

BOLD LEARNING.  
BOLD LIVING.  
BOLD GIVING.



ST. FRANCIS  
Episcopal School

2016-17  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

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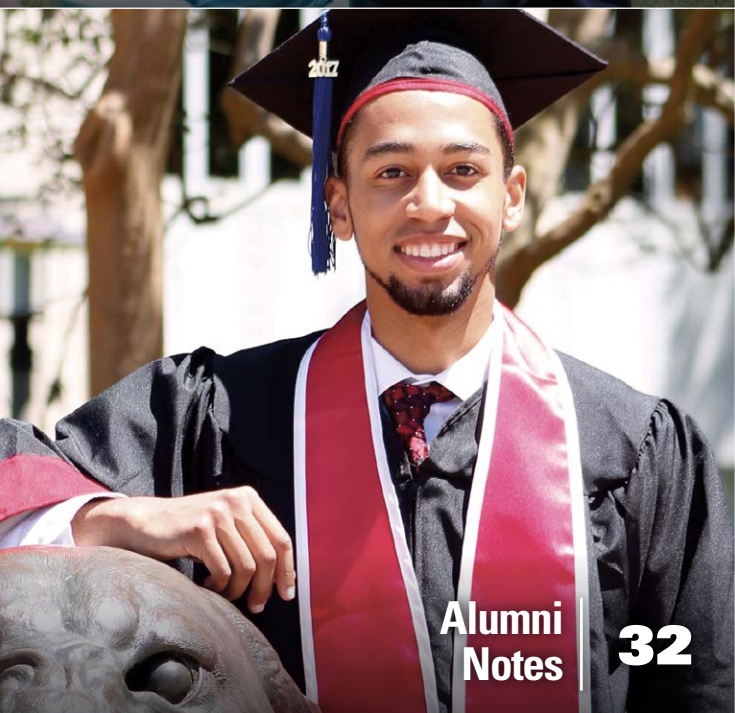
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***Bold learning. Bold living. Bold giving.*** If you were one of the many who attended Forum on the Future 2.0 in spring 2017, then you know that these words define St. Francis. I am truly grateful that ours is a community that has never lacked the courage to think differently. From our start as a rookie parish preschool to our role today as an education powerhouse and Reggio training center, our path has required big dreams, bold decisions, and necessary bumps along the way.

Interestingly, though, isn't this the same journey we expect of our students? The children who enter our Primary School also dream big through the fun of student-centric, social-constructivist learning. Our Reggio-inspired approach has drawn teachers from across the city to our annual Educator Visit Days since 2013. Once our students reach Lower School, they're primed for the bold decisions posed by inquiry-based research projects and presentations steered by their own interests and dreams. Our Middle Schoolers arrive ready to take on the world—including the bumps of trial and error—through a 21st century method rooted in collaboration, leading-edge technology, and creative thinking.

Now, we stand on the brink of a continuum into secondary education. At Forum 2.0, we learned about how our incoming Upper Schoolers will experience a fresh, research-based take on high school—rich in thematic, interdisciplinary learning that merges math and science with the liberal arts. Within our walls, problem-solving and real-world leadership will govern the classroom, the playing field, and an awesome internship and entrepreneurial program. And in chapel

and religion classes, our spiritual education core will infuse the school day with the focus on faith so vital to life at St. Francis.

Tying it all together will be the same *people for others* culture that has always made the St. Francis community so special. Our students send Valentines to troops overseas, sing carols at assisted-living facilities, prepare thousands of sandwiches and care kits for Houston's homeless, and deliver school supplies in person to children in Costa Rica. All across our Primary, Lower, Middle, and (soon!) Upper Schools, St. Francis is a family that will always believe that *bold giving* is every bit as important as *bold learning* and *living*.

Thank you for being part of the family!

**Stephen M. Lovejoy, MEd**  
Incoming Head of School

The 2016–17 school year was best characterized by one word: *growth*. Growth in our enrollment, expansion of our facilities, and the promise of our Upper School. The leadership of St. Francis continues to carefully weigh opportunities for investment and believes each improvement we make positions our school to better serve the families, faculty, and students that make up our community. Each of these enhancements is only possible because of the commitment made to St. Francis by our families and benefactors.



**JOEL MOORE**  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Following are highlights from a year of progress, promise, and change:

- St. Francis welcomed a record 900-plus students back to school in August 2016.
- On October 13, we held a groundbreaking ceremony for the Crum Athletics Center—a welcome South Campus expansion facility for our Middle School sports program, as well as home to future Upper School classrooms and athletics teams.
- The Middle School Travel Program hosted new adventures to the Grand Canyon, Bryce Canyon, and Zion National Parks, as well as Spain—in addition to its longstanding trips to Washington, DC/Colonial Williamsburg, and Monteverde, Costa Rica.
- In January 2017, St. Francis hosted an Upper School symposium attended by teachers and leaders from universities and independent schools across the nation for a day of discussion on best practices and protocols in 21st century education.
- Proceeds from the 2017 St. Francis Gala funded initiatives across our campuses, including upgrades to our Primary School outdoor playscape, core reading/writing and math training for 15 Lower and Middle School faculty members, training for a certified campus therapy

dog, and partnership in the Caring Schools program with the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

- St. Francis conducted an international search for the department chairs who will shape the curriculum and serve as the founding faculty for the St. Francis Upper School.
- On April 25, Forum on the Future 2.0 laid out our vision for the Upper School as never before, including a sample school day schedule, specifics on core programs, athletics details, and an introduction to the full slate of Upper School design team members.
- Our new Primary School cottages saw their first full year of use. What an amazing addition to our campus and programming they have proven to be!



I am confident that all of these accomplishments, as well as many not highlighted here, position us to move forward stronger and ready for the challenges and opportunities to come. Your board of trustees is committed to the mission of St. Francis, and we continue to strive for excellence while maintaining our core roots. I feel blessed to step into the future along with the warm, giving, and growing St. Francis community.

