client's best interest." He's thankful to Mrs. Tunis' Big Mac math table contest and Mr. DeMarchis' AP Stats class—"the ability to do quick math in front of clients and analyze statistical metrics" help tremendously. What he hopes always remains at Canterbury is the family atmosphere. His fondest memories come from his first year at school in Mrs. Foland's Grade 1 classroom. "I will never forget the visits from Charlie the Ghost and her talking to him on the banana phone...I am so thankful that my parents decided to put me and my siblings in Canterbury...it changed our lives for the better and made us who we are today."

**Natalie (Disher) Stroncsek '14** (16 years) B.S. Indiana University Kelley School of Business (Management and International Business); Indiana University School of Public Health (Dietetics); M.S. Oregon Health & Science



University (Dietetic Internship, Human Nutrition). Registered Dietitian in Food and Nutrition, Public Relations for a Portland-based creative agency.

Natalie offers her expertise as a nutrition professional to brands like Bob's Red Mill and Dave's Killer Bread, "supporting their brand strategies through understanding consumer behaviors, coordinating traditional and social media campaigns, and elevating overall brand awareness." What she loves about her job is that she "works alongside brands who have a deep commitment to providing high quality, nutrient dense foods...I have so much fun understanding trends, anticipating what's next, and shaping brand strategies that align with what consumers desire and expect from their food purchases." What she credits Canterbury with are the tools to communicate effectively. "The teachers encouraged us to speak with confidence and respect as we asked questions and worked together to find answers." What she hopes will always remain at Canterbury is the student-teacher relationships. "Throughout my time at Canterbury, I always felt supported by the teachers. They knew me and my family and cared deeply about our academic performance and personal development." Although she echoed her husband Sam's response about meeting Sam at school as a favorite memory, another fond memory is "the time when the plumbing went out for the day and the only way for anyone to use the restroom was to drive anywhere off campus to find a functioning restroom... the bright minds of Canterbury were at their best as students found more creative ways to describe how they needed to leave campus to use the restroom."

**Katie Haines '14** (14 years) B.S. Ball State University (Architecture, with a minor in French), M.A. (Interior Design). Director of Interior Design at Ian Smith Design Group in Philadelphia, PA.



One of Katie's favorite parts of her job is interacting with a variety of project types and clients, "whether it's a large scale commercial project or a single-family residential renovation. Helping a client to visualize their space and make it a reality makes all of the work worth it, as well as making a positive impact on the community." What Canterbury gave Katie was the ability to both give and receive constructive criticism. "In my profession everything you do is analyzed and critiqued by multiple people and asked to be improved, altered, reduced in cost, or changed entirely. The skill to thoughtfully receive and implement feedback as well as defend your choices is something Canterbury instilled throughout the years." Katie also admitted that weekly essays and overall workload "that Canterbury pushed its student to achieve did set a strong work ethic that was beneficial," not only in college but in the professional world. She hopes that Canterbury will also keep its smaller class sizes which allow for connections between teachers and students. Her fondest memories come from the field trips. "From going to the downtown Nutcracker performances to the study abroad trip to France...I'm grateful to the school and my parents for recognizing the importance of experiences outside the classroom."

**Aaron Orr '14** (13 years) B.A. DePauw University (African Diaspora with a minor in Studio Art). Co-director of Capital Property Management. Ceramic Artist.

Aaron, along with his father and brother, manages new construction of single family homes, townhome developments, and 55 and older communities throughout the Fort Wayne area, recently expanding the business to include the building of spec homes. Aaron also had his first solo

ceramic show titled "Mad World" at the Racecar Factory Gallery in Indianapolis. What Aaron loves about his job



is taking "the family business to the next level and giving back not only to the Fort Wayne community, but to those who gave me everything for my advancement." His favorite part of being a ceramic artist is "the introspection it provides...it is not until a piece is finished that I am able to say 'aha'—that's where my mind was and that's the problem I was working through." What Canterbury gave Aaron is first the importance of integrity and second the practice of meditation. "I still listen to the CD Mrs. Junk-Wright distributed during her May Term Meditation class. Meditation is mandatory in my morning routine to ensure I begin each day balanced, focused and ready to meet any challenge." What he hopes always remains at Canterbury are the lunch ladies... "they often become a friend, confidant, and stand in mother throughout the school day." And his fondest memory was the boys' basketball semi-state run in 2012 under the tutelage of Dan Kline. "That team was the epitome of what being a Cavalier was about."

