WINTER 2023-24



CONNECTIONS

CINCINNATI COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL

KNOWN. NURTURED. INSPIRED.

Homecoming
WEEKEND 2023 RECAP

Homecoming Weekend at Country Day was legendary – from the Alumni Reception and the football game on Friday, to the Alumni Breakfast and Black Alumni Network gathering on Saturday and reunions all weekend long. We hope everyone had a blast!

Oh, What a Night! We kicked off the weekend festivities with the Alumni Reception at the Wright Family Tennis Complex on Friday evening, where alumni and their families enjoyed 1970s-inspired treats under sparkling disco balls. Alumni ranging from the Class of ’53 to the Class of ’23 swapped Country Day memories, perused old yearbooks, and visited with former teachers.

On Saturday morning, the Country Day community honored two alumni during the 2023 Alumni Breakfast: Dick Durand ’73 was named this year’s recipient of the Virtue in Action Award and Steve Lazarus ’81 was selected as the recipient of the 2023 Distinguished Alumni Award. The breakfast also honored the Class of 1973, celebrating their 50th reunion, and the Virtue in Action Society, a guild composed of alumni commemorating their 50th reunion or higher.

Saturday evening marked the inaugural gathering of the CCDS Black Alumni Network. Over 80 alumni from the Class of ’78 to the Class of ’20 attended the event, where they enjoyed reconnecting and reminiscing with classmates, teachers, and administrators. Alpacino “Al” Beauchamp, CCDS director of academic affairs, welcomed the alumni and encouraged them to leverage their knowledge and experience in supporting the school’s efforts to develop more experiential learning opportunities for our students. He challenged the alums to find ways to connect their lived experiences to traditional classroom learning as a way to bring the learning alive.

Many classes held reunions celebrating milestone graduation anniversaries throughout the weekend. Celebrations took place all over Cincinnati, with alumni traveling in from all over the country, and even across the globe, to commemorate these exciting milestones with their classmates.













SAVE THE DATE
SAVE THE DATE
SAVE THE DATE

HOMECOMING & REUNION WEEKEND 2024

Friday, September 20 and Saturday, September 21

FEATURES

8-12 **Mission in Action**
Lemelson-MIT Awards CCDS Students with an Invention Grant

Celebrating Our 2023 Virtue in Action and Distinguished Alumni Award Recipients

14 **Honoring Five Award-Winning Arts Hall of Fame Inductees**

18 **Part 1: My Eye-Opening Experience in the French Exchange Program**

Centennial Spotlights

22 *10-Year Anniversary of Lower School Building Remodel*

38 *Herbert Snyder, Headmaster...Colonel... and CIA Agent?*

36 **Living Life on Country Day Time**

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

2-3 Sound Bites

4 Head of School Message

16-17 Patterson-Strauss Travel Grant

21 Pattison Distinguished Teacher Award

26 Staff Recognition Award

28-32 Athletics

32-33 Sources of Strength

34 Senior Spotlight

41-43 Class Notes

44-45 In Memoriam









ON THE COVER: *The Upper School student council spent a day at Camp Joy for leadership training, during which they had to refine communication skills, empower and trust one another, and work towards common goals. Leadership includes stepping out of your comfort zone, risk-taking, and letting go, too, and this retreat gave them plenty of opportunities to do just that. Teamwork makes the Upper School work, and with this team of exceptional and compassionate leaders at the helm, there is no doubt it's going to continue to be a fantastic year.*

Connections is published by Cincinnati Country Day School. Photos are contributed by alumni, students, parents, faculty, and staff. If you have questions or believe any information to be incorrect, please contact Josephine McKenrick at (513) 979-0215 or mckenricj@countryday.net.

Parents of graduates: If you have been receiving CCDS mail for your graduate at your home address and they have a permanent mailing address elsewhere, please let us know how to best reach them. Please send updated information, class notes, or **address changes** to addresschanges@CountryDay.net or complete the form on our website at www.CountryDay.net/alumni/alumni-news.

Cincinnati Country Day School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age (40 or over), national origin, ancestry, or military service/veteran's status in the administration of its educational programs and policies, admission decisions, tuition aid programs, employment practices and benefits, athletic, or other school-administered programs.

SOUND BITES



"I simply try to be fair and compassionate. I just have to do the right thing, which is a nice way to wake up every day."

– **Scott Kafker '77** about his profession as a justice for the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts (read more on pg. 36)

"THIS IS THE FIRST STUDENT LEADERSHIP ROLE I'VE TAKEN ON, SO I WASN'T QUITE SURE WHAT IT WAS GOING TO BE LIKE, BUT I THINK IT'S HEADING IN A REALLY GOOD DIRECTION. IT'S REALLY IMPORTANT TO HAVE A PROGRAM LIKE THIS AT OUR SCHOOL; THERE'S A LOT OF GOOD WE CAN DO HERE."

– **Jack Monroe '25**, commenting on his involvement in the Sources of Strength program (read more on pg. 32)

"Thank you to Country Day for the freedom and the power to be curious and find ways to express it… and the freedom and power to create…and the freedom and power to make mistakes. The extremely non-linear path I pursued professionally would not have even begun to be possible without Country Day. Thank you, Country Day, for pointing mein the right direction and for the happiness of belonging to a community and serving a purpose."

- **Ashley Kahn '78**, 2023 Hall of Fame inductee (read more on pg. 14)





"I'm happy about my transition to Country Day. My experience [at Country Day] put me on a path to figure out who I was on my own and to learn how to be a thoughtful and creative thinker. It was a foundational piece to being a lifelong learner."

– **Zach Higginbotham '13**, Cal-Berkeley's applied science and reconditioning coordinator (read more on pg. 27)

"My Country Day education was integral to my business success. Country Day taught me critical organizational skills and the ability to think independently. I also developed close bonds with the superb faculty members who helped foster a strong sense of my identify and self-confidence."

– **Steve Lazarus**, recipient of the 2023 Distinguished Alumni Award (read more on pg. 11)

"IT'S WONDERFUL TO HAVE NATIONAL RECOGNITION FOR WHO WE ARE. ONE OF THE THINGS I'VE ALWAYS LOVED ABOUT COUNTRY DAY IS ITS GENUINE DIVERSITY; OUR STUDENTS BRING SO MANY DIFFERENT LIFE EXPERIENCES TO OUR CLASSROOMS. IT MAKES LIFE ON CAMPUS VERY RICH, AND IT PREPARES OUR STUDENTS BEAUTIFULLY FOR THE KIND OF DIVERSITY THEY WILL ENCOUNTER IN COLLEGE AND IN LIFE. I FEEL ESPECIALLY PROUD OF THIS AWARD BECAUSE IT REPRESENTS WHO WE ARE."

- **Sarah Boocock Beyreis**, director of college counseling and external opportunities, commenting on the school's recent "Platinum with Access" award designation in the AP School Honor Roll (read more on pg. 13)

"Ohio is full of incredible soccer players, so this is a pretty cool experience for us to be recognized in this way. This is icing on the cake of an incredible season and the experience being on this team with these other powerhouse players and women."

– **Sydney Hardesty '24**, member of the state championship soccer team and recipient of All-Ohio Honors by the Ohio Scholastic Soccer Coaches Association (read more on pg. 28)



"Helping students develop their analytical eyes and writerly voices drives my daily efforts, and it sounds like no one did more for Country Day students in that regard than Mr. Pat. I would have loved to have learned from him. I don't know if it's a calling or a lack of creativity, but I've always wanted to be a teacher. I think it's the dream job."

– **Emily DiMatteo**, one of this year's recipients of the Lee S. Pattison Distinguished Teacher Award, commenting on the award's namesake and her own career choice in her acceptance speech (read more on pg. 21)



"I'VE LEARNED A LOT ABOUT AUTHENTICITY AT COUNTRY DAY AND HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO STAY TRUE TO YOURSELF."

– **Rachel "Ray" Mitchell '24** on the lessons she has learned that she feels will help the most when she goes to college (read more on pg. 34)

"Dr. Khan was amazing. He gave me so many tips about my future. He told me what kinds of extracurriculars stand out on medical school applications. And he told me it's ok if you're not getting 100% in every class. If you're determined, you can do anything."

– **Ayla Daoud '26**, remarking on her job shadow experience with CCDS parent Dr. Khurram Khan (read more on pg. 6)



"I think the great secret about government is that you get to do the most interesting work with the greatest people.... I've met some of the most mission-driven people and they are happy with their careers...and sleep very well at night. There are plenty of challenges right now, but the government or military can offer plenty of opportunities to contribute to the world."

– **Lindsay (Masters) Murl '02**, an environmental lawyer for the EPA, providing insight into pursuing a career in public service (read more on pg. 40)

"We put an incredible amount of time and thought into the grant application, and to have it selected as one of eight schools nationwide makes it totally worth it. I am looking forward to continuing the process of inventing a solution, which has been very rewarding so far. We started with three unrelated ideas this past summer and by early spring we'll start seeing an actual solution and that's an amazing thing to be a part of."

– **Ayaan Arif '25**, a member of the CCDS InvenTeam (read more on pg. 8)

Dear Members of the Country Day Community,

What a semester it's been at Country Day! After starting the school year with our highest opening enrollment in 20 years, we earned numerous accolades throughout the fall:

- Niche.com ranked CCDS the #1 private high school in the Cincinnati area, #1 K-12 school in the Cincinnati area, and #1 school for STEM in the Cincinnati area;
- The College Board's AP School Honor Roll recognized Country Day with its "Platinum with Access" award – not only the highest possible rating for academic achievement (Platinum) but also plaudits for "demonstrating a clear and effective commitment to equitable access" – better than any other private school in the city;
- MIT, through its Lemelson program, awarded CCDS students with the prestigious InvenTeam grant to create an invention geared toward improving road bike safety;
- The girls soccer team won the state championship for the second year in a row and the fourth time in six years;
- The football team won 12 games for the first time in school history, earned a third consecutive league title, and reached the regional semifinals for the first time in 24 years.

These successes are exciting examples of our continuing tradition of excellence. But sometimes our "wins" don't manifest in the form of awards or trophies. Sometimes it's smaller moments, like Lower School students advocating for bird strike protection in our facilities by presenting to our Board of Trustees' Master Planning Committee; like removing smartphones in our Middle School and Upper School to more purposefully drive a culture of connectedness; and like Pre-KI, Pre-K2, and Ms. Bertsch's Kindergarten students creating "Project Shapes" – an art exhibit that showcased their ability to bring shapes to life through this creative project-based learning experience.

And we're not done yet. In September we announced our new strategic plan, Country Day Connect, which will see major new investments in three strategic priorities:

- Experiential Learning: Our students will learn real-world skills through hands-on, immersive learning that connects them to their community and their own learning.
- Exceptional Teaching: We will become the school of choice for talented educators by innovating how teachers are recruited, retained, and rewarded.
- Connected Community: We will leverage our campus as a source of connection to the outdoors and our community.

These strategies will transform the way we learn and teach; they will transform the way we recruit and retain outstanding teachers; and they will transform our campus with reimagined facilities to meet the needs and demands of a new era. Exciting initiatives are already under development, and the best is yet to come as we approach our centennial celebration in 2026.

Thanks for all you do to help maintain Country Day's tradition of excellence.

Sincerely,



Rob Zimmerman '98
Head of School



MATCH DAY

SETTING THE STAGE FOR SUCCESS



On Match Day, current parents and grandparents, parents and grandparents of alumni, alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the school came together to raise more than $430,000! Gifts ranged from a few dollars to many thousands and every single gift made a difference! We are deeply grateful to all who took the opportunity to support our school and help us continue to provide the best educational experience possible. With the generosity of the Country Day community, every student is a star!

TURKEY TRAIN & ALL-SCHOOL FOOD GATHERING







Once again, our entire student body came together during the Thanksgiving holiday to donate food and non-perishables to families in need. We are so proud of our Upper School and Lower School students for collecting over 3,000 items for local families this year! Although the traditional Turkey Train was cut short by rain, Middle School students were able to donate over 1,800 pounds of turkey. Way to go Country Day students, truly a showcase of Virtue in Action.

A COMMITMENT TO SERVE THE WORLD AROUND US







Another successful school year, another successful Wrap-In! During this beloved Country Day tradition, our entire student body came together to donate 1,010 gifts to the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Cincinnati and ProKids, exceeding last year's total. Everyone on our campus worked together to wrap each gift (while enjoying a gingerbread cookie or two – thank you, SAGE Dining Services!), with many younger students – and some older ones – learning how to properly wrap a gift for the first time.

"I believe it's important to bring our community together to celebrate the holidays and to recognize a common thread that binds us all together: our common commitment to serving the world around us," said Laura Gunn, Upper School math teacher and director of service learning, when she addressed the students, faculty, and staff during the Wrap-In assembly. "[It] is a time for us to forget about ourselves. The Wrap-In is an opportunity to help those who really need our care. It instills the habit of caring for others."



"I LOVED EVERY SECOND!"

STUDENTS MEET MENTORS, GARNER CAREER ADVICE IN SUMMER JOB SHADOWS

By: Sarah Boocock Beyreis, Director of College Counseling and External Opportunities

People on CCDS parent Dr. Viral Jain's staff at Children's Hospital Orthopedics clinic kept mistaking Reed Horton '25 for a medical student, especially after he observed three hours of surgery without feeling woozy. "The college kids were fainting, but I thought it was awesome," he says.

Val Benitez '24 put in nine hours a day during a three-day job shadow at EY, joining CCDS parent Jeremy Vaughan on everything from Zoom calls with international clients to one-on-one meetings with CEOs to a Cintrifuse board meeting with Cincinnati business leaders. "It was really fun," says Benitez. "I saw people in cool roles that I might like to do."

Sarah Fu '25 was excited to see the relationship between graphic design and marketing during her shadow at Jurgenson Companies. "I like art, and I didn't realize it was as interconnected with marketing as it is," she says. Ayla Daoud '26 "loved every second" of her job shadow at CCDS parent Dr. Khurram Khan's oral surgery practice, where she observed wisdom teeth removal, dental implants, and root canals. When Dr. Kahn used lab-grown tissue in surgery "it was cool to see how advanced medicine has become."

Country Day students had these experiences and more last summer as part of our CCDXperiences Job Shadow Program. Students in the program see firsthand what it is like to work in a field that interests them. They garner advice about college and careers from parent and alumni hosts and learn early the value of networking. Country Day is eager to expand the program.

For a list of recent experiences or to offer a job shadow or internship to Country Day students in 2024, scan here:

The experiences immediately expand students' understanding of work. "It allowed me to see that being a doctor is so much bigger than performing surgery and making a lot of money," says Horton. "Dr. Jain is changing the lives of real people. I used to want to win a Nobel Prize, but I can see that you can change the world in much smaller ways. It's so fulfilling."

Both hosts and students enjoy getting to know each other. "Dr. Khan was amazing," says Daoud. "He gave me so many tips about my future. He told me what kinds of extracurriculars stand out on medical school applications. And he told me it's ok if you're not getting 100% in every class. If you're determined, you can do anything."

Val Benitez called Mr. Vaughen "a great guy. I loved working with him." For his part, Vaughan was "very impressed. Val belied her years in terms of her ability to understand both the business content and context, and also in her ability to read the room. I look forward to hearing how she gets on in the future!"

For students wishing to participate in the program for summer 2024, applications will open in March.

STUDENT EARNS PERFECT SCORE ON AP EXAM



Yihe Zhang ’26 earned a perfect score on the AP Computer Science Principles exam, which means she received every point possible.

“It was my first AP test and while I didn’t think it was that difficult, I know that it’s easy to make minor mistakes that impact your score,” says Zhang. “My friends were proud of me and I am proud of myself. This was a great way to start my career at Country Day.”

Last school year was Zhang’s first year at Country Day; she previously attended public school in Beijing, China.

“There were a lot more students at my school back in China. Here the teachers are all very nice and help you when you need. They can pay attention to the individual students. I also like the school culture here more. I am starting to know even more people and feel like I’m part of this big community.”

Zhang said that she likes the programming part of computer science and finds it “interesting to learn new codes. During [computer science] class I tried to read and understand other people’s codes, which I think helped me on the AP exam because part of the test involves you reading and understanding code, and I had already done that exercise in school.”