2016-17  
**REVENUES & EXPENDITURES**

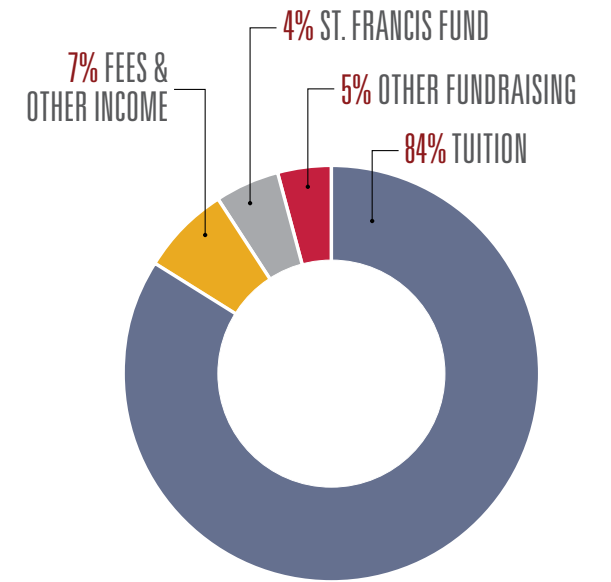
Earned income	\$ 20,120,108
Operating expenses without depreciation	21,139,521
Net surplus/(deficit) before fundraising revenue	(1,019,413)
Fundraising revenue	1,898,654
<b>Net surplus/(deficit)</b>	<b>\$ 879,242</b>
<b>Capital expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 773,950</b>

2016-17  
**BALANCE SHEET**

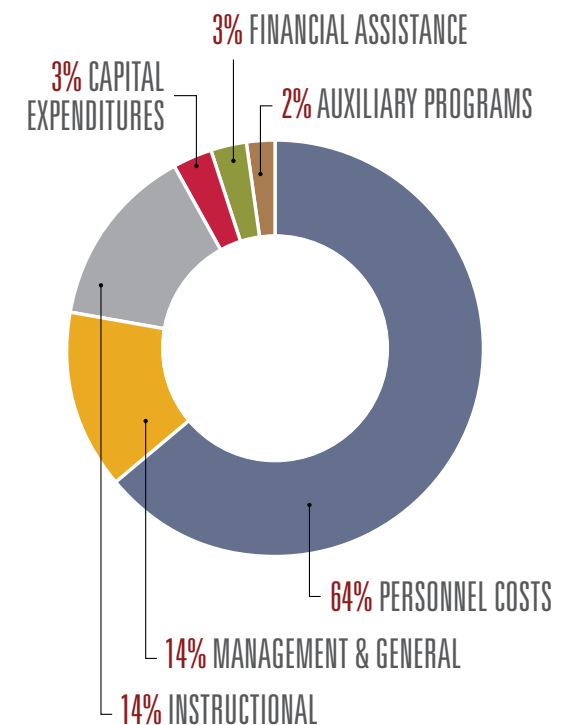
ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 8,399,428
Accounts receivable	245,982
Prepaid expenses and other assets	296,075
Pledges receivable	3,341,658
Investments	10,624,576
Fixed assets	32,589,281
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>\$ 55,497,001</b>

LIABILITIES	
Accounts payable	\$ 1,940,236
Accrued liabilities	666,320
Deferred tuition and fees	13,558,449
Notes payable	6,815,455
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>\$ 22,980,460</b>
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	\$ 25,420,034
Temporarily restricted	6,679,208
Permanently restricted	417,299
<b>Total net assets</b>	<b>\$ 32,516,541</b>
<b>Total liabilities and net assets</b>	<b>\$ 55,497,001</b>

2016-17  
**REVENUES**



2016-17  
**EXPENDITURES**



# CRUM

## ATHLETICS CENTER

ST. FRANCIS SHOWCASES OUR LATEST SOUTH CAMPUS ADDITION WITH GROUNDBREAKING AND FOUNDATION-SIGNING CELEBRATIONS

The Crum Athletics Center will serve as a multipurpose structure offering much-needed elbow room for the St. Francis Middle School sports program, plus academic classrooms and athletics facilities for the coming Upper School.



A grand groundbreaking ceremony paired with the fun of our annual 5th Quarter Party on October 13, 2016—kicking off construction on the 24,000-square-foot facility. Six months later, our students were granted a sneak peek inside the building during April's Sign the Slab event.

Our Wolves in grades 4–8 visited the building to leave their mark (i.e., their signatures!) on the bare foundation, taking their place in the history of what promises to grow into a central hub for St. Francis sports and scholastics. *Go, Wolves!*

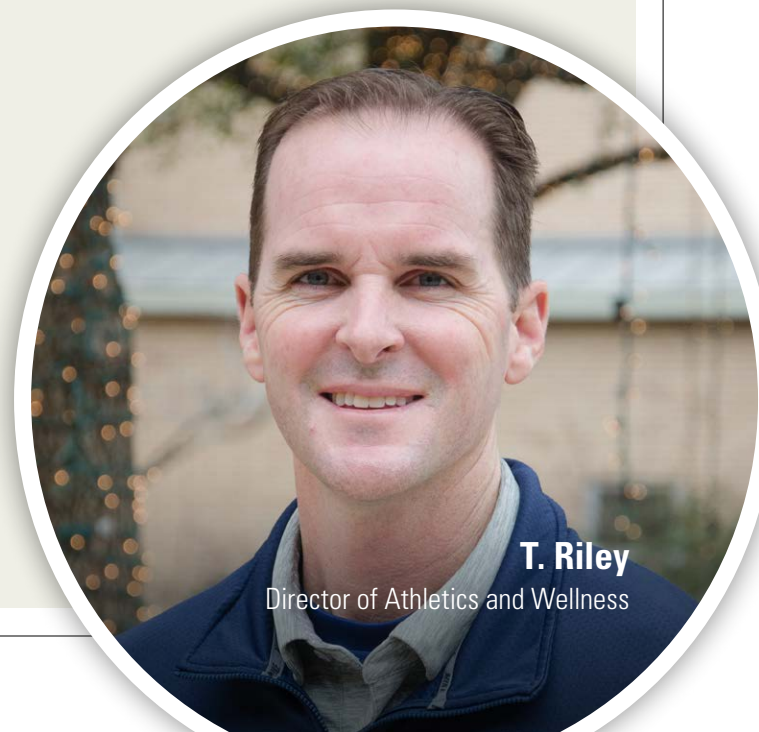
## Athletics, Down to a "T."

Having grown up the son of a coach, with fields, gyms, and locker rooms as playgrounds, T. Riley knew from a very early age that he wanted to pursue a career in athletics. "My father, who spent nearly 40 years as an NFL and college coach, helped his players become better on and off the field," he says. "He showed a true care for them as athletes *and* as people, and he was able to build long-lasting relationships along the way."

Mr. Riley comes to St. Francis after spending 12 years at St. John's School in roles including assistant athletic director, head baseball coach, and PE teacher. When asked why he chose St. Francis, he remarks, "It was the opportunity to be a part of something so unique and challenging. I want to help build something from the ground up; there are so many exciting firsts that will happen over the next few years, and I am really looking forward to being a part of that."

Mr. Riley explains that, throughout his career, his favorite memories involve the lasting relationships he has formed with former players. He says the one thing he hopes they graduate knowing is that it is always best to prepare, play, and compete *the right way*. He wants his players to take pride in doing the little things great—as they add up to bigger things—and to be the best they can be each day.

As far as advice for young or aspiring athletes? *Enjoy your time playing high school sports.* "Many students' playing careers will end after grade 12, so these four years can be some of the best and most memorable years in your life," he concludes. "Work hard, compete the right way, listen to and respect your coaches, be a great teammate, and have fun."



**T. Riley**  
Director of Athletics and Wellness



# 2017 Gala Takes Center Stage

On February 25, St. Francis’s biennial Gala took “center stage” in front of a record-breaking, 690-attendee crowd. Our ever-generous community flooded us with their kindness by raising \$365,000 to fund emerging opportunities and needs of greatest priority for our school.