*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](mailto:ahancock617@gmail.com).*



**Chris Yahanda '14** (14 years) B.A. University of Virginia (Economics with a minor in Environmental Science; M.S. (Commerce).

Consultant in Energy and Climate Practice at 3Degrees.



What Chris loves about his job is “helping companies develop innovative strategies to lower their carbon footprints. I am very passionate about the environment and sustainability, so being able to use my profession to help further causes I care about is a great perk.” Social skills and intellectual curiosity were “nurtured” at Canterbury, but Chris admits that “from college into the professional world, I have consistently noticed a leg up on my peers when it comes to foundational writing skills. Writing is such an important and versatile tool, and I thank Canterbury so much for emphasizing it so heavily.” What Chris hopes remains forever at Canterbury are the small size because when he looks back on his days, “it is the sense of community that I cherish the most...I could name every student in the high school and had a personal relationship with every teacher...it allows for a sense of trust that few other schools have. Things like free periods, May Term, and Cav Games foster an amazing community.” He also added that he liked that students were required to participate in a sport because “memories and relationships I developed through sports are among the things that have stuck with me the most.” And Chris’ fondest memories are from summer high school tennis practice. “The excitement of trying to get the girls’ soccer team’s attention while practicing next to them every morning, and the friendly competition with the guys’ soccer team about who was the best team” makes him smile still.

**Taylor (Lineberry) Doner '14** (3 years) B.S. Hanover College (Chemistry); M.A.T Indiana University (Chemistry).



Middle School Math and Science teacher at Canterbury Middle School.

Taylor loves teaching students to love learning. “I love watching their young minds grow and love the moment when a difficult concept finally makes sense, and their self-confidence grows.” And her favorite part is building relationships as great teachers do. What Canterbury gave Taylor was a love of learning which she tries to embody in her own classroom. “I distinctly remember the kindness and grace my teachers showed me during some of my hardest days, and I try to show those same things to my students.” What she hopes continues at school are the whole school events. “As a student who did not go to the middle school, it was always so much fun to get to interact with the younger students at different events...I also hope Canterbury never loses the fun events like House Games. Some of her fondest memories come from a senior girl who took Taylor under her wing when Taylor expressed an interest in theatre. “She made sure to always check in on me and when a new role was needed ...she made sure to put in a word for me to the director...I am very grateful to that senior and her kindness in making a new student feel welcome.”

**Justuss Boice '16** (3 years) B.S. Indiana University (Biology); M.S. (Finance).



Investment Banking Analyst at Perella Weinberg Partners in New York.

Justuss advises clients on complex problems as they look to further grow their business through acquisitions or divestitures of non-core pieces of their business. “I enjoy learning how to approach and solve complex/ challenging problems from industry veterans and feeling satisfied that I helped clients achieve their goals.” What he credits his Canterbury education with is giving him a challenging academic platform with a competitive environment that “helped me build vital skills that helped me succeed in college” and in his professional life. What he hopes always remains at Canterbury are Cav Games— “Go Paflas.” And Justuss’ fondest memory was going to semi-state his senior year in basketball.

**Summer Dickerhoff '16**

earned her degree from Indiana University in 2021. She then decided to take the entrepreneurial route and launched her own business. She’s been working as a contract Social Media Manager, collaborating with influencers and various brands to enhance their online presence. “Atlanta, Georgia has been my home base, where I’ve been fortunate enough to build my career and personal life.” Summer is excited to share that she recently got engaged to Alec Justice, an alumnus from the class of 2015.



**Allison Perry '16**

(16 years) B.S. Centre College (Psychology); currently working on an M.S. University of Saint Francis (Organizational Leadership). Tour guide and ski instructor with the United States Armed Forces Recreation Center in



Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany.

