

WASHINGTON EPISCOPAL SCHOOL



Joyful learning is still going **STRONG!**



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**KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE ARTS!** Guided drawing techniques were used to capture the main lines of the eyes where Grade 6 students focused on accurate proportions. They used colored pencils to practice color mixing/blending and to create a balanced background.

## **MISSION STATEMENT:**

**Washington Episcopal School** inspires academic and personal excellence within a joyful learning environment to develop students who are kind, confident, and prepared.

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## Head of School Danny Vogelmann

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Mr. Vogelmann joins a class on Zoom.

**I write this message the day after the inauguration of our 46<sup>th</sup> president, Joe Biden, and one week before I am scheduled to receive my first COVID vaccine shot.** As I reflect upon the last eight months I am filled with varying emotions about what has occurred in our nation and our world during this time and how WES has responded to those events. Above all, I feel immense hope and pride in our school community.

This past summer was like no other at WES. We missed the usual bustle of hundreds of Summer@WES campers playing and enjoying themselves on campus. Instead, our various committees and task forces were hard at work as they planned hybrid learning scenarios and COVID safeguarding strategies, and our faculty consumed hours of professional development in distance learning pedagogy.

Last summer also was a time of racial reckoning throughout our country. Here at WES, several of our alumni came together to organize a Black Lives Matter march in Bethesda to bring awareness to our responsibility as a community to use our voice in the fight against racial injustices. We are incredibly proud of the leadership and courage our alumni demonstrated, and we are humbled by the fact that they felt comfortable conducting their rally at their alma mater. Our alumni's passion and energy provided us the strength to continue our work in the area of diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the year. Read more about this exciting and meaningful event in our feature story on pages 4-5.

In early September, the WES community demonstrated their kindness and generosity as we were faced with another obstacle— a

sudden rainstorm caused flooding to our front parking lot damaging and totaling many of our faculty and staff's vehicles. In the true WES spirit, our Parents Association quickly organized a support system to help our employees with the expenses and losses they incurred.

Throughout the first half of the year, our school community showed tremendous resolve and continued to adapt to the unfolding situation of the pandemic. Our students persevered as they navigated changing learning environments, varying schedules, numerous safety measures, and seemingly countless COVID tests to ensure that our community was healthy. Our faculty engaged the students in classrooms while simultaneously teaching those students learning from home. Their creativity, flexibility, and determination ensured that our students' learning continued at high levels. As a result, our Dragons created beautiful artwork, conducted science experiments, engaged in a new math curriculum, presented their learning to classmates, read and sang during Chapel, and interacted with a Newbery Honor-winning author—all done in completely different ways from a year ago. They also celebrated holidays, played on the fields and playgrounds, and discovered new friendships. Within these pages, you can see—beyond the masks—the joy and happiness on the faces of our Dragons as they came together to learn.

We are grateful for our families who partnered with faculty as they took on the roles of support teachers at home, adjusted their lives to accommodate schedule changes, and provided valuable feedback through many surveys and conversations.

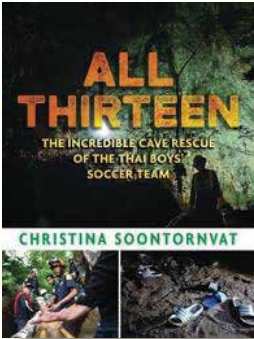
Although the last eight months have thrown a tremendous amount of challenges our way, WES has responded with exceptional grace and fortitude. The resilience of our community is second to none. These are the qualities that will continue to support our community as we look together with hope toward the future.

Sincerely,

Danny Vogelmann

# Author Visit

Award-winning author Christina Soontornvat, whose works range from fantasy to narrative non-fiction, held three sessions with students in early January on Zoom, as part of the WES Virtual Book Fair. She captivated Middle Schoolers and fourth- and fifth-graders while discussing her latest book, *All Thirteen: The Incredible Cave Rescue of the Thai Boys Soccer Team*, which was named a Newbery Honor Book and a Robert F. Sibert Honor book. She also discussed the process of writing with students in Grades 2-3. Soontornvat informed them that you don't have to come from a certain background to be a writer, shared how she draws inspiration for her stories from her real life, and also reminded all of us that it is the second draft of the process that makes you a writer. The author is proud of her Thai heritage and Texas roots, having grown up in Austin, TX.



Soontornvat is the 2021 recipient of the Jane Addams Book Award for older children for her book *A Wish in the Dark*, set in a Thai-inspired fantasy world. This award annually recognizes children's books of literary and aesthetic excellence that effectively engage children in thinking about peace, social justice, global community, and equity for all people. A national committee of members with passion for and expertise in children's literature and social justice is responsible



for making the choices each year. This book also won a Newbery Honor. "We are so grateful our students had the opportunity to meet with Ms. Soontornvat and think it's especially important to highlight authors, books, and characters from diverse cultures," commented Librarian Patrick Pané. This author visit was made possible by the Parents Association. 🌿

## Community Outreach Continues



While much has changed in this school year, WES's commitment to community service is as strong as ever! For the past several years, WES has held a monthly community service event, known as *First Friday*, and though it has looked a bit different due to safety precautions, this year we have continued to show up and support our neighbors on the first Friday of each month.

At the start of the year we partnered with local organization **Small Things Matter** to provide casseroles for area families living with food insecurity. In November we held a **Warmth Drive**, collecting new and gently-used coats, scarves, gloves, and other items for our unhoused neighbors at Church of the Epiphany in downtown DC. Many WES families also donated "Blessing Bags" with masks, hand sanitizer, snacks, an encouraging note, and other items to distribute with the winter clothing. Kathy Gallagher, who helps coordinate Epiphany's service ministries, let us know that on distribution day the items were very quickly and enthusiastically accepted. "The level of appreciation was huge," she said.

Also in November, our Middle School Student Government Association (SGA) held a school-wide **canned food drive**, along with the Elementary Division, which brought in over a thousand pantry items to donate to Martha's Table, an organization with a long history of supporting food justice for Washington families.

In the midst of a year that has challenged us on so many different levels, we are so proud of how our Dragons have continued to serve our wider community, whether from home or from school. 🌿



## STANDING UP



On June 27, 2020, more than 350 participants came together on the Gosnell Field at WES to support the Black Lives Matter movement, marching into Bethesda, speaking out about racial injustice. **WES graduate Geoffrey Shaiyen '16**, a freshman at St. John's University, shares his point of view about how he organized this peaceful and socially-distanced protest on a matter close to his heart.

***Geoffrey, what motivated you to action over racial injustice and the need for equality?***

The subject of racial injustice shown by certain cops became a regular part of our discussion at the dinner table with my brothers and parents. The George Floyd situation was a trigger. My brother Ian and I approached our parents about adding our voices in an effort to unite and change the wrong in our society.

***Organizing a march is a big endeavor for anyone. How did you decide to plan a protest march?***

As the month of June unfolded, we all saw the images of the demonstrations that were held around the country and the world. We even participated in a couple of them. We decided to organize a march/rally. The Black Lives Matter movement became a logical vehicle for us to add our voices alongside others. We envisioned organizing this with the people in our community. Ian and I decided: we were going to move forward with the rally.

***You obviously know a lot of friends who felt the same way you and Ian did about the need for speaking out. How did you plan the event and amass such a large group of participants?***

We discussed our overall plan with a close circle of friends and became even more excited. It was a little daunting to put our plan into motion but after hearing what others had to say about their fears and how everyone was at the same frustration level, we were confident we could pull it off. We formed a committee that included my WES classmates from 2016 and Ian's from 2018. Once the word spread we gained support from students from other classes as well as friends from St. John's College High School and others. We all



Geoffrey Shaiyen '16

were committed to making this dream a reality and wanted to put our thoughts and words into action.