Eighteen months of planning and fundraising culminated in a packed house, impressive live auction offerings, enticing Big Boards, and over-the-top entertainment! Guests were dazzled by 120 pieces of bling in the Tiffany-themed jewelry pull, and hearts swooned with puppy love over the sweet King Charles Cavalier “prize” making her rounds before the live auction. After dinner, the crowd was wowed by the evening’s surprise entertainment—a lip sync face-off featuring three St. Francis parent “bands.” After weeks spent practicing, these rock stars were showered with appreciation from audience members, who voted for their favorites via online donations. In the end, Glam! stole the show and took home the trophy—as well as bragging rights.

We offer gratitude to our 2017 Gala chairs, Kristen O’Pry and Kathryn Van Wie—along with Auction chairs Sveta Darnell and Trish Kyle—and their amazing committees for the never-ending effort and

energy that went into making the evening a rocking success. From hosting Gala Giveaways in the carpool line and securing auction and jewelry donations to crafting class projects and dreaming up the vision and materials, this dream team deserved the spotlight!

To everyone else who helped St. Francis shine bright—underwriters, auction donors, guests, faculty, and staff—we thank you on behalf of all our students, whose lives will be so touched by your time, talent, and treasure!

Save the date for  
**Gala 2019**  
 Saturday, February 23



We offer sincere thanks to the following Gala participants and sponsors, without whom the event would not have been possible.

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VENUE: Royal Sonesta Hotel





# 2017 Festival Under the Big Top

On Sunday, April 23, crowds of fun-loving families and friends stepped “Under the Big Top” and enjoyed the Greatest Festival on Earth. Our 47th annual Festival Day was definitely one to remember and raised an impressive \$60,000!

Spirits were sky high as carnival goers raced to and from attractions easier than in past years, thanks to a new event layout. Nothing could contain the excitement surrounding new booths like the Donut-Eating Contest and Pig Races. Or maybe it was all the goodie-filled tummies stuffed with treats from the famous bake sale or Kona Ice truck! Either way, the energy fueled epic battles at the obstacle courses, The Eliminator, and dunk tanks ... broke the sound barrier at the Pig Races (as kids screamed to the tops of their lungs to motivate their stuffed Wilburs across the finish line) ... and led to serious boogie-woogying at the DJ’s dance contest.

Far from your average carnival, Festival Day is an annual One Community Fund event that benefits both St. Francis Episcopal School and St. Francis Episcopal

Church. As always, this effort would not have been possible without the hard work of more than 350 volunteers—including 2017 Festival chairs **Erin Fowler '90, Amy Pannagl, and Leigh Williams**. Their team of volunteers truly formed the backbone of this special event, and we are grateful for the priceless time and effort invested.

Huge thanks are also in order to our many product underwriters, booth sponsors, Big Board bidders, and Carnival Cash donors.

Be sure to keep your eyes peeled for news about Festival 2018, as our chairs Megan Tipton and Marjorie Dale are already busy planning for a fabulous event!

Join us at **Festival Fiesta 2018**. We can't wait to see you!  
**Save the date for Sunday, April 15.**



# 47th Annual Festival

# Day

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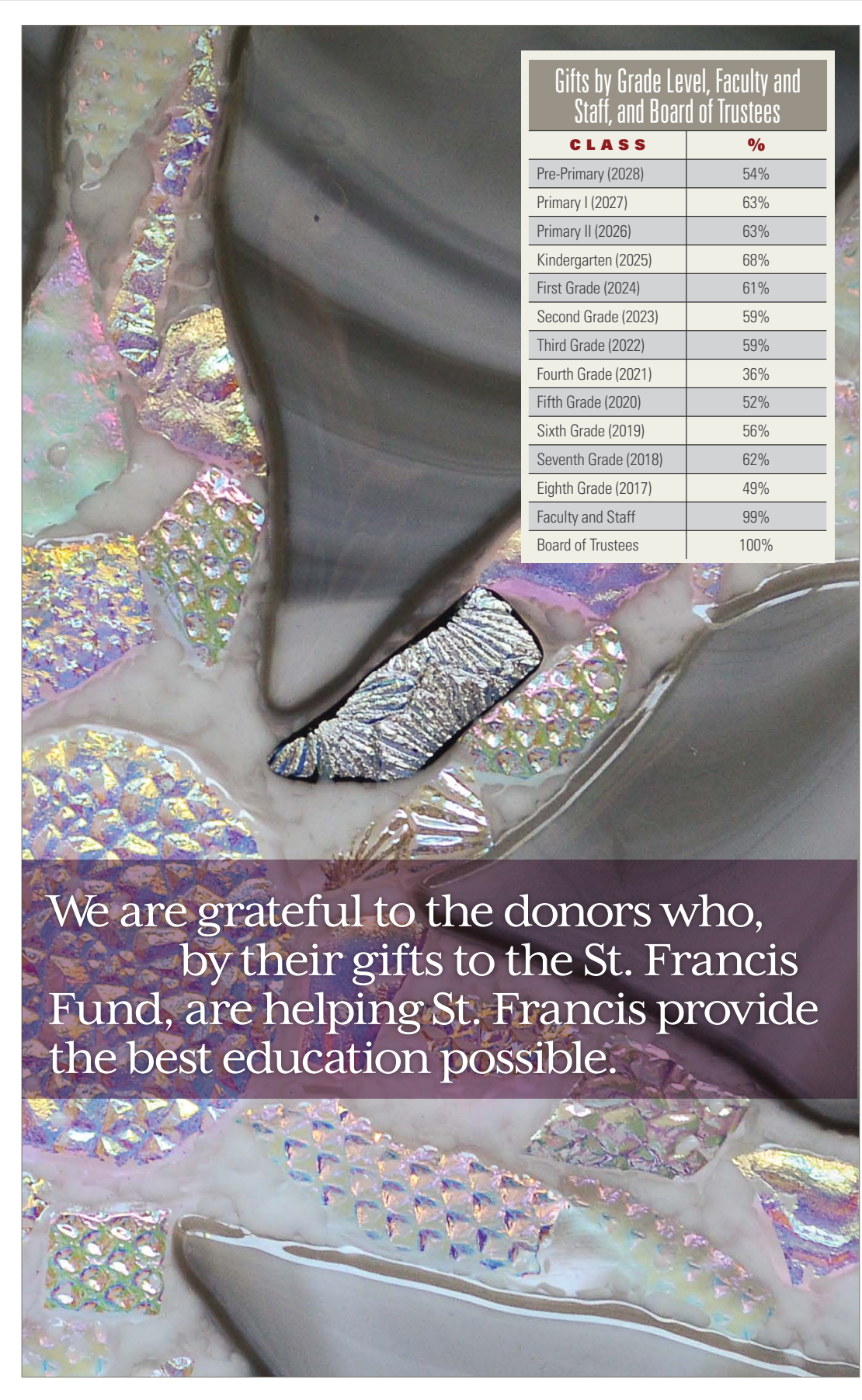
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*Game-changing generosity.* We thank the following individuals, foundations, and corporations for gifts that paved the way for further development of our South Campus. These funds supported the campaign for the Crum Athletics Center, renovations to existing South Campus structures, and critical Upper School startup costs.