Allison enjoys her job as ski instructor because she loves seeing her students “make a breakthrough and have a smile on their face. Knowing that I am teaching them a skill they may use for life is extremely rewarding.” What her Canterbury education has given her is the ability to feel comfortable “speaking in front of others, which was highly encouraged with small class sizes... having a desire to learn motivates me to be the best at my job and always ask questions.” What she hopes will always remain at Canterbury are the opportunities for trips abroad in both middle and high schools. “Without these experiences, I would have never sought out a college that allowed me to study abroad and brought me to living in Germany.” Some of her fondest memories are of Thanksgiving Feast “where every single family decided to do a rendition of Party in the U.S.A. by Miley Cyrus without knowing. It was truly a feeling of community as the entire school started chuckling at the start of each song.”

**Cruz Garcia '16** (3 years) B.A. Wabash College (History with minors in Classics and Psychology).  
Branch Manager at BayWa Solar Systems, Inc. a distribution realm in the Solar/Green Energy Industry.



Cruz has enjoyed working with BayWa after they bought Beacon Solar. Because BayWa did not have their own warehouses or labor in the U.S., Cruz was responsible for helping them create their Safety and Transportation programs until more people were hired. “I have appreciated the trust and faith that the company has put in me ...Each and

every opportunity has allowed me to learn new skills and lessons. As he thinks back over his Canterbury education, Cruz hopes what will always remain at Canterbury is the individual attention. “Moving to Canterbury was refreshing with the freedom and passion that was alive in the hallways of this very driven environment. I was welcomed and cared for instead of being treated as a number...even the students seemed to naturally add to this academic culture by working with and encouraging each other.” Cruz also loved the fact that students had the freedom to structure their own free time whether it was playing cards, reading, or going outside to kick a ball. “If you put in the work, you were actually rewarded...making me feel more in control of my career.” His fondest memories include beating his original high school in sectionals on Hancock field. “Thinking of how hard fought that game was and how ecstatic we were to win, heck, I even tear up sometimes thinking about it.” He also appreciated friends suggesting a quiet space in Mrs. Hancock’s room where he could study uninterrupted with Katherine Bowen drawing beside him.

**Caroline Tsai '16** (14 years) B.A. Harvard University (English with a citation in French). Showrunner’s Assistant for Jenny Han.

Caroline currently works for Jenny Han who is the creator and executive producer of The Summer I Turned Pretty on Prime



Video, a young adult TV show, based on the book series of the same name. What she enjoys about her job is its versatility.

“I’ve gotten to see the life cycle of a TV show in all its stages, from breaking episodes in the writers’ room to watching dailies during production, to reviewing the final cuts in the edit bay.” Caroline finds watching ideas come to life very gratifying, but her most favorite part of her job is “the creative collaboration and narrative puzzle solving.” What she thanks Canterbury for in her job are her English classes where she gained the tools “to think critically and deeply about narrative storytelling, from literary analysis to creative writing...I always knew that I wanted to be a writer...my teachers gave me thoughtful, considered feedback...they took my ambitions seriously, encouraging me to apply to summer programs and the Scholastic Writing Awards.” She admits that she took Canterbury’s dedication to the arts for granted. “I’m so appreciative that I went to a school that valued and respected artistic expression...I loved going to Stratford on the annual theater trip and watching Shakespeare and Arthur Miller plays.” Her favorite memory though is from a Model U.N. conference where she and her classmates, “visited the pie shop with Dr. Novak after a grueling day of geopolitical negotiation. Leave it to a group of teenagers to broker world peace in three hours if there’s dessert waiting for them at the end of the day.”

**Becca Bormann '17** (16 years) B.Mus. Belmont University (Music Education); M.Ed University of South Carolina (Higher Education and Student Affairs Administration). Access Specialist in the Student Access Office at Vanderbilt University.



In her job, Becca determines reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. She also advises these students through their time at



Vanderbilt. What she enjoys most is “talking with students and determining what accommodations will help them succeed. I help these students achieve their goals.” As Becca thinks of what Canterbury gave her, she writes that “the teachers were always willing to meet with students, eager to help each student succeed, and quick to celebrate that success...these are qualities that I try to emulate with my students, to ensure that they feel comfortable approaching me with their struggles, and to place trust in me and my decisions regarding their accommodations.” What she hopes Canterbury will always emphasize is its commitment to Artist, Athlete, Scholar. “I was on the swim and softball teams, performed in musicals, sang in Chamber Choir, and served as a house leader, all while remaining successful in my academics...that is rare among other schools...I learned that to be a well-rounded individual, you need to make time for the things you are passionate about while still focusing on what needs to be done to achieve your academic and professional goals.” She also hopes that Canterbury always keeps the fun aspects of school life: CAV games, House system, events like Thanksgiving Feast—things “I often brag about to my friends.” Her favorite memory was bringing a megaphone to Cav Games because she couldn’t scream. She had a voice audition the next day. “I was probably the loudest house leader the school has ever heard.”



