

School Ties





Winning students of the 2023 The Best School Year Ever contest.

CREDITS

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Introduction from the Head of School



One of the first formal occasions of the new 2023 academic year was the ceremonial opening of the Trottier-Morgan Annex at the Junior School campus. This wonderful new facility, the biggest investment in our infrastructure since the opening of the Sun Centre in 2018, was delivered to exceptional standard, on time, and within a budget of approximately \$15M. Already the benefit to the Junior School community has been massive. The carefully designed building has yielded advantages not only to those who teach and learn within it, but throughout the rest of the school as well.

Of course, a new state of the art facility of this type inevitably raises the debate about whether the school should be investing in facilities or people. I recognize the importance of this debate in ensuring balance, but also acknowledge it as spurious. Any school that aspires to excellence must ensure its facilities are fit for purpose as well as investing in its 'people', particularly the teachers who ensure that education goes on transforming lives.

Opening a new facility of this scale allows us to recognize the generosity of many donors. In particular, we thank the Trottier-Morgan family for their leadership in converting this particular dream into reality. When one looks back over the last 50 years since the amalgamation of St. Michael's and University Schools to form the modern SMUS in 1971, we can reflect on over five decades of incremental growth. We now have facilities on two campuses that genuinely reflect the quality of the education we aim to provide. As I travel to schools around BC, Canada, and the world, I am continually reminded of how fortunate we are with our beautiful spaces.

Looking forward, our Board of Governors has already made the decision to make a similar investment in the improvement of our Middle School. Thereafter as part of our *Floreat* campus master plan, we aim to build facilities in support of our science and technology programs.

As if examples were needed of how generous donations can improve the lives of students, we can acknowledge an anonymous donation of \$2M that has allowed us to plan a dramatic improvement in our boarding facilities, and an unexpected donation toward our rowing program, which has transformed the dingy and dilapidated conditions which defined the land training facilities for our rowing squad.

This provides me with an opportunity to thank all those who generously support our school and its students in so many ways. It is often said that the fees do not cover the full cost of developing our school. The last year has provided wonderful examples of how we are able to achieve our vision of excellence, when support is forthcoming.

Soon after the opening of the Trottier-Morgan Annex we enjoyed another ceremony. This time it involved the dedication of a Welcome Pole led by our Indigenous Elders, Bill White and Willie Pierre. The magnificent Welcome Pole carved by SMUS students under the expert guidance of our Indigenous Scholar, Dylan Thomas, now stands as a tangible reminder of our commitment to learn from and embrace our Indigenous neighbours.

Another significant event for SMUS is our annual Remembrance Day Service. This large event attended by almost 1000 people is always popular. It is one of the few traditions that has been preserved by a school that has been quick to modernize, in a move to be relevant and contemporary to its diverse student audience. It is always a surprise to me that Remembrance Day with its military connections, bagpipes, uniforms, bugle calls, the Lord's Prayer, and God Save the King, is as popular and relevant, maybe even more so, than it has ever been. I believe that one of the reasons for this is that it connects the past to the present. Our modern school needs to know the journey that it has travelled and the roots from which it has grown.

Over the last few months, I have been thinking about journeying forward, as well as routes previously travelled. At the beginning of this academic year, I informed the Board of Governors of my intention to retire from the end of the academic year in September 2025. There will be further opportunities for words and reflections but for now, I would like to thank all elements of the SMUS community for the warm embrace that Elizabeth and I have felt and for the privilege of being a small part of the ongoing evolution of this historic institution.

Vivat!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Turner". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Mark Turner
Head of School



Address from the President of the Alumni Association



The transition from August to September is always a bittersweet time in the academic world. The return to classes, sports and dorms is when old friends reunite, and new friends are made. Resuming favourite activities and exploring new ones brings a rush of excitement, yet this time also marks the end of the relatively carefree days of summer, a return to routine and obligations, deadlines and commitments. It's easy to see that as a loss to grumble about when we leave behind the shorts and flip-flops for more serious attire and refocus our attention once again on learning and teaching.

Most of us, as we advance through our high school and university years, are anxious for the learning to finally come to an end, to cross the stage a final time with our last degree or diploma in hand, ready for real living to begin. We might be tempted to view the main purpose of learning as acquiring the marketable skills to become independent and successful adults, allowing us to earn a comfortable living. However, if we limit ourselves to that way of thinking, we devalue an essential quality of what makes us human: curiosity. Whatever path our lives ultimately take, our inquisitiveness must necessarily follow if we are to live life to our fullest potential; this is the path to truly living, rather than merely making a living.

This natural inquisitiveness should take us far beyond the boundaries of our chosen fields and professions, our strongest subjects or favourite sports, and our biases and presumptions. It should lead us to challenge ourselves, to think outside our comfort zones, to explore new activities, to re-evaluate assumptions, to confront narratives, to question agendas, and to investigate alternatives. Each one of us is endowed with this inherent curiosity and hunger for knowledge. The mission of our school, in effect, is to feed that hunger and encourage that curiosity, and above all, to instill in our graduates the idea that learning should never end – that the journey across the stage is just the end of the beginning.

Creating a culture of curiosity, both in the classroom and throughout the SMUS community, is something each of us contributes to in our own way: students, teachers, parents, staff, alumni and benefactors. Through our committed and professional faculty, the achievements of our students and alumni, the breadth and depth of our programs, and the generosity and foresight of those who made our facilities possible, our school has acquired a well-deserved reputation for excellence. Ultimately, it's that culture of curiosity driving that reputation; it is a key ingredient in the "secret sauce" of St. Michaels University School and underpins the claim we boldly make in our mission statement: "Outstanding preparation for life."

That is, the preparation for life and not merely for living.

Let me close by wishing each and every member of the SMUS community a year of curiosity and growth.

Vivat!

A handwritten signature in black ink, enclosed within a hand-drawn oval. The signature appears to read "Neil" followed by a stylized flourish.

Neil Mulholland '88
President, SMUS Alumni Association

Cool School Things



Laurent Duvernay-Tardif gave his talk to Senior School in the gym.

Super Bowl Champ Pays SMUS a Visit to Talk Health and Wellness

Super Bowl champion and med school graduate Laurent Duvernay-Tardif spoke to Senior School students about his life in sport and following his passions as the keynote speaker during Health and Wellness Week Friday.

Duvernay-Tardif is a former Kansas City Chiefs and New York Jets offensive lineman who also holds a Doctor of Medicine and Master of Surgery from McGill University. In addition to his professional football career, Duvernay-Tardif has worked in the medical field. When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, he opted out of the 2020 NFL season to work in a care facility in Quebec. For his commitment to community and health by working on the frontlines, he received the 2020 Lou March Trophy as Canada's Athlete of the Year, Sports Illustrated's 2020 Sportsperson of the Year award, and the Muhammad Ali Sports Humanitarian Award.

The athlete visited campus as an ambassador for Sodexo Canada's Powering Performance program.

Students and teachers were eager to learn about his journey, and his ability to balance physical and mental health. Below are a couple of questions and answers from his talk:

If you could give one piece of advice to someone who aspires to play professional sports, what would it be?

I would say not to put all your eggs in the same basket. Keep an open mind to cross-training and try different sports, and stay active in different ways. I think it helps you tremendously.

At some point we can get overspecialized in what we do and I think that's detrimental to our athletic ability overall. And have other spheres to help you grow better when things don't go well, because it's never always going to go well; you're always going to face adversity. You have to face it and you have to find tools to help cope with that.

What is the most significant thing somebody told you about your mental health?

I was working with my sports psychologist a lot on the importance of emotions. I play a sport that is really contact-based and it's a lot of stats and data. There isn't a sensitive approach to how you feel as a human being. In order to perform in the NFL, you need to get hyped up, you need to be in the moment and be locked in. But if you get too much emotion, then you're jerking away from that focus. The challenge of football is to block somebody as hard as you can for three seconds but still being able to see everything around you and be able to anticipate what might happen.

For me, it came by being close with my emotions. Don't only visualize yourself having success, visualize how you're going to react to failures. How are you going to feel when you know that this drive was destroyed or this scoring opportunity has been cancelled because you screwed up? How are you going to get back on the field? So for me, I try to visualize how I will feel in those moments.

How do you mentally prepare for a game?

For me, when it comes to sport, routine is the only key to success. The way you train every Tuesday is the same. Every Wednesday is the same practice, I eat the same thing, I go to bed at the same time. And then Thursday I practice the exact same thing. Then Friday we practice at the exact same time, you have therapy with your sports psychologist at the exact same time. And no matter if you're playing at home or you play away, you always sleep at a hotel because you need to put yourself in game mode the night before. At 7 o'clock at the hotel, you have your meeting and you go to bed. I would re-watch my notes and break it down the exact same way so when you wake up in the morning, you're already in to game mode. That way when you get to the stadium, you're not anxious or surprised. Knowing and expecting what's going to happen, having that routine, really helps you cope with the stress. And by the time the first play happens, you're looking forward to it.



Grade 1 students learning about the ZipGrow Education Rack.

Growing Food and Knowledge Through Hands-On Learning

With a fresh take on a long-standing principle of building community through education, St. Michaels University School has embraced an innovative vertical farming wall that is not only revolutionizing the way students learn across grade levels but also fostering a newfound sense of excitement and understanding about living things. With the hands-on learning opportunities made possible by the ZipGrow Education Rack, teachers Naomi Eden and Anne-Marie O'Donnell guided Grade 1 pupils through a series of thoughtful and engaging lessons on the tool's efficacy for sustainable farming. Young learners can plant and cultivate various herbs and vegetables such as lettuce, basil, and Swiss chard, all while making meaningful connections between education, community, and sustainability.

For Grade 10 senior students in Business Education and Entrepreneurship, the same innovative growing system serves as a unique and dynamic platform from which to comprehend business principles. With Craig Farish's guidance, students managed a small agricultural selling enterprise and learned to navigate real-time business dilemmas. This initiative nurtures experiential learning and makes challenging concepts such as the nuances of supply and demand, marketing, and economics accessible and exciting for students.

As sustainability coordinator, Craig noted that having a tool like the indoor garden is a great step toward ensuring sustainable practices are integrated throughout more areas of the school.

These endeavours also contribute financially to SMUS's Annual Fund, illustrating the interconnections between education, community, and the school's ongoing commitment to sustainability across disciplines and grade levels.

"For the school to be sustainable, sustainability needs to exist everywhere," Craig mentioned. "The Grade 1s are involved in this, the business students are interested in it, we've had the garden at the Middle School; it's a fun and interesting educational piece for everyone. I love that this tool connects people. Maybe it's tied to the longstanding idea of humans connecting over a meal. Now students can grow their own food for a meal and connect over a really unique way of learning."



Check out the student artwork on the stairs of Middle School.

Multilingual Art Installation Promotes Positivity and Inclusion

Motivated by a sense of inclusivity and strengthened by the diversity of the 28 countries and 43 nationalities represented by the student body, the Middle School Service Council embarked on an impressive artistic and linguistic undertaking. Spearheaded by last year's Council and continued by this year's, along with the leadership of teacher Shannon Williams, the project adorned all 80 stairs on campus with handmade artwork. These staircase canvasses feature a myriad of motivational sayings diligently and thoughtfully translated into an astounding 34 languages, including a variety of significant local Indigenous languages. With a desire to promote inclusivity, community, and a sense of connection through shared language experiences, the Council engaged fellow students, teachers, and a collection of external resources to ensure each translation was accurate and meaningful.

The heart of the project lies in a desire to not only create an uplifting environment in a shared space but also to celebrate the school's multicultural community. In recognizing the power of connection through language, this unique initiative transcends language barriers and offers a message of friendship, belonging, and unity. The artwork serves as a tapestry of messages, offering a sense of support and belonging to everyone. With this ambitious yet beautifully rendered art project connecting these shared spaces on campus, this year's Council has embodied the school's ongoing commitment to fostering a culture of universal acceptance and inclusivity. Shannon commends the students' unwavering engagement and persistence in this endeavour, highlighting their leadership, selfless dedication to service, and efforts toward enhancing the school environment.

"I hope they make students and teachers truly feel like they belong here. These messages are supposed to let them know that in this school, there is always somebody here for them," Shannon says. "I think the messages the Service Council created transcend adults and children; they are for everyone. It's a message of universal belonging and inclusion." ■

Cool Student Things



Levi Budd

Levi Builds a House

With his powerful 300-word essay on the meaning of home, Levi Budd secured a generous \$10,000 donation to Habitat for Humanity Victoria. Inspired by the opportunity to support his local community and encouraged by fellow participants in his Humanities class, Levi submitted his heartfelt essay along with over 13,000 other entries across Canada to the national Meaning of Home contest. This nationwide contest welcomes essay submissions from Grade 4, 5 and 6 students across the country, with every entry resulting in a \$10 donation toward Habitat for Humanity.

Through Levi's prize-winning written descriptions of home as a safe and loving place, Victoria's local HFH organization can now benefit from a hearty donation that will aid in constructing homes in Greater Victoria with a focus on essentials like doors, windows, flooring, and cabinetry. Levi hopes to share the spirit of his essay's message with the families who find their way home through Habitat for Humanity's efforts.

Habitat for Humanity Victoria's Director of Family Service, Tiffany Gates, expressed gratitude for Levi's meaningful contribution and emphasized the vital role schoolchildren play in community building. Levi is hopeful that even more young people will enter the contest next year for an even greater positive impact, regardless of any reservations about winning. "If you apply you might not win, but \$10 still gets donated," he says, "so even if you don't win, you'll still be helping out a charity, and that's a really great thing!"

Grade 8 Inventors Design Product to Prevent Cold-Water Hypothermia

2022's Science Fair BC's Youth Innovation Showcase awarded Middle School students Liam Pope-Lau and Fraser Tuck with both the Grand Prize and People's Choice award for their innovative solution-oriented project titled LifeHeat. Through multiple experiments, tests, and diligently executed prototypes this scientist duo explored the reactions of calcium chloride in water and their implications for water safety devices. Initially inspired by Liam's own near-hypothermia incident while sailing, these students sought to find a practical solution to an all-too-common danger in their local community, cold water shock. Over time, Liam and Fraser refined their design to produce pouches that attach to life jackets and instantly generate heat upon contact with water. The team went on to win awards at regional fairs, eventually securing a spot in the semifinals of the Youth Innovation Showcase. What's next for these two young inventors? They aspire to not only enhance the project's quality and visibility (with hopes of winning a \$5,000 prize to invest in further development) but also to encourage fellow students to explore personal experiences for inspiration in their own science fair projects.



Liam P. and Fraser T. show off their invention, LifeHeat.



Naashkii Soler

Introducing the First Recipient of the Indigenous Peoples Within Canada Award

SMUS proudly named boarding student Naashkii Soler as the inaugural recipient of our school's Indigenous Peoples Within Canada Award in 2022. Originally from Canmore, AB, hailing from the Lynx Clan of the Ojibwes of Onigaming, Naashki joined us after winning The Best School Year Ever contest and then quickly became an integral member of our school community. Along with her profound dedication to addressing educational disparities faced by Indigenous students, she also pursued a research project on missing and murdered Indigenous women in an AP Seminar, followed by a chapel speech shedding light on the same critical issues. Naashki's commitment to service and her strong sense of self have distinguished her as a leader within our school. Mark Turner, Head of School, commends her leadership potential and the positive impact it will have on communities in the future.

The Indigenous Peoples Within Canada Award is one of many significant steps toward fostering authentic relationships with local Indigenous peoples and a more supportive and welcoming school environment. Our pursuit of historical understanding and meaningful reconciliation began in 2017 through collaboration with First Nations Elders, and the journey continues today with the aim to diminish financial barriers hindering Indigenous students' enrollment. Driven by her desire to advocate for those facing such disparities due to colonial legacies, Naashki aspires to become an Indigenous rights lawyer in the future. For her Grade 12 year at SMUS, she planned to further her understanding of the issues she is passionate about and contribute her strong critical thinking mindset to the journey of reconciliation at our school. Her dedication not only embodied the spirit of our community but also underscores our commitment to reconciliation as an integral educational value.