This semester she is taking engineering with Jamie Back, AP biology, and AP calculus. When asked what advice she has for any other students who would like to do well on AP exams, Zhang said to “relax. It’s really not that hard. Follow along in your classes because there are a lot of chances to practice so by the time it’s time to take the exam you should be well prepared.”



OUTDOOR EDUCATION STUDENTS LEAD INITIATIVE TO KEEP BIRDS SAFE

Did you know that over one billion birds die each year from striking windows because they cannot determine that the glass window is a solid object? When Jana Westhoven’s outdoor education classes learned about this disturbing statistic, they became worried about the birds that call Country Day’s campus home.

“All the classes were pretty adamant about doing something to not only bring awareness to this issue but to also protect the birds on campus,” says Westhoven.

With the support and involvement from Head of School Rob Zimmerman ’98 and Mark Morawski, head of Lower School, Ayla Atlan ’32, Christien-Blake Hall ’31, Crosley Brun ’33, Betsy Ryan ’31, and Jai Whitlock ’34 proposed a solution to reduce bird strikes on campus to the Board of Trustees. With the board’s approval, decals designed by Feather Friendly and installed by our facilities team can now be seen on the windows of the Montessori classroom. Thanks to the leadership and compassion of these five young leaders, the decals will help deter birds from trying to fly through the windows.

Creating leaders who, through the discovery of their own abilities, kindle the potential of others and better a dynamic world.

MISSION *in Action*

LEMELSON-MIT AWARDS CCDS STUDENTS WITH AN INVENTION GRANT



Pictured left to right: Jamie Back, Ashley Odom, Jason Starodub, Lucia Murdoch, Kate Kranias, Alex Back, Samantha Wu, Ayaan Arif, Kevin Pearson, Donovan Gray, Angela Barber-Joiner.

Cincinnati Country Day School was awarded a Lemelson-MIT (LMIT) InvenTeam grant to create an invention geared towards improving road bike safety. Country Day, which was recently ranked the #1 best high school for STEM in the Cincinnati area by niche.com, is one of only eight high schools nationwide to be selected to have an InvenTeam this year.

"We are thrilled and proud to receive this prestigious grant," says Jamie Back, InvenTeam co-educator, STEAM teacher, and Makerspace coordinator. "It's a big responsibility, but because our InvenTeam is such a diverse group, we have been able to come up with innovative and unconventional solutions. We are prepared to make a difference with our invention and the support of this esteemed program."

InvenTeam members include Ayaan Arif '25, Alex Back '25, Donovan Gray '25, Kate Kranias '26, Lucia Murdoch '25, Ashley Odom '25, Kevin Pearson '25, Jason Starodub '26, and Samantha Wu '26.







"There's something special about working on a team versus being by yourself," says Kranias. "Working together and watching an invention come together as something that will actually help bicyclists will be really satisfying."

According to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, over 100,000 bicyclists are injured or killed every year in the United States. In addition, the National Safety Council reported that the number of preventable deaths from biking accidents increased 44% between 2011 and 2020. Many driver-related bicycling accidents are caused by a lack of visibility, even in daylight. To help reduce these deaths and injuries, the Cincinnati Country Day School InvenTeam is inventing a solution to improve road bike safety by increasing cyclist and driver awareness of each other.

"I enjoy biking a lot, so it's cool to be part of a team that has the opportunity to solve a problem that cyclists face on a national scale," says Starodub. "The direct impact we can make in our community and the overall impact we can make for cyclists everywhere is really special to me."

Jamie Back and Angela Barber-Joiner, director of belonging & wellbeing and InvenTeam co-educator, initiated Country Day's InvenTeam application process in the spring, and their proposal was **one of 28 accepted across the country** This team of students worked over 70 hours during the summer, school lunchtimes, free bells, weekends, and after school to prepare the final proposal in time for the September deadline.

"We are grateful for the support we have received from so many people in our Country Day community," says Barber-Joiner. "But I must extend a special thank-you to Country Day parents, Justin and Lisa Shafer, who were inspired by the team's success in the application phase and made a generous gift to the school to provide the meals, snacks, and supplies for our InvenTeam meetings. I know I speak on behalf of the team when I say that their generosity helped fuel our productivity!"

Grant recipients were selected by a respected panel of university professors, inventors, entrepreneurs, industry professionals, and college students, including former InvenTeam members now working in the industry.

"We put an incredible amount of time and thought into the grant application, and to have it selected as one of eight schools nationwide makes it totally worth it," says Arif. "I am looking forward to continuing the process of inventing a solution, which has been very rewarding so far. We started with three unrelated ideas this past summer and by early spring we'll start seeing an actual solution and that's an amazing thing to be a part of."

The Cincinnati Country Day School InvenTeam is now busy developing a solution to the problem.

"The InvenTeams are focusing on solving problems that impact their local communities," says Leigh Estabrooks, Lemelson-MIT's invention education officer. "Teams are focusing their technological solutions – their inventions – on inequities in health and wellbeing, environmental issues, and safety concerns. These high school students are not just problem-solvers of tomorrow, they are problem solvers *today* helping to make our world more equitable.













In early July, the Cincinnati Country Day School InvenTeam participated in brainstorming activities to identify a plethora of ideas with the goal of defining an invention space that could lead to solving an existing problem in the community. While meeting with community members and organizations, one of the school's valued community members reached out to the team with a possible idea. Ashley Ward, recently retired assistant to the head of school, shared personal details about a bike accident in 2014 that took the life of Fred Carey, a much-beloved English teacher, dean of students, parent, and alumnus.

The team will build a working prototype that will be showcased at a mid-grant technical review locally in February, and then again as a final prototype during EurekaFest®.

"This is such an exciting time for alumni, parents, and community members to connect with the school. This recognition by LMIT shows the promise of our students and all they can accomplish," says Barber-Joiner. "With connected and engaged alums and community members who are doing this work, the possibilities for success are limitless. We have already been celebrated as one of only eight schools in the entire country; it's an incredible validation of the hard work and commitment of our students. With the power of our whole community behind us, we'll be unstoppable."

Scan here to watch a video that showcases the work the InvenTeam has done so far.

Scan here to follow the Cincinnati Country Day School InvenTeam's blog for monthly updates:

SAVE THE DATE!

Mid-Grant Technical Review
Tuesday, February 20 | 5:00 – 6:30 p.m.

This will be the team's first public preview and demonstration of their invention prototype so that they can get feedback from the community.








Creating leaders who, through the discovery of their own abilities, kindle the potential of others and better a dynamic world.

MISSION *in Action*

CELEBRATING OUR 2023 VIRTUE IN ACTION AND DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD RECIPIENTS



The Cincinnati Country Day School community honored two alumni during the 2023 Alumni Breakfast: Dick Durand ’73 was named this year’s recipient of the Virtue in Action Award and Steve Lazarus ’81 was selected as the recipient of the 2023 Distinguished Alumni Award.

“Every year on Homecoming weekend, it is my privilege to welcome alumni home to their alma mater – to our alma mater,” said Rob Zimmerman ’98, head of school. “But this year as I look at the extraordinary and longstanding commitment demonstrated by our two honorees it seems to be more than merely a familiar cliché to call this a home for our alumni. In fact, if you combine all the years Dick and Steve have spent at Country Day as a student, parent, employee, and trustee, you get a staggering 85 years of active engagement.”

For the Distinguished Alumni designation, the Alumni Council elects one or more alumni in recognition of their contribution to the school, their contribution to the community, or their professional achievement. The Virtue in Action Award is given to an alum celebrating their 50th or greater reunion year whose volunteer service in their community exemplifies the school’s motto: Virtue in Action.

Durand, this year’s Virtue in Action Award recipient, has been an integral part of the Country Day community for 60 years. From his first day as a third grader in 1963, he has

worn many Country Day hats: student, alumnus, parent, volunteer, employee, and trustee. Often juggling several of those hats at once, Durand has demonstrated a powerful commitment to serving Country Day.

While Durand's contributions of time and energy have helped shape many elements of the Country Day experience, he has been particularly instrumental in the expansion and improvement of the school's campus over the last 25 years. From helping to plan and oversee the construction of the Upper School building, the Early Childhood Center, and the Leonard Family Athletic Center, to managing the renovation of Broadwell House, he has literally left his mark on the Country Day campus.

"Country Day is a very different school than it would have been without Dick Durand, and the reminders are visible every day," said Zimmerman. "We are grateful for Dick's tremendous example of service and his commitment to Country Day over so many years."

While he has given much of himself to Country Day, Durand has also made major impacts on the larger Cincinnati area through his award-winning volunteer service to the Cincinnati Children's Home, the Inter Parish Ministries Food Pantry, and Camp Ernst. A true fan and student of the game of baseball, he has also spent many years coaching and promoting youth baseball throughout Ohio.

"Service to the community and school have been major priorities in my life," explained Durand. "It is part of giving back for all the opportunities and things that have been given to me over the years. I have been very fortunate to have been able to support the school along with other organizations. I very much appreciate those who have sought out, welcomed, and embraced my advice, guidance, and knowledge. I am especially grateful to have been able to serve this school's community for years in so many ways and to be able to help make a difference for the betterment of our students."

Durand is the 11th recipient of the school's Virtue in Action Award and Lazarus is the 61st recipient of the school's Distinguished Alumni Award.

In May 2023, the CCDS Alumni Council unanimously selected Lazarus to be the recipient of the award.

A lifer who attended Country Day from kindergarten, Lazarus dove right back into the Country Day community after completing his collegiate and professional education. As a young lawyer only recently out of law school, he joined the Alumni Council in 1989 to champion the interests of alumni and to advance the school. Between 1989 and 2023, he gave 16 years of service to the council, helping to mold the council into an influential vehicle for alumni voices. For 14 of those 16 years, Lazarus also served as an alumni representative on the school's Board of Trustees, and for the last three of those years, he was chair of the board's finance committee. While he has been one of the school's longest-serving trustees and one of its most dedicated alumni, his service to the school is not finished: Lazarus will continue to protect and promote the interests of the school as an at-large member of the Board of Trustees and as chair of the finance committee for another three-year term.

"Steve's service has not just been exemplary; it has been extended," said Zimmerman. "Since beginning his service to Country Day's Alumni Council in 1989, Steve has been continuously engaged with Country Day every single year as a parent, Alumni Council representative, and trustee, up through today. Thanks in part to Steve's volunteer leadership, Country Day began this school year with the highest opening enrollment in 20 years.... I am personally very grateful for Steve's advice, support, and commitment, which has made me a better head of school. He has been the driving force behind so many good things here at Country Day."

His dedication to Country Day and his love for the school are also reflected in Lazarus's decision to send all four of his children to the school from their earliest years. Allison '10, Meg '13, Sam '22, and Gertrude '27 are all lifers.

"The Country Day I attended was a very different school than what exists today," said Lazarus. "I have witnessed the school evolve from a very good school to an exceptional school. I am extremely optimistic for the school's future given its strong foundation and terrific leadership team."

In his professional life, Lazarus is a principal in the law firm of Lazarus & Lewis, where his practice focuses on the representation of public employees and their unions.

"My Country Day education was integral to my business success," continued Lazarus. "Country Day taught me critical organizational skills and the ability to think independently. I also developed close bonds with the superb faculty members who helped foster a strong sense of my identify and self-confidence."

For more than 30 years, he has been a powerful advocate for public employees, negotiating their labor contracts and protecting their rights in arbitration proceedings, disciplinary hearings, and court cases. Widely acclaimed as an expert in these fields, Lazarus is much in demand as a speaker, as a teacher, and as a panel participant throughout Ohio and Kentucky.

During the Alumni Breakfast on September 23, 2023, Zimmerman also acknowledged members of the Virtue in Action Society, a guild composed of alumni who are commemorating their 50th reunion or higher. "To those of you in the Class of 1973 and beyond, welcome back; we're honored by your presence today and hope you enjoy reconnecting with classmates and sharing stories of your time on Given Road.... Nothing gives us more pleasure than connecting with alumni and linking our history to our future."

CCDS IS THE ONLY PRIVATE SCHOOL IN CINCINNATI TO RECEIVE TOP AP AWARD

Cincinnati Country Day School has been awarded "Platinum with Access" in the 2023 AP School Honor Roll, issued by the College Board. This award recognizes the consistently high scores achieved by our students on AP exams and the school's clear and effective commitment to equitable access to advanced coursework.

In receiving this award, Country Day not only ranks top among private schools in the city but is the only co-educational private school in the state to receive the award – the other recipients being all-girls' schools in Columbus and the Cleveland area.

"This award is a testament to the exceptional quality of teaching and commitment to principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion that Country Day prioritizes as fundamental characteristics of the student experience," says Jenn Weinheimer, head of Upper School. "We are proud that this commitment has been recognized at a national level."

Among public schools in Ohio, only Walnut Hills and Wyoming High School received the Platinum with Access award. While several local schools, both public and private, received a Platinum award, they failed to earn the AP Access Award, which means specifically that "the percentage of AP exam takers who are underrepresented minority and/or low-income students mirrors the school's overall student demographics."

"This award is so exciting because it recognizes the things that are at the core of the Country Day experience: excellent classroom instruction from teachers who care about and encourage every student," says Sarah Boocock Beyreis, director of college counseling.

"It's wonderful to have national recognition for who we are. One of the things I've always loved about Country Day is its genuine diversity; our students bring so many different life experiences to our classrooms. It makes life on campus very rich, and it prepares our students beautifully for the kind of diversity they will encounter in college and in life. I feel especially proud of this award because it represents who we are."

According to the College Board, the AP School Honor Roll offers schools recognition across four levels of distinction: Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum. Schools on the AP School Honor Roll may also earn the AP Access Award if they meet select criteria.

Scan here for the full list of schools recognized by the College Board (Ohio begins on page 122).

COUNTRY DAY NAMED #1 IN THE CINCINNATI AREA

Niche.com ranked Cincinnati Country Day School as the #1 best private high school, #1 best private K-12 school, and #1 best high school for STEM in the Cincinnati area.

"We are pleased to be ranked #1 in a multitude of categories that showcase our entire program, including K-12, high school, and STEM education," says Robert Zimmerman '98, head of school. "Most of all, this is a testament to our world-class faculty and staff. We take the most pride in our relationships, not our rankings, as they best reflect how we know, nurture, and inspire our students."

In Ohio, the school also ranked #4 best private K-12 school, #5 best private high school, and #5 best high school for STEM.

Scan here to visit Country Day's profile and see the full list of 2024 rankings, methodologies, and data sources.

Honoring

FIVE AWARD-WINNING ARTS HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES

Cincinnati Country Day School welcomes the third class of inductees into the school's Arts Hall of Fame: Aaron Dessner '94, Bryce Dessner '94, Ashley Kahn '78, Barbara Kellar, and Kim Kern '87.

"Today's honorees have excelled in a wide range of artistic endeavors, including music, theater, TV, and literary works," said Rob Zimmerman '98, head of school. "Their accomplishments have won worldwide accolades, including multiple Grammy Awards, an Emmy Award, a MacDowell Medal, and recognition of one honoree's organization as Theater Company of the Decade. Three of our honorees have even been awarded a key to the city. Make no mistake; each of these five honorees is an innovator of the highest order, and their artistic voices are as inimitable as they are inspiring. But each member of this year's class also reminds us of the power of art not just to create but to reinvent, to change minds about what we think we know, to make us look at the world in entirely new ways."

Barbara Kellar has been helping the Cincinnati community see the arts world differently for decades. Introduced by Buck Niehoff '65, she is a former Cincinnati Country Day School (CCDS) teacher and an Emmy-winning champion of the arts in Cincinnati. She has long featured the movers and shakers of the Cincinnati arts scene on her TV show, *SHOWCASE with Barbara Kellar*, and has worked tirelessly to promote the arts in Cincinnati and at Country Day. She reflected on the culture of art appreciation at Country Day and her experiences as a teacher.

"Those five years I spent at Country Day were golden years because I loved the kids, I loved the parents, and everyone was so supportive. And I got the feeling that the love I had for them was returned, and it was returned in many, many ways but a love for the arts was a big part of it," said Kellar. "And we didn't say 'We have to do this or that for the arts,' it was just part of our being as was nurturing the kids and praising them for the wonderful things they did. I'm so proud that Country Day has continued this tradition."



Ashley Kahn '78, who is a faculty member at New York University and a Grammy-winning writer, music critic, and music historian, joined virtually from his home in New York and spoke with gratitude about the impact that Country Day had on his career path.