#### **How did your plan come together?**

Very quickly! We identified leadership groups, articulated our objectives, and assigned tasks. The primary objective of the march was to provide a platform for members of our community to add their voices to the Black Lives Matter movement. The second objective was to unite area students around the theme of equality irrespective of race, gender, sexuality, or religion. Lastly, our goal was to chart a way forward by providing a means for students and others to perform their civic duty.

#### **At this point, all we needed was a venue and a date.**

We were very proud to read about the statement WES put out to the WES community by Danny Vogelmann and Omékongo Dibinga on June 1 about having an “opportunity to do better in the fight against racism, to be better advocates for people suffering from systemic, race-based injustice.” This compelled us to have the march at WES. WES was a logical choice because it is where we grew up—where we were encouraged to be ourselves and to speak up. We were able to see Mr. Vogelmann and have a conversation with him. It felt good to be given the go-ahead to proceed with our plans. Many of the faculty and staff offered their support and even their own supplies. Our plan was to have a student-led, non-violent, and socially-distanced event. We then secured a venue and date and went to get the necessary permits from Montgomery County to make sure we met the county requirements. As a co-chair, Ian helped to secure permits and solidify police support for the march. He also led the graphic design team, driving the artistic vision and creating posters.

#### **How did you determine who spoke before the march?**

Our friends just stepped up. Everyone had something unique to share and prepared amazing speeches. Ian delivered an electrifying spoken word performance. Arjun Narayan '18 and Mr. Elkassem, our coach and science teacher, played *Stand By Me*, which is exactly what everyone did that day—they stood by us, they stood together, and they stood up against injustice.

#### **How has your family and others supported your commitment to this cause?**

Our parents [Dana and Hubert Shaiyan] were immensely supportive throughout, providing the occasional push and guidance while our vision was realized. Madison Welborn '16's mom and Logan Johns' parents were also very supportive—Madison's mom helped with getting media coverage. The march into Bethesda that hot and humid summer day was covered on the local ABC and NBC news stations. The Montgomery County police and Maryland Park Police were also very professional and supportive.

#### **Could you imagine having as many participants as you did?**

Not at all! We were really pleased with the diverse turnout of more than 350 people and the chance to build up support within the community during the march. There were so many WES families in attendance—WES teachers and staff, alumni, neighbors—all ages and races. It really made us feel supported and reaffirmed that what we are doing is making a difference. That we are being heard.

#### **What stood out to you during this experience?**

The richly diverse members of our community in attendance and the professionalism and the cooperation of the Montgomery County and Park Police. It was great to reconnect with members of our WES family as well as its faculty and staff.

We were pleasantly surprised to receive a call from Congressman Jamie Raskin (MD-08) whom we had the privilege of having a couple of Zoom calls with last August. He is a member of the House Judiciary Committee and a leading voice in police reform. He invited us to Capitol Hill once Covid-19 has steadied. We will follow up with Rep. Raskin on the Justice and Policing Act of 2020, a bill he co-sponsors.

#### **How are you feeling about the Black Lives Matter movement going forward?**

I definitely feel more optimistic, yet more cautious now. Some progress has been made but not enough. The events of this past summer helped propel us in the right direction. It's abundantly clear that many groups of people feel they have been mistreated or wrongfully accused, especially the African American community, and that is not okay. More attention is necessary for real change to take place. We are getting somewhat closer to making changes that will benefit everyone. I was encouraged to see all different types of people come out for the march. America is built on the idea of immigrants of different cultures coming together with a shared purpose. This march showed that as Americans we have to do better on how we treat our fellow Americans.



#### **Has this experience influenced your goals for the future?**

I plan to major in business management with a minor in sports management at St. John's. I think that being involved with the Black Lives Matter movement has shown me that I have leadership qualities. Hopefully I can use my voice to help others in the community who feel wrongfully accused and helpless and make a difference.

#### **Do you have faith that things will get better soon?**

I do believe that things will get better soon, if the momentum is sustained. The commitment and determination exhibited by my generation to justice reform leads me to conclude that “we shall overcome.” I voted for the first time in the [2020 presidential] election. Things will indeed get better. We just have to continue to have faith in a better tomorrow just as MLK, Mandela, and many other great leaders did. 🍀

For more photos from the march, please see page 24.



## Early Childhood

### Nursery · Pre-K · Kindergarten · Grade 1

**"I got this, Mrs. Nickel, don't worry," exclaimed Harriet as she put her water bottle on the sidewalk, pulled off her gloves, and maneuvered her backpack in order to sanitize her hands before entering the school building.**

It was our first icy, cold morning and it was obvious from the start that this was going to be hard and take time, but witnessing the steadfast determination as each child thought of different ways to solve how to maneuver their mittens, water bottles, and backpacks in order to "wash their hands" was worth it. This was a perfect example of how young students learn perseverance when faced with a new challenge. Kindergartener Elliott took off his gloves and stored them under his hat, and then helped his little sister while she took off her mittens, copying

him. Vahagn took his time with his new gloves, commenting about how special they were as he removed them, and then after sanitizing his hands needed to put them back on, acknowledging that it's hard getting each finger in the right spot! Arrival duty took more than 45 minutes that day and required a certain grit and resiliency amongst not only the students, but their teachers as well. No doubt that parents **persevered** that morning as they made sure their child had all the necessary equipment before leaving home.

The pandemic has meant that parents, teachers, and students need to work together to prepare for difficult tasks, meet frustrations head-on, and practice patience. Things just take time. The

good news is that these efforts and this teamwork have allowed our youngest students to build upon their self-confidence and sense of worth. An "I can" attitude has always been a strong component of WES's Early Childhood program. But this year in particular you see it in our youngest students—even with masks on, and physically-distanced from each other—they still complete a science experiment, explore the world of owls, have fun at recess, and make their first snowball of the season with an overwhelming sense of joy and pride!



On the previous page:

- A Nursery student makes his first snowball of the season on the playground.
- A first-grader practices her weekly spelling words.
- A Kindergarten student portrays one of the three kings during the Early Childhood Christmas Chapel.

1. A Kindergartener's owl painting, inspired by the book *Owl Babies* by Martin Waddell
2. What could be more fun than chasing balloons in Nursery's PE class?

3. Before every class, Mr. Elkassem sings a song featuring students' names, welcoming them into his Grade 1 science class.
4. A first-grader uses a magnifying glass to observe and measure the growth of a plant he grew from seed, part of the class' unit of study on life cycles.
5. Pre-K students enjoy recess on a sunny day.
6. A Kindergartener investigates an owl "pellet," finding tiny bones that the owl could not safely digest, as part of their unit of study on owls.
7. Painting a pumpkin in Pre-K requires focus (and a lot of paint!).
8. Ms. Brent enthusiastically leads a Grade 1 class remotely.



# Early Childhood



## Elementary Grade 2 • Grade 3 • Grade 4 • Grade 5

Last March, just before things came to a halt due to COVID-19, our Chapel virtue of the month was “perseverance.” It is perhaps unsurprising that the theme has continued through to this school year as we have resumed navigating the new normals of Zooms, mask-wearing, and physical distancing. **Perseverance** or “the continued effort to do or achieve something despite difficulties, failure, or opposition” (*Merriam Webster*) is closely allied to the concepts of grit and tenacity. Research shows that the ability to persevere through struggles can be supported by nurturing a “growth” mindset. Throughout the first semester, Elementary Dragons have worked to develop the stances of flexible thinking, optimism, and resilience in the face of challenge, and found ways to learn and thrive together in these unprecedented circumstances.