"I'm proud to be a part of a school community that has put reconciliation at the forefront of its educational beliefs and values." Naashki said, "I know there's more I can contribute [to] this area, and I'm so inspired to be part of this journey." ♣



Justin McElroy '05

ALUMNI PROFILE

All Alumni Profile interviews by Kaity Gervais

While attending SMUS between 2000 and 2005, Justin was most known for his sense of humour and storytelling, including his infamously riveting rendition of Green Eggs and Ham. Nowadays, the CBC journalist is more commonly known as one of Vancouver's Power 50, which ranks the city's most influential people, and for his role in inducting a national icon into Canada's Walk of Fame.

How do you integrate your personal interests, humour, and hobbies with your work?

My bosses at CBC have always told us, "If you're doing something in your life that's interesting, let us know, and we can have a conversation about whether this works as a CBC thing." Every year my friends and I rank something in the City of Vancouver, like the best burgers, the best park, or the best beer, that sort of thing, which doesn't quite work as a CBC story. However now, we're doing a bracket with the public for the 'Best Lake' in the province, because there's no obvious answer and everyone has their favourites. Being able to do both fun and silly things like these while also doing investigative journalism and more serious reporting on things like city hall happenings builds trust and understanding with an audience.

Spoiler alert, after more than 140,000 votes and 47 eliminations, Sproat Lake near Port Alberni won!

What's been your proudest moment of your career so far?

A few years ago, I created a whimsical bracket online for people to determine "Canada's Most Memorable (English) TV Thing." It became a giant thing, which was very surprising, and Mr. Dressup won. The next day, Mr. Dressup's family reached out to me and said, "This is super cool, I was wondering while this attention is on him, and because you have the microphone, if we could get him placed on Canada's Walk of Fame, it would mean a lot to his children and grandchildren to see that he's a part of this." So, I did a couple of tweets and stories on that, and it generated momentum from there. Two years later, they announced he was in, and it was because of this campaign. It was cool to be a part of that and to make his family so happy. My mom was a huge fan as well, and so I was able to tell her about it—and, you know, that's way cooler than just reporting on another City Hall flagship meeting.

When you were attending SMUS, who was your biggest inspiration?

It's hard to pick just one. For me I've always been inspired by a mix of people, experiences, and moments that came together, more than any one sort of 'north star'. My grandmother worked at SMUS actually, as former headmaster Shaffter's secretary. She had 11 children and managed to raise them while working at SMUS and starting a business. She never complained and did everything required, and I always thought that was the most heroic thing I've ever seen in my life.

What's next for you, and any words of wisdom for others?

When you're feeling pressure or intimidation, the expectation to perform can be very suffocating. It's okay to take a step back and explore to find all those weird and interestingly unique things that intrigue you. The people who can do that will probably be in the best place in the long run, and happiest, rather than those that are focused on the straight and narrow, and what path to take next. For me, the next path includes taking a year-long sabbatical in March 2024 to travel the world—51 countries in 52 weeks. It'll be a nice break after updating so many spreadsheets and charts during the pandemic. I'm just completely jazzed to have this opportunity to see the breadth of humanity and gain so many different perspectives. ♥

Atending SMUS for 7 years allowed Veronica to strengthen her interpersonal connections and academic pursuits, which eventually led to her becoming a doctor, therapist, and key healthcare and wellness provider for the community through her business, CAYA Health Centre. Above all else, learning the importance of balance and friendships as a youth has played a key role in her life to this day.

Tell us about your favourite memory from your time attending the school?

A bunch of memories flood in when I think about my time at SMUS; being in the school musical, all the holiday events, hanging out in the quad... I'm still really connected with the friends that I made at SMUS. They're my best friends, and my partner is an SMUS grad as well. The school has had such an impact on what my life looks like today.

What did you want to be when you grew up?

When I was a student at SMUS, I imagined myself being a dentist—it was a very specific goal I was working towards. I was skilled in sciences, and I didn't mind teeth so much, so it just made sense for me at the time as I thought it would be a fitting career path. As it turned out, I ended up choosing something very different from dentistry; I had always been interested in psychology and decided to pursue that after graduating from SMUS. I went to McGill for my bachelor's in psychology, and after working in different organizations and volunteering, I realized that was my real passion. I applied for my master's in counselling psychology, then moved to Vancouver and pursued my doctorate in clinical psychology.

What drew you to psychology?

I think hearing people's stories has always been something that draws me in. Early in my academic career, I volunteered at the McGill Sexual Assault Crisis Line, as well as completed a clinical internship with an adolescent program working with youth with learning disabilities and I just found that connecting with different people from different backgrounds and supporting them felt very meaningful. Since then, I have supported clients from a wide variety of backgrounds with concerns like anxiety, mood, trauma, and sexuality-based concerns.

Why did you decide to open your healthcare centre, CAYA?

Working in sexual medicine and women's health, I found that people had to go to multiple places to find their services; family doctors, gynecologists, pelvic floor physiotherapists, mental health therapists... I was talking to my business partner, and asking, "Where are you referring these people? Where are they going?" People deserve equitable accessible healthcare, and there just wasn't a place in Vancouver that offered specific medical and allied health, centred in one place. So that's why we created and opened CAYA, which stands for Come As You Are, as a one-stop shop for medical doctors, pelvic floor physiotherapists, registered massage therapists, dietitians, clinical counsellors, and more. It's a multidisciplinary health clinic, specifically focused on supporting women, trans, and non-binary people. The mission comes from my working in the field and seeing the inequities in healthcare for women, especially those who are racialized and marginalized based on gender and sexuality. I was hearing repeated stories of people feeling dismissed and invalidated by the medical system. Seeing and hearing these stories of suffering motivated us to open a space where people felt safe to seek healthcare.

Through this journey, what has been your biggest triumph and challenge that you've learned from?

Finding balance was extremely critical, which I think my experience at SMUS encouraged, as well. My relationships are the most meaningful thing to me, and the fact that I was able to complete my doctorate while maintaining a wonderful community around me has made me very proud. Balancing those together has been one of the most challenging but rewarding things. Being a therapist often carries a risk of burnout or compassion fatigue, so I strive to ensure that I have enough downtime to recover and reflect. It's important to be aware of what you need and to take care of yourself while giving to different areas you're responsible for. ♥



Veronica Li '11

ALUMNI PROFILE

The Junior School

Annex





A Place of Legacy and Transformation

by Shara Campsall

This past September, we officially celebrated the opening of our new Junior School Annex where storied generations of alumni, their contributions to this building, and their indelible legacies will continue to be honoured alongside vibrant new narratives formed fresh from the Annex. Both the deeply etched, earlier edifice stories of human connections as well as these new perspectives will offer current and future generations of learners in our Junior School a profound new space with a host of potential opportunities for use. Both the Cameron Family Art and Quinton Family Music rooms are now bustling with creativity and discovery.

The Cameron Family Music Room receives its namesake from the honour of Alumnus Brian Cameron, Class of 1971, for his exceptional philanthropic support and commitment to St. Michael's University School. Born and raised in Victoria, Brian's journey with St. Michael's was characterized by a sense of curiosity and boundless enthusiasm. He graduated as a young Grade 7 student from what was then known as St. Michael's School and completed his studies at Oak Bay High. Following high school graduation, his thirst for knowledge propelled him to the University of British Columbia, where he pursued studies in agriculture. Surprisingly, this trajectory would ultimately lead to the establishment of Pastiche Productions, a video production company that would redefine the benchmarks of quality and creativity in media and communications services, including film and video production.

I met Brian for the first time in 2013 when he and his first wife, Ann, volunteered at Dandelion Society (now known as Dandelion Street Outreach at Our Place).

This charitable organization continues its tireless efforts today to ensure Victoria's homeless population is greeted with a morning coffee, warm conversation, and a hot breakfast. During my three months of volunteering, we would get up at 3 to fill Ann's van (an iconic staple of the charity) with food and sundries and head out to wake up residents gently with a hot coffee and much-needed supplies.

"Why does this organization resonate so much with Ann?" I asked Brian once, to which he replied:

"To Ann, we all matter, and we all need to know we are valued."

That ethos was the essence of both Ann and Brian: unwavering warmth and devotion to humanity.

Brian's commitment to his old school was exemplified by his steadfast support for SMUS education initiatives. A true advocate for the power of knowledge and the potential within young minds, Brian contributed to financial aid and the Junior School for multiple years, demonstrating his desire to create opportunities for others. In 1990, he began supporting SMUS as a parent, where he generously gave to the Spring Fair, a timeless and memorable community event in our school's history. Brian remained actively engaged as a parent of three SMUS alumni: Lucas '04, Molly '07, and David '12.





In 2014, on one of those cold mornings out delivering help to those in need, Brian committed to a significant donation in support of the rebuilding of St. Michael's School. In turn, I asked him why he felt the art room would be the ideal place to celebrate his gift and he said, "Have you met Molly, David, and Luke? My children are all artists." Notably, his role as a donor for the Junior School was instrumental in enabling the Victoria Avenue project to continue.

Sadly, Ann passed away on September 16, 2015. With Roslyn his second wife by his side, Brian passed away last year on September 12.

Yet, today, we rejoice in Ann, Brian and Roslyn's loving and generous spirit and are thrilled to open the Cameron Art Room in their honour.

The Junior School community and the broader SMUS community continue to prosper due to the dedication of individuals like Brian. His legacy is interwoven into the core of our great school, a reminder that even the most unassuming gestures can resound powerfully, reverberating across time as a guiding light of hope and support for generations to follow.

Not unlike Brian Cameron, The Honourable Anthony Quainton, or 'Tony,' as friends and colleagues called him, was not just a supporter of our school but a pillar of our community, a dedicated advocate for education, and a valued Board member.



Tony attended St. Michael's School from 1942 to 1944, and later moved into boarding at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, from 1948 to 1951. From there, his post-secondary journey took him from Princeton University in New Jersey all the way to Oxford in London. Tony had a distinguished diplomatic career. He lived in multiple cities around the globe and spoke numerous languages namely: Hindi, French, Russian, and Spanish.

We are saddened by Tony's passing on July 31, 2023, leaving behind his wife, Susan Quainton (nee Long), three children, and nine grandchildren. Before his passing, Tony made a generous gift to his old school, St. Michael's, with the wish to name the music room in the new Annex *The Quainton Family Music Room*, in honour of his family's deep roots in our school and their combined love of music.

Tony's commitment to the growth of our Old School was unwavering. His revered connection with St. Michael's spanned generations before him. The Quainton family's deep ties to our institution were exemplified by not only his grandfather's authorship of our school hymn but also his father's attendance at St. Michael's along with his brother, The Rev. Rodney Quainton, and then his father's subsequent teaching role in 1919.

In addition to his familial legacy with our school, Tony was a dedicated donor for more than three decades. His generous contributions supported various funds, including endowment, building facilities upgrades, financial aid and his final commitment to the Journey for Life campaign and the Junior School. His commitment to our mission extended beyond his financial support; Tony was actively involved in our Board of Governors, serving on advisory committees, and as an Honorary Governor, providing invaluable guidance and leadership.

In recognition of his outstanding dedication, in 2016, SMUS honoured Tony with the Vivat Award, a testament to his unwavering commitment to St. Michaels University School and the core values that we uphold.

The Quainton Family Music Room in our new Annex was officially unveiled during our ribbon-cutting ceremony on September 21, 2023. ♥





Science teacher and rowing coach, Susanne Walker Curry, won the prestigious Lifetime of Service and Commitment to Secondary School Rowing award in 2023.



Crafting a Tough Inner Shell

by Sarah Hagkull '16 and Diego D'Lorm '22

The journey of the SMUS Rowing Program began during the 2008-09 school year, marked by an endorsement from the Board of Governors to provide our students with the opportunity to train and compete year-round. Eleven athletes embarked on this voyage, transforming the humble confines of the Wenman Pavilion change room into their winter training space, amplifying the sound of determination with a boom box and the rhythmic cadence of ergometers. These athletes made a daily pilgrimage to the Royal Roads University lagoon, which bridged the distance between aspirations and the limitations of space at our urban campus. The rumbles of success echoed through their efforts, yielding three golds and a bronze at the 2009 Canadian Secondary School Rowing Association (CSSRA) National Regatta, a testament to the spirit and dedication of this pioneering group.

In its first decade, the program gained momentum, growing on average of 60 student-athletes each season. Many went on to row in university, myself included (University of Tulsa '20). The SMUS Rowing crew became synonymous with resilience, commitment, and teamwork. More than twelve years after that inaugural season, Diego D'Lorm '22 embodies the culmination of this journey. As a SMUS rower, his resilience echoed the program's ethos, a testament to the values woven into our rowing legacy. His narrative reflects not just personal resilience but also the torchbearer spirit passed down to every athlete in these waters. Diego symbolizes the past, present, and the promising future of our storied tradition.



One Team, One Family, on and off the water.



I was 15 years old when I found myself trembling in a rowboat 2,000 miles away from home. Better yet, I was a 238-lb., corn-fed Texan, now sitting upright and shell-shocked, in the bow seat of a rowing shell in the Pacific Ocean. Just three months prior, I was a ranch hand in a rural Texas town of 400.

SMUS, on the West Coast of Canada, had accepted me for Grade 10. That's when my world changed: I came to SMUS hungry for improvement. I wanted to learn, meet new people, and improve my athletic abilities. I had promised myself a challenge, so I tried out for the school rowing team.

During my tryouts for the rowing crew, we swam in the middle of what my Texan eyes perceived as an ocean surrounded by tundra. Our Navy Seal of a Head Coach, Susanne Walker Curry, instructed us to jump in, swim 100 metres, and tread water for four minutes. I barely even knew what a metre was, let alone it was spelled differently in Canada—and it was only my second day in the country!

My teeth chattered as I dipped my toes into the water. Our commanding officer shouted, "Go!" and I heard an involuntary, "Yes ma'am!" squeak from my lump-filled larynx.

I dove in.

As soon as I broke the water's surface, I realized I had to act: each doggy paddle seemed to move me in slow motion. I disregarded a Grade 9 student's "shiver-me-timbers!" quip and realized I was, quite literally, out of my element. Finally, a teammate extended a hand, and, with a sturdy grip, pulled me out of the frigid water and hoisted me back up. I rolled onto the middle of the rocking wooden dock. Little did I know that this was only the beginning of my journey of becoming comfortable with the uncomfortable.

Being raised in the southern U.S., I knew hard work, and wasn't afraid of it. However, I quickly realized that the 'hard work' I was used to was quite different from what it meant in the rowing world. But, under Coach Walker Curry's whip-cracking mastery, supported by Assistant Coach Sarah Hagkull's ('16) unwavering confidence in her own untapped potential, I quickly learned what it would take to get me to that 'next-level' success—which, I can truly say, when I finally reached it, seldom have I felt prouder.

I had promised myself a challenge.

After a few weeks of rowing practice, it only seemed fitting to assign new headings in my calendar replacing the typical 'days of the week.' I typed in: 'Land or Water Training.'

On the front lines

Our team's land training was akin to an ancient form of corporal punishment; even though we would yank the oars with all our might, it was as though we failed to make any visible ripples. During my early SMUS water-training days, I would quiver more from fear than from the frigid cold!

The Novice Eight, as we were, was the place where piano virtuosos, physics phenoms, and me, one particularly hefty southern boy, really got down to making waves on campus. In the Eight, we appeared to move more laterally than backwards and forwards. In the end, the stultifying nature of rowing resulted in everyone in that boat quitting. All except for me. Come hell or high water (and hail, no less), rowing had become a non-negotiable.

I had promised myself a challenge.

Two years later, due to an unwavering work ethic and a boatload of luck, my crew and I realized how very fortunate we were. After seven months of rowing, I even lost 70 pounds. Soon after, I won the 2020 Monster Erg Regatta, an annual erg (rowing machine) race held over Super Bowl weekend. The University of Victoria, then-host to the race, ranked me as the number-one novice rower on Vancouver Island.

Team to beat

Solo rowing aside, my time at SMUS taught me that the sweetest victories are won as a team. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, our practice schedule was not reduced; we would still row seven times a week for a minimum of 14 hours, because we knew that medals are earned in winter training. Coach Walker Curry would continually remind us with her team tenet, "less talky-talky, more worky-worky!"

We became battle-hardened. Our Eight would go on to win the first ever Men's Novice 8+ race at the CSSRA National Regatta in St. Catharines, Ont.