Introduced by Charlie Goetz, Ashley Kahn '78 joined virtually from his home in New York City.

"Thank you to Country Day for the freedom and the power to be curious and find ways to express it… and the freedom and power to create…and the freedom and power to make mistakes," said Kahn. "The extremely non-linear path I pursued professionally would not have even begun to be possible without Country Day. Thank you, Country Day, for pointing me in the right direction and for the happiness of belonging to a community and serving a purpose."

Scan here to watch the pre-recorded video comments with the Dessner brothers.

In pre-recorded video comments, Bryce Dessner '94, a guitarist, composer, producer, curator of music festivals, and a founding member of the Grammy-winning band The National, also spoke about the concept of service, gratitude, and joy when asked what advice he had for the next generation of artists.

"For those of you who are making art…stay connected to the joy of doing it," said Dessner.

"No matter how successful or famous or how hard it gets, it's that spark that will always remain the only reason to do it. And to realize how lucky you are to be at a place like Cincinnati Country Day, with such amazing teachers and resources, and to be in this beautiful place. And to do your best to honor that and put yourself at the service of others. Take that gift forward and think about what you can do for the world and for other people."

And when it comes to serving the community, Kim Kern '87, who has overseen the growth and expansion of The Children's Theater of Cincinnati (TCT) into a top-ranked and award-winning theater and academy, has served the Greater Cincinnati community since 2013 in her role as managing director and CEO of TCT. Her colleague and the theater's artistic director, Roderick Justice, described her as "the maestro of Children's Theater and now a shining star in the Cincinnati Country Day School Arts Hall of Fame."



Head of School Rob Zimmerman '98 interviewed Bryce Dessner '94 (left) and Aaron Dessner '94 (right) when they were in Cincinnati for the Homecoming music festival.

"Kim doesn't just lead the way," said Justice. "She encourages her team to dance the way, to sing the way, sometimes to puppeteer the way. And Kim leads with the grace of a conductor of a symphony."

Kern credits Country Day with her ability to lead with such impact.

"It is not what I learned at Country Day that has influenced me so greatly, it's how I learned. The world is abuzz these days with the talk of and focus on 21st-century learning skills…those are all things that Country Day was well ahead of the curve on," explained Kern. "Those are all things that were very much instilled in me that enabled me to be successful no matter what path I took. The other thing that Country Day taught me was not just how to succeed but how to succeed gracefully and with humility and, maybe more importantly, how to fail gracefully."

As one of the newest inductees into the Arts Hall of Fame, Aaron Dessner '94, who is a guitarist, keyboardist, songwriter, producer, and curator of music festivals and is best known as a founding member of the Grammy-winning band The National, as the co-founder of the indie rock duo The Big Red Machine, and for his Grammy-winning collaboration with Taylor Swift, also had recommendations for those who might aspire to achieve some of the success he has over the past 25 years. "Have faith, be collaborative, and find community. Because when you look back, that's what's meaningful: friendship and memories."



We celebrated local legends Kim Kern '87 (left) and Barbara Kellar (right).

Country Day's Arts Hall of Fame, which was founded in 2021, celebrates the school's strong and vibrant tradition in the arts. Former students and community members are recognized for their contributions to the fine, musical, performing, and literary arts at CCDS and beyond. This year's inductees joined the seven existing members of the school's Arts Hall of Fame.

Zimmerman left the inductees and their guests with some closing thoughts about the importance of community, support for the arts, and art in today's world.

"We need art, we need artists, and we need art education now more than ever. That's one reason why it's so meaningful for us to gather and celebrate the artists in our midst. Perhaps these stories of Country Day arts legends will not simply reaffirm your belief in the value of a Country Day education; perhaps they will reaffirm your belief in art as the source of hope in this troubled world."

TEACHERS TRAVEL ACROSS THE GLOBE FOR **SUMMER SABBATICALS**



The Patterson-Strauss Travel Grant honors long-time faculty members Bob Patterson and Tony Strauss. The goal of the grant is to fund a sabbatical program for veteran faculty. With almost 60 years teaching at Country Day between the two of them, Brock Miller, Upper School science teacher, and Elena Belfor-Sigalov, piano instructor, were the recipients of this year's grant.

WHAT INTERESTED YOU MOST ABOUT APPLYING FOR THE GRANT?

Elena Belfor-Sigalov: It was a long-time dream for me to go back to Italy. In 1989, when we left the former Soviet Union, we didn't have passports, money, anything. We were just refugees. We had to go to Austria first, wait for months, and then stay in Italy for three months while we awaited to receive political refugee status. While we were there, we didn't really get to experience the culture. So going back was important to me to truly take in the culture, especially the arts, like DaVinci, Michaelangelo, Baroque, and other Renaissance arts.

Brock Miller: I've heard that being a recipient of the grant is a wonderful opportunity from the people who have gone before me, and I was waiting for the right time for my wife and I to go to Alaska. Because everything has to be shipped to Alaska, it's an expensive place to travel. The grant allows you to do more than a bare-bones trip, so we got to explore a bit more and have a few more experiences. Tony Strauss and Bob Patterson were also good friends of mine. It was a very meaningful experience and I thought about them a lot during that trip.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO HAVE RECEIVED THIS GRANT?

EBS: I was very fortunate to know Bob Patterson very well. He supported me and made me feel comfortable when I started working here. He was interested in my family's story and how I grew up in the Soviet Union. He was very interested in history and music. We became great friends. He helped me feel like I was an equal part of the community. And Tony Strauss was a legendary teacher. To receive this grant was such an honor. I couldn't be more appreciative.

BM: It was particularly meaningful because of my memories of Bob and Tony. Bob was a fantastic English teacher and a good friend. And Tony just was "Mr. Country Day." He knew everything about this place. Tony and his wife would entertain the faculty after football games. He was someone I had lunch with all the time and gave me such wise counsel about what it meant to be at Country Day. Nobody knew more about Country Day than Tony.

WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE MEMORY OR EXPERIENCE FROM YOUR TRAVELS?

EBS: It's really hard to say, but probably the first day. We took a tour of Machiavelli's Villa and learned about his life and impact on history. We went to museums, got to see amazing mountains, and at a wine tasting, we even tried blue champagne. We also saw the American cemetery and memorial in Florence. Experiencing such history and traditions on the first day was amazing to experience. We were all just enjoying life. It was a great way to start the trip.

BM: Two memories that stick out are tightly related. The first one is when we went to Denali National Park. We took a bus ride into the park and saw mountain sheep, elk, caribou, and grizzly bears; it was just great. On the next day, we got to see a former student, Katie Karnes '13, who is a park ranger at Denali. She was also best friends with my daughter. We had dinner with her and learned what life is like for a full-time Denali ranger. It was just great to see how happy she was living her life!



WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST TAKEAWAY FROM THE EXPERIENCE?

EBS: Exploring the history of Italy was important, but the social experience was very meaningful to me. Learning how people live and interact in other countries has always interested me – to see how families live together and how they interact with people they don't know...how they don't work as much as we do here in America. In Italy, parents spend more time with their children and families stay together in the same household for generations. Also, their love of music is everywhere. It is amazing. We got to go to the opera at the end of the trip. I cannot explain how impactful it was that I was able to be immersed in their culture.

The beauty of this country, the sea, the architecture, the food, is unbelievable. Italy is a beautiful country filled with such an amazingly welcoming and interesting culture. It's an experience I won't soon forget.

BM: Just how different it is. I have traveled to all but two states of the lower 48 and Alaska is like no place else. The residents have to be so self-reliant and yet, they just love it there. Once people get up there and live there for a while, it seems like they never want to leave. We were at a presentation at Denali, it was raining and barely 60 degrees, which we wouldn't think is a great day, and one of the rangers approached us and said, "What a beautiful day!" to the crowd. Whenever we have overcast and gloomy weather here in Cincinnati, my wife and I now say, "This is beautiful Alaska weather!"

If you have ever thought about going to Alaska, go! I'm also really grateful that it's a generous enough grant that I could take my wife. It was such a great experience.



WHY DO YOU FEEL IT'S IMPORTANT TO COUNTRY DAY TO OFFER THIS GRANT TO TEACHERS?

EBS: The travel grant allows us to experience something we might not normally be able to. Country Day is a very special school to offer this opportunity to its teachers. This is something that allows teachers to enrich themselves and then enrich their students

BM: Part of my role as a teacher is to expand my students' worldview. And going to Alaska expanded my worldview. I'm now able to tell my students about different ways of living and ways of thinking.





PART 1:
BEYOND BORDERS:
MY EYE-OPENING EXPERIENCE IN THE FRENCH EXCHANGE PROGRAM

By: Shiva Shyam '26

In late October, I was exposed to a life-changing experience along with 17 other Country Day students.

This year, the school brought back its one-to-one French exchange program with the Lycée Saint-André in Colmar, France, after the pandemic.

"I have a love of different cultures and languages, so I thought going on this trip would increase my knowledge of French culture and its language," remarks Ali Zimmerman '26. "I really love to travel, which makes this whole experience even better. I remember in middle school my best friend and I said we were going to go to France together no matter what and it's happening, so there's also a bit of nostalgia."

This fall, I had the amazing opportunity to host my exchange partner, Eline, for one week. The week flew by, and we soon found ourselves saying goodbye when we felt as if we just said hello. Throughout the week, I made some incredible memories that I knew I would cherish for years to come. One of my favorite moments was playing a strong game of chess, where I was able to learn the names of various pieces in French.

"I really enjoyed going out to dinner with my students and a friend of mine," says Zimmerman. "Our waiter was even a French student in college, so he noticed an accent and started speaking French with us, which was super cool. I also loved playing Just Dance with them. We did that for a few hours throughout their time with us and it was a blast."

Along with Just Dance battles, Ali introduced her students, Mylena and Constance, to a variety of authentically American experiences, including a trip to Graeters and to a Country Day football game.

If I were to sum up this program in one word it would be this: eye-opening. Sitting in the classroom learning about vocabulary is inherently different from experiencing the language around you. Through this program, I realized that the French language is not just a textbook chapter but a rich culture and a lifestyle for millions of people. This was experienced by many other students as well.



Shiva Shyam '26 and her exchange partner, Eline, dining out at the Cheesecake Factory on Eline's last night in Cincinnati.

"It's important that people experience different cultures and ways of life, and one easy way to do this is by going on an exchange program," remarks Zimmerman. "When you know people from other cultures and spend time with them, it really broadens your mind in some ways that you wouldn't expect."

Ali summarized by stating her anticipation in continuing the program. "I'm excited to go to France and see my students again, and I'm excited to meet other people in a French school, but I'm honestly most excited for the experience as a whole. The flight, the time change, the language difference... I think it will all be a really good experience."

From carving pumpkins to baking cookies and watching Hocus Pocus, I truly appreciated every moment spent, and was able to learn so much from my partner that goes beyond language. Additionally, I feel immensely grateful towards the school for the opportunity to participate in a program such as this, one that many only get to experience in college, if at all. I was able to grow as a person just by meeting people from across the globe, something that I think is a unique experience for any student. I am incredibly excited to go to France this coming spring, and to eat many pastries.



The 2023-24 French exchange program participants.



French students were able to attend a French III class, where they drew and described a Halloween haunted house in French.



Ali Zimmerman '26 (right) with her exchange partners, Constance and Mylena, on a trip to the Dayton Air Force Museum.

Part II of this piece will be in the spring edition of Connections, after the Country Day students spend time in France.

THE 8TH GRADE CLASS TAKES ON WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Class of 2028 took over Washington, D.C. for their 8th grade trip in October, visiting such sites as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Arlington National Cemetery, the National Museum of American History, the National Museum of Natural History, the White House, the Capitol building, the Washington Monument, the National Mall, the Smithsonian Institution, the National Museum of African-American History and Culture, the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, the Air Force Memorial, and the Iwo Jima Memorial! Walking an average of 54,549 steps each throughout the trip, they traversed the city together for an incredible experience of immersive learning, team-building, exploration, and reflection.



THREE NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARS, TEN STUDENTS RECOGNIZED THROUGH NATIONAL RECOGNITION PROGRAMS



In the 69th annual National Merit Scholarship Program, Marley Handler '24 was named a National Merit Semifinalist, and Rana Arebi '24 and Gracie Mitchell '24 were named National Merit Commended Students.

"I plan to become an aerospace engineer because I've always liked building things since I was kid, and this is something I will include in my college applications and resumes for internships and other programs," says Handler.

National Merit Semifinalists have an opportunity to continue in the competition for 7,140 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly $28 million that will be offered in the spring. Over 1.3 million juniors in about 21,000 high schools entered the 2024 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2022 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT). To become a finalist, the semifinalist must submit a detailed scholarship application, possess an outstanding academic record throughout high school, and be recommended by a high school official.

"These students have some of the highest test scores in the nation," says Sarah Boocock Beyreis, director of college counseling and external opportunities. "As you could tell from their peers' loud cheering when we announced their names in assembly, we are so proud of their hard work and impressive achievements."

About 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Although they will not continue in the 2024 competition for National Merit Scholarship awards, Arebi and Mitchell placed among the top 50,000 students who entered the 2024 competition.

"This is definitely an academic honor and something that I will include in my college applications," says Mitchell. "But there is a lot that has brought us to this point. AP testing has helped a lot and so has test prep through Revolution Prep. And the teachers here [at Country Day] have really helped us prepare in so many ways. We have a solid math track here, and the same with English; both of which help with the analytical skills, test-taking strategies, and knowledge recall that helps with standardized tests like this."



Top left to right: Gracie Mitchell, Alex Riemann, Donovan Gray, Lucas de Alarcon, Rachel Mitchell, Ami Bah; bottom left to right: Marley Handler, Vic Quintero, Lucia Murdoch, Ashley Odom, Imri Young, Gigi Macais-Jaime, Rana Arebi

Additionally, five students were also honored in the National African American Recognition Program: Donovan Gray '25, Ray Mitchell '24, Ashley Odom '25, Imri Young '25, and Aminata Bah '24; and five students were also honored in the National Hispanic Recognition Program: Lucas de Alarcon '24, Lucia Murdoch '25, Vic Quintero '25, Giselle Macias-Jaime '24, who was previously honored, and Alexander Riemann '24, who was also previously honored.

According to the College Board website, the National Recognition Programs award academic honors to underrepresented students. Students who take eligible administrations of the PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, or AP exams are considered for awards. While this is not a scholarship program, students can include this academic honor in their college and scholarship applications.

"These students are so much more than just their standardized test scores, but these tests do require a specific sort of skill set," says Jenn Weinheimer, head of Upper School. "These kids aren't only strong students who are pushing boundaries in our most difficult classes and challenging themselves as athletes and citizens; they are also great test-takers. And we're proud of everything they achieve."

AWARDING TWO EDUCATORS FOR EXEMPLARY TEACHING, LOYALTY & COMMITMENT

Amy Thonnerieux and Emily DiMatteo – this year's Pattison Award winners – embody the pillars of the award. Country Day's Lee S. Pattison Distinguished Teacher Award is presented to faculty each year for exemplary teaching, loyalty to the school, and commitment to the students, their parents, and their peers.



"Amy is a unique, beautiful member of the tapestry of our school," wrote Molly Petre, Middle School teacher and 5th grade team leader, in her nomination. "She threads together our community with her professionalism and passion for literature, technology, and quilting. She is ever ready to help a student or a colleague with technology training or seek and find the 'just right' book.... She is a consummate teacher to children and adults in the Country Day community."

Rachel Corwin, who is the world languages department chair and grade 8 team leader, says "Emily is the consummate professional and ideal teammate. Reliable and hard-working, she is someone who I can always count on. She is an asset to any team; always diplomatic, innovative, and kind. She has a knack for anticipating the next task at hand, and then taking the lead to get things done. In her classroom, Emily helps students discover a love of (or at minimum an appreciation for) reading. She works patiently to improve her students' skills at writing. She is rigorous and compassionate simultaneously, providing each student with just the right amount of support they need to grow. She makes connections with all her students, especially her advisees, for whom she advocates and supports. Emily provides experiences in the classroom that teach students the skills they need to be successful. There is no doubt in my mind that she has inspired several future educators."