In many respects, teachers have continued to do what they do best—building positive, respectful, and joyful classroom communities and designing engaging, active, and hands-on learning opportunities. Our Elementary Dragons have risen to the challenge to adapt to new circumstances. Grade 5 students

completed 3D masks in Art, Grade 2 scientists investigated and made simple machines in STEM, and Grade 4 Dragons learned ukulele in music. As part of a social studies project, Grade 3 students collaborated in pairs and investigated a variety of landforms. They created 3D posters and presented their learning to their at-home and in-school peers with pride and confidence. Students are now adept at joining Zoom meetings, listening to and engaging with their peers in break-out rooms, sharing their screens to present their learning, and of course, celebrating holidays together. When learning at home, they have found ways to be organized, look after their school resources, navigate schedules, and arrive on time to class.

Above all, Elementary Dragons are ready at any moment to help each other—providing tech advice over Zoom, cheering with encouragement when friends are sad, reminding friends about schedules, classes, and resources, and of course, making each other laugh. They should be proud of all they have achieved this semester and we can’t wait to see them all on campus again, hopefully very soon.



On the previous page, from top left:

- Grade 2 students learned about communities and located their homes on a map.
- A fifth-grader paints her 3D mask in art class.
- Grade 4 students compete in "Island Hopping," a team-building and problem-solving exercise in PE.
- A fifth-grader laughs during a team-building exercise on Orientation Day.

1. The Grade 4 virtual Halloween costume party was a fun way to celebrate!
2. A third-grader joins his class in a Zoom meeting from home.

3. Ms. Frizzle drives the WES bus on Halloween (or is it Ms. Rodriguez?).

4. Grade 2 students created constellations of stances of a "growth mindset."

5. A fifth-grade student works on his Bridges Math decimal checkpoint.

6. Ms. Nelson helps a fourth-grader navigate his new Chromebook on Orientation Day.

7. A third-grader finds it hard to put down a good book!

8. A Grade 3 student drops off Halloween treats to children at Stepping Stones Shelter, as part of her Acts of Kindness project in STEM class.



# Elementary



## Middle School Grade 6 • Grade 7 • Grade 8

Here at WES we know that learning can happen anywhere. And perhaps there's never been a year where that has been more apparent than this one! Whether on-campus or at-home, our middle school students have persevered through a remarkable and unforgettable first half of the school year with their usual curiosity, joy, and vigor.

From our first days of school, we knew this would be an extraordinary year. We invited our students to **return to campus** for an Orientation Day under tents outside, spread out on our campus grounds. We began the year in virtual learning with an updated schedule and integrated technology and learning platforms that enabled our students to manage six academic periods a day as well as physical education and specials, such as art, performing arts, and Latin. Our students were thrilled to come to campus once a week for PE, where they enjoyed walks and runs on the Capital Crescent Trail, flag football, and lots of social time afterwards.

We were delighted to return to campus in a hybrid model in early October, and students **quickly got to work**—sharing their homemade Chesapeake Bay critter models in science, conducting experiments in science labs, and creating “transformation” (scaled) drawings in geometry, clay writing tablets in ancient civilizations, digital music compositions in performing arts, and even recreating *A Long Walk to Water* on the turf field for their world geography class.

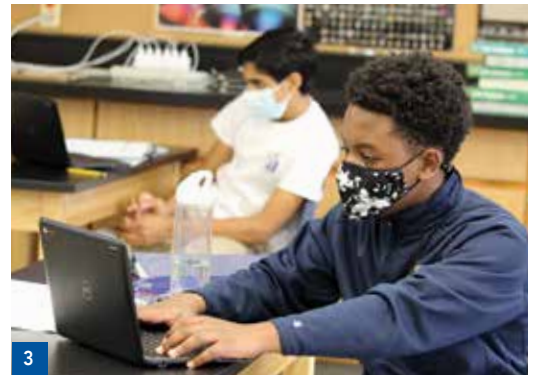
Maintaining the social-emotional curriculum remains an important aspect of the Middle School. Despite not being physically together as we normally are, we enjoyed many of the great middle school **fall traditions**. We had a robust SGA election season, and our SGA organized the Middle School pumpkin decorating competition and festivities that included costumes, donuts, and some very creative pumpkins!

There were meaningful **service opportunities** this autumn as well, as students helped to create care packages and donate winter coats for a local shelter. The SGA also organized a Middle School Advisory Canned Food Drive. Along with the Elementary division we collected 1,000 cans to donate to an area food pantry. These service activities were a strong reminder that we persevere for the good of others as well as ourselves.



As we returned to virtual learning during the time between the November and December holidays, we continued to thrive as a community through our **Advisory program**, which convenes virtually every Wednesday. “W Days,” as Wednesdays are affectionately known, have provided our middle schoolers with an opportunity to meet across grade levels—an important element of maintaining our community. W Days include our weekly Chapel service, a Middle School Community meeting, and allow our multi-grade Advisory groups to get together for some weekly conversations and check-ins. Each group provided a “**Holiday Showcase**” presentation in December to celebrate the many family traditions that our students embrace. Finally, W Days provide students one-on-one time with teachers during office hours, and plenty of enrichment activities in our very successful clubs programs—including our SGA, school newspaper and yearbook, French, Spanish, chess, and ceramics clubs, as well as anime, sci-fi book, sports talk, and more!

WES middle schoolers are certainly looking forward to the spring, as we continue to **learn and grow together**, wherever we are!



On previous page, from top left:

- A seventh-grader examines a fossil as part of the evolution unit in life science.
- Grade 8 geometry students use scaled drawings to create favorite cartoon characters.

1. A sixth-grader created and wore a TV-head zombie costume for the Middle School Halloween festivities.
2. In Grade 7 world geography, students walk a mile carrying water jugs to experience what it is like for many people to secure water around the globe.
3. Grade 8 physical science students apply physics formulas to analyze laboratory data on kinetic and potential energy.
4. A seventh-grader records data about natural ecosystems on the WES campus during a life science laboratory activity.

5. During a unit study of magnetism, students built a functioning compass from scratch. While manipulating different variables and being a problem solver, this sixth-grader attempts to balance her compass.
6. Sr. Pizarro leads a Spanish verb conjugation activity in Grade 7.
7. The Middle School Spanish club prepares "completos," a Chilean hotdog featuring sausage, avocado, tomato, mayonnaise, ketchup, and sauerkraut.
8. Grade 8 girls chat from a safe distance during recess.
9. An eighth-grader chose to paint a gingerbread house rather than make one for the Middle School holiday Advisory challenge.
10. A sixth-grader shows the cookies she baked for the Middle School holiday Advisory challenge on Zoom.



# Middle School



## PERSEVERANCE

is the *heart*  
of *art* at WES.

It is a necessary skill for growth and project completion. This year, it was even more important that we persevered to provide a meaningful art experience in the midst of a global pandemic. With the knowledge that it is hard to create art without materials, the Art Department **packed art kits** for each student. Whether a student is learning from home or in the building, the art kits allowed them to have the supplies that they needed to create.

Teachers learned new technologies and did their best to mimic the classroom with the use of Zoom and document cameras. Students picked up a **new set of skills** as they worked much more independently. Showing perseverance through problem solving, learning how to use materials, and working on their own.



Even with the challenges of having to learn and create art differently, students were able to complete a variety of projects that encouraged them to **express their own identities**. In all grades, students had the opportunity to learn about an array of artists and art forms. In turn, they used this newfound knowledge to create their **own unique works of art**—from storytelling and self-portraits to batiks and seasonal projects. Students were challenged to use a variety of two-dimensional and three-dimensional techniques to create their art.

We are committed to ensuring that Art continues to provide **community connections** through displaying on the walls in the building and sharing virtually through art shows, school news, and social media.



# U is for Ukulele

In a year of adapting to dynamic situations, the ukulele was added to the elementary music curriculum, replacing the recorder for students in Grades 3 and 4 for this year. According to band director and music teacher Matt Eisenberg, adding the ukulele, a string instrument, was a department decision in response to limitations on music instruction and health concerns in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The recorder, like all woodwind instruments, produces aerosolized particles, so it could not be used safely during group instruction. Students are able to play the ukulele while wearing protective masks during class. Instruction has been offered both in-person and remotely. In future years, ukulele instruction will likely continue, in combination with recorders.