Such accomplishments were admirable, albeit short-lived. However, the process leading up to these achievements changed me forever. I learned to find joy in seeing incremental improvements in my life and in the art of striving for progression, rather than perfection. Furthermore, I noticed that keeping my promises and working as hard as possible earned me a wealth of self-respect. The latter is accompanied by a newfound mental toughness and a sense of calm confidence.

Kindness is King

Most importantly, I learned that kindness is derived from integrity. And much like the attitude in the boat, kindness is contagious—even as much as a global virus!

Early on in my SMUS rowing adventure, just the mere act of walking upstairs to class each day seemed like a daunting task. Add oar-pulling to the mix? I was a sweaty mess. Who knew I would soon be able to cultivate an ability to resist impulses and let them pass by like a bad stroke in the Eight.

Accepting challenges with energized tranquillity and ferocious commitment to the task at hand became my new default; I began to value moments of focus behind a sea-length backdrop of distraction. As a particularly hefty 15-year-old, in a world full of twerps and phone tweets (not to mention the never-ending chocolate milk in the dining hall), rowing was exactly what I needed.

I had promised myself a challenge. Promise kept.



Senior athletes Emma Curry, Markus Muller, Owen Vincent, and Lily Langtry capture the first ever National Title in the Mixed Quad (4x-), 2022.

As an alumna of our esteemed rowing program, I'm humbled by our journey—a tapestry of triumphs, challenges, and rooted in the rich tradition and legacy of the Rowing program. It is an immense honour and privilege to guide and mentor these extraordinary individuals, carrying forward the tradition that has defined our pursuit of greatness. From cramped change rooms to the SMUS Rowing Club boathouse, countless souls have shaped our evolution. There is immeasurable gratitude and pride for our SMUS Village, for we would not be where we are today without the unwavering support of our global community. This community not only bonded through sport but also through the impact of Head Coach Susanne Walker Curry, whose exceptional leadership garnered national recognition for a Lifetime of Service and Commitment to Canadian Secondary School Rowing award in June 2023, marking her profound impact on the legacy she began building in 2008-09.

Through pandemics and triumphs, from floodlit training in Derby's parking lot to the podiums of CSSRAs, our athletes have remained tethered by an unbreakable spirit, connected not just by medals but by the unspoken language of resilience and camaraderie. As we stand on the cusp of another year, another triumph, our coaches are humbled by the overwhelming support from every facet of the SMUS Village—past, present, and future. The medals glitter, but it's the unity, the unspoken bond that transcends victories, resonating within the walls of our renovated Derby training space and shimmering on the water's surface with each stroke of our new shells. It's more than medals; it's the symphony of dedication and community that continues to shape our rowing legacy. 🏆



Rashid Al-Abri '19

ALUMNI PROFILE

Originally hailing from Oman, Rashid was a recipient of the Takatuf Scholars Program which allowed him to experience life in a new country while pursuing his education. Rashid was able to explore new passions in poetry, computer science, and biology—all of which continue to serve him today as a Columbia University PhD candidate, researcher at the New York Genome Center, and avid poet with an honourable mention for the Jessamy Stursburg Poetry Prize.

What's your favourite memory of your time at the school?

The inaugural spoken word evening hosted by our club, VOICES, at the then-brand-new Sun Centre is a standout moment. Under the incredible mentorship of Mrs. MacDonald, we found ourselves plunged into the thrilling world of event planning, the rush of laying out snacks, arranging seats, and the frantic excitement as we scrambled to set up the sound system and stage area. Witnessing people sharing their stories, voicing their triumphs and challenges, all resonating with the universal experience of adolescence, was a truly gratifying experience.

Another fond memory is tied to the gaming arcade we built at Barnacle. The idea was initially mine, and it was embraced by Mr. Geddes, who helped us acquire the necessary components. With the help of other Barnacle boys, we navigated our way through the complex wiring instructions and built a gaming machine right in our common room. Seeing my peers take joy in playing games on it, their competitiveness and camaraderie, was incredibly rewarding. Pacman never goes out of style.

How did you get into poetry?

In truth, I was simply looking for an arts elective that I thought would require the least amount of work, and Mrs. McCachen's creative writing class seemed to fit the bill. This casual choice turned out to be one of the most rewarding decisions I've ever made. The class was more challenging than I anticipated; I found myself grateful for stepping out of my comfort zone and learning to craft poetry in English, a second language I was still honing. I discovered that poetry could be a form of journaling as it offered me an opportunity to express my experiences, connect with others, and explore the common ground of our shared

humanity. After SMUS, poetry taught me how to handle life's complexities and the stress of university with grace and resilience. It's been a consistent reminder that there's always a quieter, more peaceful perspective to find, regardless of life's inevitable chaos.

What have you been working on since graduating from SMUS?

I achieved my computer science degree at Stanford University and started my PhD in Computer Science at Columbia University. Currently, I'm doing research at the New York Genome Center, under the supervision of Professor Gamze Gürsoy. I'm immersed in the fascinating intersection of computer science and biology in my professional and research roles; my focus is on creating computational methods and frameworks that delve into the three-dimensional structure of the genome. Much can be gleaned about diseases and phenotypes (observable traits in an organism like height or hair colour) by studying the sequence of our genome. Understanding biological phenomena, from protein folding to identifying disease-associated mutations, heavily relies on sophisticated algorithms and computer science theory. Although I wasn't a fan of biology when I was a teenager, it was an eye-opening realization to learn how tightly intertwined biology and computer science truly are.

Why do you think you've seen the level of success that you have, and what advice might you give to others?

My willingness to sit at the intersection of two distinct fields has provided me with a unique perspective and skill set that can be an asset to both pursuits. Over the past three years, I've been deeply involved in researching repetitive tracts in the human genome and their role in cancer. While I still have lots to learn, my experience has certainly strengthened my foundation in the field. I believe my success is attributed to my ability to navigate and integrate knowledge from various domains, creating a unique blend of expertise that aids in the advancements I've made in my research.

Regardless of where you are on your journey, I think it's crucial to find a mentor. Life and career paths are often filled with complex turns, sudden changes, and unforeseen challenges. While it's entirely possible to navigate through these on your own, the insights and guidance from a mentor can prove invaluable in traversing this path more efficiently and effectively. Never stop seeking guidance and never stop learning. ■

Standing as the longest-serving house parent, in the capacity this unique role is understood today, Mat has only spent a small handful of years off SMUS campus. As a Lifer, Mat's journey has carried him from student to houseparent of 22 years to the current Head of Mathematics. He continues to positively impact not just our school but the field of Canadian education.

What was your time as a SMUS student like?

My parents were of limited means but hardworking. Thankfully, they were able to pursue my acceptance and send me to the school. I have so many amazing memories as a student. I played as many sports as I could, and we had a lot of success there. I fondly remember lots of music, and of course, math contest day was my favourite school day. It made me want to become a touring musician or a teacher when I grew up. The many teachers and friends that made each day special are the most important, though. In my first 20 years I lived in 20 different houses, so without SMUS, I would have been changing schools a lot... SMUS was and continues to be home for me.

How did your path after graduation lead you right back to SMUS?

I pursued a double major in Mathematics and Psychology at UVic after SMUS. Right after I graduated from university I had no plans, and there was an opening for a houseparent at SMUS that I learned about through one of my former teachers at the school. Following that I was a temporary math teacher, and I realized that teaching mathematics was something that I was good at. One thing led to another, and the following year when a teaching position opened up, I went and got my teaching certificate so they could hire me as a full-time teacher while also being a houseparent. My undergraduate degree and experience as a houseparent prepared me for a career as a math teacher. I enjoy working with teenagers. They bring so much energy and joy and potential to what they do. I love being a part of their early journey, as they begin to understand what they can become and where they can go. I am lucky enough to have the opportunity to perform in front of the school throughout the year as well, which helps keep me musically involved.

What are some of your biggest accomplishments in your career?

I spent 6 years as the Faculty Representative on the SMUS Board of Governors, and now I'm Head of Mathematics at SMUS. We've evolved our program and philosophy significantly over the past several years, and I'm immensely grateful for and proud of our team and our work. I have co-authored worktexts for AP Calculus and co-founded a grading software program called Markury that helps to grade in a standards-based teaching environment. Also, I am the current co-chair of the Ministry of Education Numeracy Assessment Marking Team.

Working in the Boarding community for 22 years, including 12 as the Senior Houseparent of Barnacle House, is also up there. This was a formative time for me both personally and in my career. Those years are very special to me for the friendships made, especially those with all of the boarding alumni from dozens of countries. This is a gift that keeps changing over time as we all stay connected and move through our lives. I don't see others as competitors, I see us as working together in this life. I think my strengths involve a vision of excellence, being a big-picture thinker and embracing change that is for the greater good. I can share that vision here. Change is a natural next step; evolution is vital in education and vital to our growth as a community. It requires a team with diverse skills. I am ever the optimist-idealist and so benefit from working with those who tend toward detail-oriented realists.

Who is your biggest inspiration, and what words of wisdom might you give to others?

Bill Greenwell, former SMUS Basketball coach, stands out as an important mentor in my life. As my math teacher, coach, and colleague, he inspired me to be an educator. I'd advise my fellow alumni to really live the SMUS Mission. The world needs passion with compassion, to pursue truth by understanding different perspectives, and to build a global community. Stay connected with those around you, that includes your SMUS classmates and community. *Vivat!* ♥



Mathew Geddes '93

ALUMNI PROFILE

In Conversation With

Gargee Ghosh

by Zephyr Fisher-Franke '23

**Navigating Economics, Advocacy,
and Women's Empowerment**

In a compelling interview, Gargee Ghosh '93, President of Global Policy and Advocacy at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, shares her unconventional journey in economics and advocacy. Starting from a global perspective gained through travel and college experiences, her interest in economics emerged as a rigorous analytical approach to social issues. Gargee's career trajectory, spanning from unpaid internships to impactful roles, illustrates her dedication to creating meaningful change. She encourages aspiring women in economics and politics to embrace their diverse perspectives, emphasizing the importance of their presence in reshaping these critical fields. Gargee's story serves as a powerful testament to breaking barriers and advocating for transformative impact.



How did you first get interested in economics?

I was interested in social issues for a long time, and growing up my family travelled a lot, so even though I was born and raised in Victoria, it just felt like I had a bit more of a global perspective and cared about issues. But it wasn't until college that I ever heard about economics as a discipline. And for me it was just a great way to bring rigorous analysis to social issues instead of having conversations about what's right, it was a way of analyzing problems.

Were there any courses at university that led you to economics, or any extracurriculars that you were interested in?

I graduated from SMUS and went to UVic, not intending to actually focus and major in economics. My first year was English, French, Economics, honestly an array of things and I thought I might be interested in business. But then I really loved the combination of maths and social issues that economics provided. I had one professor that really helped me understand what economics could do as a discipline and how you can apply it to things. He was very much a teacher that challenges you to think further, and he really helped me fall in love with it but also feel like I was good at it. I ended up doing my thesis under him and then went on to graduate school Economics as well.

What was the biggest challenge you faced during university or grad school?

I think if you are somebody who doesn't have a five year plan, it's always scary to encounter the people who do because you think you should be like them and know exactly what you want to do. And I have never been like that. At this point in my life, 20 years into my career, I'm a fair bit more comfortable that it actually works for me because it means that I'm open to a lot of opportunities. And when I graduated from UVic, I ended up going to Oxford which was just a totally different place and level of thinking than what I would have imagined.

What was the biggest motivation through your education or your career to get you to where you are now?

I always cared about doing well in school. It took me a little while to expand my way of thinking and form my own opinion that I can be proud of, and I really found that transition happened in college. I think a lot of people get there sooner, maybe later, or maybe never. For me, in college, motivation became about being a useful person in the world, and then in grad school I felt like "Okay, this is going to be about poverty and equality" because that's what fires me up and that's what I want to apply my skills to. And then once you find a cause, it becomes a guiding thread through your career, and for me I've looked at jobs through a lens of where I can make an impact on the issues I care about.

Is there anything you're super passionate about or love about your job?

Every day is different, which is what I love. Sometimes I get to nerd out with my original interest in economics, looking at how the global economic downturn will affect Africa and what that means for spending on health. Some days it's a diplomatic problem, like President Biden and President Xi Jinping just met in Bali and what does that look like for our China office. Sometimes it's that there is a dinner being hosted for a bunch of high network people, so what sort of issues should we present to encourage them to donate. It's not at all the kind of job you could imagine existing, so I'm actually really glad I didn't have a five year plan.

After you graduated, what path did you take to become President of Global Policy and Advocacy for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation?

For me, it was to follow the opportunities that had a high impact. And then as I progressed and had a network following people that I wanted to work for, so coming right out of grad school I worked as an unpaid intern for the UN, working under the Secretary General. After that I looked for a company that cultivated their junior staff and took mentorship seriously, and I went to the private sector and worked for a strategy consulting firm in New York, which gave me all these amazing skills while helping me pay

off my student loan debt. But I really wanted to go back to development economics because that's what I love, and I was told about a think tank in Washington that was brand new, and that people thought was going to be a force for good in the world. I took an 80% pay cut and just threw myself back into the world of development economics. It was there that I got recruited to work at Gates where I was for some time before moving to work for Google, but ultimately returned back to Gates, where I've been working for quite a few years now. I think it's a good deal of luck, a good deal of throwing yourself into whatever and being open to possibilities.

What kind of advice would you give young girls and women who are interested in the field of economics or politics?

My first piece of advice would be to go for it. Because the field needs more, both economics and politics need more women. Not just for the numbers, but because I've seen in my career that women bring a different lens to these fields. For example, in college you're taught about these soulless models that believed people made rational decisions, always optimizing the lowest cost to make the most money. It's female economists who have been bringing behavioural economics and psychology to say, actually that's not what everybody is optimizing for, sometimes it's more complex than that. I took my boss Bill Gates to the UN General Assembly to help replenish the global fund, and we were in this amazing group of people including Justin Trudeau, Emmanuel Macron, Martin Schulz, and Ursula von der Leyen was the only woman in that group. We were chatting in the green room after, discussing global funds and economics, and at one point I just said, "I'm so glad you're here at this level so that women can see you as a role model", and she said "I think about it. It gives me a lot of motivation because I am often in these rooms with heads of states who are mostly men. And this is true from the beginning of my career all the way up to the highest level".

My advice would be to take time and understand what change you want to make. A lot of people enter with a real 'change agenda' but these fields are deep with research or tradition and often reject that, which I think discourages a lot of young women. If you take the time to understand what drives these fields then you're set up to be yourself in them and bring in your own views and choices. ♥

Inspiring Connections

A Serendipitous Encounter with Melissa and Jonathan

by Jonathan Nguyen '22 and Melissa Sawyer '94

The Power of Alumni Collaboration

In the summer of 2023, Melissa received an email from fellow alumnus Jonathan which sparked a serendipitous meeting centred around their shared passion for the Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) in New Orleans. His proactive outreach and genuine warmth during their interaction, coupled with discussions about their alma mater, SMUS, reflected the evolving ethos of our school and its adaptability to modern times. This encounter not only left a lasting impression but also showcased the potential for alumni synergy, underscoring the transformative power of unexpected connections in shaping collective impact and societal evolution. Here Melissa reflects on her shared passion with Jonathan.



How did you first meet Jonathan?

Jonathan sent me a lovely email in June 2023, congratulating me on a recent fellowship I had been accepted into. He informed me that he was going to be in New Orleans through July, working as an intern in the Client Services Department with the Orleans Public Defenders (OPD). He let me know that his colleagues at OPD valued the work of the city's Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) and that he would love to connect to learn more about the program while he was in New Orleans.

I emailed Jonathan back and thanked him for his kind words and for reaching out. I told him that I would be delighted to meet him and take him on a tour of YEP's headquarters, followed by lunch at Café Reconcile—a community non-profit partner organization that offers career training in the field of hospitality to young, underserved people.

Jonathan brought along four of his friends from OPD—all of whom were college students and summer interns. On the tour, we talked about YEP and had a lovely lunch together.

What makes you so passionate about empowering incarcerated youth?

Since YEP's inception in 2004 as the first juvenile re-entry program for formerly incarcerated children in Louisiana, the organization has grown significantly in scope and size. Today, YEP engages youth and families in the Greater New Orleans region who live in chronic poverty, are out of school or work, or have experienced trauma. We are the largest non-profit organization in that region focused on providing comprehensive services to court-involved, underserved youth.