The Country Day community would not be the same without these two spectacular people. Thonnerieux, who is the Lower School librarian and is now in her 17th year at Country Day, says she was "surprised and honored to receive the award. Knowing that other faculty members – people who do what you do – nominated you is very rewarding. It's nice to be validated and recognized for work that I'm passionate about.... Libraries have been called the great equalizer as they provide equal opportunities to all who walk through the doors. I hope that the children that come through our library feel this – that they see themselves as creators, coders, makers, researchers, and, of course, readers. That they challenge themselves to see the world in new ways and stretch themselves as learners. This is what I strive for every day."

DiMatteo, who is in her sixth year of teaching English in the Middle School, agrees and says "it is nice that the school has something in place that recognizes teachers. Now I need to pay it forward; there are so many people here who are doing great work.... I'm just one person in a sea of talented educators, I want to help recruit the next generation of educators who are going to elevate this profession."

Both faculty members were presented with $10,000, with an additional $1,000 that must be spent on something that supports their role in the school. While Thonnerieux is still deciding how to allocate her funds, DiMatteo "ordered books immediately, which allowed me to try something new in addition to purchasing more high-interest books. My objective is always to get the students to read and to read a lot, so my idea was to get them to read a trilogy this summer. I think it was an effective way to have them take more ownership of their reading."

The Pattison Award was created in memory of one of the school's legendary teachers, Lee S. Pattison, who graced the Country Day campus from 1946 to 1988. First granted in 1989, the Lee S. Pattison Distinguished Teacher Award seeks to celebrate teachers who best embody all that Lee Pattison gave, day in and day out: loyalty, creativity, humor, flexibility, and integrity.

"Helping students develop their analytical eyes and writerly voices drives my daily efforts, and it sounds like no one did more for Country Day students in that regard than Mr. Pat. I would have loved to have learned from him," said DiMatteo in her acceptance speech. "I don't know if it's a calling or a lack of creativity, but I've always wanted to be a teacher. I think it's the dream job."



Congratulations to these two teachers who join the ranks of a long and impressive list of winners. To view past winners and learn more about the Pattison Award scan here.

CENTENNIAL SPOTLIGHT

10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY
Lower School Building

January 14, 2024, marks the 10-year anniversary of the remodeling of our Lower School building!

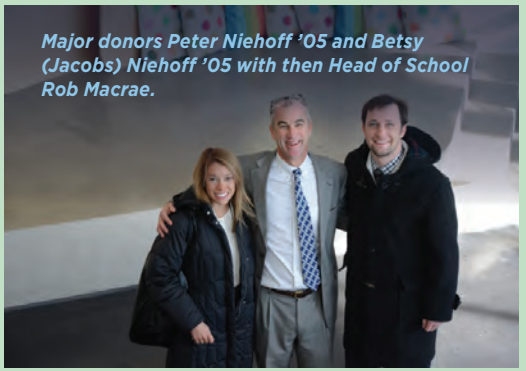
In 2014, the school finalized a huge capital project, finishing extensive repairs and maintenance of the flat roof and remodeling the front entrance, including the addition of the glass-fronted lobby (Niehoff Commons), administrative offices, bathrooms, library, stage, faculty work space, a new covered walkway (which adjoins to the original section at the front), and the concrete plaza in front of the Lower School.

To commemorate this milestone, we have collected some fun facts as we wander down memory lane:



The school community gathered in Niehoff Commons for the ribbon-cutting ceremony.

- Two new Lower School teachers joined us that year: Chloe (Hockley) Reddick and Connie Wagner (who is also the parent of 4th grade teacher Michelle Newman).
- 108 families made donations to support the capital improvements.
- We buried a time capsule on January 14, 2014, which will be opened in 2064.
- Remember the $100,000 Jen Aquino Challenge? Jen (Aquino) Jensen, head of Lower School at the time, was challenged to hold a different bug, bird, or reptile for each $10,000 raised. Needless to say, she held 10 critters!
- 16 Lower School faculty or staff members who worked at Country Day during the 2013-14 school year are still employed here today.



Major donors Peter Niehoff '05 and Betsy (Jacobs) Niehoff '05 with then Head of School Rob Macrae.



CREATIVITY SOARED AT FALLFEST 2023!

By: Johanna Brun, PA vice president

The Country Day campus buzzed with a burst of creativity at this year's art-themed FallFest! Held on September 23, the annual community event brought together students, parents, families, faculty, and staff for an afternoon filled with laughter, creativity, and a splash of color!

The festival featured beloved inflatables, such as Human Whack-A-Mole and the Extreme Rock Climb Slide, while games like Quarterback Blitz and Lucky Sucker kept kids of all ages excited for prizes, including sand art bottles filled at the newly established craft tables.

More than 1,012 bottled and canned beverages kept guests hydrated, while 176 hotdogs and 244 burgers fueled attendees for the festival and Homecoming game.

Adding an artistic twist, the festival introduced the wildly popular "Paint the Teacher" activity, where students launched over 1,200 biodegradable paintballs at our spirited faculty and staff. Students also created vibrant sand art masterpieces with over 120 pounds of colorful sand and engaged in other creative activities like collage art, showcasing their true colors at the Blue and White Spirit Shack.

Kiddieland was another notable highlight, with the addition of an inflatable balloon dome, a dedicated craft table, and an increased number of games, even the youngest of attendees couldn't help but be impressed.

This year's festival set a record with 466 presale tickets, and the Parents' Association sold so many tickets that IOUs were issued at the gate instead of bracelets!

A heartfelt thank you goes to the incredible 150 parents and 130 students who dedicated their time, energy, and creativity to make the event a resounding success. From filling the campus with decorations and collaborative artworks to supervising games with enthusiasm, and from crafting delicious treats like cotton candy and snow cones to expertly managing the distribution of prizes, our volunteers were nothing short of phenomenal.

Once again, this year's FallFest was a resounding success, blending artistry, collaboration, and a touch of unconventional fun.













DR. ALLEN GUELZO TALKS LINCOLN, AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AT COUNTRY DAY



Dr. Allen Guelzo (on the right) with members of the Indian Hill Historical Society.

In partnership with the Indian Hill Historical Society, Country Day welcomed Princeton historian and award-winning author Dr. Allen Guelzo to campus. Dr. Guelzo gave a riveting speech about American democracy and President Abraham Lincoln, which is the topic of his upcoming book. He engaged the Keeler Theater-packed audience with a well-versed perspective, while also providing little-known facts and anecdotes. Dr. Guelzo should expect to see an increased demand for his book's pre-order list after his enlightening speech.

SIX COUNTRY DAY STUDENTS INDUCTED TO CUM LAUDE SOCIETY

Country Day is proud to have six students inducted into the Cum Laude Society this year. The Cum Laude Society is dedicated to honoring scholastic achievement in secondary schools. We are one of the few schools in Cincinnati to host an independent chapter. To qualify, students must be in the top 20% of their class, based on their GPAs from their sophomore year, junior year, and the first semester of senior year. This year's class includes the following seniors (pictured from left to right): Leo Joffe, Rena Arebi, Marley Handler, Gracie Mitchell, Emma Rainey, and Alex Riemann (not pictured). "This year's exceptional first group consists of six students with widely varied academic interests," says Nat Tracey-Miller, MS/US librarian and Cum Laude Society chapter advisor. "They have demonstrated a shared mastery of our challenging curriculum, each uniquely displaying their passion for learning."



MAX STOSSEL TALKS ABOUT THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA WITH COUNTRY DAY PARENTS



Max Stossel (center) with the PA president, Dean Johns (left), and Head of School Rob Zimmerman '98.

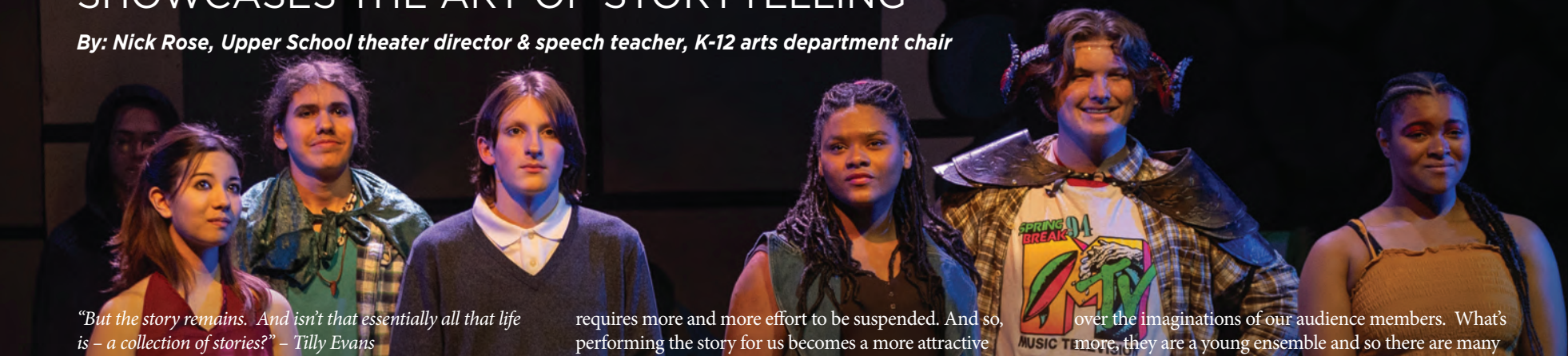
The Parents' Association hosted Social Awakening CEO Max Stossel, who is a former tech industry leader and an award-winning speaker and storyteller, in early November to speak with parents about the effects that social media is having on their children. Stossel's mission is to "help teens, schools, and parents survive and thrive" in an ever-changing and evolving digital world. He illustrated some of the specific ways technology is designed to be addictive and distracting, highlighted how social media impacts young (and adult) minds, and gave recommendations on how to address some of the challenges you and your family are facing. His presentation was thought-provoking, entertaining, and full of notable takeaways.

Scan the QR code for tools and reminders from Max Stossel for parents.

SHE KILLS MONSTERS

SHOWCASES THE ART OF STORYTELLING

By: Nick Rose, Upper School theater director & speech teacher, K-12 arts department chair



"But the story remains. And isn't that essentially all that life is – a collection of stories?" – Tilly Evans

It was this line that sold me on the power of *She Kills Monsters*. Because for all its sophomoric silliness, it is a powerful story. A story of Agnes Evans as she tries to understand the story of her lost teenage sister, Tilly. With every roll of the 20-sided die, with every slaying of the poor adventurer, Steve, with every new wild and crazy boss monster, Agnes does indeed learn more about who her sister was in life. But more importantly, Agnes learns to live with her grief and still share one last meaningful experience with her sister simply by participating in the imaginative story Tilly created. And at the end of the epic journey when the dragon is slain, Agnes realizes along with the audience it was the actual act of storytelling that mattered most.

We sometimes forget that theater is simply the communal form of storytelling. It is fundamentally the same as when we were young and sat in a circle while our teacher read us *Green Eggs and Ham*, or *Pete the Cat*, or *The Little Blue Truck*. When we were younger, it was easier to let our imaginations run wild while our teacher read to us about fantastical things that are still somehow related to our worlds. As we get older, it gets tougher. Our disbelief requires more and more effort to be suspended. And so, performing the story for us becomes a more attractive option. And even then, we know it must be performed well in order to charge up the old engines of our imaginative powers.

Based on the reactions of many of our audience members this fall, I feel confident when I say that every student in the Nighthawk Upper School Theater is a master storyteller. People laughed at the silliness; they cheered when the monsters were slain; they cried when they realized the depth of Agnes's grief; and their hearts swelled when the story came to its end and Agnes realized that "this made her happy."

And it was all to the great efforts of the actors and crew who told the story.

We had veteran actors Nicole McNeal '25, Rachel Mitchell '24, Ashley Odom '25, Yvannia Buten '26, and Dylan Rumpke '24 back and offering wonderful and nuanced performances. But we also had a lot of new faces onstage this year like Joey Mieher '26, Mick Gammon '26, Autumn Rinaldi '27, Oliver Jeffries '27, and Ava Lewis '26 just to name a few. Together this group of talented performers won over the imaginations of our audience members. What's more, they are a young ensemble and so there are many more opportunities to see them onstage.

But the art of storytelling in theater is more than just performing a character onstage. There must be a set on which to perform it. There must be costumes and props to help define the characters we are watching, and there must be lighting and sound to help us bring the world of the story to life. And Country Day is so lucky to have such a strong team of talented artists to provide our productions with just that. Students like Will Schiff '24, August Dickerhoof '26, Vic Quintero '25, Gracie Dickerhoof '26, Jack Albers '26, Emily Connolly '27, John Mullins '26, Cara Hamall '25 and many others worked hard each week to build a wonderful set, design magical lighting and soundscapes, and make sure the swords and the sorcery looked out of this world. I am always astonished by their work.

And so, as this story has come to its close and the storytellers go back to their day-to-day lives as CCDS students, I am a little sad, and a lot proud. While they are done telling the story, their story of *She Kills Monsters* will remain with each of them as they each build upon their life's collection.

And I get to say that I was there when they told it.



"Unsung Hero" WINS STAFF AWARD

The Staff Award is given annually to a staff member whose outstanding workplace achievements contribute to the school's excellence. This year, Jeff Spain '71, Country Day's invaluable network administrator, was selected to receive the award.

When asked about what it means to have received the award, Spain said, "I'm very grateful. At the end of the day, I don't work because of any recognition. I work as hard as I can because I believe it's the right thing to do."

Spain's colleagues in the IT department value everything he brings to their team.

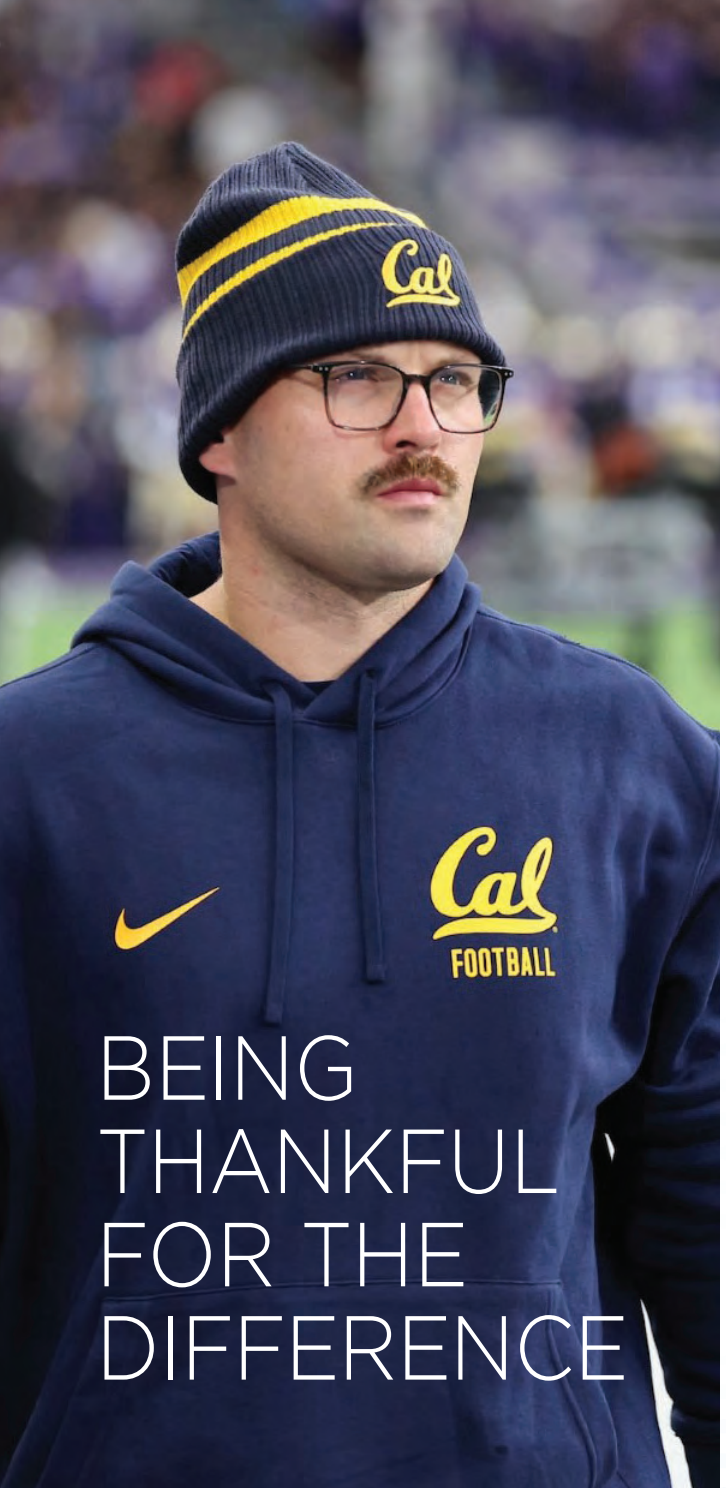
"This whole network is his design," says Mike Sivitz, technical support specialist. "He's grown and developed it over time. If he ever leaves, it will probably take multiple people to replace him."