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# David Smithwick

## APPLE OF OUR EYE

Middle School teacher and mentor David Smithwick retires after 30 years in the classroom—and receives a send-off worthy of the cream of the crop.

*Award-winning educator. Devoted history enthusiast. Remarkable role model.* For 30 years, David Smithwick really has been the apple of our eye in the St. Francis Middle School. How fitting, then, that in his final days before retirement, the veteran American history teacher was honored by a surprise visit from KHOU 11 News reporter Cristina Kooker, who presented him with the Star Furniture Red Apple Award. The distinction, which recognizes deserving educators in southeast Texas who are making a difference in the lives of children, culminated the colorful career of this former antiques dealer who turned to the classroom to share his love for a world gone by with the generations of the future.

“When a student comes back to St. Francis, the one person they are looking to see is Mr. Smithwick,” remarked Incoming Head of School Stephen Lovejoy. “He’s had an impact on so many kids’ lives—it goes beyond anything we can say.” Maybe it’s how Mr. Smithwick strived to bring a working knowledge of history to students through his frequent travel to historical landmarks across the country. Or how his lessons were enhanced by his earlier roles teaching

Texas history, American literature, Latin American studies, and geography to our seventh and eighth graders. *Or maybe it was the neckties.* Mr. Smithwick recalls that, in an effort to make lessons more interesting, he started wearing the most outrageous ties he could find. He ended up with about 400 of the eye-popping accessories—99 percent of which were gifts from students happy to join in on the joke.

Twice nominated as U.S. History Teacher of the Year by the Lady Washington Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Mr. Smithwick has also been recognized as an Outstanding History Teacher by the Texas State Historical Association. As he becomes part of the history of St. Francis, he leaves behind a lasting legacy of dedication, global perspective, the power of humor, and some final words of advice: “Always question, investigate, and come up with your own ideas.”

There’s no questioning the fact that we appreciate Mr. Smithwick for his years of service and the incredible influence he’s had on the lives of our students!

## 30 Years



**WENDY BRUCKNER**  
Primary I Faculty

Wendy Bruckner says that when it was time for her to choose a career, women had three options: nurse, secretary, or stewardess. Not keen on any of the above, she chose to forge a career in education. Since making that pivotal decision, she has spent 34 years as an early childhood teacher, including three decades in St. Francis’s Primary School. When asked what has kept her here so long, she chuckles, “I have more fun than the children!”

Mrs. Bruckner originally began her time at St. Francis as a parent and church member. During her three daughters’ formative years at the school, her husband coached sports and served as president of the board of trustees, and she joined him as a warden for the church. She is proud to report that her girls went on to earn graduate degrees as they built upon the educational foundation laid at St. Francis.

Throughout her time in the classroom, Mrs. Bruckner says she’s learned that parents are the biggest source of support when it comes to the academic development of her students. She is thankful for all the time she has spent with her students’ families and the bonds they’ve formed over the years. In fact, these bonds are the heart of what she considers to be her best career achievement—her former students. As she describes them, “They are decent, kind, productive human beings.”

What makes us most proud to call Mrs. Bruckner a St. Francis educator is her tireless dedication to the little ones who enter her classroom. She is committed to making every day exciting—whether that means constructing a giant castle out of cardboard boxes or mastering concepts through small-group work. And then there’s her humor. When asked what advice she would give to a young or aspiring educator, she quips, “The second semester is easier.”

## 20 Years



**MARY PEÑA**  
Kindergarten Faculty

For Mary Peña, a teacher is not something you become—it is something you just are. As a child, her favorite pastime was playing school, and she naturally gravitated to babysitting and daycare roles as she grew. For as long as she can remember, Mrs. Peña says she wanted to be a teacher and have the chance to express her love for learning, creating, and children. Fortunately, the energy she draws from the classroom each day fuels her life outside of it as well, and she says she’s grateful for her family, who have been beside her on this journey all this while.

Mrs. Peña’s career began in the Alief school district and has spanned nearly 30 years and several elementary grade levels. When she came to St. Francis in 1997, she knew she had found a home. She says what resonated most with her was the school’s commitment to educating the child as a whole—including wrapping lessons in the folds of faith. She also loves that she is able to watch her students grow up.

Throughout her 20 years at St. Francis, Mrs. Peña has lived plenty of memorable moments, but one stands out as tops. She recounts, “A student brought a lizard to class one day, and the children played with him all day long. Near the end of the day, I noticed the lizard was not moving as the child held it. I asked if he was dead, and she replied, ‘Just a little.’”

Every day that she enters the classroom, Mrs. Peña brings along her goal to guide each student in a way that works best for him or her as an individual. She says, “The pride on my students’ faces when they realize they *can* do something they thought they could not is an image that stays with me!”

# Woolrich Fund

## SARAH W. WOOLRICH FUND FOR FACULTY CELEBRATES 13 YEARS OF EXTRAORDINARY LEARNING EXPERIENCES

When promising students meet passionate educators, one-of-a-kind learning awaits. For 13 years, the Sarah W. Woolrich Fund for Faculty has provided St. Francis teachers with the type of learning adventures that ignite classrooms, inspire curiosity, and bring the far-away to the fingertips. Established in honor of our esteemed first principal, Sarah W. "Sally" Woolrich, these awards underwrite unique professional development journeys that span the globe—from mapping the migration of polar bears to traveling the ancient Silk Road to exploring the Holy Roman Empire. Thanks to the generosity of our St. Francis community, life-changing trips and training serve to spark the imagination of our world-class faculty. The first-hand insight, hands-on lessons, and artifacts they return with truly bring learning to life. *So teaching becomes transformative. And students become scholars.*

### E-STEAM



Amanda Heidemann

What do you get when you combine a sunny personality with first-rate solar energy research? A classroom that shines with real-world math application and remarkable student ingenuity. When math teacher Amanda Heidemann (fourth grade) contemplated her students' year-end math project—the design and construction of scaled model houses featuring solar energy components—a lightbulb went off. Why not visit the heralded Hawai'i Preparatory Academy Energy Lab, a top student-centric research and collaborative education facility? The first zero-energy, -water, and -waste school building in the world, the Energy Lab offered our St. Francis educator a direct view into efforts to create a healthier planet. This knowledge will, in turn, inspire our students to calculate volume and conversions, collect data, and graph solutions for energy-efficient models worthy of Hawai'i's sunny shores.