Every year, YEP helps more than 800 young people develop skills and strengthen ties to family and community. Our primary area of focus is to provide children, youth, and adults with an array of services that help individuals thrive while reducing the likelihood of justice involvement. These services can range from after-school programming to employment-readiness training to adult education. Over the years, it has become increasingly apparent that, too often, young people and families only receive support once they are system-involved; I believe that we should invest more resources into preventative services, while continuing to support justice-impacted individuals.

Although I remain passionate about supporting incarcerated youth, over the years YEP's programming has refocused in

response to the growing and unmet need in the Greater New Orleans region. This shift now encompasses programming within primary service areas such as mentoring and youth advocacy (YEP Mentors), adult education and high school equivalency preparation (YEP Educates), work-based learning (YEP Works), before/after-school enrichment programming (YEP Enriches).

Why did you decide to welcome Jonathan to visit YEP?

I have such positive feelings about SMUS, and will always support the school, current students, and alumni however I can. So, when Jonathan emailed me, as soon as I saw a smus.ca email address pop up in my inbox (with the subject line: "Congratulations Message from a SMUS Alumni" no less), my curiosity was immediately piqued. I had to learn who it was from and their reason for reaching out. When I saw it was Jonathan, I thought that was very cool. I'm not sure that when I was his age—just months out of high school—I would have had the confidence, thoughtfulness, or interest to reach out to a fellow alum who happened to be living where I was, or doing work that I was interested in. I was very impressed with the fact that Jonathan had the courage to connect; I wanted to be sure to reciprocate his gesture with a warm welcome to YEP.

What lasting impression did Jonathan leave on you?

Jonathan is one of the warmest and friendliest people I have met in a long time. He is optimistic, intelligent, kind, compassionate, and interested in local, national, and international issues. Jonathan shared with me that after graduating from college he might like to return to Vietnam to pursue work in either climate change and clean energy or with individuals who have autism and other disabilities. He noted he may even want to start a Café Reconcile-type model. I assured him that I would be happy to provide him with any support, guidance, and mentorship throughout his college career, and beyond. Whether he starts an NGO or enters the non-profit sector, I'll help in whatever way I can.

After spending several hours with Jonathan and his OPD colleagues, I felt inspired and more hopeful about our collective future in this field. Knowing there are young leaders in the world like them, who equally value and are committed to those same social-justice aspirations, gives me confidence that we are in good hands.

What words of advice would you have for your fellow alumni who are interested in getting involved with this kind of project/field of work?

Given the magnitude of the challenges facing the world, there is immense opportunity for individuals to apply their skills and experience in a way that will make a positive difference. For some people, this may be working in a non-profit or social justice organization. For others, it may be providing adjacent support to these types of existing organizations and efforts. Contributing one's time (volunteering), treasure (donating), and talent (skills), provides critical support to entities doing important work; everyone has something that will add value to the work they care about.

Did you and Jonathan compare notes about your SMUS experiences? If so, were there any similarities/differences that stood out?

It was exciting to hear Jonathan talk about all the improvements, enhancements, and expansions that have taken place on campus in the past decade(s), and how wonderful the campus now looks with these efforts. I have a picture in my office that was taken in the Chapel (when I was honoured as the Alumnus of the Year in 2014). When Jonathan saw it, he had a big smile on his face as he recognized the location right away! He shared that Brown Hall is no longer the students' dining hall and that there is a wonderful new gym. He also mentioned that last year, he was one of two Head Prefects, as the school has progressed from the former gender-specific titles of 'Head Boy' and 'Head Girl.' I found that very on-point with society's changing culture and independent-school norms.

My introduction to Melissa, founder of the impactful Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) in New Orleans, began through the SMUS Alumni newsletter, leading to a meeting that provided profound insights into her work. Stemming from my summer internship with the Orleans Public Defenders, my dedication to empowering incarcerated youth aligns closely with Melissa's commitment to addressing systemic justice challenges. Her journey from witnessing issues within the juvenile justice system to establishing YEP underscores the importance of active involvement and immersive understanding. Aspiring social work alumni can benefit from exploring diverse career paths and seeking mentorship, exemplified by my connection with Melissa. Our shared experiences within SMUS's diverse boarding community fostered an environment conducive to personal and professional growth.

Here Jonathan reflects on his time with YEP and connecting with Melissa.



How did you first meet (or learn about) Melissa?

I first learned about Melissa and the Youth Empowerment Project (YEP) through the most recent edition of the SMUS Alumni newsletter. It is always amazing to see members of the SMUS family doing impactful work in the world, especially in overlooked regions like the deep U.S. South. However, it was not until I met Melissa in person that I truly gained a deeper understanding of the positive influence she and her team at YEP have had on the people of New Orleans. It's not surprising that she has deservedly been selected as a member of the prestigious Pahara Fellowship, among other recognitions for her contributions to this beautiful city that I had a chance to visit and live in over this past summer.

What makes you so passionate about empowering incarcerated youth?

I am forever grateful to be a part of the Robertson Scholars Leadership Program. It has provided me with many opportunities to learn, fail, and grow in my leadership development journey. One of its components is Community Summer, focusing on community building and cultural immersion in one of four locations in the U.S. South: the Mississippi Delta, Eastern North Carolina, the Appalachian region of Kentucky, and New Orleans, Louisiana. Each member of the freshman class took on an internship with community-based organizations in each of these locations, and I, for many reasons, decided to apply to the Client Advocate position at the Orleans Public Defenders, or OPD for short. With 85% of people who encounter the criminal



legal system in New Orleans being unable to afford a private attorney, OPD's mission is to fight for these individuals using a client-centred approach, providing them with justice, support, and advocacy.

Born and raised in Vietnam, a country where human rights are constantly violated by parties of power, I have seen firsthand the things that are taken away from victims of a corrupt system. These experiences have fuelled my interest in empowering incarcerated people when the system has failed them. I came into this summer internship wanting to learn more about the differences in the justice systems of Vietnam and the U.S. and came away with so much more. I witnessed the unfair treatment of marginalized people in court, jail, and all sectors of NOLA society. I saw the negative consequences that imprisonment can have on not only the people who lost their freedom, but also on their family members: their aging mother whom they might never see again, their little boys who no longer have a father figure, and their wives now taking on all family responsibilities. But I also saw hope in the endless fight from people who truly care about making a transformational change in this world. I got to know each one of my clients better, who were somehow able to keep their optimism and liveliness despite being dehumanized by the justice system. The passion of the attorneys, law clerks, social workers, and judges whom I was honoured to work with and the relationships I formed with my clients have helped keep the fire in me alive. I left my summer internship knowing that as long as one person still cares, change can happen.

Why did you decide to pursue a visit to YEP and meet each other?

After reading the news about Melissa in the SMUS Alumni newsletter, I knew I had to reach out. It was a unique opportunity to not only enrich my experience learning about New Orleans's justice system but also meet and get to know an accomplished SMUS alumna devoting her career to social work. Moreover, when I told my co-workers at OPD that I had reached out via email to a high school alumna who is the founder of YEP, everyone encouraged me to pursue a visit because they knew the impact YEP has had on incarcerated youth in New Orleans. In fact, one of the social workers is Melissa's neighbour, which I was delighted to find out about!

What is the most shocking thing about YEP?

Melissa was so kind that she invited me and all my co-interns for a tour of YEP and treated us to lunch at Café Reconcile, one of YEP's long-time partners. The first thing that stood out to me and my friends about YEP is how friendly everyone is. Although our group was visiting during a workday, each person stopped whatever they were working on to talk with us more about their roles at YEP and the different ways they help youth. YEP has a wide range of programs from connecting young people to mentors to helping them get their GED to becoming prepared for the workforce. I will always remember the lively thrift store managed by YEP's graduates that offers a 50% discount every Friday. Nor will I forget the attention to detail given by the people working at YEP's bike shop or the delicious Southern comfort food at Café Reconcile, served directly by youth in training at YEP. My visit to YEP was definitely one of my favourite memories from this past summer!

What new insight or perspective was Melissa able to provide during the visit? What impression did she leave on you?

The other OPD interns and I all come from different backgrounds and have our own reasons for pursuing this internship, but I know I speak for everyone in the group when I emphasize just how much we've learned from Melissa about the challenges and rewards of doing social work in a community that truly needs help. She encouraged us to take time during college to really learn about ourselves and our places in the world. As she went to each person to ask about who we were, where we were from, and what we saw ourselves doing in the future, I thought about what I had learned so far that summer and reflected; you can't understand the most important things from a distance. You must get close. Before founding YEP with two colleagues, Melissa saw the challenges that incarcerated youth faced during her time at Teach for America and working other jobs in New Orleans helping reform the juvenile justice system. To truly understand the problem, she had to live with it. I came up with new ideas for making an impact, and I now know the first step to understanding the nuances of the problems I am trying to solve.

What words of advice would you have for your fellow alumni who are interested in getting involved with this kind of project/field of work?

There is always a great need for people to enter social work because the cycle of poverty, racism, and inequality is never-ending. I encourage all SMUS alumni, especially young alumni like me, to be open to all career options because I believe all members of the SMUS family can create transformational changes in their own ways. We can't forget that SMUS alumni live and work all over the world, so there's a high chance that someone is working in the field you want to pursue and would be more than happy to mentor you through the process of getting there. I am grateful for the mentorship I have found through connecting with Melissa, who I know will always be there as a resource while I continue to navigate future pathways.

Did you and Melissa compare notes about your SMUS experiences? If so, were there any similarities/differences that stood out?

As boarders at SMUS, we had some memorable shared SMUS experiences to reminisce about. The boarding community prepared us both for the real world with its diversity of nationalities, backgrounds, and interests. I dearly miss everyone at SMUS and hope to enjoy a return visit soon. ♥



Anna Mollenhauer '17

ALUMNI PROFILE

Anna Mollenhauer, an SMUS Lifer with big dreams, has consistently taken on new experiences and challenges. From building formative friendships and kayak excursions at SMUS to playing field hockey on the international stage with Team Canada, her passion for sports and valuing community has led to significant successes in life—and hopefully one day, the Olympics.

What's your favourite memory of your time at the school?

My favourite school memories are probably the school sports teams, tournaments, and trips we went on, and the friendships fostered therein. I tried as many sports as I could, and moving into Senior School I played field hockey and soccer. The Experiential Program in Grade 10 was one of my favourites where we did all our classes in the morning and then in the afternoons we would go off and try different extracurriculars. So, I participated in cooking and baking, woodworking, and all sorts of things—every week was a new activity. It culminated in an eight-day excursion: a kayak trip through the Broughton Archipelago up-island. We visited Alert Bay and the residential school there and kayaked all around. Moreover, it was all for school credit, so it can't get much better than that! I have very fond memories of that program, and it was very special because I think we were one of the last years to be able to participate in the program before it evolved into the Grade 10 Outdoor Education program that exists today.

What's your biggest passion in life?

Field hockey is something that I've always been super passionate about. I started playing when I was four, and my mom also played, so it's been a huge part of my life for as long as I can remember. In Grade 9 art class, we did a project on 'role models', and I chose the Canadian Senior Women's National Team. As I grew up and started playing more competitively, I started playing provincially for Team BC from Grade 8 to Grade 12, and I was at the University of Victoria field almost every day. I got to know the UVic coaches well, so it started to feel like a second home to me. All the while, I always had attending UVic in the back of my mind. I was a student-athlete there for 6 years after graduating from SMUS. I started competing for Team Canada as a Junior up until U21, where we won gold at the Pan-

American Championships. I got my first cap (first debut) as a Senior at the start of 2019 and have been playing with them since.

How do you stay balanced and incorporate your interests?

When you're a student-athlete, time management is kind of in your wheelhouse; even at SMUS, you know, you have homework and things to be studying for, school practices, tournaments on weekends... you're constantly on the move 24/7. So, I've always valued doing little things for myself, whether that's walking down to the beach at sunset, reading a book, or going to my favourite coffee shop. I really enjoy baking, which is kind of a benefit to me because I try making fun stuff for dinner while I'm training and it's easy to balance with my other hobbies and obligations. With field hockey, I've had the opportunity to do a lot of volunteer coaching, too. I love working with kids and seeing the love and joy they have for the game because that's how it was for me when I was little. Balance can be hard to find, but I feel like I found it at a young age because I've been doing this since I was 12 or 13.

What drives you to pursue this elite level of athletics, and what's next for you?

It might sound cheesy, but I was a little girl with big dreams, and today I want to make that little girl proud. I was only four or five years old when I started telling everyone that I wanted to play for Canada and wanted to go to the Olympics. That girl was onto something, and now I want to fulfill the dreams she had. Another big one is my team... they inspire me and push me to be the best version of myself daily—and that goes from all of my teammates that I've had, the ones at SMUS, the ones at UVic, the ones provincially and now my current teammates on the national squad. I truly value being a part of a team, and the relationships and connections you foster when you're working toward a common goal. We're all in it together. I find them to be super inspiring, and it's an honour to play with them. My biggest goal right now is Paris in 2024; the Canadian women's team hasn't qualified for the Olympics since 1992. We don't know the roster yet, but the Olympic Qualifiers will be in January 2024, and I'm very hopeful. When you play with your heart and not with your head you can accomplish anything you set your mind to. 🍀

When her entire family moved from rural Alberta to Victoria, BC, Amyrose was able not only to attend SMUS from Grades 6 to 12 but also to fall back in love with school. Fast forward to today, and the polyglot has transformed her experiences in academia, her love of music, and a PhD in Italian Studies into a business that fills a notable yet niche gap in post-secondary humanities.

What did you want to be when you grew up?

As a child, I never had a clear picture, but I loved the history of the school. As a singer, I loved all of SMUS's traditions, and how much culture and music were integrated into them. I loved languages and travelling, so I always thought that I would have some kind of job that incorporated those elements, but I had no idea what it was going to be. When I was graduating from SMUS, I was awarded a big scholarship to study business. At that point, I thought I could do something in international business because maybe it would allow me to explore the languages and travel that I was so interested in. But in my very first business class, the professor said, "If money isn't the most important thing in your life, get up and leave now." So, I did. At the time, I was taking a lot of Italian classes because I wanted to better know and understand what I was singing about when I was singing opera. That led me to do a master's degree in music as well as a master's and PhD in Italian Studies at Berkeley.

How did you get into your unique current line of work?

I loved the research side of academia more than the teaching aspects. I found an academic administrative position at the University of Toronto running the Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, and I loved that because it was in my narrow field, and administration gave me something other than teaching. Later, when my husband, Dr. Patrick Gill, SMUS '97, got an amazing job opportunity in Silicon Valley, we moved there, and I didn't have work permission in the States. I had previously done a little bit of translation and editing for professors and called a grad school friend, Dr. Lisa Regan, who had done some more serious freelance editing. It became clear that we had complementary skill sets, and that there was more work in our field than we initially thought. So, we decided to create a business and make a go of it together, rather

than being solo freelancers, and that's how we created TextFormations. It's an editorial company that provides wraparound services for organizations and individual scholars in the humanities, education, and the arts instead of having separate copy editors, indexers, and translators. We do it all.

How do you balance or integrate your hobbies and personal interests into your work?

I started singing when I first came to Victoria from Alberta; I wasn't great at piano, so my piano teacher suggested I sing instead, and set me up with some wonderful teachers – first, Ruth Kyle and then Karen Smith. When I went to grad school, I was told that I couldn't be a Berkeley grad student as well as sing – it's just too much – but I had a voice teacher who said, "If you really want to be serious about this, why don't you do a master's degree in music while you're doing your PhD in Italian? It's never been done, but just try it for a year." In the end, I was able to achieve both and was training and singing all the time in operas and performing solo recitals with Anna Cal on piano. More recently, I am planning a recital with Anna Cal for the Christ Church Cathedral series in 2025. I speak and work in five or six main languages, including Italian, and I'm a dramatic soprano. One interesting connection between my voice and my company is that I use five or six main languages both as a dramatic soprano and as an editor and translator.