A member of the lute family, the ukulele was introduced to Hawaii by Portuguese immigrants from Madeira in the 1800s, and is featured in songs by artists Don Ho and Jason Mraz. Ukulele instruction is most similar to guitar. Both instruments are held and operated similarly, and lessons can focus on both chordal playing and melody playing.

Eisenberg, who plays numerous instruments, commented that he has "experience teaching group guitar lessons, and I was comfortable with a basic understanding of the ukulele. The students are excited about learning to play the ukulele and have really been enjoying it. "Would the whole family enjoy learning to play the ukulele while spending more time at home? "Absolutely," added Eisenberg. "Teenagers and adults would want to try out the concert ukulele, while smaller musicians are more suited to the soprano uke." Songbooks for the ukulele feature pop, traditional, theater, and movie music. Local and online retailers offer a variety of ukuleles for about \$80 for a quality entry-level instrument.



# M is for Music

## Top-bottom, L-R:

- A Pre-K student practices keeping a steady beat.
- A Nursery student expresses creativity by dancing and playing a maraca.
- Sisters in Grades 4 and 6 play the clarinet and piano during "The Twelve Nights of Christmas" virtual concert.
- In music class, first-graders make up their own rhythms on the drums.





**F**rom a PE teacher's point of view, the wonderful sight of students returning to campus this past fall could only be topped by having these same students bring the WES fields and sports court back to life. The quiet and desolate fields of last spring gave way to the sound of happy WES Dragons who once again took over these spaces to play and compete against each other, rekindle friendships, and build new relationship with classmates.





With safety at the forefront, all PE classes were held outside this past fall as long as the weather cooperated. So unless there was a torrential rain fall, which we did see in early September, you could always count on seeing PE classes outside and students engaged.

PE teachers seamlessly adapted to the new normal and stepped up their creativity in a big way. From making ninja warrior courses, to playing soccer and flag football, adapting games to adhere to social distance guidelines, and sledding in the snow(!), the goals remained the same: *Focus, Fun, and Fitness*, for students at WES or exercising at home. WES PE is going strong and is anticipating an even more exciting spring!



# Welcome New Faculty!



**Nick Bosman, Teacher Support**  
**Home Town: Saxapahaw, NC**

My favorite book as an elementary student was *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. It was the first "big kid" book that really captivated me and sparked my imagination. My mom read it to me every night when I was in Kindergarten, and I ended up finishing the rest on my own as I learned to read.



**Gina Brent, Resource Teacher**  
**Home Town: Washington, DC**

A favorite childhood memory is going to Wildwood, NJ! Every summer, that was our big family vacation that included loading up the Volkswagen Beetles with aunts and cousins. Spending the whole day at the beach with everyone was the best! And, I still have our VW Beetle for that sentimental reason.



**Jeanna DiCarlo, Grade 3 Teacher**  
**Home Town: Braintree, MA**

A favorite memory from childhood is making fettuccine Alfredo for my whole family (about 25 people) with my mom. It's a family tradition we still do even now. We hand cut about three pounds of prosciutto for toppings every time! I now do the same tradition with my own daughters for our friends that are family here in Virginia.



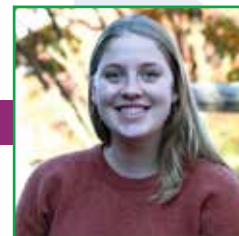
**Caleb Driker-Ohren, Teacher Support**  
**Home Town: Huntington Woods, MI**

At the end of each school day my fourth-grade teacher, Mrs. Carter, would read us Roald Dahl's *The Witches*. She brought the story to life with her cadence and gesticulations. It was one in a series of books (and a series of teachers) that impressed upon me the transformative power of reading.



**Donna Flint, Controller**  
**Home Town: Little Falls, NJ**

My husband and I are big readers and have always encouraged our kids to read too! We read to them long after they could read themselves. Some of the books included *The Little House on the Prairie* series, the *Wonderful World of Oz* series and later the *Tolkien Trilogy*. During the pandemic I reread the trilogy—what a great escape!



**Katherine Kunze, Pre-Kindergarten Associate Teacher**  
**Home Town: Rochester, NY**

One of my favorite memories from when I was the same age as my students is when my sister was born! All I wanted was to be a big sister so I was very excited. As a four year old, I wanted to name her Flower which my parents didn't go for. After she was born, I didn't love sharing the attention with my sister but now she is my best friend!



**Kimberly Lee-Mott, Grade 1 Teacher**  
**Home Town: Buffalo, New York**

A favorite childhood memory is when a major blizzard gave us our first ever snow day. We were out of school for a week and I remember watching the deer that lived in the zoo escape over the 5-foot high snow drifts. (I lived across the street from the city park and zoo.)



**Susie Loutoo, Teacher (Grade 5 math)**  
**Home Town: Washington, DC**

I lived overseas in a variety of countries until I was 7. Born in Germany, I also lived briefly in England and then France. When I was close to 5, I moved to Pakistan where I learned to read. When my family moved to the DC area, I remember being so excited to find the school library full of all kinds of books, mainly in English, and always available! I had never had that kind of access before. The Washington area has remained "home" for me.



**Mackenzie Marr, Early Childhood Music Teacher**  
**Home Town: Augusta, GA**

A little-known fact about me is that: from 2016-2018 I taught virtual piano lessons to high school girls in Kenya.

**We welcomed 17 new teachers and faculty support members this year.** The addition of these staff enabled WES to be nimble in the classroom for both in-person and remote learning situations and allowed us to maintain small class sizes to deliver the WES curriculum to more than 280 students. The support and dedication of all our faculty and staff are keeping things running effectively and smoothly in this unique school year.

***Read on to get to know more about our new faculty!***



**Salim Nashid, Payroll and HR Coordinator**  
**Home Town: Los Angeles, CA.**

A little known fact about me is that I went to the same high school as The Beach Boys.



**Jessica Nelson, Grade 4 Teacher**  
**Home Town: Long Island, New York!**

My favorite childhood book was *Miss Nelson is Missing* because I always wanted to be a teacher and loved pretending to be Miss Viola Swamp! (My students in 4C are very careful not to invite a visit from Miss Swamp.)



**Emjay O'Shea, Teacher Support**  
**Home Town: Springfield, MA**

When I was a kid, one of my favorite book series was *Encyclopedia Brown*. My family got me hooked on detective stories from a young age, and I loved how these books gave me the chance to "be the detective" and solve the mystery myself.



**Emily Rice, Kindergarten Associate Teacher**  
**Home Town: Houston, TX**

My mom used to read me a chapter from *Junie B. Jones* every night when I was in Kindergarten and we loved her funny phrases like "speedy quick!".



**Rachel Rodriguez, Grade 2 Teacher**  
**Home Town: Alexandria, VA**

My favorite book from childhood was *Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs*. I would sit and color for hours with my brother about which foods we would love to have fall from the sky. I also started my love for cooking at a young age, reading my mom's cookbooks. Now I make it a goal to research and cook 100 new recipes a year. In 2020 I tried out 108 recipes that were new to me!



**Archana Shukla, Faculty Support**  
**Home Town: Mumbai, Maharashtra, India**

I actually taught economics at the same graduate school I graduated from in India! My professors became my colleagues, which was a bit awkward at first. A few years later I moved to the US and when my daughter was of preschool age, I began working with three-year-olds and discovered a new passion and profession. After 10 years I am incredibly happy to be working with children and learning from them as a teacher.



**Sarah Taiibi, Development Associate,  
Special Events and Gift Coordinator**  
**Home Town: Washington, DC**

My favorite childhood book is *Charlotte's Web*. My hobby is cooking—especially Afghan and Latino food.