**Ricky Lou '17** (12 years) B.S. Indiana University (Economic Consulting, International Business, Public Policy Analysis). Project Manager for Eviden, a tech consulting firm.

As a project manager Ricky loves seeing the impact that his project has on the Texan community. “Working in a project related to the opioid epidemic has exposed me to some truly heartbreaking data. Positively impacting a community daily keeps me going.” He thanks Canterbury for giving him the right environment to develop his critical thinking skills. “As a consultant, my main job is to be a problem solver. Canterbury is where I started to build my foundation for these skills. The teachers were the greatest asset.” What he remembers with real fondness is the whole Canterbury community, and he smiles when thinking about leading Spindler House during Cav Games his senior year.

**Jack Steffy '17** (16 years) B.A. Washington University (Global Health). Operations and Strategy Manager for a company that provides therapy for children with autism.



Jack explained that his job is to ensure that the company functions smoothly and efficiently on a day-to-day basis. “Since I started, we have grown from four to seven clinics, supporting 200 children and their families.” What he loves to do is interact with the families. “It’s incredible to hear their stories about the progress their children are making. Some children come to us completely unable to speak, but within a matter of months hardly stop talking long enough to take a breath.” What Jack thanks Canterbury for is his ability in critical thinking. “One of the biggest gifts I took away from the school has been learning to approach a novel problem and land on a reasonable answer...Canterbury helped me develop this skill even more than college did.” What he hopes always

remains at Canterbury is its sense of community... “cultivated through events like Cav Games, Thanksgiving Feast, Grandparents Day, etc.” His fondest memory is centered around a friend he made in first grade, Loz Barker. He was from the United Kingdom, and Loz and his mom managed to get to Jack’s house after he had invited them without his mother’s knowledge...when Jack’s mom got home, she invited them to stay for dinner, and “we had a fantastic evening. Loz and I stayed good friends until he moved back to England after 7th grade...we still stay in touch and are sure to catch up every so often.”

**Elise Wellman '17** (13 years) B.S. University of Notre Dame (Chemical Engineering). Environmental Engineer for Active Pharmaceutical Manufacturing at Eli Lilly and Co.



Elise writes that she has enjoyed leading environmental regulatory efforts for several large capital projects. “The role provides uncommon visibility to how companies are impacted by changing regulatory legislation, how large companies drive growth, and the impacts that my work provides for patients.” What she credits Canterbury with is making her a lifelong learner—she believes that continuing to develop this learning has helped her reach her current goals and approach the life that she is still figuring out. What Elise hopes will remain at Canterbury forever are “the traditions from 4th graders acting in the Lower School play and running a business, to the 8th grade DC trip and building marble rollercoasters by hand, the junior year college visits, and making it through a year with a demanding curriculum or a rite of passage teacher...having those milestones created a shared experience between everyone in

the grade that we still talk about when we are together.” Elise’s favorite memory is from a Middle School Christmas show, where a group of boys sang, “White Christmas by the Drifters, and one of them absolutely nailed the high pitched ‘I-I-I’ and everyone erupted into laughter.”

### **Maria Teel '18**

(15 years) B.A. University of Notre Dame (Political Science and French). Completed a Fulbright Scholarship year in Senegal. Teacher of English at the university level and support education research for a Senegal-based NGO.



Maria loves the relationships that she is building with her work. “In my work as a teacher, supporting my students on their journey motivates me. In my work in international development and education research, I’m inspired by my relationships with knowledgeable Senegalese researchers, teachers and other leaders in the education field.” What she is thankful to Canterbury for is her French background. “My language background from Canterbury absolutely propelled me to study French in college and eventually live in Senegal. Now I’m fluent in French, using it every single day in my work and daily life.” What she hopes will remain at Canterbury is the students’ enthusiasm around the arts and athletics. “I learned to appreciate my classmates’ strengths and passions by attending soccer games or theater performances or concerts, and I’ve carried this appreciation into my friendships as an adult.” Her fondest memories are of Cav Games...Go Smith House! “I remember lining the hallways for the sleigh race, where one student pulled another sitting on one of those

scooter hockey boards with wheels on the bottom. I’m not sure if they’re still doing that these days...we always joked about how dangerous it was.”