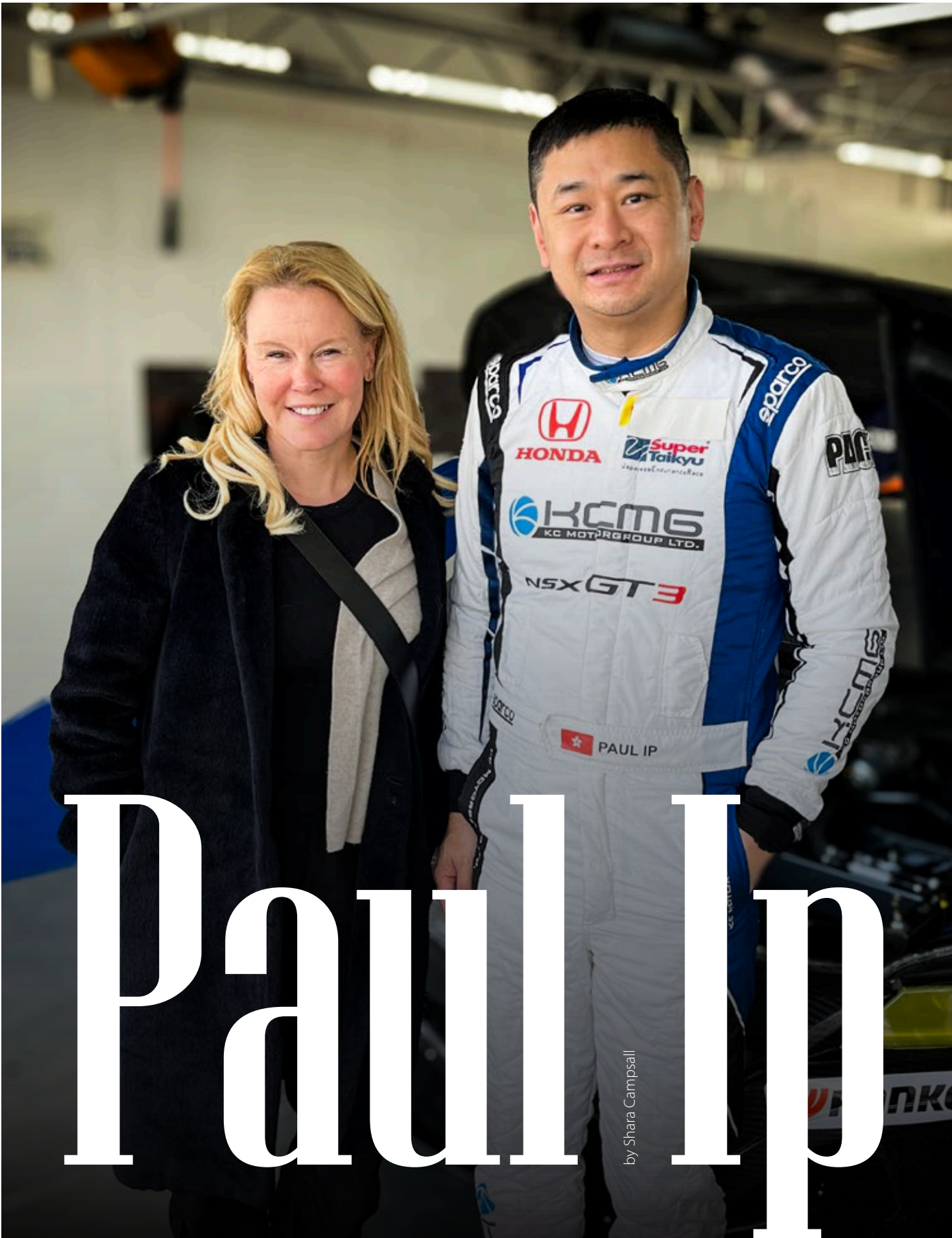
What advice might you give to others?

Be flexible – genuinely flexible. I had a spare year in between degrees, and I was going to try out the life of a professional opera singer... and then I got pneumonia. I was so sick for 6 months, and I think it changed the trajectory of my whole life. That could have been devastating, but it allowed me to dive more into learning languages, like German. I dove further into academics, and into connecting with new and different people. Never be afraid to reach out and ask questions. Talk to everybody! It doesn't matter if it's the CEO of some famous company—send them an email. If it's somebody working at the grocery store, have a conversation, even if you don't speak the same language. Connect with people, and then connect them with other people. That's been extremely rewarding for me, and I would advise that anybody try it: be brave enough to reach out. ♥



Amyrose McCue Gill '96

ALUMNI PROFILE



Paul Ip

by Shara Campsall

Shara Campsall and Paul Ip '93 at the Fuji Racetrack in Tokyo, while on a break between Paul's prepping for an endurance race. February 2023.

From Racing Through Exams to Revving Cars on the Racetrack

The world of motorsport is a thrilling arena where speed, skill, and adrenaline converge.

Dr. Paul Ip, an alumnus of St. Michaels University School (SMUS) from the Class of 1993, is different from your typical racing enthusiast. His journey from SMUS classrooms to racetracks around the globe is a remarkable tale of passion, perseverance, and a love for high-speed adventures.

Paul first walked through the halls of SMUS in 1988 as a boarding student, in Grade 7. Now, he's an entrepreneur and the founder and driver of Hong Kong-based KC Motor Group Ltd. (KCMG). Recently, Paul returned to his SMUS Middle School roots—now as a parent of two first-years: a day student in Middle School, and a Senior School boarding student.

Paul's journey into the world of motorsport began as a personal passion. Born in Hong Kong, and raised in multiple countries, including Canada, the United States, and the United Kingdom, Paul's fascination with racing took him on an exhilarating journey through Europe and the U.S. By 2007, it became clear to Paul that the level of competition in Asia lagged behind other countries and international standards.

That's when he decided to don his entrepreneurial helmet and start his own company/team: KCMG Ltd. was off to the races!

In 2015, Sabi University in Paris, France, awarded Paul an honorary doctorate for achieving significant success in motorsport. Paul's success has been nothing short of outstanding. That same year, on June 14, KCMG took first place out of eight contenders in the Le Mans Prototype 2 (LMP2) class at the 2015 24 Hours of Le Mans—the crown jewel in the world of motorsport, and the ultimate test of man vs. machine.

Revered among fans worldwide, competing teams construct a brand new prototype car and race it through the night. Industry standards hold that a win in this class is proof of a team's competence and maturity. In fact, Paul's team happened to be the first in China to secure this class win, according to the program's website.

It's never too late to chase our dreams because, sometimes, the path less travelled leads to the most extraordinary adventures and accomplishments.

Last February, I had the chance to meet Paul and his wife, Annika, in Hong Kong. I so enjoyed hearing Paul's story of discovering his passion for the racetrack and how he and Annika met. She is a race car driver herself.

After a two-hour drive with SMUS Head of School Mark Turner, we arrived to meet Paul and the KCMG Team at the Fuji Racetrack, which sits at the base of Mt. Fuji. A memory I won't soon forget! I was in complete awe watching the team practise. Walking into a race paddock is an overwhelming experience. Pre-start-up, drivers Paul and his co-partner from Italy waited in the wings while a team of engineers and mechanics wearing KCMG-branded uniforms huddled around the vehicle which was seemingly swathed from head to foot in an intimidating set of computer monitors.

Owning and operating a race car is a mammoth task of administration, with dozens of engineers, mechanics, builders, and drivers with centuries worth of combined experience all focused on the singular task: getting one car to the track on time, in one piece, let alone ready to compete at more than 200 kilometres per hour. Everything about the car has to be in perfect working condition: the temperature, the fuel, the oil, the tire pressure. The engineers are fully knowledgeable on how to assess and adjust parts of the car's body as necessary to ensure optimum racing capacity.

I asked Paul what he felt were his most significant racing accomplishments, in addition to the earlier-mentioned LMP2 class achievement.

"As a driver, I was Asian Formula 3 Champion in 2007. That same year, we also took the Vice-Champion title in the FIA World Endurance Championship—becoming the first Chinese team to do so. KCMG also clinched a Daytona 24-hour podium third-place overall in 2022," he remarked.

Now, as parents with their children attending SMUS, Paul and Annika bring with them their deep appreciation for the transformative power of education; Paul's return to his beloved school has been 30 years in the making. It's a homecoming that showcases the full circle of a remarkable life's journey.

His story is a testament to the power of following one's passion, and his unwavering determination and love for racing have propelled him to outstanding heights—a reminder to us all: It's never too late to chase our dreams because, sometimes, the path less travelled leads to the most extraordinary adventures and accomplishments. ▀

The Evolution of Student Service



Grade 12 student, Ilona Stukalo, participates in the Service Council's Coffee Drive, raising donations for Victoria's Rainbow Kitchen Society.

Reframing what ‘meaningful service’ means, to help make the right impact on the world

On March 1, 2022, 15-year-old Ilona Stukalo was in the backseat of her family’s car, fleeing Kyiv en route to Poland. It had been four days since Russia invaded, and she and her family, alongside tens of millions of fellow Ukrainians, were living in “a nightmare that we were all hoping to wake up from.”

Ilona’s mom drove her and her younger brother the long distance to the border. Their parents knew it would be safer for the kids to be in another country.

“When my mum, my brother and I were fleeing to Poland, we were welcomed by volunteers with snacks, water, clothes, other necessities and phone numbers to call for assistance,” she says.

It was her first time experiencing the power and impact of service.

“There were a lot of refugees, but they made sure to ask everyone if they were okay and if they had what they needed,” Ilona says. “Seeing the passion and empathy in their eyes and knowing how important it is for the refugees crossing the border, is what inspired me to join the Service Council upon my arrival at SMUS.”

Ilona came to Victoria for her Grade 11 year at SMUS. She admits that she felt a sense of survivor’s guilt, being safe at school in Canada while millions of Ukrainians were facing a different reality back home.

She chose to channel those feelings into the Service Council; a place where she could give back and help pay it forward in a meaningful way.

Within six months, Ilona went from being a new Grade 11 boarding student jumping into service for the first time in her life, to being elected co-Head of Service Council for her Grade 12 year. That journey is the byproduct of a reframed and more purposeful approach to service at SMUS that reprioritizes meaningful impact over good intentions, and developing the right skills to prepare students for life.

International Service

International service trips to Africa, Asia and Central America have long been a popular option for Senior School students.

When the pandemic hit in March 2020, a week before Spring Break, SMUS naturally cancelled its trips that year. When SMUS-led international trips began again in 2022-23—a field hockey trip to Germany, a music trip to Cuba, and a culture trip to Singapore and Vietnam—service was noticeably and intentionally absent from the offerings.

“For the sake of preparing students for life, we need to be constantly reexamining our practices, and adjusting as appropriate,” says Ritch Primrose, Senior School Assistant Director, Student Life. “We also need to model the appropriate way to respond to challenges so students become leaders and become problem solvers knowing the right skills, and the right approaches.”

The killings of Black Americans in 2020 such as George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery—and the discovery of mass gravesites at former residential schools in BC and Canada brought about a surge in public discourse about race and inequity. That led to organizations around the world, including SMUS, reexamining

policies and practices through a lens of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).

“It has always been important, but in the last few years we’ve had more open conversations with students and staff, we’ve formed an EDI Advisory Committee, and our hope is that all of this work that we’re doing is leading to more purposeful approaches,” Ritch says.

A more purposeful approach to service means gone are the days of travelling to India, Kenya or Ecuador to visit poverty-stricken areas to “build” schools and other infrastructure.

David Boroto ’14 is one of hundreds of alumni who did just that while at SMUS. He was active in service and leadership; involved in Service Council, elected Head Prefect, and went on a Spring Break service trip to India in Grade 11.

“It was such a positive experience going on that trip,” he says of his memories of the cultural components of visiting India, including seeing the Taj Mahal and learning yoga.

But he doesn’t feel the same way when he looks back on the service element of the India trip: pouring concrete for a school, digging a garden, painting walls and playing with students at the school.

“We were high school students; none of us had done construction work before, none of us were trained engineers,” says David, who went on to study infrastructure engineering at the University of Toronto, and then earned his Master of Philosophy degree in Engineering for Sustainable Development from the University of Cambridge.

“Did we have a great time? Yes. Did we have any impact? Did we do service? Did we actually achieve the feel-good component of what the trip set out to do? No.”

In the decade since graduating from SMUS, David has gained further international development experiences in Guatemala, Kenya and Uganda. As his understanding of this work has shifted, he has learned more about how to ensure service work, particularly abroad, is done in a more meaningful and respectful way.

“Nothing is ever 100% altruistic, but there’s a scale. It’s important to be clear to yourself and others and ask, ‘Am I doing this for myself?’ and ‘What right do I have travelling overseas to try and do this work?’” he says. “There’s a difference between addressing an issue, and having a learning experience that makes you feel good and that will be great for your university applications. And that’s okay to some extent, as long as the people you’re quote-unquote serving aren’t harmed by it.”

Raechel Jones, who teaches social justice and psychology at the Senior School, believes the move away from international service will give current students a more authentic understanding of service, and allows them to be more mindful and respectful of a community’s needs.

“It was a model that has been used for a long time. And any model is worth revisiting to ensure that the people you’re aiming to do service for are the ones benefitting,” she says. “There’s so much our students gain from being in a new country, stepping outside of their comfort zone and experiencing a new culture. But when it comes to the service piece, we can’t take these trips and the impact they have on other people lightly because it comes at a cost.”



SMUS Alumnus David Boroto '14



David participated in the World Vision 30 Hour Famine in 2013.



David went to India for a Service Council Spring Break service trip in Grade 11.

Reframing Service

Service remains one of the four core values at SMUS. For that value to be meaningful to the recipient, however, it must exist alongside the other three SMUS values: courage, honesty and, most importantly, respect.

The reframed approach to service is more mindful of the people that students are trying to serve. Whether a student wants to help solve a problem, support a community or an organization, or simply raise funds or awareness, it's important they consider intention and impact: Why is this work important? Who will benefit most from my actions? Why am I interested in this work? What skills do I have that allow me to perform this work? Could this service work have negative impacts on the people I want to help?

This approach helps create leaders who are sensitive to the needs of the community, who will put in the work to understand an issue before taking action, and who have the skills to reflect on how their contributions impact others.

With a pause on international service in 2020, along with deeper conversations around equity, diversity and inclusion coming to the fore, it naturally shifted the focus of service at SMUS closer to home.

More attention has been put on supporting established organizations in Victoria and Canada, and ensuring students learn more about the issues they're working to address.

When service at SMUS does have an international focus, it's when students are willing to open up and share their personal stories to help their schoolmates better understand the needs of their community. Last spring, for example, Ilona spoke in Chapel about her experiences living in and fleeing Ukraine, which helped spark on-campus fundraising efforts to support a Kyiv-based organization.

"That made me feel heard and understood; that I have a voice and I can do a lot with my voice. I've never had this realization before that adults or other students might listen to a 16-year-old girl," Ilona says.

David says being at SMUS, where service was prioritized and where he learned that teenagers have skills and capacity to make a difference, is where his interest in international development began.

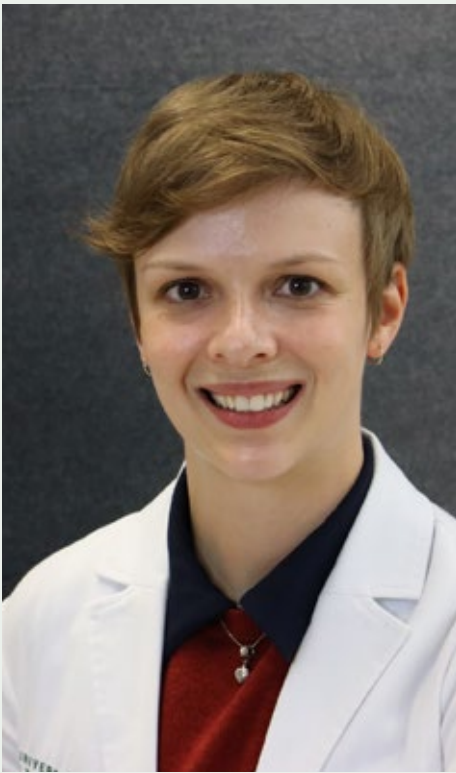
He has since worked around the world with a variety of service-minded organizations, including an arm of the United Nations that implements and supports sustainable infrastructure. He is now board chair of Engineers Without Borders Canada, an international development non-profit that mobilizes the engineering community and leverages technological innovation to address global challenges.

His advice to SMUS students just starting to pave their own service pathways and who want to make a positive impact is to reflect honestly on intention and impact.