**Natasha White, Faculty Support**  
**Home Town: Woodbridge, VA**

A little known fact about me is that I've been playing clarinet for 10 years and I have a degree in music.

# WASHINGTON EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

# Alumni

## CLASS NOTES



1



2



3



4

1 Olivia Heflin '12 and family celebrate her graduation from University of Pennsylvania in May 2020; Hunter '10, Spencer '05, Jorman '07 and his fiancé Stephanie Caudle, and parents Julie and Willie Heflin • 2 St. Andrew's graduates Felicia Gelos '16 and Caroline Milne '16 on graduation day • 3 Brothers Alex '17 and Max '20 McMillan at WES this summer • 4 Jake Bradt '08 and Becky Rivas on their wedding day in August, on Nantucket

'20 **Emily Evans**  
emmyjevans@gmail.com

**Marco Burrows** plays violin in the orchestra at St. Albans and is playing soccer and lacrosse. He also helped with charitable clothing and toy drives. **Nasim** and **Samir Elkassem** are on the Churchill swim team. **Emily Evans** loves attending Stone Ridge and has joined a few clubs (Generation Ratify, dedicated to ratifying the equal rights amendment; Spectrum--awareness and support for the LGBTQ community; BSA/black student alliance; and TWLOHA, providing hope and help for people with mental illnesses). She is interested in playing sports when they become available. **James Grebowski** is practicing with Pro Skills Basketball. **Emanuelle Hair** is enjoying Stone Ridge and is on the Debate Club. **Alex High** is in the Chinese History Club and the History Club at St. Albans and is doing crew and cross country. **Declan Jamberdino** is doing well at Landon and loving all of his classes, especially biology, Spanish, and English. He is still playing hockey at Capitals Hockey Academy and has the pleasure of being on a team with **Trey Knott**. **Amy King's** favorite class at Field School is Latin. **Camille Montrose** is playing bass in Holy Child's instrumental ensemble. **Davis Oeltmann** is on the football and hockey teams as well as part of the Best Buddies Club at Georgetown Prep. He recently was selected as a Young Ambassador for the Henrik Lundqvist Foundation for 2021-2022, one of only 14 young adults from the NY and DC metro areas. **Grace Pressley** had the lead role of Don Pedro in Holy Cross' production

of *Much Ado About Nothing* in November. **Maria Stepanyan** is very actively involved in publishing poems and articles for various journals at Sidwell Friends School. She published an article on immigration policies and two of her poems were selected and published in the *Culture and Identity Journal*. Maria periodically publishes articles for Sidwell's main magazine, *The Horizon*. **Lia Walton** has joined several clubs at St. Andrew's (A Cappella, People for Pets, and Coding) and looks forward to auditioning for the musical.

'19 **Elim Ephrame**  
ephrame.elim@yahoo.com

**Eliza Horne** attends the Madeira School. She played soccer in the fall and is on the Model UN team this winter. Over quarantine in June, she ran a half marathon (just for fun). Eliza is also continuing with ceramics—something she loved during her days at WES. **Naomi Horne** attends Holton-Arms School and played softball this fall. **Gabi Love** is playing basketball at St. John's. **Mareina Mitchell** played volleyball at St. Andrew's and also enjoys dance. She participates in A Cappella, Students of Color Association, and the musical. Chemistry is her favorite class. **Iris Zola's** favorite class is biology and she is active at St. Andrew's as a member of Hearts for Haiti, Girls Who Start Club, Student Ambassadors, and the Lion's Club Program. She also has been involved in plays and musicals.

We look forward to resuming reunions when possible. *We miss our Alumni!*

## '18 Fiona Turnbull feturnbull@icloud.com

At St. Andrew's, **Isabella Dodro** is a member of a number of organizations (A Capella, Class Rep for Student Government Association, Student Faculty Liaison for Students of Color Association, Varsity Boys Basketball Manager, Black Student Alliance). She was grateful to have had the opportunity to help facilitate her school's annual Diversity Conference which strengthened her leadership skills. **Julian Haas** plays soccer and wrestles at St. Andrew's. He's looking forward to working on his oral history project about the history of the Italian Civil War during World War II. **Harrison Kehler** continues his skill at running, participating in cross country, winter track, and spring track. He also writes for *The Mane News* and is a member of Model UN at St. Andrew's. AP Calculus is his favorite class. **Conner Nickel** continues to swim for St. Andrew's and is a member of the art club. **Ian Shaiyen** spoke at the Black Lives Matter march at WES in June, and delivered his original spoken word performance at the event. Ian joined the Catholic Church at St. Bart's in September—Jackie Thornton was his sponsor. **Katie Skinner**, who was a standout artist at WES, is in honors art/portfolio development class and looks forward to helping with the musical this year. **David Stevenson** enjoys theatre productions at St. Andrew's and competing in track and field (shotput and discus). His favorite class is physics. **Bradley Whiteway** was on the 4th Quarter Dean's List, First Honors, at Georgetown Prep last year.

## '17 Thomas Carney tpcarney97@gmail.com Emelia Isola Isolaemelia@gmail.com Joanna Dematatis jkdematatis@gmail.com Randolph Kaminskis Randolph.kaminskas@gmail.com

**Dale Bell** competed in *It's Academic* with his B-CC team last June via Zoom. He was able to successfully answer a Championship Round question, he said, based on a lesson in Mrs. Earle's science class. His team won more than \$6,000 in scholarship funds for his school. **Evan Deobald** was admitted into the College of Arts and Sciences at Boston College and plans to study economics and history in the fall. He made the 4th Quarter Dean's List at Georgetown Prep last year and participates in club running and cycling. He is very active in SOME and other community

service outreach programs. **Karim Elkassem** is captain of the Churchill swim team **Nico Jordan**, a senior at Georgetown Prep, was named a National Hispanic Recognition Program Scholar. He volunteered at SOME this past summer. **Garrett McCally**, a member of Boy Scout Troop 61 in Washington, DC, recently achieved scouting's highest rank of Eagle Scout. Garrett earned First Honors 4th Quarter of his junior year at Georgetown Prep and was admitted to Boston College for the fall semester. **Nick Stewart** was honored as a National Hispanic Recognition Program Scholar in November and earned First Honors 4th Quarter of his junior year at Georgetown Prep. **Holden Woodings** plays soccer at St. Andrew's and is part of the Lions Den. **Miles Woodings** continues to wrestle at St. Andrew's and enjoys AP computer science.

## '16 Maddie Blonder Maddieblonder@gmail.com

**Maddie Blonder** was a speaker at the Black Lives Matter march at WES in June. She attends Penn State University. **Peter Connolly** and **Nick Leahy** made the 4th Quarter Dean's List last year at Georgetown Prep. Peter attends Georgetown University and Nick attends Villanova. **Alex Davidson** is a freshman at University of Pittsburgh, not far from his older brother **Josh '14**, at Duquesne University. **Ben Deobald** started at Washington University in St. Louis and is enjoying the school and engineering. He still is very active in SOME and other community service outreach. He made 4th Quarter Dean's List, First Honors, at Georgetown Prep last year. **Caroline Milne** had a great first semester at Bates College and is so happy with her choice of that school. **Georgia Mitchell** started her first semester remotely at Kenyon College. **Sarah Myhre** is studying architecture at Clemson University and enjoyed her first semester. She is a member of Delta Zeta sorority. **Sarah Norton** started her year remotely at Dickinson College. **Christian Phillips** enjoyed his first semester at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia. He is studying Finance with a minor in Data Science and was just accepted to the Dean's Leadership Program in the Haub School of Business. **Geoffrey Shaiyen** led a Black Lives Matter march on June 27, 2020, at WES. See the feature article on page 4 for more on his endeavor. Geoffrey joined the Catholic Church at St. Bart's this past fall. His former teacher, Jackie Thornton, was a sponsor for him and his brother **Ian '18** in

September. **Julia Topetzes** finished her first semester at Gettysburg College and really enjoyed her experience. She is majoring in psychology with a philosophy minor. **Madison Welborn** was a panelist (Gen Z Student Activist) on DC Democratic Women's Club's Virtual Town Hall Event in October 2020. See the Alumni Profile for more information about Madison's latest pursuits.