Spain has been a part of the fabric of Country Day for almost 65 years. He is a Country Day lifer who started kindergarten in 1958. During his time as a medical doctor and running his own practice, he continued to stay involved by designing and building Country Day's network. And he's now about to complete his 28th year as full-time staff member.

"No one loves this place more than Jeff," says Rob Baker, director of technology. "He's very invested in the success of this place. Country Day wouldn't function without his work behind the scenes."

Head of School Rob Zimmerman '98 concurs with Baker about Spain's investment in the success of Country Day.

"As an alum and former parent, Jeff's ties to Country Day are deep and authentic. His combination of expertise and passion for Country Day makes him an unstoppable force. Jeff is, in many respects, the biggest unsung hero at Country Day. Much of our day-to-day operations run on the network that he maintains. Without his expertise and diligence, we simply would not have the school that we have today."



BEING THANKFUL FOR THE DIFFERENCE

Zach Higginbotham ’13 may now be a “staff nerd” who handles all the team’s performance data and sport science-performance analytics and performance reconditing on the field with the University of California, Berkeley’s football program as their applied science and reconditioning coordinator, but he was a self-proclaimed “chronic underachiever” in high school.

“I was always a talented kid academically, but I was never driven in that area,” says Higginbotham. “Without people like Peter Fossett, Charles McGivern, Greg Ross, Steve Conner, and a few others, I’m not confident I could have developed to where I am now. I may not have found the NFL career I dreamed of or a Harvard law degree, but a decade later I’m light years ahead of where most are in my profession and am on track to get my PhD. It’s a drastic change from the underachieving wannabe jock, who didn’t like studying. All of this is because I was encouraged to find my own unique path in life because of CCDS. My experience [at Country Day] is an integral piece of my development.”

Higginbotham was recruited to play football for the University of Cincinnati and committed to playing during his senior year at Country Day. “I didn’t come from much so if college wasn’t paid for, I probably would have gone to a trade school.” After his freshman year, he transferred to Marshall University due to personal reasons and graduated with a bachelor’s degree in exercise physiology. He then pursued his master’s degree in sport science and performance rehabilitation from Logan University.

He transferred to Country Day his sophomore year after attending Elder High School for one year. Greg Ross was his summer basketball coach before his 8th grade year



and tried to convince him to attend Country Day but Higginbotham wanted to attend a school with a bigger athletic program. When they re-connected during Higginbotham’s freshman year, he knew he had to follow Ross’s advice because he “really trusted Greg. I’m happy about my transition to Country Day. My experience [at Country Day] put me on a path to figure out who I was on my own and to learn how to be a thoughtful and creative thinker. It was a foundational piece to being a lifelong learner. If you had told my high-school self that I would be on track to get my Ph.D., I would have laughed in your face. Country Day taught me how to handle the bandwidth and consider all options. I’ve never been part of anything like it.”

Higginbotham recently fielded prospective jobs with a professional soccer team in the United Arab Emirates, a professional rugby union team in Australia, and even a few NFL opportunities. But he rejected them. As a coach on Cal-Berkeley’s football team, Higginbotham feels like he’s exactly where he is supposed to be...for now.



Zach's senior year picture.

"Since I finished playing in college, I have been a bit of a rambling man. I believe I'm on state seven now, as coaching can be unforgiving and lacking leads in the classifieds. It's an interesting ordeal having a job that's mostly dependent on 18- to 22-year-old men showing up every day and showing consistency at a very high level. But what I do is really fulfilling because I was one of those kids on the field. To watch someone not be able to walk and then to see them play in the NFL and know that you had a part in that is so rewarding."

While he believes his work is gratifying, it's also very taxing. An intensive football schedule means he often cannot make it home for holidays.

"If you're home for Christmas it means you're with a team that probably isn't very good and you're about to be fired or you were fired. My first job out of college was when I worked for a Top 5 team, I was making $8,000 a year, sleeping on a foam mattress on a friend's floor, and working 10-12 hours daily for the first year. It's a really hard profession starting out; most young coaches end up sleeping in their office or their car. You have to love it and hold some sense of purpose, or you'll get burned out quickly."

He landed at Cal-Berkeley after a coaching staff change at the University of Mississippi, electing for professional stability, but never forgetting that, at the end of the day, he's working in the entertainment industry. "If your team is not winning you quickly become expendable; it is a bottom-line business. You have to know what you want in your career and in your personal life. I fit well in collegiate and professional football; it's what I know and it's where I have the highest career trajectory because of it. I know my path and profession is a little different than most in the CCDS community, but I am thankful for the difference and the daily struggle of it."



Zach on the sidelines during a Cal-Berkeley football game.

STUDENT-ATHLETES NAMED AMONG THE BEST IN THE STATE, REGION & NATION



Following their thrilling victory in the Division III state championship, three players on the Country Day varsity girls soccer team are being recognized for their outstanding performances this past season.

Elizabeth Zimmerman '24 was declared one of the best soccer players in the nation when she was named to the 2023 Fall Girls High School All-America Team by United Soccer Coaches. Zimmerman is the sixth player to be named an All-American under Theresa "Hirsch" Hirschauer, the varsity girls soccer head coach. Along with 1,200 of the best youth, high school, and college players in the nation, Zimmerman will be honored at the All-America ceremony and reception in Anaheim, California in January 2024.

United Soccer Coaches also announced that Zimmerman and Sydney Hardesty '24 were named to the Girls High School All-Central Region Team. This team includes the best players from the midwestern states. This is also the first year that two Nighthawks were named to this regional team since Hirsch has been head coach.

"Ohio is full of incredible soccer players, so this is a pretty cool experience for us to be recognized in this way," says Hardesty. "This is icing on the cake of an incredible season and the experience of being on this team with these other powerhouse players and women."

Hardesty, Zimmerman, and Megan Zimmerman '24 round out this year's awards by receiving All-Ohio Honors for Division III by the Ohio Scholastic Soccer Coaches Association. Hardesty and Elizabeth Zimmerman received first-team honors, with Zimmerman being named Player of the Year. Megan Zimmerman received second-team honors.

"I couldn't be prouder of the hard work and leadership of these young women," says Hirsch. "All three excel in the classroom while also participating in multiple sports for Country Day. Their leadership, along with Piper Farris '24, was the foundation for our team's success. These awards are a culmination of their incredible high school careers, during which they won 75 games with two state championships and a state runner-up."



LEAVING BEHIND A LEGACY

By: Marin Lange '25, a member of the 2023 state champion soccer team

Now that the state championship trophy for girls soccer is back safe and sound at Cincinnati Country Day School, we can take a sigh of relief and talk a bit about what this team accomplished.

The Nighthawks' record this year was 22-2 and they collected all three trophies, becoming district, regional, and state champions. At this year's state final match, the Nighthawks played the same team from last year's state final – Ottawa-Glandorf. The game-winning goal was scored in the first half by Megan Zimmerman '24 from a corner kicked by her sister, Elizabeth Zimmerman '24. Goalkeeper Alyssa Easter '26 and the backline of defense – Melissa Teke '24, Samantha Easter '24, and Sydney Hardesty '24 – had a shutout throughout the entirety of tournament season, not letting one ball into the back of the net, even when Melissa Teke '24 had to go to the goal line herself to save the ball (without her hands!) in the state final.

While the team consists of 37 girls ranging from freshmen to seniors, 13 out of the 37 are seniors. And this senior class is something special. A lot of people could say that about any senior class, but this senior class has proof to back them up. The Class of 2024 has an outstanding record of 75-9-5 from their four years playing high school soccer. This class has also won two state trophies, one state runner-up trophy, three regional trophies, and four district trophies. That is 10 out of 12 possible trophies that a team can win in four years, which is absolutely remarkable.

They also have their own teammates to vouch for just how welcoming they made the experience for everyone on the team. Junior Molly Klekamp says the seniors on the team have "made this year so much more fun and personal" and she wishes "this wasn't [her] last year with them." Molly's experience was not unique; everyone on the team could easily come up with something remarkable the seniors have done for them.

It's not just their teammates who have recognized the seniors' natural leadership and inclusive nature. Our four senior captains, Piper Farris, Sydney Hardesty, Elizabeth Zimmerman, and Megan Zimmerman, have been named 1st team all MVC Conference, Molly Klekamp '25, Josie Hyden '27, and Melissa Teke '24 have been named 2nd team all MVC, and Samantha Easter '24 and Alyssa Easter '26 were given Honorable Mentions. Megan Zimmerman was also named Player of the Year in the MVC Conference. Elizabeth Zimmerman was named Ohio's D3 Player of the Year and Head Coach Theresa Hirschauer was named All Southwest Ohio Girls D3 Private Coach of the Year by the Ohio Scholastic Soccer Coaches Association.

While the team has accomplished all it was hoping for, the seniors are surely leaving behind an inspiring legacy for younger generations to come, and their trophies will be forever displayed and admired in the trophy case by others wishing to accomplish the same.



FOUR COUNTRY DAY SENIORS ANNOUNCE PLANS FOR ATHLETIC FUTURES



The gym of the Leonard Family Athletic Center was filled with friends, family, teachers, and coaches as four Nighthawks officially announced to the Cincinnati Country Day School community where they have committed to continue their athletic careers at the collegiate level.

Davis Campbell (Liberty Township) will attend the University of Evansville to play baseball; Parker Corbin (Loveland) will attend the University of Maryland to play baseball; Piper Farris (New Richmond) will attend East Carolina University to play soccer; and Sydney Hardesty (Loveland) will attend the University of Toledo to play soccer. All four athletes will be playing at the Division-1 level at their respective schools.

"It is a day of achievement for these student-athletes and their families," said Dennis Coyle, athletic director. "I want to congratulate each of you and your families on this accomplishment. You have made your teams better and your programs better, not just because you are good athletes, but because you are good people."

When Corbin was asked about how Country Day has prepared him for his next adventure, he said, "Country Day taught me how to interact with people from a variety of backgrounds. I also learned skills like time management that will not only help me in college but also in the workforce."

He was also very appreciative and grateful for the time he spent at Country Day.

"I like how tight-knit the community at Country Day is. I really enjoyed playing at a smaller school because I got to form such special bonds with my teammates. The memories I made here will definitely last a lifetime."

The next athletics signing day will take place on February 7, 2024, at 12 p.m. in the gym of the Leonard Family Athletic Center.



As one of two Cincinnati high school soccer players named Ohio Player of the Year in their divisions by the Ohio Scholastic Soccer Coaches Association, Elizabeth Zimmerman '24 had 32 goals and 32 assists to lead the Nighthawks to the Division III state championship for the second year in a row.

2023 FALL SPORTS WRITE UP

CROSS COUNTRY

- **CCDS Invitational – Girls 2nd Place, Boys 3rd Place**
- **Vanca Pandey '26 won the CCDS Invitational for the 2nd year in a row**

MVC Awards:

- **Boys Finished in 4th place**
- **MVC Runner of the Year: Vanca Pandey '26**
- **MVC First Team: Vanca Pandey '26**

**Vanca Pandey '26 qualified for the OHSAA Regional Meet*

GIRLS GOLF

- **Katie Wang '24 earned Medalist honors in multiple matches. Her low score for the season was a 36.**

BOYS GOLF

MVC Awards:

- **Team finished in 3rd place**
- **MVC First Team: Marc Hayden Mann '25**
- **MVC Second Team: Ethan Argus '25**

Team was Sectional Runner Up and finished 4th at Districts

FOOTBALL

- **MVC Champions for the 3rd year in a row**
- **10-0 regular season (outscored opponents 431-20!)**
- **12 wins – the most in school history**
- **OHSAA Regional Semifinalist**

MVC Awards:

- **Coach of the Year: Dennis Coyle**
- **Offensive Player of the Year: Parker Corbin '24**
- **Defensive Player of the Year: Shepard Snell '24**
- **First Team MVC: Parker Corbin `24, Ryan Coyle '25, Teagen Davis '25, Lucas Donahue '26, Luke Heekin '24, Patrick Ramage '25, Colin She '24, Bryce Snell '25, Shepard Snell '24, Lee Thomas '25, Andrew Zimmerman '24**
- **Second Team MVC: Brandon Proffitt '26, Will Robinson '26**

- Honorable Mention MVC: David Fields ’27, Elijah Guttman ’25

SWOFCA All City Division 5/6/7:
- 1st Team – Parker Corbin ’24, Lee Thomas ’25, Lucas Donahue ’26, Patrick Ramage ’25, Colin She ’24, Shepard Snell ’24, Ryan Coyle ’25 & Andrew Zimmerman ’24

Southwest Ohio All District Division VI:
- Division VI Defensive Player of the Year: Shepard Snell ’24
- All District: Paker Corbin ’24, Lee Thomas ’25, Patrick Ramage ’25, Andrew Zimmerman ’24, Shepard Snell ’24, Ryan Coyle ’25, Lucas Donahue ’26, Colin She ’24

All State Division VI:
- 1st Team –Lee Thomas ’25, Shepard Snell ’24, Ryan Coyle ’25 & Andrew Zimmerman ’24
- 2nd Team - Parker Corbin ’24
- 3rd Team - Patrick Ramage ’25

BOYS SOCCER
- MVC Awards: Team finished in 3rd place
- First Team MVC: Lucas de Alarcon ’24, Andrew Pavlisko ’26, Donovan Gray ’25
- Second Team MVC: Gabriel Benitez ’26, Nate Paumier ’25, Nicholas Vredeveld ’25
- Honorable Mention MVC: Trey Blum ’26, Levi Homan ’24

Southwest Ohio All District:
- Lucas de Alarcon ’24, Andrew Pavlisko ’24, Donovan Gray ’25

All State:
- 2nd Team All State: Lucas de Alarcon ’24

GIRLS SOCCER
- Division III State Champions (and did not give up a goal the entire OHSAA tournament!)
- Regional Champions, District Champions, Sectional Champions, MVC 2nd place

MVC Awards:
- Player of the Year: Megan Zimmerman ’24
- First Team MVC: Piper Farris ’24, Sydney Hardesty ’24, Elizabeth Zimmerman ’24, Megan Zimmerman ’24
- Second Team MVC: Josie Hyden ’27, Molly Klekamp ’26, Melissa Teke ’24
- Honorable Mention MVC: Sam Easter ’24, Alyssa Easter ’26

Southwest Ohio All District:
- Elizabeth Zimmerman ’24, Megan Zimmerman ’24, Sydney Hardesty ’24, Piper Farris ’24

All State:
- Division III Player of the Year: Elizabeth Zimmerman ’24
- First Team All State: Elizabeth Zimmerman ’24, Sydney Hardesty ’24
- Second Team All State: Megan Zimmerman ’24

United Soccer Coaches Association All Central Region:
- Elizabeth Zimmerman ’24, Sydney Hardesty ’24

United Soccer Coaches Association All American:
- Elizabeth Zimmerman ’24

GIRLS TENNIS

CCDS Invitational:
- Team finished Runner Up
- Ayla Daoud ’26 was Flight 2 Singles Champion, Sarah Fu ’26 was Flight 3 Singles Champion

GCTCA Tournament:
- Rana Arebi ’24 – 2nd Place First Singles
- Ayla Daud ’26 – 1st Place Second Singles
- Katherine Connelly ’26 & Caroline Connely ’26 – 2nd Place Second Doubles

MVC Awards:
- Team Finished in 2nd place
- Player of the Year: Rana Arebi ’24
- First Team MVC: Rana Arebi ’24
- Second Team MVC: Ayla Daoud ’26, Catherine Connelly ’26, Caroline Connelly ’26
- Mention MVC: Sarah Fu ’26, Andera Sgro Plaut ’27, Reema Arebi ’27

Ayla Daoud ’26 & Rana Arebi ’24 both qualified for the OHSAA District Tournament.