"I've learned that having good intentions isn't enough. There's a level of reality that needs to come into it, in terms of measuring the impact that you're having on the communities that you're trying to serve, and then asking the question, 'Am I the best person suited for it?'" he says. "I know there are many bright, engaged, passionate students who want to be involved in their communities and who want to make a difference. There's a huge opportunity in front of each of them today to reconsider what active community engagement looks like for them."

Ilona says that getting involved in service at SMUS, and being able to use her experiences to help educate her classmates and raise money to support her fellow Ukrainians, has shifted her perspective on the impact that students can make, and on the importance of service.

"This past year, I've had a lot of self-reflection and growth, and I've been trying to find my place in the world and find purpose. I feel like I've found that in service," she says. "I'm proud that I'm able to do something meaningful with it, and it made me realize that I would like to continue to make the world a better place." ♥



Kaylynn Purdy '10

ALUMNI PROFILE

Whether it's swimming across the Strait of Georgia or attending medical school, Kaylynn is no stranger to drive and dedication. After attending SMUS for 3 years as a boarder and one of Hugh McGillivray's scholars, she has since continued her dream of becoming a doctor bettering the community through neurology and policy making.

Why did you choose SMUS?

I come from a very small coal mining town in the Rocky Mountains called Sparwood. My high school class was quite small, and not many students were bound for university, which meant that classes needed to apply to universities such as high-level math and science were not offered locally. I never felt challenged in school, and as a result felt quite frustrated with going to school. SMUS was an opportunity to receive a better, more supportive education and to pursue all the classes I would need to get into and thrive at a university. By the time I was in Grade 9, I knew I wanted to be a doctor. I also knew medical school was hard to get into and that nobody from my town had done it. I wanted the best chance possible.

How do you balance -or integrate- your various hobbies with your life?

Sometimes finding balance is hard, and I am still working on it. Having a routine is helpful, but it's also important to build in unstructured time that I can spend with my family or friends. For me, exercise has always been important. I started swimming in a club in my hometown but eventually gave it up to pursue road cycling when I came to SMUS. I cycled competitively at a high level until the last year of my bachelor's degree when I had a terrible crash that meant I couldn't race anymore. I then switched back to swimming as part of my rehabilitation from that accident. From there, my good friend Caryn Dooner '10 and I decided we wanted to swim the Strait of Georgia to fund raise for women's cancers. Caryn was a competitive rower but formerly was a club swimmer like me. So swimming was something we both got back into to complete the 30km swim back in 2014! I think both from competitive cycling and open water swimming I have learned how to sit in the silence of my thoughts, and to use training times as a place to think through things, and to plan what I want to do next. They have also both taught me that physical pain is partly a state of mind and that you really can push your body through quite a lot with the right mindset.

How did you become a doctor after graduating from SMUS?

I graduated from the University of Calgary with a bachelor's degree in health sciences, which is when I got into neuroscience research and decided to pursue my dream of becoming a doctor. I attended medical school at the Northern Ontario School of Medicine, finished a master's in health policy at Stanford University in 2023, and am currently in my final year of a residency program in neurology at the University of Alberta. I added in the extra degree in health policy because I felt, during medical school and residency, that being a doctor was not enough, and that the pervasive problems that affect people's health often begin at the policy level. I hope to be both a neurologist and continue to grow as an expert in health policy. Neurology is a very interesting field because there is still so much that we don't know about the brain and nervous system as well as neurological disease. There is so much potential for new treatments and therapies and that makes it pretty exciting. It is also a very complex specialty that involves a lot of problem solving and systematic thinking, and I really like that challenge.

What has been your proudest moment in your life and career so far?

My career is just beginning, but I think one of my biggest achievements thus far has been becoming part of the Board of Directors of the Association of Faculties of Medicine of Canada (AFMC). I am the only learner/student member of the board, and the board consists of the 17 Deans of Medicine in Canada. It has been an incredible opportunity to be part of the board and to learn from some of the most accomplished people in Canadian medicine. I think my proudest moment was graduating from Stanford this June. I never thought I would become a doctor, let alone go to one of the top schools in the world. It was an amazing moment to walk across the stage to receive my diploma and look out to see my parents and fiancé who sacrificed so much for me to get there. If my parents hadn't allowed and made the sacrifices needed for me to attend SMUS, I don't think I would be a doctor right now let alone hold a degree from Stanford. I think what makes me stand out is an inability to let injustices go. I have a very hard time walking away from something that isn't right and will do everything I can to fix it. I take my role as an advocate very seriously, and I think it is the most important role as a physician. Never stop trying to make the world a better place. ■

While pursuing an unconventional career path that started at SMUS when he was just 13 years old, Justin Tse with his passion for technology and business-savvy mindset has received several accolades for his work across social media, including most recently the Youth Entrepreneur of the Year award. The jet-setting real estate, innovation, and travel mogul takes his audience through the experience of a lifetime, which all started by listening to his gut when it told him to follow a non-traditional professional trajectory.

What are some of your favourite memories of your time at SMUS?

I started at SMUS in Grade 4 when my family moved to the area. At the Junior School I was really into hockey, so playing that every day at recess and lunch with my friends was a big part of my memories. I noticed early on that the things I was passionate about felt like extreme obsessions. When it was hockey, it was full-on. I would watch every video possible, learn every position, and everything there was to know about hockey. I built a colosseum out of clay for a school project once because I was really into architecture, drawing buildings, and floor plans... I thought maybe I wanted to be an architect, but I wasn't good at math or engineering. When I got to the Middle School, I became more interested in learning about tech and YouTube, which were both relatively new at the time. I was the last of my friends to get a phone because I lived so close to school, so I learned about different phones and iPods by borrowing from my friends and watching videos on YouTube. I wanted to learn more about them so that I would know which device I wanted to save my money for. That was what really kickstarted my tech obsession, so I have a lot of memories of that.

How did this passion transition to your career while you were still a student?

I started spending more and more time trying to keep up with press releases from Apple and all the major tech companies, which turned into selling iPhone and iPod accessories at school. Making money on social media was still a new industry, but it was something I was interested in, so I put everything towards that—all my free time during lunch and after school. The money I made from selling accessories was the money I used to invest in the purchase of equipment I used to start filming tech product review videos of different phones and devices. I tried to produce a very high quantity. Eventually I started receiving free products to review and

then sell afterwards, and by Grade 11, I was able to generate a pretty sustainable income while I was still living at home.

When did you know that it was time to take your business to the next level?

My parents strongly encouraged me to go to university, but I wasn't the best student. I applied for the business program at UVic, and by my second year, my business had doubled in size and revenue. I would go to school during the week, and just film from the time I got home on Friday, through the entire weekend. It got to the point at the beginning of my fourth year where I felt like I was learning more about business from my own experiences than in a school setting, and I was being held back from a lot of opportunities for my business; I couldn't travel for any press events or make any connections, and I could only respond to people during the weekends. So, I dropped out, and in what would've been my fourth year of school, I had already taken 150 flights for these opportunities. If I had waited any longer, then I would've graduated during the pandemic and wouldn't have been able to travel and make those connections. But I believe if I dropped out any earlier than that, the company wouldn't be the same either—some of my most important hires who still work for me today came from connections made during that program, once they graduated.

What's next for you, and any words of wisdom for others?

It's my 13th year making videos, and I've branched out into travel content, real estate, and electric cars, which all still relate to tech. It's most certainly still the foundation. I didn't realize how many tech events would be in places like Zurich, Milan, and Hawaii. While in those places, I thought, "Hey, we're in a cool destination that I've never been to, so let's make a video about that." Which eventually turned into getting invited to lots of travel campaigns, like the Four Seasons private jet around the world, sponsorships from different car companies, and attending Formula One races. I bought my first property in 2017 and was able to tie in my previous passion for architecture and did a video recently where we did a tour of a quarter-billion-dollar condo in New York. So, we'll see where it goes from here, but I think it's important to lean into things that you're interested in, commit to them fully, and give them enough time to see if it pans out. If you're putting in the effort, then eventually it'll work itself out. You just have to trust the process. 🍀



Justin Tse '15

ALUMNI PROFILE

Founders and Benefactor Dinner



Valerie Beeston and Grade 10 student, Sophie de Launière, getting to know each other before dinner.

Highlights from a speech by John Herpers '64 as told by David Angus '62 during the Founders and Benefactors Dinner in October 2023.

In the beginning of 2000, I was invited by Joe Small, a close family friend and a Jesuit priest, to visit him in Nairobi, Kenya. Our plan was to visit Nairobi for 1-2 weeks and go on safari the third week.

When I arrived in Nairobi, Joe drove me to a friend's home. I was surprised that it was a one room home. There was no shower, toilet or bedroom. It was old and in need of repair. In conversing with his friend, I learned that there was a common bathroom and shower on the property. Since he was not married, he often ate with neighbours who cooked food outside of their homes.

We stayed for a short time and went on our way. Joe lived with about fifteen other men on a large piece of property with many buildings that had bathrooms, a kitchen and a dining room for our meals. And thank God there were showers, bath tubs and toilets in the sleeping quarters.

His fifteen friends were from Europe and North America. Their purpose was to help the poor, find them jobs and help them find schools for their children. Joe who was a retired teacher would tutor kids if they required assistance with their academics. He loved working with the kids and was very popular.

During my visit, I was shocked at the poverty in Nairobi. I watched families gathered together. Most were unemployed, had no accommodations and walked the streets. They begged for food. There was restricted or no water, few toilets or shower facilities.

But there were a few neighbourhoods that had medium sized houses. Joe explained that many Europeans either owned or worked for companies. They lived in decent neighbourhoods, sent their kids to either public or private schools but, according to Joe, these neighbourhoods only represented a small percentage of the population.

During the second week, I was asked if I would like to visit a school called Starehe, a boy's school in Nairobi. The school was started in 1959 in two Quonset huts donated by Kenya Shell and BP Oil. And in the fall of 1959 seventeen boys entered.

When I walked on the campus, I saw kids who were dressed in uniforms walking to and from classes. When I walked into the administrative office, I was introduced to the general administrator who took me around the campus. I immediately compared the school to our St. Michaels University School. The buildings were impressive; the students were welcoming and inquisitive. They were athletic and played games throughout the school year.

According to my guide, there were 1200 students at Starehe. The students come from African, European, and other universities

the world over. Starehe receives about 20,000 applications every year. After rigorous interviews and rigid testing there are only 250 students accepted.

Starehe is a charitable school. At least 70% of its students receive free tuition and the rest attend at a reduced rate.

When my campus tour was finished, I was very impressed with the school. I was impressed with the campus, the students and the academics. Any student who attended Starehe had an opportunity to attend a university, learn about their fellow students, play competitive sports, receive three meals per day and had the opportunity to overcome poverty.

When I arrived home in Portland, Oregon, I found a Jesuit middle school, St. Andrew Nativity School, which is located in the inner city of Portland. It is the only tuition free private middle school in Oregon. Students who are admitted come from very financially challenged families.

The students enter Grade 6 and many test at a third grade level. The student teacher ratio is 14:1. There is a 48 hour school week. The graduation rate from Nativity School is 98-100% and the students are accepted at many private high schools. 98% graduate from the high school and 88% go on to college.

In 2004, I began volunteering at St. Andrew Nativity School. I mentored students who wanted exposure to the Portland community. I spent time reviewing their reading, writing and math skills. After a few years, I invited a few active and retired lawyers and executives to speak to the students about their youth and their careers. The students were impressed and asked good questions.

I thought about these kids attending St. Michaels University School. They would learn to make decisions on their own, be challenged by the school's staff, have a challenging academic schedule, an international culture and sports programs and live with students who could become lifelong friends.

I spoke to Rob Wilson and John Davies about having a Nativity Graduate attend SMUS. We visited Nativity School, toured the school and met with the President. When we made our proposal the President was very inquisitive. She had questions like who will pay for the tuition? Is a child to be taken to a foreign country and stay there for four years? What would their mother feel about her child attending a boarding school? Many Nativity students hadn't been in downtown Portland.

The President wanted me to meet with the board. Because I was educated and boarded at University School, I could explain that the school provided me with excellent teachers, a challenging academic schedule, sports programs and housing with other boarders who were from other countries. I found great friends, some of whom I am still in contact with today.

A board member challenged me with an interesting question. How would a Nativity student who came from a challenging family situation in Portland adjust to St. Michaels University School? I informed him that the staff, a mentor and fellow students would help the Nativity student adjust to the environment.

The President called the following day to tell me that the Nativity board supported sending a student to SMUS. However, she thought it might be a difficult challenge to find a student whose parents would support their child attending a boarding school in another country. I responded that if there was a candidate we would arrange to have the parents and student visit the school.

Our first Nativity graduate was Musu Ofosu. She was born in England, moved to Portland, Oregon and was interested in attending SMUS. Her mother had attended a British boarding school and





thought Musu would thrive at the school. She entered in the fall of 2007 and graduated in the spring of 2011. She moved to London and completed her degree in marketing. She is now married and has a young son. And she is employed in marketing.

Our second student, Paris Lowe, entered SMUS in the fall of 2009. After her first three weeks as a student, I visited the campus. I was sitting in the quad and heard Paris's voice. She knew everyone's name; she seemed to know the whole student body. I went to one of her classes and she contributed to the class. She graduated in 2014 and attended the University of San Diego. After she graduated, she was accepted to Johns Hopkins University to study for a master's degree in Public Health. She is married, has two young children and is working in public health.

Our third student, Leah Sparkman, entered SMUS in the fall of 2013. She became involved in sports, theatre and was an excellent student. During her Grade 12 school year, she applied for a scholarship to Santa Clara University and was awarded a full academic scholarship in the spring of 2017. She is now employed by Nike in Austin, Texas.

Our fourth student, Marbella Ramirez, graduated in 2022 and is completing her final year at community college in Portland.

Our fifth student, Jahiel McCoy, graduated from Nativity in June 2023 and entered SMUS this fall. He is bright, friendly and engaging.

In closing, my involvement in SMUS has been a journey from the fall of 1960 to the present. I arrived in the fall of 1960; I was fourteen years old. My mother and I arrived on the Princess Margaret; we arrived at the school and after unloading my luggage, my mother left to take the Princess Margaret back to Seattle. I was homesick and missed my parents. I played rugby, basketball, but I was too big and clumsy to run track. I did well academically and graduated in 1964. I had formed great relationships with fellow students and masters like Rob Wilson, Ian Mugridge and Nick Prowse.

I am extremely proud of the Nativity SMUS relationship and the Nativity students who have graduated from SMUS. I want to thank Rob Wilson, Shara Campsall, and Mark Turner for their support of this relationship and for their exceptional support of the Nativity students who have attended and graduated from SMUS. ♥

Retirees



Ian Hyde-Lay | 39 years



Ian Hyde-Lay's near four-decade tenure at SMUS is a testament to his unwavering dedication and remarkable humility. Hailing from Duncan, Ian was immersed in the ethos of independent schools from a young age, growing up at Shawnigan Lake School where both his parents held prominent roles. His upbringing fostered a strong connection to community and a passion for athletics, especially basketball and rugby.

Initially pursuing a history degree at the University of Victoria, Ian's trajectory shifted towards education after an influential directed studies course with Dr. Sydney Jackman. He was drawn to teaching through coaching, seeing it as an extension of education. This realization led him to return to UVic for a bachelor's in education, shaping his path towards SMUS.

Joining the school initially in the history department, Ian's versatility and commitment propelled him into the role of Athletic Director. For over three decades, he shaped the lives of students, teaching Physical Education to Grades 8 through 12 and interacting with some of the nation's most gifted athletes and scholars.

Ian reminisces fondly about remarkable students who passed through SMUS, notably Simon Ibell, whose battle with Hunter Syndrome made a profound impact on Ian. Simon's courage and unwavering positivity were inspiring. Despite his challenges, Simon managed the Senior Basketball team, later becoming a prominent advocate for those with rare genetic conditions.

His family, deeply rooted in the SMUS community, saw both Ian and his wife, Lisa, as educators and houseparents at the school. The boys received a stellar education and forged enduring friendships, echoing Ian's own formative experiences within a school community.

As he transitions into retirement, Ian's hope is to leave behind a legacy that inspires students to seize opportunities, embrace diligence, and cherish gratitude. He cherishes the power of gratitude, considering it the world's most potent prayer. Reflecting on his time at SMUS, Ian expresses immense gratitude for the fulfilling journey he's had, describing it as a fantastic and enriching career.