## '15 Ryan Kyle Ryankyle36@gmail.com

**Mark Schlager** is a sophomore at The George Washington University majoring in political science and minoring in Spanish. He was able to do a remote internship for Young Kim's (CA) congressional campaign. **Brendan Grau**, a software engineering major, has made Dean's list for all three semesters at Rochester Institute of Technology.

## '14 Samantha Liggins samanthaliggins@gmail.com

**George Bowman** is studying political science as well as economics and psychology at University of Miami. **Josh Davidson** is a sports marketing major at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh. **Jack Helmanis**, who attends University of New Hampshire, was accepted to the business school's honors program, an economics honors fraternity, and a special program for finance students to connect with professionals working in finance. **Parker Lotstein** transferred to Middlebury College in early 2020. **Anna-Sophia Massaro** is a philosophy major/education minor at Bates College. She is also president of her ballroom dance team and is enjoying axe throwing!

## '13 Alya Ahmed AAhmed17@sidwell.edu Genevieve Dickinson genevieve.dickinson@gmail.com Sterling Myhre semyhre12@gmail.com Jack Szulc-Donnell thenso37@yahoo.com

**Alya Ahmed**, a senior math and economics major at Yale, won the Tobin Scholar Award, given to one of the top performing students in economics. She plans to move to New York City after graduation this summer to work in investment banking. She got to spend some time with her brother **Ali '11** in San Francisco last semester and visited family in Pakistan in the winter. **Katherine Bowles** graduated in December 2020 from Miami of Ohio with a BS in Software Engineering. She started a job with Bank of America in February in their Global Technology and Operations department, after interning with them last



Lucy Weems '19 stopped by WES to donate books this fall.



Andrew Fullerton '13 in Rome, 2019



Alya Ahmed '13 and friend's dog



Nora Dahlberg '10 wearing a costume of Sansa Stark from Game of Thrones she created for herself



Mayowa Tinubu '12

# Alumni Class Notes

summer. She is back in DC, spending time with her family. **Andrew Fullerton** is a senior at NYU, studying Music Business and minoring in Film & TV production. He studied abroad for the spring 2019 semester in Paris. He spent September 2020 living in Los Angeles with **Nathan Mosher**. **Amiri Hill** had a summer 2020 Congressional Internship with The Congressional Black Caucus Foundation. She is a senior at Loyola College of New Orleans. **Christopher McTaggart** did an Architectural Studies program in Europe last winter and has been in rural Minnesota since June. He is majoring in Cinema and Media Studies and minoring in Art History at Carlton College. He writes for an online publication, *Emulsive*, and is taking German. He may apply to post-grad programs in Germany.

**'12 Douglas Chen-Young**  
dchenyoung@gmail.com  
**Grace Recka**  
grace.recka@gmail.com

**Douglas Chen-Young** received his BA in economics from UNC Chapel Hill in 2020. His minors were entrepreneurship and Hispanic studies. He is an economic development intern with the Institute for Sustainability Development (IGSD) in DC. Douglas spent time in Spain last summer. **Grace Dickinson** is attending graduate school at Johns Hopkins pursuing a degree in elementary education with a certificate in special ed. She also is teaching first and second grade math at a public charter school in Fort Toten in DC. She wrote to Mehdi Elkassem, "I am forever thankful for you and all my WES teachers for setting the ultimate example as I've started my journey in the classroom." **Olivia Heflin** graduated from University of Pennsylvania last spring. **Madison Lotstein** graduated from Middlebury College and has a position with

NIH (neuroscience). **Carolyn Martin** graduated from College of Charleston last May and is working remotely in Bethesda as a Research Associate for Guidepoint, an expert networking company in NYC. **Laurence Ruberl**, who graduated from Earlham College in May, is working for ASRC Federal, contract at Ames Research Facility as a Junior High Performance Computer Engineer in Palo Alto, CA. **Mayowa Tinubu** graduated from Amherst University in June as an economics and political science double major. He recently moved to New York and works as a sales trader for Barclays. In an email to Mehdi Elkassem he remarked that he is "really grateful for the foundation that you and the community at WES gave me." **Catherine Wagner** is living in Montana and studying sociology. Despite some hip surgeries, she is enjoying fishing, hiking, and rafting. She also is involved in rodeo competitions.

**'11 Peter Abdow**  
peter.abdow@gmail.com  
**Sarah Bair**  
soccersab@gmail.com  
**Jake Bredhoff**  
jake.bredhoff@yahoo.com

**Ali Ahmed** is working for his startup in San Francisco. He has deferred his acceptance to Harvard Business School for a couple of years. He traveled to Pakistan this winter to see family. **Sarah Bair** is pursuing her masters at the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University, studying community health development in their global health department. She is working as a grants coordinator for the American Farm Bureau Federation. **Katie DeVries** is an entrepreneur, using her culinary skills to open Hearthwood Hull Bakery in the Sea Pines Resort, in Hilton Head, SC. She is chef and owner, providing delicious baked goods and confections. WES classmate **Isabelle Kramer** and her family visited Katie this summer and were happy customers! **Sarah Dickey** is in her second year of law school at Washington University and hopes to work in NYC this summer. **Lauren Freeny** started her graduate work at Washington University in St. Louis in August. **James Hemus** graduated with distinction from Queen Mary University of London with his M.Sc this past fall. He spent some time in Costa Rica before starting a job this year.



Evan Deobald '17, Ben Deobald '16, and Nico Jordan '17 this summer • Chef Katie DeVries '11 in Hilton Head, SC • Sarah Myhre '16 and brother Sterling Myhre '13 at a Clemson football game this fall



Susie Bair '07 (center) shows her engagement ring with siblings Sarah '11 and John '09 • Christopher McTaggart '13 • Class of 2020 grads Zaid Stormer, Trey Knott, and Declan Jamberdino • Anna-Sophia Massaro '14



Dale Bell '17 (left) competes on the "It's Academic" quiz show • Julia Topetztes '16 • Ron Valenzia, Geoffrey Shaiyen '16, and Bill Isola at WES this fall • Sarah Dickey '11

**'10 Lindsay Bratun**  
lindsaybratun@gmail.com  
**Jonathan Butturini**  
Jab990@gmail.com  
**Shelby Mahaffie**  
shelby.mahaffie@gmail.com  
**Madison Sharp**  
endesha4079@gmail.com

**Nora Dahlberg** spent a while working in theater in DC fabricating and designing costumes (Signature Theatre, the National Opera, Anacostia Playhouse, etc.) and NYC (Broadway premiere of *Frozen*). Last year she moved to Salt Lake City to explore and find better work-life balance. She is studying coding and web design at the University of Utah. She also teaches Stage Makeup for Imagination Stage via Zoom and makes costumes for historical re-enactors. Nora skis and climbs in her spare time as well. She also sewed and donated 122 masks over the summer. **Andreas Gizaw** will attend University of Maryland School of Medicine in August. He works as a COVID-19 Contact Tracer for Montgomery County. **Leia Karam** lives in London



Top to bottom, L-R: Brendon Walsh '08 and his grandmother • Forrest Wright's '04 artwork for the WES holiday card • Alice Locke Luchs '03 with husband Richard and son Wally (4) • Jack Metelski '07 and his fiancée Nicole Hawkins in November • Sofia Selowsky '04 • Katie Conley Hanley '06, her husband Taylor, and daughter Reilly Grace in Hawaii • Ben Coleman '08 • Bethany Mark '09 with daughter and fiancé • Arjun Ganji '09 • Betsy Bowman '09 and husband Dan Matos



and is a transformation and technology PR Manager at BT Group. **Byron Jones** started NuWave Construction, a general contracting company last May. His vision is built on "changing the stigma and negative experiences that customers typically have when dealing with contractors. My goal is to focus on customer satisfaction, by providing quality workmanship and great communication throughout the entire process." His company provides remodeling and new construction (kitchens, baths, HVAC, windows, and total renovations). This fall he designed and renovated a bathroom for his former teacher and coach Bill Isola. Check out his website at [www.itsanuwave.com](http://www.itsanuwave.com). **Dana Martin** relocated from NYC to work remotely in Bethesda during the pandemic.