**Akash Meesa '18** (6 years) B.S. Duke University (Neuroscience with minors in CS and Chemistry) Software Engineer at Deutsche Bank in New York.



What Akash enjoys most about his job is learning how money flows through the world and how people perceive it. “It’s been fascinating learning and observing how people interact with money in different roles as an individual vs. representing a corporation...I enjoy walking around the city, seeing how money impacts the lives of residents here.” What Akash credits Canterbury for is his desire to ask questions... “I can’t emphasize how much this has helped me enjoy life, as people have such interesting perspectives on the world.” His memories of his time in Sr. Colegrove’s Spanish class encouraged him to ask questions. “We’d begin discussing the etymology of a Spanish word and the conversation would extend to the history of the language and then to how religion played a role in structuring the language.” What he enjoyed the most and he hopes continues is May term, as it gave students the opportunity to study things they might not have otherwise learned. Akash’s fondest memories center around the carefree, happy times such as “a pickup game of basketball after lunch and before English class.”

**Olivia Watson '18** (13 years) B.A. Vassar College (Psychological Science and Italian Studies). Account Executive at Ruder Finn, a public relations agency in New York City.



As a public relations executive, Olivia works with a variety of clients to “gain media coverage and grow their social media presences...I get to brainstorm fresh ideas for social media and develop creative ways to tell our client’s stories.” She believes her most important gift from Canterbury was its insistence on the importance of a strong work ethic and resilience in the face of challenges. “I gained the confidence to experiment and take risks...at Vassar I took classes in many different disciplines before declaring my majors, explored my creative interests by working for four years in the theatre department’s costume shop, and was very involved in student journalism, serving as Editor-in-Chief of Vassar’s student newspaper” an interest that started with Canterbury’s *Untitled Paper*. What Olivia hopes will always remain at Canterbury are “the small classes and the advisory system...I really enjoyed how they cultivated community and provided mentorship.” She also hopes that Canterbury will always emphasize the importance of arts and sports. She enjoyed taking visual arts classes, and although her sports were at the Fort Wayne Ballet, she loved watching her sister play soccer and her brother play soccer and basketball. “One of my favorite memories has to be the trip to Paris and to the South of France...I loved exploring Paris with some of my closest friends and getting to practice the French I’d spent years studying at Canterbury.”



**Cami Van Horn '18** (16 years) B.S. Southern Methodist University (Finance with specialization in Alternative Asset Management. Head of Investor Relations of Sixth Street Specialty Lending.



What Cami admits to loving about her job is sitting "in a room full of highly intellectual and educated people because it allows me to continue learning something new every day." She also enjoys the travel, spending time in cities she would never have gotten to know. What she is grateful to Canterbury for is "countless essays." In her present job she says she sits down each quarter with a blank word document, "and I write a seven-page script that is heard by listeners across the country. Looking back, I am now so thankful for the essays that were due every Tuesday of freshman year because they taught me how to write, how to develop a narrative, how to organize my thoughts, and I rely on that skillset today more than I ever imagined I would." What she hopes will always be at Canterbury are small class size, rigorous writing requirements, opportunity to present in front of the class or an audience, the advisee structure, the house system, and All-School chapel. Her fondest memories always were centered around home soccer games, "especially when the girls had a game right before the guys. The whole school was filled with anticipation especially as post-season began."

**Saisri Gussenhoven '18** (7 years) B.A. Johns Hopkins University (Public Health Studies). Research Assistant as she enters her second year of a master's program.