### ENGLISH



Carol Bedard and Morrie Bogrand

Honoring a Middle School curriculum rich in the grand works of Shakespeare, Dickens, and Chaucer, teachers Carol Bedard and Morrie Bogrand traveled to England to "reincarnate" these literary giants. Between strolling the streets of London and taking in performances at The Globe Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company, the two attended the Globe Theatre Teacher's Workshop on Shakespeare and visited the Charles Dickens Museum. Through exploration of Shakespeare's immense body of work and a glimpse at the world's largest collection of Dickens artifacts, Mrs. Bedard and Mr. Bogrand gained an insider's feel of the period's political, cultural, and religious influences. Stepping further back in time, they ventured to the countryside of Canterbury and Oxford, where a Medieval Walking Tour, plus stops at Leeds Castle and the White Cliffs of Dover, punctuated their peek into the Middle Ages, when Chaucer lived and wrote in this bustling center of learning.

### MATH



Holly Plost

Ask Technology/Math Specialist Holly Plost how to motivate kids to (gasp!) enjoy math, and she'll tell you it's all in their *mindset*. Fueled by Dr. Carol Dweck's research-based model—supporting the potential of a "growth mindset" versus the stagnation of a "fixed mindset"—St. Francis has worked to encourage a growth mindset among faculty, staff, and students for a number of years. This past summer, Mrs. Plost headed to Stanford University for a two-day workshop on "Teaching Mindset Mathematics" led by Dr. Jo Boaler, a Stanford mathematics professor, researcher, and author. The event highlighted the role mindset plays in determining success and failure, with an emphasis on helping students embrace challenge as an opportunity to learn and improve, rather than avoiding it due to potential failure. Mrs. Plost previously facilitated a campus book study covering Dr. Boaler's book, *Mathematical Mindsets*, and returned from Stanford armed with further research for teaching mindset resiliency in math and beyond!

### MISSION WORK



Carol Kemper

Jumping at the chance to "be a blessing and show God's love to children in need," Primary I teacher assistant Carol Kemper planned to travel with Chapelwood Methodist Church for a *Mission on the Move* trip to Tapachula, Mexico. There, Ms. Kemper was set to spend a week ministering at a home for orphans and children whose parents are in prison—helping to break generational ties to oppression, poverty, and crime. Through art activities, play, and worship, Ms. Kemper envisioned not only sharing the love of Christ with these children, but also offering the home's regular care providers a much-needed rest. Due to unforeseen circumstances, Ms. Kemper's mission trip has been postponed. Upon her return, we look forward to hearing about all of the wonderful and inspiring stories of her work.

### SPANISH



Maria Capecchi and Mercedes Perli

Lower School Spanish teachers Maria Capecchi and Mercedes Perli believe that learning a language should entail not only *instruction* in a classroom, but also *immersion* in a culture. Indeed, research suggests that when teachers educate students on the food, music, dance, artists, and traditions of a country, the more engaging that education becomes. Thanks to a summer trip to Malaga, Spain, this language-loving team was able to brush up on the life and times of Pablo Picasso (introduced in the fourth-grade curriculum) through trips to The Picasso Museum and the artist's childhood home. They also added in a local cooking class, roamed through a popular market, and took in a *tablao flamenco* (traditional flamenco performance) as well. After unpacking their stories, videos, and pictures, Ms. Capecchi and Mrs. Perli have planned classroom displays highlighting the marvels of Malaga. *Olé!*



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 Courtney & Greg Schilling  
*In honor of Lizzy Travis and Diane Wiener*  
 Jill & Ryan Smith  
 Anne & Stephen Smith  
*In honor of Emily Duncan and Carla Quine*  
 Limor & Stuart Smith  
 Aurora & Aldo Sordelli  
 State Farm Insurance Companies  
*In memory of Sally Woolrich*  
 Barbara & Jeff Steen  
 Jennifer & Mark '89 Stringer  
 Ellie & Jack Sweeney  
 Eloise & James Taussig  
 Melanie & Mike Tomsula  
 Rebecca & Charles '88 Turner  
 Megan & James Vondra  
 Amy & Erik Voss  
 Geraldine & Charles Waitman  
*In memory of Sally Woolrich*

Susan & Mike Wilson  
 Doris & James Wright  
*In memory of Sally Woolrich*  
 Piper & Matt Zaleski

EVERGREEN

GIFTS UP TO \$99  
 Shelly & Curt Ableson  
 Kathryn & Wilson Adkins  
 Hiba Mouslimany & Saud Alawadhi  
 Maggie & Mark Baker  
 Frances & Alvin Callender  
*In honor of Maria Capecci and Mercedes Perli*  
 Deb & Marc Cunningham  
 Julie & Bryan '86 Dehan  
 Polly Dixon & Howard Haworth  
*In honor of Shila Smith*  
 Jan & Gerald Fitts  
*In memory of Sally Woolrich*  
 Mary Hamby  
 Susan & Garth Heitshusen  
*In memory of Sally Woolrich*  
 Anne & Jeff Liddle  
 Carol Lee & Allen Lyons  
 Shelley & Doug Masterson  
 Ellen & Sam Moreton  
 Karen & Jason Rash  
 Louise Ratz  
*In memory of Sally Woolrich*  
 Lisa Schultz  
*In memory of Sally Woolrich*  
 Shila & Mel Smith  
*In memory of Jean Bay*  
 Charlotte & Steven Sullivan  
 Mir&a & Steve Tadlock  
 Lindsay & George Ward  
 Ali & Thomas Williams  
 Betsy & Jim Winn  
*In memory of Sally Woolrich*  
 Whitney & Stan Zisman  
*In honor of Carol Kemper*



WOOLRICH FUND AWARDS LUNCHEON



2017 Outstanding Volunteer Award:

Brandi Marrus



When looking at schools for her two children, Brandi Marrus knew she wanted them to learn in a nurturing, faith-based environment. When she discovered St. Francis, she found this and so much more. Over a period of eight years, this community would become a home to her and her family. They would make friends, share life experiences, and become stronger in their faith. From lessons and recitals to volunteering and chapel services, life at St. Francis was never dull—and Brandi says it’s shaped her family through a myriad of memories.

would be the perfect way to spend time with students and explore a lifelong interest. She was right. “Some of my most memorable moments at St. Francis were products of my involvement around campus,” she says. A particularly satisfying moment was when the eighth graders were able to recall all of the lessons they had learned throughout their years in Art à la Carte. She also fondly recalls presenting the faculty with their end-of-year gifts as part of the Parents Association Board.

“I learned a long time ago that if you want to make a difference in your child’s life, you have to be involved as much as you can.”

It wasn’t long after the Marrus family joined St. Francis that Brandi saw how involved parents were and knew she wanted to get in on the action. As president of the Parents Association, she learned just how much the organization influences campus life each day. From planning experiential learning events to funding vital extracurricular programs to hosting the Spring Luncheon and other parent enrichment activities, Brandi feels fortunate that she was able to contribute to such an important part of the community. “My love for my children, plus the fact that I had time to do it, was what motivated me to get through those doors every day,” she remarks. “The opportunities I had to interact with administration, teaching faculty, and students were invaluable.”