**'09 Kelsye Little**  
[klittle5@scmail.spelman.edu](mailto:klittle5@scmail.spelman.edu)  
**Bethany Mark**  
[bethany.mz.lovely.mark@gmail.com](mailto:bethany.mz.lovely.mark@gmail.com)

**Betsy Bowman** and Dan Matos were married on February 15, 2020 in Miami and now live in Orange County, CA. **Arjun Ganji** is in his second year of law school at The George Washington University. **Kelsye Little** is teaching Kindergarten at Laura H. Carnell School in Philadelphia. **Bethany Mark** is teaching Kindergarten and is enjoying time with her daughter. **Lars Sorenson** has been with a startup called Candid, based in NYC, for four years.

**'08 Aszanai Jones**  
[azzanaiprincess@gmail.com](mailto:azzanaiprincess@gmail.com)  
**Ben Martin**  
[Musicman5326@yahoo.com](mailto:Musicman5326@yahoo.com)

Congratulations to **Jake Bradt** and his wife Becky Rivas on their marriage on August 22, 2020. They enjoyed a small ceremony on the Bradt's deck in Nantucket—just parents, siblings, and Jake's grandmother. Jake continues his PhD program at Harvard and Becky attends law school at University of Chicago. **Ben Coleman** is in his third year of medical school at University of Maryland and is starting his surgery rotation. **Ben Martin** started a new position in August 2020 as an Environmental, Social, Governance (ESG) consultant at Solebury Trout and started a part-time MBA program at Georgetown University last fall. **Brendon Walsh** is a salesforce consultant doing technology implementations for non-profit, educational institutions, and healthcare companies. He recently moved to Geneva Switzerland for a year last July to spend time with his 98-year-old grandmother and to ski this winter. He plans to return to Chicago in August.

**'07 Shannon Egan**  
[Segan1004@gmail.com](mailto:Segan1004@gmail.com)  
**Jack Metelski**  
[john.metelski@gmail.com](mailto:john.metelski@gmail.com)

**Susie Bair** became engaged to Oliver Jones on July 4, 2020. They met while students at Clemson University. **Jorman Heflin** is engaged to Stephanie Caudle, who is from Bakersfield, CA. **Jack Metelski** is engaged to Nicole Hawkins. The couple met while students at Colgate. Jack still works for Bessemer Trust in their investment department in NYC.

**'06 Chloe Lansdale**  
[chloe.lansdale@gmail.com](mailto:chloe.lansdale@gmail.com)  
**Clark Pastrick**  
[Clark.pastrick@gmail.com](mailto:Clark.pastrick@gmail.com)

It was exciting to see what **Katy Conley**, founder of @SeasAlohaToday, has been up to, when we spotted her Instagram. Katy married Taylor Hanley in 2018. They live in Hawaii and welcomed their first child, Reilly Grace, in August 2020. Taylor is a member of the Air Force and was stationed in Iraq in January 2020.

**'05 Kristin Maller**  
[kmm\\_09@yahoo.com](mailto:kmm_09@yahoo.com)  
**Jon Rice**  
[Jonathan.rice@me.com](mailto:Jonathan.rice@me.com)  
**Charis Whitnah**  
[whitswow@aol.com](mailto:whitswow@aol.com)

**Della Bradt** is engaged to Alex Cvek. They met four years ago in DC and were engaged in October 2020.

They are planning a spring 2022 wedding.

**'04 Sofia Selowsky**  
[Sofia.selowsky@gmail.com](mailto:Sofia.selowsky@gmail.com)  
**Jeffrey Scholl**  
[Jeffr3354@aol.com](mailto:Jeffr3354@aol.com)

Opera singer **Sofia Selowsky** was severely impacted by the pandemic but has been working on a tech startup with a friend. Thanks to WES Kindergarten teacher **Forrest Wright** for creating an original illustration for this year's WES holiday card.

**'03**

**Alice Locke Luchs** lives in Montana with her husband Richard and their son Wally (4). She and her husband run a dog boarding business and she also trains dogs.

**'02 Carolina Richards**  
[richards.carolina@gmail.com](mailto:richards.carolina@gmail.com)

**Caroline Geier Masur** and her husband Jack welcomed their first child, Annie Grace, on June 18, 2020. They live in Baltimore.

**'01 Sarah Jones**  
[Sarah.whitney.jones@gmail.com](mailto:Sarah.whitney.jones@gmail.com)



Follow @alumniwes on Instagram



Join WES Alumni Association group on Facebook

# Alumni Class Notes

'00 **Anne Glassie**  
glassie@gmail.com

**Alex Boisclair** is a yoga instructor at Down Dog Yoga in Bethesda. **Will Seeley** and Noelle Tom-Wigfield were married on October 6, 2019. They reside in Portland, OR and are expecting a child in early 2021.

'99

'98

'97 **Nate Guggenheim**  
Nate.Guggenheim@WFP.com

**Mariam Ayub** is Chief of General Internal Medicine at Medstar Georgetown University Hospital and is an associate professor. After WES, she attended Holton-Arms. She then was a pre-med major at Brown University and attended University of Maryland for medical school. She lives in Bethesda.

'94 **Charlotte McCormack**  
char.mccorma@gmail.com

'93 **Palmer Seeley**  
Palmer.Seeley@caryacademy.org  
**Dan Freer**  
Dan.freer@gmail.com

**Dan Freer** and his family temporarily relocated to Charleston, his wife Katie's hometown, during the pandemic.

'92 **John Pinto**  
johnp1979@yahoo.com

'91 **Alia Campbell-Crawford**  
aliacampbellcrawford@gmail.com

We were so pleased to hear from **Alia (Ayub) Campbell-Crawford** this past summer when she was in town. She showed her children, Zara (5) and Rafay (2) WES. Alia graduated from Holton-Arms, and attended Brandeis University for freshman year, and then transferred to the University of St. Andrew's (Scotland). She then went on to BPP Law School in London and

received her law degree. She met her husband Luke in London and they were married in 2011, where they have lived ever since. Alia is a political risk analyst, supporting projects in the public and private sectors. She set up and is on the board for the European Ultimate Federation (EUF), having picked up the sport of Ultimate while at St. Andrew's. She currently is project managing a gender equity in sport manual through a grant she wrote for the EUF. Alia hopes to move to the Bethesda area in this year.

'90 **Ashleigh Freer Parr**  
afparr@gmail.com

'89 **Stephan von Schilcher**  
vonschilcher@gmail.com

What fun it was to catch up with **Stephan von Schilcher**. His and wife Becky's two sons, Johann (6) and Oskar (4) keep them busy. The boys love to play LEGOs, and soccer, take bike rides down to the community dock in Annapolis, and going out on the boat.

They also enjoyed going to the cabin this past summer.

'88 **Rebecca (Schneider) Luria**  
reflecerebec@hotmail.com

**Britt Snider** and his wife Keeley welcomed Elizabeth Dorothy (Eliza) on September 18, 2020. She joins big sisters **Katherine '22** and **Maeve '24**.