VOLLEYBALL

MVC Awards:
- Second Team MVC: Gracie Mitchell ’24, Madden Smith ’24
- Honorable Mention MVC: Jordan Lowe ’25, Charlize Rust ’24



A HISTORIC FOOTBALL SEASON

With a big win against Paint Valley, our UNDEFEATED 2023 football team had the most victories in a season of any Country Day football team in the history of the school! With a 12-0 record, this was the first time in the program’s history that a team won 12 games in a single season and the first time since 1999 that the team made it to regional semi-finals in the post-season.

Coach Coyle and the Nighthawks ended the season with a tough match-up in the regional semifinals against Versailles but as Miami Valley Conference champions THREE YEARS in a row, the team had a 10-0 regular season and outscored their opponents 430-20. Way to go, Nighthawks!



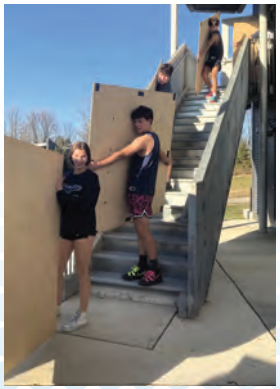
Congratulations to Shepard Snell ’24 who was naed D6 Defensive Player of the Year! He led the Miami Valley Conference in total tackles with 144, and had 4 fumble recoveries and 3 interceptions this season!

BETTERING THE WORLD THROUGH GYMNASTICS

Gymnastics Coach Steve Conner sent the word out to the gymnastics community that our gymnastics floor was available after a newer floor was offered to us. The Lakota East/West coach connected Conner with the owner of Perfection Gymnastics Club, who is from El Salvador and told Conner about a club in his country that might be interested in the floor. Tembag Gymnastics Club in San Salvador had never had a full spring floor before and were thrilled about the possibility. They sent a representative to pick up the floor in a rental truck, and when he showed up, CCDS gymnasts, wrestlers, and basketball players helped carry and load the floor into the truck. Now check out the Tembag gym space! Just goes to show how much we're all connected, how much supporting one another matters, and how one small act of kindness can make a huge impact.











COUNTRY DAY BRINGS SOURCES OF STRENGTH TO STUDENT BODY

Last year, U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy issued a special advisory about what he called an alarming increase in the mental health challenges facing American teenagers. To combat this crisis and to fortify the wellbeing of all students, Country Day has implemented Sources of Strength, a national youth mental health promotion and suicide prevention wellness program for kindergarten through 12th grade. The mission of Sources of Strength is "to prevent adverse outcomes by increasing wellbeing, help-seeking, resiliency, healthy coping, and belonging."

"Five years ago, we started looking for something to bring to our students that could help them improve healthy behaviors," says Kathy Scheidler, psychologist in the Upper School.

So what makes Sources of Strength different than other mental health and suicide awareness programs? Instead of using shock-and-awe statistics, Sources of Strength uses a different route: teaching students to understand their feelings and normalize help-seeking behaviors. They do this by learning about the protective factors, or strengths, taught by the program – family support, positive friends, spirituality, healthy activities, mentors, mental health, physical health and generosity.

"This program takes more of a proactive approach," says Scheidler. "It focuses on preventative activities that can help students before they get into serious trouble. We want them to know the elements of help-seeking. The goal is for them to know who the trusted adults are and who they should go to when they notice one of their peers is struggling." And this certainly is a whole-school initiative.

The implementation process began during the 2022-23 school year with select Country Day staff and faculty members, who went through



coach training. In the spring of 2023, Lower School classrooms began teaching the program's K-6 curriculum. Students in 5th and 6th grade began learning their curriculum this past fall during their advisory periods. This past summer, 40 students selected to be peer mentors, in seventh through 12th grade, along with 16 adult advisors, attended a full day of training. The training was led by 1N5, a nonprofit organization that specializes in implementing programs like Sources of Strength. "It was important for us to find a program that was evidence-based, and this was one of the only ones that was," says Nikki-Bishop Kallmeyer, psychologist in the Lower School. First-grade teacher Jessica Beaudoin likes how the program not only gives the students a voice but also helps them understand other people. "Our school is already so open to what other people are feeling that this just enhances that. Some of the kids notice their peers being upset before the teachers notice it. They are trying to solve problems before they come to one of us. I'm just so impressed with the social maturity of the kids at this school."

Choir instructor and 5th grade advisor Greg Miller says, "It is so unique that we have an entire school that is working on this program. These kids are so good at so many things that I think it's going to explode positively once all the kids figure it out."

While the Sources of Strength curriculum is adult-led in kindergarten through 6th grade levels, the program is a little bit different for the 7th through 12th graders. Sources of Strength uses the social network to make health coping contagious. Peer leaders work closely with adult advisors to engage in and promote the eight strengths through campaigns.

"We're still figuring out our obstacles," says Alexis Nordrum, psychologist in the Middle School. "But we try to meet every two weeks to get the word out about the program amongst the students. The goal will be to eventually have the program be completely peer-led with support from the adult advisors as necessary."

Jack Monroe '25, one of the peer leaders, is excited about the potential impact the program can have on his classmates. "This is the first student leadership role I've taken on, so I wasn't quite sure what it was going to be like, but I think it's heading in a really good direction. It's really important to have a program like this at our school; there's a lot of good we can do here."

Seventh grader Ece Karakus '29 agrees with Monroe about how a program like Sources of Strength can benefit Country Day students. "It's important to know that there's someone specific you can go to for help."

Karakus is also applying the program's lessons in positivity with her friends. "When my friends are upset about something, I try to help them look at things from a more positive point of view."

Angela Barber-Joiner, director of belonging and wellbeing, believes Country Day is the perfect place for a program like Sources of Strength to thrive.

"We have an advantage here at Country Day to build on these important lessons grade by grade and improve their skills. We can develop strong leaders who have a healthy level of social-emotional learning. This will only help strengthen our community."





SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: Rachel "Ray" Mitchell '24

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ACTIVITIES YOU ARE INVOLVED IN THIS SEMESTER?
I am a peer mentor, student tutor, and part of the Writing Support Club, which helps students with papers and other assignments. I love being a part of Theater Club, where I am not only the president, but I am also an actress and choreographer. I am one of the board members of the EDI Council. I also revived the Spectrum Alliance, an LGBT group that had to be shut down due to COVID, at Country Day to give people a safe and supportive place. Outside of school, I have also been a competitive dancer since the age of three.

WHAT HAS SURPRISED YOU THE MOST ABOUT YOUR SENIOR YEAR SO FAR?
Honestly, senior year has been tough, but I have felt so supported and feel like I can accomplish anything. It's more work than most people chalk it up to be, but it's so rewarding. I don't feel like the work has been for nothing – I know that I will be a better and stronger person because of it. It's just nice being a senior and having the opportunity to choose classes that I am interested in, like being able to sign up for a criminal justice class next semester since I am interested in becoming a lawyer. Also, the whole college admissions process has been so much easier because of our college counselors. They held my trembling hand the whole time.

WHAT STANDS OUT MOST TO YOU ABOUT YOUR TIME AT COUNTRY DAY?
Whenever I'm asked this question, I go back to when I visited Country Day as an eighth grader and shadowed for the day. I first thing I noticed in every teacher's office was that there were signs that said this was a safe place for all. And that's what I took home with me when I told my parents that I wanted to go to CCD. And when I finally got here, everyone was so nice and accepting. And then joining EDI Council my freshman year solidified it for me. I didn't have to hide myself to fit in; I didn't have to worry about others' opinions, and I could just stay unique and true to myself. That's what Country Day did for me. I'm definitely walking out of here as an empowered, young woman.

GRADUATION WILL BE HERE BEFORE YOU KNOW IT. WHAT PLANS HAVE YOU MADE SO FAR?
I have just recently applied to college, and I haven't been accepted anywhere yet. But wherever I go, I want to pursue a career that involves a lot of writing, specifically a lawyer in criminal justice because I truly do want to help others. And I also want to continue dancing and acting while in college.

WHAT LESSONS THAT YOU LEARNED OR EXPERIENCES THAT YOU HAD AT COUNTRY DAY DO YOU THINK WILL HELP YOU THE MOST WHEN YOU GET TO COLLEGE?
I've learned a lot about authenticity at Country Day and how important it is to stay true to yourself. No matter where you are or what you are doing, you are you and that's perfectly okay. I feel like staying true to myself and learning how to express that in ways that are important to me and using that to help others has been one of the most important lessons that I'll take with me to college.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUNGER COUNTRY DAY STUDENTS?
I will say two things – try anything and don't give up. Growing up is tough; Country Day is tough. But if you don't try something new, you won't find out what makes you tick. You won't find things that you love. If I hadn't decided to try out for [the Upper School's production of] Clue – which is also a movie that I love – my sophomore year, I never would have found my love for the theater. I would have missed out on an amazing opportunity to make all the friendships and connections that I now have.

WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR PROUDEST MOMENT AS AN UPPER SCHOOLER?
My proudest moment at CCD was the final bow I took at the end of this year's fall play, *She Kills Monsters*. As I took that bow, I realized that I would soon be leaving a community that I love, and one that has made me a stronger and happier person. I've met my best friends, learned to be confident in uncomfortable situations, and how to work with others. I will always treasure my long conversations during tech workdays, the loud music played in the dressing rooms, and the smiles after we finished our performances. I am truly proud of the theater community, and I am forever thankful for my involvement in it.

WHAT DOES LEADERSHIP LOOK LIKE TO YOU?
It means making a positive change. It doesn't have to be the biggest change in the world, like curing cancer, but I think making enough to change that is significant enough to put a smile on someone's face, that you made their day just a little bit better. But there isn't a clear definition of leadership, and there shouldn't be. Everyone has the potential to be a leader in their own way.

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEADERSHIP HAS COUNTRY DAY GIVEN YOU?
Country Day hands you the tools to be a leader and then allows you to run with it. For example, by joining EDI Council, I learned how to talk to bring more inclusion to Country Day. I learned how to make people feel included and feel wanted. After that, I just wanted to keep helping other people; I wanted to help others be able to have their voices heard.

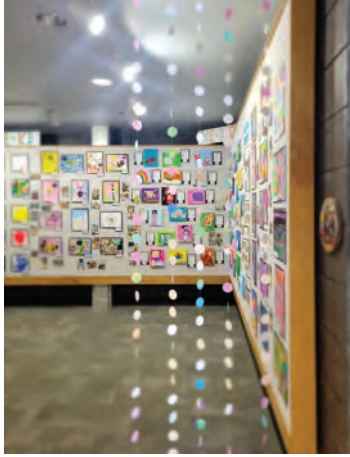
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FORWARD TO MOST IN THE SECOND SEMESTER?
I am looking forward to sleeping a lot more because I will be finished applying to college and that stress will be gone! Most of all I am looking forward to finishing my senior year as a happy person. I can't wait to just keep expanding on my happiness here and enjoy my last moments at Country Day.

WHAT DO YOU THINK HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST ACCOMPLISHMENT AS A NIGHTHAWK?
It's probably being able to enjoy what I'm doing. The fact that I get to walk into school every day after all the work that I do and maintain my smile is kind of incredible. And I think that it is because I get to help others and helping others has made me feel more confident and better about myself. I think it is an accomplishment to look forward to new activities and projects because I wasn't always like that. I'm happy to take on all the challenges that Country Day presents me.

IF YOU COULD GIVE ONE PIECE OF ADVICE OR WORDS OF WISDOM TO YOUR FRESHMAN SELF, WHAT WOULD THEY BE?
Everything is going to be okay. Keep your head up. It's hard being thrown into a new environment, especially one that is so drastically different from your previous one. The challenge will be good for you – it's what will make you a stronger person in the future.

ANYTHING ELSE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SAY ABOUT YOUR COUNTRY DAY EXPERIENCE?
There are so many paths to take at Country Day that you just know that no matter where you end up, you are in the right place. Oh, and one last thing is to buy and read my books when they come out! I'll make sure they get published and brought to the CCD library!





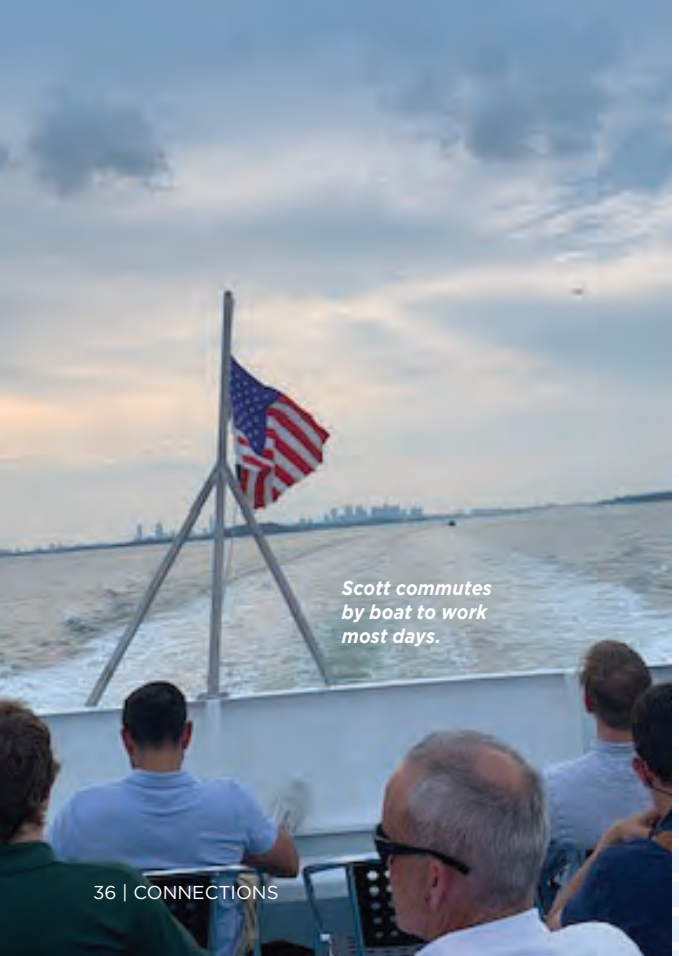
CREATING ART WITH SHAPES

"Project Shapes" was sparked from a project-based learning conference a group of Lower School teachers attended last summer. With a specific template that guided the teachers on how to structure the project from start to finish, including milestones and learning goals, the project began with the driving question "How can we create art with shapes for our community?" and concluded with an art gallery reception as the community event. For the reception, our young artists from Pre-KI, Pre-K2, and Ms. Bertsch's kindergarten class brought shapes to life in their beautiful and creative pieces. It was an incredible celebration of the power of art and education.





LIVING LIFE ON COUNTRY DAY TIME



Scott commutes by boat to work most days.

One look at the Wikipedia page for Justice Scott Kafker '77, and it is easy to see that he is someone who should rightfully command both respect and attention.

After all, he has spent more than 30 years in public life, 22 of those serving as a judge. For 16 years, Kafker sat on the Massachusetts Court of Appeals, serving as its chief justice for two years before being appointed to the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts in 2017, the state's highest court. In his time on the bench, Kafker has written upwards of 1,000 decisions. He has also held positions as law clerk to state and federal judges, associate at a prominent Boston law firm, deputy chief legal counsel to the governor of Massachusetts, chief legal counsel for the Massachusetts Port Authority, professor of state constitutional law at Boston College Law School, coveted keynote speaker, and author of numerous book reviews, comments, and articles in leading legal journals.

One might even wonder how it is possible to accomplish so much. What is the key to his success?

"I keep a Cincinnati politeness instead of a Boston edge," says Kafker.

And while he has lived in Massachusetts for 40 years and says it has been ages since he has been back to Cincinnati, his loyalties are still to Cincinnati sports teams. "My parents were both professors at UC and die-hard Bearcats fans." His mom, Serena, even taught at Cincinnati Country Day School and Hillsdale before attending law school herself.

As one of seven justices on the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, Kafker says he pursued being a judge because he wanted to do justice. "When you're a lawyer you do what your client asks – as long as it's legal – even when they goofed up. In this job, my only duty is to do justice, without fear or favor, according to the law. I'm also not an elected official, subject to any political pressures. I simply try to be fair and compassionate. I just have to do the right thing, which is a nice way to wake up every day."