In addition to her work with the Parents Association, Brandi also looked for ways to get involved inside the classroom. Having grown up with an artist for a mother, she guessed that becoming an Art à la Carte docent

While it was her love for her children and the blessing of time that spurred Brandi to give so generously of herself to St. Francis, she says it was the chance to become involved and interact with faculty and staff that cemented her commitment. And now that both of her children are in high school, they realize the significance of also having been cradled by faith during their St. Francis years. She points out that they miss having that virtue-driven culture as part of their daily school lives.

When asked what she will miss most about our school, Brandi reflects, “St. Francis was where my children grew up and became young adults. It will always be the place where they ran to me at the end of the day and threw their arms around me when they were young, where they learned how to make friends—and how it hurts to lose them—and where they realized what it was to be a teammate and to put God first.”

2017 Outstanding Volunteer Award:

Stephanie Willinger



When Stephanie Willinger recalls her time at St. Francis, her favorite memories center on those moments when she glimpsed the powerful potential within students. She says these were opportunities that could have only existed in an environment that truly fosters the holistic development of children—and it was the same environment that cultivated a spirit of giving in her own daughter, Piper Willinger `17. Just as Piper was led to volunteer monthly with Montrose Street Reach, participate in mission trips, and give of her time when victims of Hurricane Harvey were in need,

growing up, Stephanie admits it took time for her to realize the importance of team sports. Through her daughter’s participation, though, she became aware of the countless advantages—from boosts in self-confidence to lessons about healthy competition to simply easing the often bumpy road that is a Middle School social life. She affirms that the vibrant athletics program at St. Francis certainly contributed to Piper’s overall growth and credits her success as an athlete, in large part, to the caliber of coaching and competition at St. Francis, all supported by the Booster Club.

“Art is so vital to who we are as humans. We have been translating our ideas and hopes and fears into visual form since the beginning of time. I am so honored to have been able to contribute to the celebration of the arts at St. Francis.”

mom Stephanie’s years at St. Francis were defined by service in a community that truly advances its mission to be *people for others*.

Stephanie was originally struck by how much St. Francis encourages parental involvement. When considering how she could give of her time, the former Sotheby’s New York employee and self-described “artsy kid” was naturally drawn to our Friends of Fine Arts (FoFA) and Art à la Carte programs. As FoFA treasurer and Art à la Carte docent, Stephanie relished the act of sharing her passion and held dear the impact that art had on students—the light in children’s eyes upon seeing their artwork displayed in the People Place Gallery or realizing there was, in fact, an artist among them to be explored and celebrated.

A calling that may not have been as clear, at least initially, was how involved Stephanie would become with the Athletics Booster Club—which she describes as the hardest-working group of women she’s met. Not an athlete

Contributing to a community that encourages students in their faith, challenges them in the classroom, and inspires them to pursue their dreams was of paramount importance to Stephanie when selecting her family’s school community. After finding her checklist complete at St. Francis, the sense of camaraderie between faculty and families further encouraged her to become involved. But it was ultimately the expectation from St. Francis that students be *people for others* that made her dedication a done deal. “I think to truly be a person for others, you first have to be comfortable with the person you are, have confidence in your voice, and feel safe taking what might seem like a risk,” she muses. “Whether it is stepping outside your comfort zone to help a stranger in need, supporting a friend, or standing up to a bully, St. Francis has given my daughter the tools to help her on her path to becoming a person for others, and I am eternally grateful.”





**CLASS OF 2017 HIGH SCHOOL DESTINATIONS**

<p><b>Arty International School</b> Nathan Kralik</p> <p><b>Berkshire School</b> Grace Wood-Hull</p> <p><b>Columbus Academy</b> Ashley Reynolds</p> <p><b>Emery/Weiner School</b> Alex Hendin</p> <p><b>Episcopal High School</b> Will Adkins Blake Bagwell Cooper Deyo Kate Donaldson Antonino Green Thomas Jackson Conner Jones Paul McGarry Ryan Rassoli Mia Schulze James Taussig</p>	<p>Jessica Wang Jack Way</p> <p><b>Episcopal High School (Virginia)</b> Edward Powers</p> <p><b>Houston Christian High School</b> Annabelle Alemand Cameron Alemand Colten Burnett Kennedy Casey Emma Dickey David Goodall Lachlan Hamra Colson Hock Cody Huai Ashley Kearns Hudson Malone Lauren Thibault</p> <p><b>The Kinkaid School</b> Lilly Butcher Suzannah Gilmartin Michael Hay Patrick Iglesias</p>	<p>Grayson Lattimer Grace Markovich Walker Marrus Arusha Mehta Ryan Pipkin Blake Pou Carson Wolf</p> <p><b>Memorial High School</b> Liv Clark John Cutter Helen Holmes Grayson Jasper Will Leman Amelia Mannetti Keeley Moore Drew Morris Lily Rassoli Addison Reilly Mueller Thomas Trey Tuscai</p> <p><b>St. Agnes Academy</b> Madison Corredor Alexandra Heard</p>	<p>Mary Perea Barbara Savage Sarah Tidwell Piper Willinger</p> <p><b>St. John's School</b> Pierce Ederle Leyton Howell Eric Johnson Nova Manning Vivian Terry Lyndon Way</p> <p><b>St. Paul's School</b> Isabel Maney</p> <p><b>St. Pius X High School</b> Justin Cabaud</p> <p><b>St. Thomas High School</b> Travis Cummins Hunter Cummins Colin D'Elia Adam Desroches Henry Proffitt</p>	<p><b>Strake Jesuit College Preparatory</b> Robert Clark Andres Cueva Alexis Gomez Nathan Jamieson Jorge Leiva Tobey Ly David Markham Arshan Mehta Jack Shanklin Luke Stefan</p> <p><b>Stratford High School</b> Cole Graydon Caroline Oteiza</p>
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**CLASS OF 2013 COLLEGE DESTINATIONS**