## Former Faculty News

**Kelly Rutherford** and her husband Adam welcomed Avery Brielle on July 19, 2020. She joins brothers Chase and Austin. **Barbara von Schilcher** celebrated her 80th birthday this past summer. **Stu Work** has a new granddaughter, Tessa Lewis Work, born on September 7, 2020, in Pasadena CA. She joins brothers Craig (5) and Philip (3) and brings Stu's grandchildren count to five.



Top to bottom, L-R: Jack Helmanis '12 • **Grace Dickson '12** • Britt '88 and Keeley Snider with daughters Katherine '22, Maeve '24 and Eliza at Eliza's baptism in December. • **Mark Schlager '15** (left) • Alia (Ayub) Campbell-Crawford '91 and her children Zara (5) and Rafay (2) at WES last summer • **Catherine Wagner '12** and boyfriend **David in Montana** • Adil Husain '14 at his alma mater, Potomac School, in front of a photo mural of him playing tennis • **Stephan Von Schilcher '89** and his sons at the beach • Lars Sorenson '09 • A project photo from **Byron Jones' '10** general contracting firm, NuWave • Byron Jones '10 at work on a job site

**Parents of WES Alumni:** Please email or call us with any news you wish to share (photos, too!) of your WES alums! Contact us at [www.w-e-s.org/alumni](http://www.w-e-s.org/alumni) or call the Development Office at 301-652-7878, ext. 212, 214, or 215.

# Alumni PROFILE

Madison Welborn '16



We caught up with Madison Welborn '16 when she gave a poignant and energizing speech at the Black Lives Matter march at WES in June. Her gift for storytelling is obvious as she tells us about life after WES and her pursuits as an activist, college freshman, and future filmmaker.

## BEYOND WES

Since the eighth-grade at WES, I always knew I wanted to be in the film industry, I just didn't know exactly what I wanted to do yet. So I looked for secondary schools that had digital arts and all arts as their main focus. That's how I ended up at the Edmund Burke School in Washington, DC, after I graduated from WES in 2016. I was very active at Burke—I played soccer, basketball, softball, and volleyball and participated in clubs such as BSU (Black Student Union), Leadership Program, and Film Club. A friend and I helped start a film club and I served as Vice President for two years. I also took Video Production classes that taught

about the process of filmmaking and all of the techniques you must have to make a good film. With a laser-like focus on film, I visited Chapman University in Orange County, CA, during the summer of my junior year of high school. I immediately fell in love with everything on their campus, especially their film school, Dodge College of Film and Media Arts. Since I knew film was my passion, I applied to the top film schools in the country, including Chapman, the number four top film school in the country. The creators of *Stranger Things* graduated from Chapman as well as many more incredible people in the industry. Everyone on campus was extremely humble and welcoming, so from that point forward I knew I could

envision myself here for the next four years of my life. You can imagine how thrilled I was to be accepted to Chapman last year and that's where I started this fall, although remotely. My first semester I started a club called Chapman University's Black Film Society (CUBFS) and I am really looking forward to getting this club off the ground for my spring semester, and see the places this club can go.

## ACTIVISM

WES classmate Geoffrey Shaiyen reached out to me last June and laid out his entire plan—that he was planning a Black Lives Matter protest with the help of some other friends of his and some help from WES staff as well. He asked if I wanted to get involved and I told him I would love to join. What motivated me to get involved was the fact that I've grown up seeing people who look like me getting killed because of their skin color, and every day I leave my house, I believe that could be me. I wanted to share my thoughts at this protest because I realized that people are really listening and I want to make a difference, so I wasn't going to let this opportunity go to waste. This all led me to leading the marketing committee for this event. I was able to do a radio interview on 96.3FM with Harold Fisher. With help from my mom and her connections with local news stations, we ended up having NBC and ABC come to the march, and we appeared on the local news later that night and throughout the entire weekend. A few more things I wanted to share at the protest during my speech were my experiences with racism and what it felt like going to a predominantly white private school all my life, and how at times I felt like I couldn't fit in because of my skin color. However, I learned that the message I wanted people to take away from my speech and this entire protest was that racism is very real in America, and we have to unite together to put an end to it. It's not going to change overnight but the more we use our voices, the more we will see results and things will shift with time.

Last October, a close family friend of ours, James Brown—the host of *The NFL Today*, *The James Brown Show*, and *Thursday Night Football* on CBS Sports—and his friend were part of the planning committee for the DC Democratic Women's Club Virtual Town Hall Event before the elections. Mr. Brown reached out to me to ask if I would be interested in speaking and being a panelist for this event because they needed Gen-Z panelists to discuss their activism along with their promoting and encouraging young people to vote. Since I just turned 18 I felt I could really speak on voting and the benefits voting will have on our country, and the outcome of the 2020 election. I discussed how I had just submitted my vote myself and how life-changing that felt because it made me really understand that I was finally old enough to use my voice. I explained that voting is the most nonviolent and most powerful way to use your voice to make a difference. Yes, protesting and educating people does something as well, but voting decides who will be in office, making the decisions for you and the entire country. Finally, I explained how as an African American myself, I feel I have an obligation to vote, because my ancestors literally marched and fought for their lives, protesting in the streets so that we could have the right to vote, so I feel I am doing them a disservice if I don't exercise that right my people worked so very hard to grant us.

## LOOKING FORWARD

Hopefully, once I graduate from college, I envision myself on a film set somewhere being a production assistant, hard at work, watching the masterminds and professionals perfecting their craft, and maybe one day, I will be a film editor and tell stories that will resonate with people for years to come. My inspiration is Joi McMillion, who was one of the film editors on the movie

*Moonlight* that won and broke Oscar records at the 2017 Oscars. McMillion was the first Black woman ever nominated for best film editor and that's something I hope to accomplish someday.



Madison delivering a speech at the Black Lives Matter march and rally, June 2020.

## REFLECTING BACK

Some of my greatest memories at WES were all of the study field trips we went on, from Utah, to Italy, to France. Utah is definitely my favorite study trip, because of how beautiful Utah is and all the activities we were taken on—hiking, horse-back riding, mingling with Native American tribes, paintball, archery, bonfires, and many more that are not forgettable. Mr. A, [Deighton Alleyne] one of my favorite teachers at WES, who unfortunately passed away the year after our trip, gave me the best memories from Utah that I will hold onto dearly. I would say that going on all of these study trips, you learn something new about yourself each time and that is a very beautiful thing to experience.

## ADVICE FOR WES STUDENTS

Some advice I wish I had heard would be to enjoy your time at WES, because sometimes I was just so excited to grow up and experience more things. But looking back I should've just relaxed and



Madison with the late Congressman John Lewis (D-GA) and her Grade 6 classmates in 2013 at WES

enjoyed the moments at WES because WES is the best school I ever attended. Most of my loving and beautiful memories took place there at WES alongside my WES community. I know that as you get older the workload increases and grades start becoming more important, but don't let all of that stop you from discovering who you are and losing yourself in that process. Always stay true to yourself and life should be much more fun that way.♥



Nathaniel Bazemore '19, Ethan Vogelmann '19, & Ishaan O'Neal '19

## BLM MARCH

June 27



Ian Shaiyen '18 rallying the crowd



Speaker Isabella Dodro '18



Alana Woods '20 & Kim Bair



Speaker Maya Grebowsky '18



Alex '21 & Christian Berko '17



Speaker Maddie Blonder '16



Mehdi Elkassem & Arjun Narayan '18 perform "Stand by Me."



Maddie Griffin '18 & Charlie Sagely '19



Isaiah Horne '18, Jordan Murphy '18, & Miles Jones '18



Class of 2016 members, L to R: Caroline Milne, Gemma Bazemore, Madison Welborn, Renata Taylor-Smith, Jackie Thornton, Maddie Blonder, Georgia Mitchell, Felicia Gelos, Charlotte Mensforth, & Kim Ross



Maxie Stumpf '20 & her mother Andrea Stumpf



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