In his current role as associate justice of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts, writing decisions is a big part of the job. "It's like writing 25 term papers a year, and my favorite ones are when I have to dig into history or deal with dramatic changes in modern day life," says Kafker.

All the issues that Kafker and his colleagues consider are serious as the court chooses, for the most part, which cases it decides to hear. "I find each case I'm working on to be the most interesting at the time. I've written a lot of constitutional law decisions, involving free speech and ballot questions, and many cases involving universities and hospitals, as education and health care are mainstays of the Massachusetts economy."

His court also decides the most significant criminal cases – indeed any appeal of a first-degree murder conviction comes directly to his court. But Kafker reflects a quick wit and a sense of humor about his work. "I wrote one decision that received a



As stated in his profile in the 1977 yearbook "It is true that Scott has achieved a great deal at Country Day, but most of us have a pretty good idea that it won't even match what he does in the future."

lot of press attention about a golf course and errant shots hitting a neighboring home. The reporters referred to me as the 'defender of the hackers' because I said a golfer cannot reasonably control the direction of a golf ball."

He believes that Country Day prepared him well for his career.

"The two school subjects most relevant to what I do are English and history, and I had spectacular people teaching me how to write and research. I still remember my terrific 4th grade teacher, who taught me how to outline. To this day, when I organize my opinions, I use the outline structure she taught me. My high school teachers were also incredibly rigorous. I got my highest grades in my first quarter at Amherst College and thought it was easier than high school; that's how well Country Day prepared me for the next step in life."

He said the school affected him in other ways as well, including his lifestyle.

"My whole life is still on CCDS time – I work until late afternoon and then I get in some kind of physical activity and then head home for dinner. A healthy mind and a healthy body was a big part of life at Country Day and I'm still conscious of it."

During Kafker's tenure at Country Day, Gordon Wright '44 was the coach of a very successful tennis team. Kafker wanted to play tennis, but his parents were not wealthy and could not afford private lessons, so Gordon Wright gave him individualized instruction during tennis practice. "To have a highly regarded coach take an interest in me that early…I was very taken by that. But it was the norm at Country Day."

As Kafker considered his options for college, he took into account the fact that his pen was mightier than his racket and focused on academics and developing as a writer. He wanted to go out west, but his parents would not let him go to California because they thought he would never come back. "My uncle attended and loved Amherst College and it was not too far from an ocean, so it seemed like a good choice for me."



Scott and his brother Roger '81 with their mother Serena, who taught at Country Day and Hillsdale.

Most mornings these days, he commutes by boat to his office in downtown Boston. His wife, Lea Anne Copenhefer, is from Louisville (they met in law school) and is a successful lawyer. Both of his children, Matthew and Nicholas, now live on the west coast but attended Middlesex School for high school where "they got the best education imaginable, just like me."

"At Country Day, you have this real opportunity with smaller classes and super teachers who are teaching you how to write and think in ways you will carry with you forever. There is so much from my time at Country Day that I carry with me. My advice to current students is to take it all in and to recognize in particular the talent in your peers. I learned an enormous amount from my fellow classmates and now they're running hospitals, starting high-tech businesses, and are even successful poets."



Scott on vacation with his family outside of San Fransisco. From left to right: His wife Lea Anne, younger son Matt, older son Nick, and Nick's wife Melissa.

CENTENNIAL SPOTLIGHT

Herbert Snyder

HEADMASTER... COLONEL...AND CIA AGENT?

By: Nat Tracey-Miller,
MS/US librarian, CCDS archivist

As Cincinnati Country Day School's second headmaster, Herbert "Herb" Snyder oversaw the formative years of the young institution. But his dedicated correspondence to his collegiate alumni journal illuminates the eventful years following his departure, including his travel in the Second World War and beyond. Through nearly a hundred letters over six decades, Snyder gave simple life updates, mused on campus doings, and waxed rhapsodical about his beloved Cornell football team. These entries reach a startling peak in Snyder's obituary in the November 1972 issue of the Cornell Alumni News: "Herb was the total Cornellian, even after a full life as a private school teacher, headmaster, and CIA operative."

Born in Iowa near the Quad Cities, Snyder graduated from Cornell in 1916. Snyder's father, president of the American Mathematical Society, was a longtime math professor at Cornell. Snyder headed off to Europe to fight in World War I, following a brief teaching stint at the St. Mark's School in Massachusetts. He served as a first lieutenant in the infantry, and was awarded a Croix de Guerre for "extraordinary heroism in action near Blanc Mont." After the war, he returned to his post at St. Mark's, where he taught for several years before briefly accepting the position of headmaster at the Valley Ranch School in Wyoming.

Snyder came to CCDS from the Cranbrook School in Detroit in the summer of 1929, where he had served as athletic director and the head of the history department. He succeeded founding CCDS head Harold Washburn and grew the school to as many as 115 students (it opened with 50) and a faculty of a dozen. In his entry in school history *And Five Miles Farther,* colleague and future headmaster Herbert M. Davison refers to Snyder as "a superb teacher of history and a counselor of boys without peer." 1943 alum Tuck Asbury remembers he was "determined to make strong young men out of what he believed to be overly protected boys." Asbury also notes the challenge of retaining students into high school during these years, as classes of 25 in the middle school would be decimated to a graduating class of three due to the lure of eastern boarding schools. His



years at the helm were characterized, per Davison, by "thin populations and precarious finances–but stable administration, faculty, and trustees."

Snyder's tenure came to a sudden end in January of 1941 when he was called up to active duty. This is noteworthy for two reasons: Snyder was in his mid-40s, well beyond the cutoff in the prior year's Selective Service Act, and the United States was still 11 months from entering the Second World War. Nevertheless, as the Enquirer noted on January 25, 1941, Snyder (now a major) was due to report to Fort Hayes in Columbus the following month. He was promptly replaced by Harwood Ellis, who would join the army himself three years later. Snyder spent much of the next three years at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, home of the General Staff College, which also trained generals Eisenhower, Bradley, and MacArthur.

Snyder and the 44th Infantry departed the U.S. via Boston Harbor on September 5, 1944. They arrived in Cherbourg on September 15,1944 and deployed to eastern France the following month. Upon landing, Snyder was named assistant chief of staff for intelligence under Commanding General Robert Spragins. The infantry's initial deployment was near Colmar, where Country Day students now experience their exchange program. That fall, they cut northeast through the Northern Vosges Mountains and liberated Strasbourg. Much of the winter was spent on the defense of Sarreguemines, on what is now the French-German border.

The Infantry moved into the heart of Germany at the end of March 1945, freeing the industrial city of Mannheim in the process. Cutting southeast after a training period, they liberated a string of towns on the Austrian border at the end of April. After crossing into Austria, the 44th forced the surrender of the scientists from the Nazi V-2 program, including Werner Von Braun, who would later be central to NASA's Apollo program. After V-E Day, the division occupied Imst, Austria for two months before returning to the U.S. in July, but we know from his Alumni entries that Snyder spent at least some time after this with the Group Control Council in Berlin, the small leadership group that oversaw the military government of occupied Germany. By the time of his discharge, he was promoted to colonel (a moniker by which he would be known for the rest of his life) and earned the Bronze Star.

Upon his return to the United States, Snyder became the head of the short-lived Arizona Desert School in the Santa Catalina Mountains north of Tucson, AZ, which closed in 1953 due to "accumulated debts and low enrollment," per a brief State Historical Society footnote. His missives don't designate the exact date of his departure, and for a long stretch his entries largely detail travel with his wife (a trip to Europe on the Queen Mary in 1950, for one).

But another Alumni Journal article tips us off to what he was up to in the years before he retired to a quiet life back in Ithaca. At a Cornell reunion in the summer of 1972, four months before his passing, Snyder told a story that tangentially referenced training "Asian" spies on the Mariana island of Saipan. While he doesn't go into more detail or give us a timestamp, we can infer some details about his role. The Naval Technical Training Unit—which Snyder doesn't reference by name but calls "the worst kept secret in Asia"—made its home on Saipan from 1950-62 and was a key part of the CIA's Cold War operations in Southeast Asia. The CIA used this facility primarily to train spies and saboteurs deployed in China and focused on counterintelligence and psychological warfare. At this point, Snyder was well into his 50s, and while we'll never know just what his role was, it's clear that the qualities deemed valuable by the Army upon his arrival in Europe were still proving valuable well into the Eisenhower administration.

Although his years at CCDS were rich and full, they marked a relative calm in Snyder's eventful life between two World Wars and the onset of the Cold War. He wasn't the only headmaster to have a long and influential tenure at CCDS, nor the only one to serve in the military. But he was the only headmaster whose pathway from Given Road led to international espionage.

So far as we know.



Lindsay (Masters) Murl `02, a Country Day lifer, has always had a passion for science, history, and the outdoors. She's turned those passions into an impressive career path, including work as a geologist for Worley in Los Angeles, an environmental regulator for the state of Colorado, and an attorney-advisor for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Q&A WITH ENVIRONMENTAL LAWYER LINDSAY MURL '02

What role did Country Day play in inspiring you to become an environmental lawyer?
I have always had a love of the outdoors, but I never thought about becoming a lawyer in high school. However, my environmental literature independent study with Mr. [Bob] Patterson introduced me to *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson and *A Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold. They also helped me connect what I was learning in the classroom with problems in the real world and understand what can be done to protect human health and the environment. We only have one planet, one home. We are not separate from the natural world, and how we treat Earth directly impacts our health and our future.

Was there a teacher or staff member at Country Day that encouraged you to become a lawyer?
No one pushed me to be a lawyer – some deterred it, actually – but I always loved asking questions and engaging in rigorous debate. Mr. [Merle] Black was extremely influential. He laid a strong foundation that helped me thrive in college and beyond. I remember being a little intimidated when I enrolled in my sophomore history class. Mr. Black distributed famously heavy black binders filled with college seminar-style materials. However, I quickly realized I loved being challenged by his long reading assignments and intense classroom discussions. The challenges he set helped me realize what I am capable of. His classes and passion for teaching nurtured my love of learning. And that's what I think law is all about – constant learning.

Were there any lessons you learned at Country Day that you feel helped you get to where you are now?
Small communities, like Country Day, are really important. Students can spend a lot of time in high school itching to get out, dreaming of the bigger world. But when you get out there and join your profession, you find you end up becoming part of some sort of small community. And that community spirit that I felt at Country Day was important. It was such a positive experience, and I try to bring that attitude to my work and life today.

What's been the most rewarding aspect of working for the EPA?
I know my work makes a difference. It's rewarding to help lessen the risks to both the environment and communities. It's important to think about hazardous waste facilities and Superfund cleanups holistically. Everything is connected. What is the risk to human health, drinking water resources, or ecosystems from chemicals or releases? What do laws and regulations require? What enforcement tools may be available to assure compliance? It's intellectually stimulating, but it all ties into protecting people and the environment.

What is the biggest challenge you face as a government employee?
Some people think the government does too much, others think it does to little. Some folks will always disagree, but that's something you have to accept. You do the best you can in your role.

Are there any unexpected ways that Country Day prepared you for your career?
I think it's important to receive a well-rounded education so that you can become a well-rounded person. The arts are important! At Country Day, my early experiences in theater gave me the confidence to speak in front of people, which greatly helped with the public speaking aspect of being a lawyer. Of course, I still enjoy Shakespeare and Beckett, too.

What advice do you have for any current student who is thinking about pursuing a career as a lawyer or working in public service?
The great secret about government is that you get to do the most interesting work with the greatest people. I love my colleagues. They are intelligent, caring, and mission driven. Our work is meaningful and affects people's lives. Since environmental regulation is complex, it's also interdisciplinary and team-driven work. I am constantly learning about other topics and working with others. I've learned about everything from Cold War nuclear weapons complex history to Native American sacred sites. Public service is also a wonderful place to make contributions to your country, state, and/or local community, whether it's in civilian government work or in the military.

What's your favorite memory from your time at Country Day?
It's not a specific memory, but I want to recognize my peers at Country Day. When I think about my time there, I think about the friendships I made. My friends and classmates taught me just as much as the teachers did. Being a teenager can be tough, but I had friends and a peer support system that was important to me and influenced who I am today. It's a caring and positive community, and I think the world needs more of that spirit.



CLASS NOTES

1978

Robert "Dewey" Hollister '78
Dewey and his wife Lisa live in Christiansted on St. Croix in the U.S. Virgin Islands, where Dewey is the director of the Virgin Islands Rare Plant Initiative, a conservation program of the Naples (FL) Botanical Garden. Dewey and Lisa moved to St. Croix several years ago when Dewey took the leadership of the St. George Village Botanical Garden, which he transformed into the Botanical Garden of the Virgin Islands. Dewey asks that his classmates send snow.

1984



John Stein '84
On November 29, the Cincinnati branch of the American Jewish Committee (AJC) awarded John its prestigious 2023 Community Service Award in recognition of his leadership in the Jewish and Cincinnati communities. Following in the footsteps of his grandfather and mother, John joined the local AJC board in 2005. He was president of the Cincinnati office from 2010-2012 and helped steer the organization as a member of the AJC Board of Governors from 2009 to 2015. He is currently chairperson of The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati and previously served on the Board of Governors of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (Chair of Investment Committee 2012-2022), the Natan Fund (2013-2016), and the Mayerson JCC (VP 2005-2011). Additionally, he serves as the treasurer of the Immigrant Refugee Law Center and previously served as treasurer of the Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park (2014-2021). Professionally, John is co-founder and principal of Five Stones Investment Group. Prior to that, he was co-founder and president of FSI Group LLC, a registered investment advisor with a specialization in the Financial Services sector. Between 1995 and 2020, he was the co-portfolio manager of that firm's equity hedge funds and its six private equity funds.

1994



Greg Lewis '94
Greg Lewis, design director at the architecture and design firm SHP, and his team recently won the 2023 J ames D. MacConnell Award, a prestigious international award, for their work designing two project-based learning campuses for Winton Woods City Schools.

2002

Lindsay (Masters) Murl '02
Lindsay joined the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency in Seattle as an attorney-adviser. Her work focuses on toxic waste regulation, Superfund sites, and other environmental matters. She previously served as the lead regulator for the Rocky Flats Site in Colorado, and she continues to keep a foot in nuclear weapons and nuclear energy facility cleanup efforts. Lindsay's junior-year research paper on the Manhattan Project was just the beginning! Read more about her on page 40.

2003

Erin Tapke '03
Erin is engaged to John "JT" Means of Upper Arlington, Ohio. Erin, an attorney, is the in-house counsel for Huntington Bank in Columbus, where she provides legal advice and guidance to the bank on their digital products and services. JT works in real estate for Street Sotheby's International Realty. Congratulations!



2004



Ashley (Durand) Tople '04
Ashley and her husband Andrew welcomed Elias Terry Tople into their family on November 13. Big brother Eliot is curious about the new addition. Congratulations to the Tople, and a few words of advice: sleep when you can!

2007

Scott Shad '07
Scott married Alix Benear on September 9 in Oklahoma City. Scott and Alix live in Denver, Colorado.

2008

Jeff Bismayer '08
Jeff and his wife Jane welcomed their daughter, Thomasine Annette, in May. Congratulations!

Peter "Trey" Dayton '08
Peter, known to his classmates as Trey, lives in Baltimore with his husband, Douglas Johnson. Peter is the director of operations for arts education in Maryland Schools, a nonprofit that advocates for equitable access to arts programming in Maryland Public Schools, but his passion and his focus is composing and playing music. Peter regularly gives live piano performances in Baltimore and has recently released his fourth album to critical acclaim: "All in the Sound: New Vocal Music by Peter Dayton" was listed as Critic's Choice in the September 2023 issue of the classical music magazine Opera News. Writing that "Peter Dayton... specializes in creating fresh contemporary repertoire for voice and accompaniment," Opera News praised Peter throughout its review for the creativity and sophistication of his composition. Recently, Peter has started exploring an interest in writing and illustrating children's books, producing a small picture book featuring his drawings of little birds.