<p><b>Auburn University</b> Anna Demecs</p> <p><b>Baylor University</b> Braden Hovermale Jeremy Mitschke Charles Moreton</p> <p><b>Boston University</b> Nicole Bartuch</p> <p><b>Bryn Mawr College</b> Sydney Gyenge</p> <p><b>Emerson College</b> Cecelia Hada</p> <p><b>Fordham University</b> Mariam Ahmad Catherine Gassiot</p> <p><b>Furman University</b> Rebecca Scully</p> <p><b>Haverford College</b> Oscar Melendez</p> <p><b>Louisiana State University</b> Jackie Heston Cole Jasper Max Liggett Braden Tellepsen</p>	<p><b>Mercer University</b> Brent Bishop</p> <p><b>Northeastern University</b> Paulina Lelo de Larrea</p> <p><b>NYU, Tisch School of the Arts</b> Brock Looser</p> <p><b>Reed College</b> Ethan Lambright</p> <p><b>Rice University</b> Joe Theriot</p> <p><b>Southern Methodist University</b> Lily Ahrabi Michael Blalock Nick Leach Paulina Leiva Makay Morris Taylor Smith</p> <p><b>Southwestern University</b> Miranda Slaton</p> <p><b>Texas A&amp;M University</b> Taylor Buchanan Olivia Christiansen Johnny Krell Ian Southwell Foster Weyel</p>
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<p><b>Texas Christian University</b> Cooper Budd Cameron Gray Tyler Huggins Andrew Leibman Gavin Watler Sydney Welling</p> <p><b>Texas Tech University</b> Drew Pontikes</p> <p><b>Trinity College</b> Grace O'Leary</p> <p><b>Tufts University</b> Rustin Rassoli</p> <p><b>Tulane University</b> Olivia DiMichele Lauren McGrath</p> <p><b>University of Alabama</b> Powell Cutts</p> <p><b>University of Arkansas</b> Baxter Jones Henry Suman Harrison Weyel</p> <p><b>University of Colorado</b> Matthew Duke</p>	<p><b>University of Houston</b> Talal Barazi Elle Cook Sultan Edlibi</p> <p><b>University of Miami</b> Liz Bond Alec Voss</p> <p><b>University of Mississippi</b> Libby Weyel</p> <p><b>University of Pennsylvania</b> Ben Padon</p> <p><b>University of Rochester</b> Stefanie Faucher</p> <p><b>University of Southern California</b> Justin Welling</p> <p><b>University of Tennessee</b> Taylor Bowers</p> <p><b>University of Texas</b> Michael Boyd Liz Entrekin Natalie Haas Emily Jack Jackson Kins Matthew Leggett Austin Paul</p>	<p>Dylan Poynter Amir Razavi Cullen Thomas</p> <p><b>University of Virginia</b> Cooper Wozenkraft</p> <p><b>Vanderbilt University</b> McCauley Reardon Jamie Woolley</p> <p><b>Wake Forest University</b> Claudia Tezel</p> <p><b>Washington and Lee University</b> William Brueggeman James Goettee</p>
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**CLASS OF 2017 COUNCIL PRESIDENTS AND AWARDS**

**COUNCIL PRESIDENTS**

<b>Athletics Council</b>	Patrick Iglesias
<b>CARES Council</b>	Suzannah Gilmartin
<b>Chapel Council</b>	Isabel Maney
<b>Environmental Council</b>	Lyndon Way
<b>Fine Arts Council</b>	Emma Dickey
<b>National Junior Honor Society</b>	Arusha Mehta
<b>Student Council</b>	Isabel Maney
<b>Wellness Council</b>	Trey Tuscai
	Alexis Gomez

**AWARDS**

<b>Bernice Ruczko Writing Award</b>	Sarah Tidwell
<b>Bonus Crivis Award</b>	Lauren Thibault
<b>The Chisholm Award</b>	Amelia Mannetti
<b>Community Outreach Award</b>	Hudson Malone
<b>DAR Award</b>	Paul McGarry
<b>Distinguished Athlete Award</b>	Blake Pou
	Drew Morris
<b>Leadership Award</b>	Vivian Terry
<b>Most Determined Award</b>	Kate Donaldson
<b>Nota Bene Award</b>	Emma Dickey
<b>St. Francis Award</b>	David Goodall
	Vivian Terry
<b>St. Francis Performing Arts Award</b>	John Michael Hay
<b>St. Francis Visual Arts Award</b>	Amelia Mannetti

ALUMNI PROFILE



# A Class of Her Own

There's no doubt that teachers can play a major role in students' lives. Whether it's sparking a career interest or offering welcome counsel, the work of educators extends far beyond the classroom. This summer, Lizzie Pearson '05 had the rare opportunity to sit down with her St. Francis fifth-grade science teacher—Harriet Mitchell. As the two caught up, we found out just how much Mrs. Mitchell meant to Lizzie in those important Middle School years.

**What led you to choose a career in veterinary medicine, and how did St. Francis influence your decision?**

I think I knew from birth that this is what I wanted to do. I've always had a love for animals. Growing up, all of my birthdays were somehow animal-related—petting zoos, pony rides, etc. Being in your classroom really nurtured my love, because you always let me come early and take care of the classroom animals. I remember that, at one point, we had a tortoise, Madagascar hissing cockroaches, and even a hamster.

**What do you remember most about your years at St. Francis?**

St. Francis was a great place to be. I remember it being a place where I felt happy, comfortable, and safe. I remember mummifying apples in

third grade, building bridges with toothpicks in fourth grade, and you building on my love for science in fifth grade. I remember always doing fun things. St. Francis always tried to get us involved and keep us interested in what we were learning.

All the teachers were great. I loved that they were flexible and willing to work with me. I remember one year I had a math workbook to complete throughout the school year, and I finished it in about a month. My teacher was great about it and ended up giving me extra work to suit my needs.

**Are there any St. Francis events you remember with special fondness?**

Yes! The Blessing of the Animals was always an excuse to bring my pets to school. Those were always good memories.

**I remember you being a very shy, quiet girl and that your confidence developed a lot more over the school year. Do you remember what brought that out in you?**

You were always someone I could talk to. Socializing was not the easiest for me, so it was nice to have someone like you. What really helped me was getting to help take care of the class pets and feeling as though I had a job and was responsible for something. My time spent in your classroom is something I still feel happy about when I look back on those years.

*In May 2017, Lizzie graduated from the Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine and entered a rotational internship in New Mexico. After she completes this yearlong training, she plans to return to Texas to begin her practice.*

MEET OUR NEWEST ST. FRANCIS

## Bundles of JOY



WILLIAM,  
son of Elyse Scott Hatch '98



RALEIGH,  
daughter of Meghan Watkins Thompson '89



JAMES,  
son of Kendall Buckalew McCord '99



VIRGINIA,  
daughter of Cabell Walker Woods '97

AROUND TOWN



Dane M. Webb '98 and wife Erin with their 17-month-old son at his first Astros game.

ON CAMPUS

"I have full confidence in your abilities, and I fully expect each and every one of you to end up as someone your parents and teachers will be proud of."

Joe Theriot '13 blessed the Class of 2017 with much wisdom when he visited St. Francis to speak at their Convocation & Tie Ceremony.

5

Number of Class of 2013 students who graduated from their respective high schools with cum laude, magna cum laude, or summa cum laude honors.

PEOPLE FOR OTHERS



**Edward Taussig '08**  
Edward Taussig '08 has returned to Budapest, Hungary, for his second year of mission work with Cru, formerly Campus Crusade for Christ. (Pictured here with teammate Allie.)

ATHLETICS



**Kacy Clemens '09**  
Drafted by the Houston Astros in 2013, Kacy Clemens '09 chose to put his education first and honored his commitment to the University of Texas—where he pursued a degree in finance. Named one of the Best Texas Hitters of 2017 by *Baseball America*, Kacy led the Longhorns in nearly every category—batting average (.305), on-base percentage (.414), slugging percentage (.532), home runs (12), RBI (49), runs scored (48), walks (40), and hits (67).