Ian's impact extended far beyond sports, embodying the school's ethos of holistic education. His teachings transcended the boundaries of the classroom, shaping character and instilling values that will resonate through the lives of the students he influenced.



Bruce Kuklinski | 33 years

Bruce Kuklinski spent 33 fulfilling years as an influential teacher and coach, embodying values of integrity and dedication. His journey began in New Zealand, where his passion for caring for others, especially children, led him to pursue teaching over other career paths. Joining SMUS in 1989, he embraced coaching rugby and tennis, eventually becoming a revered figure in the sports department. He cherished the school's diverse and excellence-driven environment, crediting it for his growth.

Bruce's impactful tenure involved teaching Physical Education and Health Education while coaching various sports teams. His coaching prowess extended beyond the school as an international rugby referee for Canada and later as a Citing Commissioner, participating in numerous prestigious events worldwide, including the Rugby World Cup and the Rio Olympics.

Bruce emphasized the importance of promoting fitness and health among students, drawing from personal motivations linked to family health struggles. His involvement with charitable events like the Terry Fox Run showcased his commitment to meaningful causes.

His connection to SMUS transcended his professional life; it became the place where he met his wife, Simone, who was also a teacher at the school. Their bond symbolized the broader connections he fostered within the SMUS community, emphasizing the interconnectedness of all.

As Bruce approached retirement, he reminisced about the invaluable experiences and relationships he'd cultivated. He acknowledged the unsung heroes behind the scenes and expressed gratitude for their contributions to the school's success.

Though planning to continue his involvement in international rugby citing, Bruce humorously hinted at a leisurely start to retirement, intending to stay connected to SMUS, cherishing the memories and the supportive community that had become an integral part of his life.

Bruce's legacy at SMUS transcends mere coaching and teaching; it's about the profound impact he had on individuals, the supportive environment he fostered, and the enduring connections he formed. As he steps into retirement, his influence and dedication remain etched in the hearts of those whose lives he touched.



Joan Tweedie | 33 years

Joan Tweedie, the teacher-librarian at the Senior School, retired after 33 years of dedicated service. Throughout her career, Joan's love of reading has been the driving force behind her innovations and support for students and faculty.

Joan's journey at SMUS began in 1987 when she and her husband, Rob, moved to Canada from South Africa. She seized the opportunity to become the school librarian after learning about an opening at a social gathering. Her love for SMUS was immediate, rooted in the sense of tradition that she felt when first stepping onto the school grounds.

Over the years, Joan made significant contributions to the SMUS community. She taught classes on academic integrity, critical thinking, and combating misinformation. She initiated book drives benefiting schools worldwide and created programs like the Buddy Reading program, and annual Book Teas. Her curated "book bags" and summer reading lists became cherished traditions, emphasizing the importance of reading among students and teachers.

A notable project during her tenure was the SMUS Author Wall, celebrating published authors within the school community. Joan also played a pivotal role in designing the Snowden Library, envisioning a warm and barrier-free space. The library, now considered the "heart of the school," reflects her vision of a welcoming environment with breakout rooms for study and collaboration.

Joan's impact reaches beyond the library, as she and her husband served as Senior Houseparents of Winslow House for eight years. This experience allowed them to form deep connections with students and their families worldwide, creating a home away from home.

As Joan bids farewell to SMUS, she reflects on the sorrow of leaving but expresses excitement for future adventures. Her immediate plans include a trip to Geneva to visit family and a return to Toronto. She looks forward to exploring new paths in life and remains grateful for the excellent opportunities for professional growth and the lifelong friendships developed during her 33 years at SMUS.

In her own words, Joan feels extremely fortunate for her career in education, working alongside dedicated colleagues and brilliant teachers. She trusts that doors will continue to open for her in the future, just as they always have throughout her remarkable tenure at SMUS.

Judy Tobacco | 32 years

Judy Tobacco, a dedicated PE teacher at SMUS for 32 years, leaves behind a legacy of advocating for inclusive athletics and fostering students' passion for sports. Her commitment to equal opportunities in PE led her to ensure that every student, regardless of ability, had the chance to participate fully and enjoy the gym experience.

Initially drawn to a business degree, Judy's heart led her to switch to a PE program during her education at the University of California, Berkeley. Returning to Victoria, she graduated with an Honours Education degree from UVic before joining SMUS, driven by aspirations to enhance the school's sports program and engage in extracurricular activities.

Judy's influence extended beyond the gym; she championed a varied sports program, particularly for female students, and promoted the role of women in athletics. Her dedication to experiential learning saw her chaperone numerous outdoor education trips, providing students with opportunities to challenge themselves



through activities like surfing, scuba diving, and rock climbing.

Her involvement in international Spring Break trips to places like Kenya and India showcased her commitment to making a difference. Judy emphasized the impact of such experiences on students, offering them a first taste of contributing positively to the world.

Additionally, Judy introduced a glass fusing boot camp, combining art and technical skills, which allowed students to see her in a different light outside her usual role.

As she embraces retirement, Judy looks forward to exploring her passion for glass art, pursuing stained glass and welding. She anticipates a slower pace, intending to engage in personal fitness and take up welding courses.

Reflecting on her time at SMUS, Judy cherished the vibrant community, enthusiastic students, and supportive colleagues. Her ultimate hope is that her students carry forward the knowledge, skills, and confidence to lead healthy lives, continuing their love for physical activity beyond their school years.



Kathleen Cook | 30 years

Originally from Saskatchewan, Kathleen and her husband, Kevin, joined SMUS in 1991, drawn by its values and educational passion. Kathleen's diverse roles included Senior Houseparent, Director of Residence, and Assistant Director of the Junior School. Her commitment to admissions ensured a welcoming environment, striving to make families feel supported and excited about joining the school community.

Focused on the child at the core, Kathleen aimed for every student's success. Her dedication extended beyond administrative duties, encompassing support, encouragement, and leadership initiatives like the Leadership Assembly Program.

Her influence wasn't confined to the Junior School; Kathleen and Kevin chaperoned service trips to various countries, emphasizing the importance of leadership and service in making a positive impact globally.

Proud of SMUS's embrace of the Reggio Emilia approach, Kathleen highlighted the school's progressive, innovative, child-

centred environment. Her family's strong ties to SMUS mirrored the school's supportive community; her children, Nicole and John, became SMUS Lifers, while Stephanie benefited greatly from the school's resources.

As Kathleen embarks on retirement, her excitement for the future resonates. While eager for travel, volunteering, and reading with Kindergarteners, her primary focus is showering love on her grandbaby, Rhys. Kathleen acknowledges the invaluable experiences at SMUS and expresses gratitude for the inspiring colleagues, particularly Becky Anderson, with whom she partnered.

With her eyes lighting up at the sight of Rhys playing outside, Kathleen eagerly anticipates a new phase of life filled with choices. Her desire to support her daughter's family echoes the support she provided to countless students during her illustrious tenure at SMUS. As she embraces this new chapter, Kathleen is forever grateful for the wisdom and lessons learned from the children she's had the privilege to guide.



Diana Leggatt | 29 years

Diana Leggatt's nearly three-decade tenure at SMUS as Controller was a role she embraced from the start, recognizing it as her ideal job. Raised in Victoria with a natural affinity for math, her early exposure to accounting in high school courses sparked her career interest. She swiftly excelled at Camosun College, leading her to join KPMG, an international accounting firm, where she completed her CPA.

In 1994, opportunity came knocking when SMUS needed someone to oversee their annual audit. Diana's three-month contract to organize the audit quickly turned into a permanent position. She found her niche, aiming to own a role that allowed her to support the diverse needs of an organization, steering her away from the broader experiences at KPMG.

As SMUS's Controller, Diana adeptly managed the school's finances, witnessing remarkable transformations within the institution over her tenure. She played a pivotal role in navigating drastic changes, including significant fundraising growth, a substantial increase in student enrollment, and the establishment of bodies like American Friends of St. Michaels University School Inc. and the Vivat Foundation.

Beyond her professional contribution, Diana had a personal connection to SMUS as a parent. Both her sons attended the school, offering her a unique perspective on the institution's workings from a parental viewpoint, further strengthening her ties to the community.

After 29 fulfilling years, Diana retires alongside her husband, Peter, eager to savour a slower pace of life. Their plans involve tending to their 1913 property, engaging in house projects, relishing outdoor activities, and catching up on their reading lists. They cherish the prospect of travel, including a trip to Italy and exploring various parts of Vancouver Island. For Diana, retirement signifies a welcomed sense of freedom and the opportunity to enjoy life's simple pleasures.

Peter Leggatt | 28 years

Over the course of 28 years at SMUS, Peter Leggatt has become a revered figure, known not just for teaching chemistry but for his contagious humour, relaxed approach, and a deep commitment to nurturing genuine relationships with his students.

Peter's journey to SMUS wasn't straightforward. Initially drawn to marine biology, he soon discovered his true passion lay in education. After a stint in the public school system, an unexpected opportunity emerged at SMUS, altering the trajectory of his career.

Joining SMUS in the mid-90s, Peter's teaching role extended far beyond the boundaries of the classroom. While his expertise lay in chemistry, his impact reverberated throughout the school. He coached soccer teams, achieving significant victories, and became an integral part of the theatre department. Utilizing his woodworking skills, he crafted intricate set pieces for SMUS productions, including the elaborate backdrops for *My Fair Lady* and *Fiddler on the Roof*.

However, what truly set SMUS apart for Peter was the enduring sense of community. Alumni, former faculty, and the current SMUS cohort all coalesced into an unbreakable network. This tight-knit atmosphere, complemented by the support and resources afforded by the school, made SMUS a unique and welcoming place for Peter to flourish in his career.

Retirement beckons for Peter and his wife, Diana, signalling a shift toward a more leisurely lifestyle. Their plans include a return to hobbies long set aside, such as woodworking, golfing, and fly fishing. With a 1913 house featuring ancient apple trees, the Leggatts anticipate immersing themselves in home projects. Yet, beyond these aspirations, the true focus lies on relishing time with family and cherishing the profound connections fostered during their time at SMUS.

Jerome Foenander | 18 years

Jerome Foenander’s 18-year tenure at SMUS was underpinned by a simple ethos: kindness and respect for all. His classroom wasn’t just a space for learning; it was a haven where students felt heard, engaging in discussions while upholding a firm code of respect for everyone.

Hailing from Australia, Jerome initially aspired to a journalism career but found his calling in teaching, encouraged by his remarkable rapport with children during his coaching years. He arrived at SMUS on a short-term contract for Physical Education, later transitioning to teaching English and Humanities in the Middle School, where he passionately blended his love for literature with his zeal for sports.

Jerome cherished building relationships and trust with his students, emphasizing the value of nurturing both their intellectual and physical faculties. His transition to teaching English in the Senior School was an opportunity to delve deeper into literature, a subject close to his heart.



Grateful for SMUS’s library expansion into Indigenous narratives, Jerome embraced the school’s rich cultural tapestry. His transition to the Senior School reconnected him with students he’d known since Grade 6, culminating in a heartfelt tribute when they requested him to deliver the graduation speech.

Family holds immense importance for Jerome, reflected in his son’s education at SMUS due to the school’s nurturing environment. With his youngest son’s graduation aligning with his own retirement, Jerome plans a meaningful trip to Australia, revisiting his roots and creating lasting memories.

Though stepping into a new role as a tutor, Jerome fondly reflects on his teaching career, citing the invaluable friendships and cherished moments at SMUS. As he embarks on this new chapter, Jerome’s love for teaching remains unwavering, ensuring his legacy of kindness and respect endures beyond his tenure at SMUS.



Peter Butterfield | 14 years

Peter Butterfield dedicated 14 years of unparalleled commitment, vast experience, and a profound regard for students to St. Michaels University School. Despite a transient upbringing due to his father’s Navy career, Victoria remained his hometown. His journey from a professional singer and performer to a teacher converged perfectly when he joined SMUS in 2009.

The decision to transition into teaching stemmed naturally from his musical career, enabling him to impart performance techniques and stylistic nuances. Engulfed in the musical realm at SMUS, Peter took charge of choir instruction, organized chapel music, sponsored the Piano Club, and directed some of the school’s musical theatre productions. Notably, he sustained the theatre program during the COVID-19 peak, staging performances of “21 Chump Street” with a devoted group of students.

Peter’s influence extended beyond music, orchestrating European tours and fostering an exchange program with Ahousaht High School, bringing diverse cultural exchanges for SMUS students. His unwavering dedication to enriching student experiences, whether as a houseparent, educator, or European tour guide, remained a hallmark of his career.

Post-retirement, Peter’s schedule remains packed, balancing his roles as a conductor for the Victoria Philharmonic Choir, revisiting his piano skills after years, tending to his garden, refurbishing a 1971 MGB, and frequent trips to Italy. Despite these ventures, Peter acknowledges missing the exceptional environment, friendships, and, most importantly, the students at SMUS. Reflecting on his time, he fondly remembers the school’s uniqueness, signalling the end of a remarkable chapter in his life.



Leanne Wilkins | 12 years

Leanne Wilkins, an art teacher at SMUS for 12 years, championed bravery in her students' creative pursuits. In the Middle School, she introduced a diverse range of artistic styles, relishing the energetic and transformative atmosphere of teaching adolescents.

Her most fulfilling moments were witnessing students' breakthroughs—those who initially doubted their artistic abilities eventually found pride in their work.

Leanne's journey into teaching arose from a varied career background, and her pivot to education stemmed from a desire to infuse more art into her life.

At SMUS, she emphasized the importance of exposing students to diverse creative avenues, believing it crucial to allow exploration in various artistic mediums like music, choir, and visual arts.

Her legacy includes innovative projects like the Legacy Art squares—a mosaic of individual tiles revealing a collective masterpiece during closing ceremonies.

Leanne bids adieu to SMUS, looking forward to a relaxing summer at home—painting on the sundeck and enjoying golf. Her hopes for a European tour hinge on the world's situation.

Leanne leaves behind a legacy of courage, creativity, and exploration, reflecting the essence of artistic passion and its transformative impact.



Jennifer Fisher | 12 years

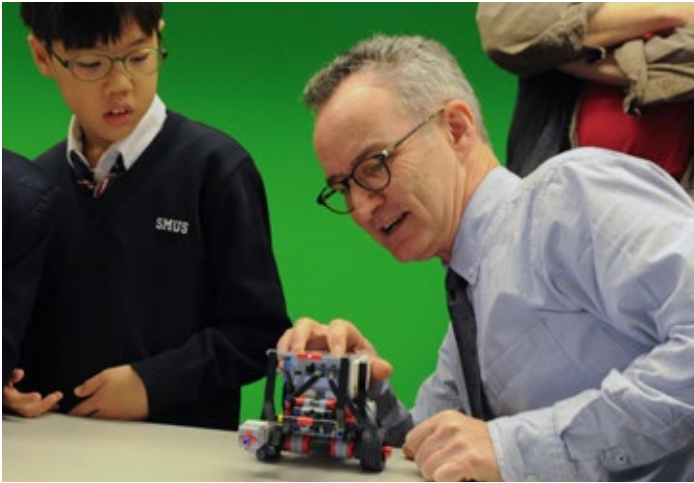
Jennifer Fisher, immersed in music since childhood, dedicated 12 years to nurturing young musicians at SMUS. Starting violin at age three, she became a crucial part of Victoria's music scene.

Driven by her daughter's interest in strings, Jennifer filled the void in string education. At SMUS, she passionately led the strings program in Junior and Middle School, relishing the thrill of introducing beginners to the musical world.

Motivating students to practice effectively was her challenge, but she found joy in their shared accomplishments after mastering a piece.

Leaving SMUS, Jennifer looks forward to a more relaxed schedule, prioritizing family time and travel while occasionally returning as a substitute. Her tenure at SMUS left her grateful for its collaborative environment, professional growth opportunities, and the joy of creating music together.

Her lasting hope is to have instilled in her students a love for music and the fulfillment of collaborative achievement—a legacy she wishes they carry forward.



Peter Steed | 8 years

Peter Steed's journey to SMUS came full circle after two decades of longing to join the community. Initially drawn to BC's beauty, Peter shifted from architecture to education, spending 15 years in Victoria's public school system. The allure of SMUS persisted, and he finally secured a role eight years ago.