Left to right: Fletcher '10, Henry '12, David '08

David Pease '08, Fletcher Pease '10, Henry Pease '12

Tired of having to take his gloves off in the cold to fish his phone out of his pocket on the ski slopes – and eager to avoid the risk of fumbling his phone to a snowy death from the chair lift – Henry Pease '12 was inspired to invent a smart snow goggle with a built-in head-up display providing the wearer a variety of information and allowing the wearer to receive calls and texts with their phone safely in their pocket. After some initial tinkering, Henry teamed up with his brothers David '08 and Fletcher '10 and the trio has designed and is producing and selling an augmented reality goggle that they call "REKKIE" (military slang for a reconnaissance mission). The REKKIE provides the wearer such data as the time, the wearer's speed and direction, and the wearer's location on the mountain as well as the location of friends on mountain, and – via a "big clicky button" easily operated by a gloved or mittened hand – allows the wearer to take phone calls and read texts. Along the way, the Pease brothers had some help from Dan Whittelsey '08, who designed their logo and helped create the user interface for the REKKIE app, and from Greg Magarian '08, who provided legal counsel and assistance. Recently, the Pease brothers pitched REKKIE to the business moguls on ABC's "Shark Tank" – and walked away with a six-figure investment from Mark Cuban!

2010



Kevin Baxter '10

Kevin Baxter '10 is marking significant professional and personal milestones. At the end of August, Kevin took a new position as lead engineering and hardware planner at GE Aerospace. In his new role, Kevin is responsible for ensuring that engineering and procurement activities at GE Aerospace run smoothly. And Kevin and his wife Kristin, a mechanical design engineer at GE Aerospace, welcomed their first child, Adalyn Jane Baxter, in early December.

2011

Michael Fitzgerald '11

Michael Fitzgerald married Sallie Lau in Seattle on September 2, 2023. Michael and Sallie met while attending the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth, from which both graduated in 2021. Among the CCDS alumni celebrating the wedding were Gretchen Weigel '11, Sara Fitzgerald '13, Robbie Pierce '11, Devon Sutton '11, Tyrique Wilson '11, and Alex Meixner '11. Michael and Sallie live in Seattle, Washington, where Michael is a finance manager for Microsoft, and Sallie is a project leader for the Boston Consulting Group.



Left to right: Robbie Pierce '11, Devon Sutton '11, the groom, Tyrique Wilson '11, and Alex Meixner '11



Class of 2011 Mini Reunion

On October 1, 2023, 14 members of the Class of 2011 gathered in Nashville, Tennessee, for the Bengals game against the Titans. Sadly, the Bengals fell to the Titans, but the assembled members of the Class of 2011 had a great time!

Left to right: Michael Fitzgerald, Basil Dejong, Baldur Tangvald, Robbie Pierce, Will Fritz, Alex Meixner, Will Duncan, Jules Cantor, Claire Heinichen, Mac McKee, Wyatt Tiffany, Grant Hesser, Tyrique Wilson, Andrew McElhinney, and Audrey Tiffany (Wyatt's wife)

2012

Adriana Ungerleider '12

Adriana recently graduated with her doctorate in nursing practice (DNP) from the University of Cincinnati. After graduating from Country Day, she went on to earn a bachelor's degree from Washington University in St. Louis, and immediately jumped into a post baccalaureate program at University of Pittsburgh, where she earned her Bachelor of Science in nursing. She worked at Cincinnati Children's Hospital until relocating to Colorado with her husband. She now works at Denver Children's Hospital as a patient care coordinator, although her role will soon change to that of nurse practitioner. She and her husband, Charles Warwick, a Country Day "lifer" and fellow member of the Class of 2012, have settled outside of Denver in the suburb of Westminster, Colorado.

2013

Class of 2013 10-year Reunion

Over Thanksgiving break, the Class of 2013 celebrated its 10-year reunion at Pearl's in Columbia-Tusculum. Well attended and punctuated by laughter, the event brought classmates together from across the country. The party lights burned into the early-morning hours as friends reconnected, introduced fiancé(e)s and significant others, and closed the gaps of years and miles. Several retired and current faculty members – including Tim and Pat Dunn, Eldrich Carr, Chuck McGivern, and Peter Fossett – stopped by to collect overdue projects and assignments. Special thanks go to Sarah Mae Selnick and Eaisa David for organizing and promoting the gathering.







2015

Kailas Menon ’15
After completing his master’s degree in foreign service at Georgetown University in the spring of 2023, Kailas joined the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Consular Affairs. He looks forward to serving the nation and ensuring the safety and well-being of U.S. citizens here and abroad.

2017

Foster Opals ’17
Foster has accepted a permanent position with the Department of Justice in Cincinnati after an extensive internship. Foster, who has recently graduated from the University of Cincinnati with a degree in criminal justice and accounting, will start as an operational support technician.

2015

Alex Chantilas ’18
Alex has moved to London for graduate school. After earning his bachelor’s degree in comparative literature at the University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill), and pursuing a year of research with the UNC Gillings School of Public Health, Alex has started a master’s program at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Alex’s post-graduate research at the UNC Gillings School focused on the challenges to government response to and management of floods in multi-layered governmental systems, such as our federalist system, and will soon be showcased in his first published paper. At LSE, Alex is pursuing a master’s degree in environment and development.

2018

Nick Jaccaci ’18
Nick graduated from Middlebury College in 2022, where he studied international politics, economics, and the Chinese language, and is living in Portland, Maine, working for Accenture, a major international consulting firm. Nick – who likes a good round of pub trivia – is thoroughly enjoying life in Portland.

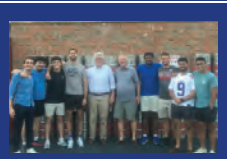
Madeleine Morales ’18
Madeleine is a first-year student at the University of Pennsylvania’s Carey School of Law, and her goal is to become a public interest lawyer focused on gendered healthcare justice. Madeleine’s interest in gendered healthcare policy was sparked by a political science course at Barnard College on gender and public policy. Madeleine’s work in that course led her to petition several state legislatures to remove taxes on menstrual products and catalyzed her interest in becoming a lawyer to shape public policy. After graduating from Barnard, Madeleine earned her MPH in public health policy & management from Columbia’s Mailman School of Public Health in 2023. Madeleine invites all with an interest in gender and public policy to contact her and is happy to connect with CCDS alumni in the Philadelphia area.

2019

Sam Jaccaci ’19
Recently graduated from Washington University in St. Louis, Sam has moved to Los Angeles to pursue his passion for film making and film editing.

2020

Class of 2020 Mini Reunion
As the summer wound to a close, eight members of the Class of 2020 gathered for drinks and dinner at the Little Miami Brewing Company in Milford. Cader Rowe, Brennen Walker, Riley Michalski, Ammar D’Ambrosio, Eashwar Kantemneni, Josh Nixon, Jay Bhati, and Manav Patel reconnected and reminisced with each other and with retired faculty members Merle Black and Peter Fossett. Good times were recalled, funny stories were told, and much laughter filled the tap room.



Left to right: Cader Rowe, Brennan Walker, Riley Michalski, Ammar D’Ambrosio, Peter Fossett, Merle Black, Eashwar Kantemneni, Joshua Nixon, Jay Bhati, and Manav Patel



Joely Virzi ’20
Joely will take a break from her studies at Middlebury College during the spring 2024 semester to pursue an internship with the Center for Strategic and international Studies (CSIS) in Washington, D.C. CSIS is a preeminent bipartisan foreign policy and national security policy research institution. Returning to Middlebury in the fall of 2024, Joely will complete her studies and play one more season of soccer for the Panthers before graduating in February of 2025.



ATTENTION!

Have great news to share?

Have you moved?

Do you have a new email address?

Still receiving mail addressed to your alumni children, who no longer live with you?

Please help us stay connected by going to www.countryday.net/alumni/alumni-news or scanning the QR code below.

IN MEMORIAM

Submitted by the loved ones of those we will never forget.

Peter Reed Field ’84

Peter Reed Field ’84 of Mooresville, North Carolina, passed away on September 28, 2023, and is survived by his wife Carolyn Field. A fellow classmate shared that Peter “was a three-sport athlete for CCDS in football, wrestling and baseball. He had a wicked curveball and became a starting varsity pitcher by his sophomore season. He started both ways as a lineman in football, junior and senior year, and won an Iron Man.” Peter went on to study at Colgate University.

Joseph Whitehouse Hagin ’55

Joseph Whitehouse Hagin ’55 of Cincinnati, Ohio, passed away on July 11, 2023. He died peacefully at The Christ Hospital surrounded by his family. He was 86 years old and had an extraordinary life filled with love and laughter. He is once again with his beloved wife Hannah. Joe is survived by a devoted and loving family, his two sons, Joseph W. Hagin II ’74 and Huntingdon H. Hagin ’84, both of Cincinnati, his daughter-in-law, Lauren Baumann Hagin and three grandchildren, Katherine Hagin, Elizabeth Hagin and William (Hunt) Hagin, his sister Hart Graves and his brother, Rab Hagin, both of Lexington, Kentucky, along with many dear nieces and nephews.

Lorrence T. “Larry” Kellar

Lorrence T. “Larry” Kellar of Cincinnati, Ohio died November 12, 2023. Larry graduated from University of Iowa and from the Darden School at the University of Virginia with an MBA. He answered a blind ad in The Wall Street Journal for his job at Kroger. Larry’s wisdom was highly regarded and many private and publicly traded companies as well as arts and civic organizations tapped him to serve on their boards. Larry is survived by his wife Barbara of 46 years; his children Kate Wagner, Ainsley, Kevin, and Nicholas; his grandchildren Ava, Francine, Paul, and Kempten; and his fur babies Baby Sister II, Scarlett, and Rhett. Larry was preceded in death by his brother Allen and his sister Iona and is survived by his brother Donald and his honorary brother Steve Kallmeyer. Read more about Larry on page 45.

Frederick Richards MacLean, Sr. ’58

Frederick Richards MacLean, Sr. ’58 of Lighthouse Point, Florida, passed away on September 20, 2023, at 83 peacefully, surrounded by his wife, children, in-laws, and grandchildren. Fred was born on April 7, 1940, to Thomas Alexander MacLean and Dorothy Harper MacLean (née Richards) in Columbus, Ohio. Fred was raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, graduating from Cincinnati Country Day School in 1958. He went on to study political science at Johns Hopkins University, graduating in 1964. After several years in the insurance business, Fred earned his law degree from the University of Miami and built a successful law firm and a successful wealth management company. Fred is survived by the love of his life, Sherry, and their three children, Mikey (Thomas), Fred, and Tracy (McCarver). He is also survived by their spouses, Adrian Thomas, Laura MacLean and Ian McCarver, respectively; by his five grandchildren, Lillian Thomas Nagle (m. Ryan G. Nagle), Frederick R. MacLean III, Henry Beard Thomas (m. Yazmin E. Thomas), Madeline R. MacLean and Kathleen A. McCarver; and by two great-granddaughters, Hollister P. Nagle and Rosalie L. Thomas. All three of Fred and Sherry’s children live in Lighthouse Point, as do their grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Sanderson “Sandy” Rowe Orr ’65

Sanderson “Sandy” Rowe Orr ’65 of Cincinnati, Ohio, died on September 2, 2023, at 76 after a five-year battle with breast cancer. After graduating from The Masters School in Dobbs Ferry, NY she attended Colorado Women’s College and married Potter Orr at the age of 19 and would have celebrated their 57th wedding anniversary in October. A gifted and competitive athlete, a talented painter, and a friend to many charities, she is survived by husband Potter, daughter Mimi Orr Manzler ’85, son-in-law Scott Manzler, grandchildren Cameron Orr ’28, Mackenzie Orr ’30, Greyson Wagner, Laney Wagner, daughter-in-law Katie Wagner, son-in-law Mike Wagner and numerous nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her son Jimmy Orr ’94.

Robert “Bruce” Selnick ’78

Robert “Bruce” Selnick ’78 of Indian Hill, Ohio, died in his home on September 28, 2023. He was born March 16, 1960, to Barbara Brennan Selnick and William Blake Selnick. Nearly a lifetime resident of Cincinnati, his family moved here in 1960 from Cleveland. Bruce attended Lotspeich (The Seven Hills Schools), and then Cincinnati Country Day School, located conveniently in the backyard of his home on Shawnee Run Road. From there, he went on to Georgetown University and played center as a Hoya on the football team. Bruce, a humorous and sweet husband, father, and grandfather, is survived by his wife of 38 years, Sarah Warrington; his children, Megan (Martin Hubbell), Natalie (Thomas Burke), Lisa (Geoff Scharfenberger), and Sarah Mae Selnick ’13; his grandchildren, Wesley Burke, and Henley Hubbell; and his dogs, Murphy, and Maizy. Bruce is predeceased by his father, Bill Selnick; his mother, Barbara Brennan Selnick; and his best friend, Barney Moore. Bruce was unwavering and persistent in his love for his friends and his family. His heart was full and kind to anyone that he came to know and will be hugely missed.

Lawrence William Ward, Jr. ’70

Lawrence William Ward, Jr. ’70 of Truckee, California, died on November 20, 2023, of esophageal cancer at his home. He was 71. After Country Day, Larry graduated from Harvard College and Columbia Business School before moving into his successful investment banker and private equity career in New York and California. Larry and his wife, Rosemary, eventually retired to the Tahoe area where they enjoyed the great outdoors spending endless hours hiking, biking, skiing, and playing golf. In addition to his wife, Larry is survived by his four children, Madison, Sydney, Peyton, and Winston; his sister, Eileen Ward Barrett ’69; and brother, Kevin Ward ’74. Throughout the years, Larry remained connected to Country Day by lending his strategic counsel, having served as a trustee at his children’s school Sage Hill in Newport, CA, or contributing to the school’s fundraising efforts. During his final days, Larry continued to proudly wear his CCDS alumni spirit wear.



A GREAT FRIEND TO ALL

Former Cincinnati Country Day School (CCDS) grandparent and trustee Lorrence "Larry" Kellar passed away on November 12, 2023, after an illness. Larry was the grandfather of Ava Kellar '19 and served on the board of trustees from 2017-23.

"Having served with Larry as a trustee and served under him as head of school, I can attest to his unique contributions to our school community," says Rob Zimmerman '98, head of school. "He was a brilliant thinker whose genial deportment never obscured his keen strategic insights. He generously supported Country Day in many ways, and he will be missed beyond words."

Larry spent the major part of his career (31 years) with The Kroger Co., where he held various positions in finance, capital management, audit, accounting, and real estate from 1965 until 1996, including group vice president of finance and real estate. He was responsible for all of Kroger's real estate activities, as well as facility engineering, which coordinated all store openings and remodels.

In addition to the impact he made while at Kroger, he was also known as a great patron of the arts in Cincinnati. Larry and wife, Barbara, have supported the Cincinnati Ballet for over 40 years, playing an instrumental role in the ballet's 50th anniversary endowment campaign. Their three-plus decades of support for the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra have helped grow corporate sponsorships. Additionally, they have supported Cincinnati public television for nearly 50 years, where Barbara has long hosted the Emmy Award-winning program "Showcase."

In 2014, the Kellars gave $500,000 to endow the Barbara & Larry Kellar Prima Ballerina Fund to support the Cincinnati ballet's top female dancer. Their daughter, Ainsley, danced with Cincinnati Ballet and granddaughter, Ava, is an Otto M. Budig Academy student who danced the role of Clara in the 2013 production of "The Nutcracker."

The Kellars also led multiple fundraising efforts on behalf of CCDS and were honored as Philanthropists of the Year by the Association of Fundraising Professionals in 2014. Additionally, Larry was recipient of the Great Living Cincinnatians Award in 2016, awarded by the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber.

"Larry was great friend to Country Day, to the greater Cincinnati community, and to me and my family," says Jody Brant, former president of the CCDS Board of Trustees. "He brought a unique perspective to his role as an influential member of our board. His presence will be missed but his impact on Country Day will continue for many years."

We offer our sympathies to his family, including his wife Barbara, who was recently inducted into Country Day's Arts Hall of Fame.

CINCINNATI
COUNTRY DAY
SCHOOL
6905 Given Road
Cincinnati, OH 45243-2989

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
Paid
Cincinnati, OH
Permit No. 871

JOIN IN THE FUN! STAY UP TO DATE WITH EVERYTHING COUNTRY DAY ON SOCIAL MEDIA.

Like us on Facebook:
CincinnatiCountryDaySchool

Subscribe to our channel on
YouTube: CincinnatiCountryDay

Follow us LinkedIn
CountryDay

Follow us Instagram:
countryday