For her main lab work, Saisri works with black women from the Baltimore area, conducting structured, in-depth interviews regarding their health behaviors, and their experiences with intimate partner violence. "I think this experience has really cemented for me that I want to work in individual-based care in a way that really centers on the patient and their experiences. I enjoy connecting with people, believing that they should be included in decision making regarding their care." What she learned from her time at Canterbury was a love of learning. "I appreciated the freedom and encouragement we received to take school seriously and to explore interests with dual enrollment and Malone classes...I also really appreciated the smallness of our classes and the opportunity that gave us to talk to teachers and to advocate for ourselves." Saisri loved the school spirit especially during Cav Games and sporting events, but perhaps more importantly she found herself "missing how accessible teachers were in high school and how they were there to help you." Such levels of accessibility and dedication were much harder to find in big lecture halls, taking much more work to seek out extra help. Saisri's fondest memories revolve around the times she spent with friends "truly just goofing off and laughing...I used to get in trouble for talking too much...I truly appreciate the people that I met who brought so much joy and fun to each school day."

## the 2020s

Despite not attending college, **MaKayla Runge Helgeson '20** has a career performing the same duties and responsibilities as her colleagues with degrees. "I assist in surgery cases, often prepping our



patient (horses) to go onto the surgery table as well as prepping the surgery site for the doctor to make their incision. I also go on the road to assist the doctors with farm calls - whether we are doing every day check ups or a laceration." Occasionally, she works night shifts to help a horse survive by monitoring IV fluids, administering medications, and more. "The photo I shared is me with a couple of my coworkers while we performed a blood transfusion to a very sick foal."

## in Memoriam

Middle School Math teacher, Business Office Assistant from 1989-2000, and mother of Howard Stanley '96, **Sue Stanley, 78**, died at home in Prairie Village, Whitewater, Wisconsin on October 23, 2023.



**Dr. Francis Joel Smith '94** died on October 25, 2023 in Las Vegas, Nevada at the age of 48. His primary residence had been Lakewood, Colorado. As a research scientist in craniofacial embryology, Francis was involved in public outreach and advocacy for craniofacial anomalies awareness. He worked at Universities and Medical Centers in Colorado. Francis had been looking forward to a new stint as an Anatomy teacher at Canterbury during the second semester of 2024. Francis was a keen pianist, violinist, and Star Trek aficionado.



# Announcements

**Peishanika Arnold '20** is a recipient of the 2023-24 Herbert B. Jacklyn Program. Applicants had to be between the ages of 18-21, US Chess members with a rating between 1500-2000, and have a sustained history of playing US Chess-rated events.



While a student at Canterbury, Arnold ran a children's chess club at the local library. She also helped start a chess club at her current school, Davidson College, in Davidson, NC. Arnold will graduate in May with Magna Cum Laude.

**Alex Hancock '05** and Sydney Shearsby were married on August 26th in

Charleston, South Carolina. His brothers Sam '02 and George '04 and parents Jonathan and Alice Hancock joined in the celebration. Alex is Head of National Sales



and Leasing for the commercial portfolio of the Howard Hughes Corporation. In his role he creates the strategy for the positioning of ground-up developments, and leads a team pursuing large-scale commercial opportunities, from town centers to corporate headquarters to data centers. Alex and Sydney live near Houston, Texas in the Woodlands.



**Laura (Kramer) Arment '07** and her husband Andrew celebrated the birth of their son Alexander in January 2023.

**Journey Masters '11** got married in 2022. "I'm so grateful for the teachers who impacted my life so greatly and made me want to be a teacher myself to impact those who also struggle in school."



**Lauren (White) Feuerstein '12** got married to her husband Adam in 2022 and then moved to Grand Rapids where she works as a pediatric dentist. In July 2023, they welcomed their first baby, Theodore.



**Emma Ocken '14** has been working as the Project Architect on the Whitley County Sheriff's Office & Detention Center.



# Class Reunion



The Canterbury High School Class of 1993 came together in August 2023 to celebrate their 30th class reunion.

Thirteen Class of 1993 graduates came together from nine different states. They were joined by another nine former classmates, seven retired teachers, and five current staff members, including Head of School David Jackson.

"Seeing the teachers might have been the most unexpectedly delightful part," said Wilson Rothman '93. "Don Rod Griffin, our Spanish teacher, was as animated as ever. Math teacher Walt Rieger, history teacher Eric Wehrli, bio teacher Ted King and Dennis Eller, our drama coach and college counselor all made appearances, along with two middle school teachers, Judy King and Judy Hayhurst. It's a little bizarre to sip wine and swap parenting stories with people who once handed out grades, but I highly recommend it if you get the chance."

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