Kacy knocked expectations out of the park once again when he was drafted soon after by the Toronto Blue Jays. The All-Star continues his family legacy—both his father, Roger, and brother Koby played professionally.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP



**Larry Wilkins III '09**  
After graduating from the University of Houston's Wolff Center for Entrepreneurship, Larry Wilkins III '09 plans to help expand the family business, Just Play Sports.



**Evangeline "Bug" diMichele '09**  
Evangeline "Bug" diMichele '08 shows you how to make "seasonal, sustainable food taste great" on her blog, Bugbites.blog.

WEDDINGS



**Chuck Helms '00**  
Chuck Helms '00 and his wife, Allison, on their wedding day, December 3, 2016.

ARTS AND HUMANITIES

**Avery Looser '15 and Brock Looser '13**  
Alumnae sisters Avery and Brock are taking the arts world by storm. Noted since their St. Francis days for their work both on the stage and behind the camera, the duo have, as of late, used their talents to bring issues of social injustice to light.

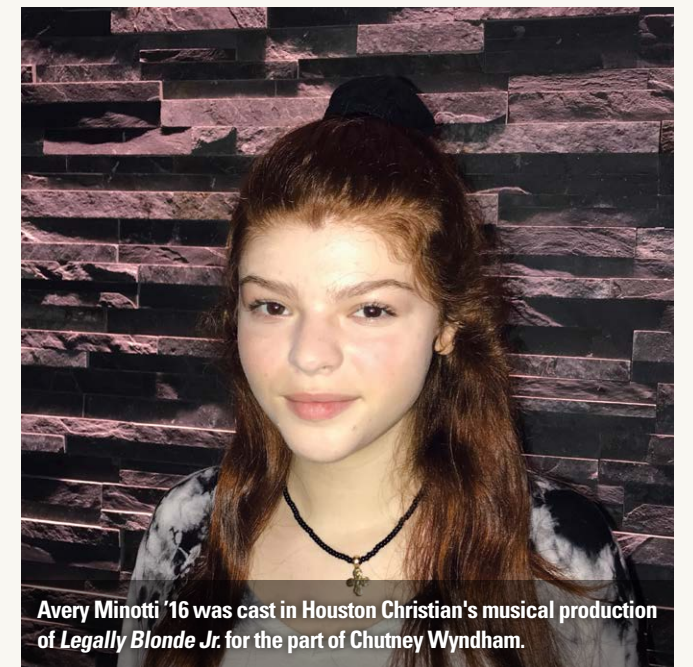
Brock recently co-directed and performed an image theatre piece on racism and police brutality with the Augusto Boal Theatre Company, then brought the show all the way to the United States Congress—where it was the first performance of its kind. Brock explains, "I hope that our image left people reviewing how they see the world and people different from them."

Brock graduated cum laude from The Kinkaid School and received both the Tom Boyd Musical Theatre Award and the school's Acting Award. She also received the Ruth Denney Scholarship at the Tommy Tune Awards and will attend the New Studio on Broadway at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.

Meanwhile, Avery stays busy shooting documentaries and short films for The Kinkaid School, and her short film—*Sincerely the Victims*—was accepted in the NFFTY Film Festival.



**Lauren Porter '15** was named editor-in-chief of *The Knight Times* student newspaper as a junior at Episcopal High School.



**Avery Minotti '16** was cast in Houston Christian's musical production of *Legally Blonde Jr.* for the part of Chutney Wyndham.

**\$664,260** Total dollar amount of scholarships awarded to the St. Francis Class of 2013 upon graduation.

The simple truth is that your support—in the form of financial contributions, volunteerism, and generous goodwill—breathes life into the programs and mission of St. Francis Episcopal School. Listed below are some of the most effective ways to make a difference for our students. To learn more about these giving opportunities and special invitations, please contact the Advancement Department at 713.458.6178.

**ST. FRANCIS FUND**

These gifts support our budget by providing essential operating revenue. We ask every family, alumnus, grandparent, friend, and faculty and staff member to support the Fund first and to continue to do so each year.

**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN**

Gifts to the capital campaign allow us to provide state-of-the-art facilities for our students and have been the driving force behind the expansion of our campuses and the addition of our long-awaited Upper School.

**ENDOWMENT GIFTS**

This investment fund provides revenue to augment the St. Francis operating budget, as independent schools have long realized that healthy endowments reduce dependence on tuition while still allowing for a competitive edge.

**EVENTS**

The St. Francis calendar is full of fun and exciting events, and each one offers unique sponsorship opportunities and participation levels. Contact us to learn more about our events and the ways you can support them through the gift of your time or resources.

**PLANNED GIVING**

One of the many ways to support St. Francis is through a planned gift. Donors can use estate and tax-planning techniques to provide for charity and heirs in ways that maximize the gift and/or minimize its impact on the donor's estate. Planned gifts can include outright gifts that use appreciated assets in lieu of cash; gifts that return income or other financial benefits to the donor in return for the contribution; and gifts like a bequest of beneficiary designation in a life insurance policy or retirement account, payable on the donor's death.

**TRIBUTES & MEMORIALS**

Recognize a beloved family member, role model, or friend through a gift dedicated in their honor or to their memory. St. Francis will notify the individual or family of your special gift with a message of our gratitude. Gifts can be made at any time and will appear in the school's annual report.

**MAJOR GIFTS**

Several exciting projects St. Francis would like to bring to fruition fall above and beyond the school's operating budget and must be funded through philanthropy. Give us a ring if you are interested in learning more about current opportunities to support.

**MATCHING GIFTS**

Many employers participate in a matching gift program. You can increase your impact on campus and your gift level as a donor when you recognize St. Francis using matching gifts. Find out if your employer has a matching gift program by contacting your benefits administrator.

**SARAH W. WOOLRICH FUND FOR FACULTY**

Named for our school's remarkable first principal, this fund is designed to enhance the educational experience of our students by first expanding the horizons of our teachers. Thanks to the Woolrich Fund, our teachers have stood before the art masters at museums in Paris, participated in a dinosaur dig, walked through the Holy Land, toured the Roman Empire, and more.

**VOLUNTEERING**

Whether they're teaching Art à la Carte lessons, selling Wolf Wear, celebrating student birthdays, planning special events, or fueling a broad range of other activities, volunteers are the lifeblood of the St. Francis community. Not only does volunteering allow parents to connect with other St. Francis supporters, but it also results in a much richer student experience. To volunteer, contact us today!

**Non-discriminatory Policy**

St. Francis Episcopal School admits qualified students of any race, color, or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. St. Francis Episcopal School is an equal opportunity employer.

The 2016–17 Annual Report is produced by the St. Francis Episcopal School Marketing and Communications Department.

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**MAIN CAMPUS + MAILING:** 335 Piney Point Road, Houston, TX 77024 • 713.458.6100  
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- Vance Ulsh**  
Associate Head of School for Finance
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Head of Middle School
- Anne Longley**  
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