His arrival heralded a revival of the computer science program, expanding it from a single course to multiple offerings across Grades 10-12. Reflecting on his tenure, Peter finds pride in shaping a robust computer science education. He cherishes the diverse, talented students, envisioning future leaders among them.

Retirement signals a newfound freedom for Peter, brimming with crossword puzzles and travel plans outside traditional breaks. Embracing the Island's beauty, he's eager for leisurely pursuits and the joy of witnessing fall's colourful spectacle after a quarter-century away.



Chris Linn | 7 years

Christopher Linn dedicated seven years to overseeing and organizing sports at the Senior School, excelling as both a rugby coach and Assistant to the Director of Athletics. Responsible for logistical planning, he managed administrative support for competitive teams, accommodation, meals, and intramural programs for boarding students not in competitive sports.

Chris's journey at SMUS began during university through a co-op program. His passion for coaching rugby led him to join SMUS as an intern, where he learned administrative ropes and immersed himself in rugby coaching. The inclusive nature of rugby and SMUS's community spirit deeply resonated with him, leading to his continued dedication.

Memorable highlights included coaching the Junior and Senior Rugby teams on their trip to Australia and fostering connections within SMUS's supportive environment. Relocating to Boston, he aims to continue his rugby coaching career, inspired by influential coaches and family tradition. Chris fondly reflects on his time at SMUS, cherishing the supportive community and impactful experiences.

Shona Lazin | 6 years

Shona Lazin found a home at SMUS Junior School, reminiscent of UK schools, upon moving to Vancouver Island. With a teaching career spanning Edmonton and a hiatus to raise children, she felt drawn back to teaching. Joining SMUS as a Kindergarten Associate Teacher, she embraced the small class sizes and collaborative teaching approach.

Over six years, Shona became a beloved figure, cherishing the enthusiasm of Kindergarteners discovering the world. Engaged in the school's community spirit, she supported Grade 5 students in annual musicals, relishing the chance to reconnect with former students.

Community at SMUS left a lasting impression on Shona, fostering friendships and support. Though retiring, she leaves the door open for occasional teaching and volunteering. Balancing retirement, she plans to assist her husband's law practice and explore hobbies like watercolour painting, reading, and gardening. Excited about flexible travel outside school holidays, her upcoming plans include a trip to New York and welcoming a new puppy in the fall.



Paula Rennie | 5 years

Paula Rennie, with a lifelong passion for working with children, found her calling in Learning Support at the Junior School. Her 35-year career spanned both regular and special education, leading her to SMUS in 2017. She first covered a maternity leave, then spent two years as an Associate Teacher in Grade 1, a role that invigorated her. Eventually, she transitioned to Learning Support, relishing the individualized connections with students and families, focusing on their strengths and fostering self-advocacy.

Paula's approach emphasized building relationships with students alongside academic assessments, believing in the power of connections. Students cherished their time with her, seeking opportunities to read and engage. Grateful for her time at SMUS, Paula enters retirement with gratitude, eager for cycling, hiking, tutoring, and relishing relaxed mornings. She reflects warmly on the meaningful experiences and opportunities she found at the school.



To learn more about the impact and interests of our 2022 and 2023 retirees, read the full-length stories at smus.ca/retirees22-23

Alumni Updates



Mike Smith '10 and his wife Jorden were married in August, 2022 and also welcomed their daughter, Reverie.



Bhupinder Dalku '09 and Harjot Bhandal were married in May, 2022 in Hamilton, Ontario.



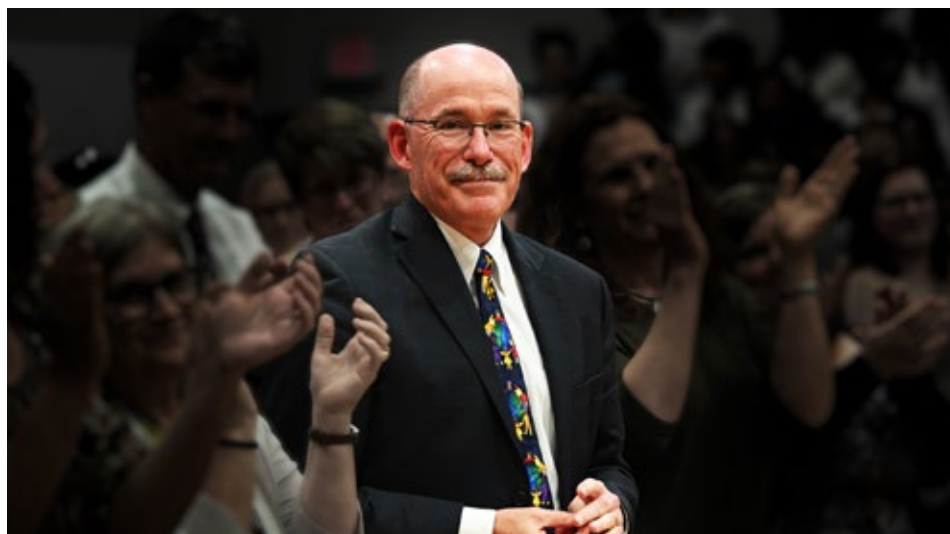
Charlie White '14 and **Josef Svorkdal '13** were married in July, 2022. Other SMUS alumni in attendance were (from left to right) **Dayna Fitzgerald '14**, **Ryley Erickson '13**, **Chloe White '17**, **Stephanie Wong-Harrison '14**, **Sage Friswell '15**, **Olivia Sorley '14**, and **Mickey Aylard Todd '11** (with her son Campbell).



Danny Wu '14 is promoting his most recent directorial venture with his film, “American: An Odyssey to 1947”. The film is currently on an Oscar Qualifying festival tour, premiering most recently at the prestigious Thessaloniki Documentary Festival, and the It’s All True Documentary Festival. It was also named one of Jonathan Rosenbaum’s top films of 2022. Danny saw success with his debut film, an investigative documentary called “Square One: Michael Jackson”.



Lauren Nijjer (Kullar) '09 and her husband Jordan welcomed their beautiful daughter, Naomi, into their family on March 28, 2022 in Richmond BC. Naomi already loves the outdoors and loves to explore their neighbourhood of Steveston, BC.



Andy Rodford *Past staff/faculty*

After 30 years in education and experiential learning, as a Head of School, Deputy Head, Director of Admissions and Advancement, teacher and director of a large outdoor education centre and summer camp, Andy has founded Venture Gained Consulting Inc. He will work closely with public, private and not-for-profit administrators and business leaders to develop tailored solutions to address their unique needs and challenges.



Bill Buckingham *Past Staff/Faculty/Alumni parent*

A noteworthy update on the activities of former staff members and alumni parents may capture the curiosity of those wondering about their current pursuits. Aligned with the motto of “Mens Sana In Corpore Sano,” there is a small group pursuing the sport of outrigger canoe racing.

The outrigger canoes, originating from the islands of the South Pacific, have gained substantial popularity across the Pacific region, Europe, and other parts of the world. The contemporary 6-person racing canoe, measuring 45 feet in length and 19 inches in width, features a supporting pontoon on the port side. Races are conducted not only with these six-person canoes but also with one-person versions of the same type.

Annually, a World Championship is organized for these canoe races, alternating between sprint and distance courses each year. In the previous year, the sprint races took place in London, England, at a prominent rowing venue. Subsequently, the distance races occurred on the island of Samoa, situated in the South Pacific near Fiji.

An attempt was made to join the Canadian National Team in the 70+ division, and Bill Buckingham, former staff member successfully secured a spot. The age categories for this event span under 19, open, 40+, 50+, 60+, 70+, 75+, and 80+, offering inspiration to older athletes.

The competition featured participants from 27 countries, totalling almost a thousand athletes. The Canadian team, consisting of 65 members, achieved notable success, securing a 4th position in the medal standings. With great work, they were surpassed only by New Zealand, Tahiti, and Hawai'i, outperforming formidable contenders like Australia, the US, and Great Britain. In the 16 km race, the 70+ team earned a bronze medal, navigating challenging conditions characterized by sauna-like temperatures (30°C with high humidity, making it feel like 38°C). A fierce competition with the Hawai'ian crew ensued throughout the race, with the Canadian team ultimately emerging victorious.



Genna Purcell '10 recently opened an Italian food store in Cordova Bay. Gigi's Italian & Specialty Foods carries a large selection of imported, Canadian and local specialty items, with a focus on Italian cuisine. A curated selection of Italian and specialty meats, cheeses, grocery items, hostess gifts, and knick-knacks for the home will be available. At Gigi's you'll find your favourite pastas, olive oils, balsamic vinegars, and specialty items. Treats for everyday and special occasions with traditional seasonal items enjoyed by many for the holiday seasons.



U SPORTS recently awarded alumna and first-year UVic student, **Rebecca Stone '23**, with top honours as Field Hockey Rookie of the Year.



Justin Tse '15 was recently awarded Youth Entrepreneur of the Year (YEY 2023) in the area of Media and Marketing.



Nicole Bunyan '11 picked up valuable hardware for Team Canada at the recent Pan Am Games in Santiago, Chile. “Fantastic week here for Canada, both on the men’s and women’s sides,” shared Nicole Bunyan, who earned two Silver medals at these Games: one in the Mixed Doubles and one in the Women’s Team event.



Congratulations to alumnus **Byng Giraud '85** who was granted the Order of British Columbia this past August. Byng, commended for aiding First Nations in economic progress, is one of 14 individuals in British Columbia honoured with the provinces’ top recognition. The provincial government, in its announcement, acknowledged Giraud’s role in helping facilitate over \$1 billion in partnerships for First Nations. The Order of BC investiture ceremony for 2023 was at Government House in Victoria.

Passages

John G. Myers '50 (University School)



With fond memories of his easygoing nature and wit, we mourn the loss and celebrate the lasting impact of a beloved professor and friend, John G. Myers. Born in Vancouver, British Columbia, John attended University School and then went on to become a cherished faculty leader at the Haas School of Business (Berkeley). Myers' love of teaching and technology inspired the first Haas computer lab. His dedication, warmth, and expertise in consumer behaviour made him an invaluable mentor to generations of students. John became a pioneering behavioural scientist in marketing, authoring influential works and serving as a dedicated community builder. His passion for creating a sense of belonging touched countless lives.

Craig Doupe '51 (University School)

A beloved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, and friend, Craig will be fondly remembered for his unwavering devotion and zest for life.

From his service in the U.S. Army to his distinguished career in law, Craig's passion for justice was as evident as his love for Husky football. His retirement opened a new chapter of service, where he selflessly took up volunteering, leaving an indelible mark on various organizations.

An adventurer at heart, Craig cherished every moment with his devoted wife, Rosemary, exploring the outdoors and embracing life's many wonders. His love and generosity continue to inspire his family, and he will be deeply missed by all.

Ian Tyson '51 (University School)

Known across the country for his iconic song *Four Strong Winds*, a cherished anthem symbolizing the Canadian spirit, Ian Tyson was a beloved folk and country music legend. His musical journey spanned from childhood spent in Victoria to adulthood as a celebrated artist captivating hearts and souls nationwide.



On the Greenwich Village scene, Ian and Sylvia's harmonies touched countless lives. Performing as a solo artist, Ian continued to captivate audiences with his melodies embracing themes of cowboys and love lost. His musical contributions earned him the Canadian Order of Merit, a testament to his enduring legacy.

May his memory be as timeless as his music.

Duncan Mathieson '54

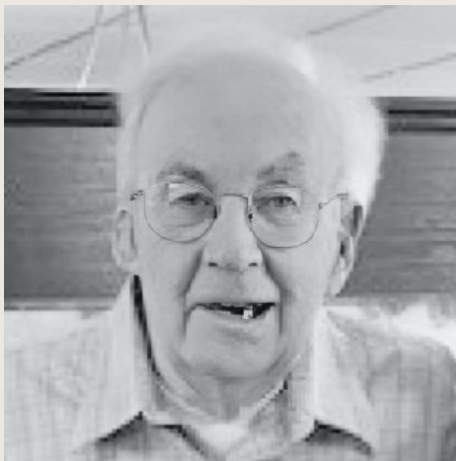
Duncan attended University School and went on to Collège Militaire Royal in Saint-Jean, Quebec.

During his distinguished career with the Royal Canadian Navy, Duncan and his family journeyed many places. Once retired, Duncan became an active member of the Navy League of Canada and the Naval Officers Association of Canada.

Along with his loving wife, Sarah, Duncan settled on Salt Spring Island where he immersed himself in the community and touched many lives.

Duncan's daughters remember him fondly as the fixer of anything and their partner and friend in countless adventures. His kindness will be remembered and shared by all who knew and loved him.

Leslie Gilbert '50 (University School)



Born in Peru, Leslie's family later settled in Coquitlam, BC. Following this, Leslie moved to Victoria and embarked on an educational journey at University School. While pursuing his passion for engineering, Leslie built a successful career with Canada Public Works and the Ministry of Highways before retiring in 1988 after 30 years of dedicated service. One of Leslie's most memorable contributions during his career is his work on the well-known Coquihalla Highway.

Leslie's legacy lives on through his beloved family.

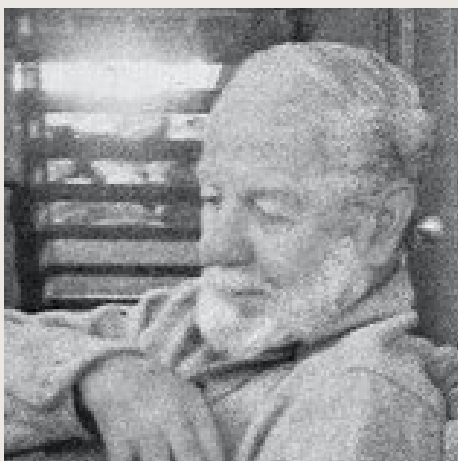
Larry Devlin '59



We mourn the passing of Dr. Larry Devlin, a dedicated educator and beloved leader. Born in Powell River, BC, Larry found his academic calling at University School before embarking on a remarkable journey of learning and teaching. His many achievements spanned from being the first student council president at the University of Victoria to earning a PhD in Adult Education at The University of Chicago. He was a valuable member of both our SMUS Board of Governors and Alumni Association board.

Dr. Devlin returned to Victoria in 1969, where he played a pivotal role in establishing the Division of Continuing Studies. Larry was a kind leader, a respected teacher, and a passionate pianist, and leaves a profound legacy of love that will continue to foster lifelong learning and inspire countless students.

Gerald 'Jerry' Forrester '59 (University School)



As a young man, Jerry served with dedication in Princess Mary's Scottish Regiment. Jerry's life was filled with remarkable achievements, including his

role as an Inspector and Adjudicator for the Washington State Department of Labor & Industries, and as a past Battalion Chief for the Lake Bay Fire Department.

Jerry cherished his passions for dogs, children, fishing, and sharing laughter with his infamous, albeit terrible, jokes. He found joy in the simplest of pleasures—antique tractor shows, hardware stores, and garage sales in his hometown of Vaughn. Jerry's warmth extended far beyond his family to countless nieces and nephews, whether related by blood or heart, who knew him affectionately as "Uncle Jerry".

James Longridge '60 (St. Michael's School)



James Michael Longridge, a beloved teacher, mentor, and friend, passed away on November 29, 2021, leaving behind a legacy of compassion and wisdom. Born in Exeter, England, he embraced sports and education, excelling in cricket, field hockey, and golf. A devoted husband to Louise and father to Michael and Sara, James dedicated his life to fostering a love of learning in young minds throughout his role as principal at various high schools. His leadership, fairness, and sense of fun endeared him to students and colleagues alike. James's boundless curiosity and wit radiated through his love of art, aircraft, and stamp collecting. He will be deeply missed.

Robert 'Bob' Kelley '65 (University School)

Bob attended University School in the early 1960s. He was well liked by his classmates and teachers and remained lifelong friends with many of them. Of note, he kept a close friendship with Rob Wilson, enjoying annual duck-hunting excursions and Rugby Sevens tournaments in Las Vegas (despite his dislike of flying.) Bob built a

long and successful career in the Insurance sector, often referred to as a 'giant' of the industry. We are grateful that Bob remained connected with the School through the years and he will be greatly missed by the SMUS community.

Donald Blosser '68 (University School)



Born in Victoria, Donald's resilience and strength, along with his parents' unwavering dedication, helped him overcome severe asthma and allergies during his early years. Donald attended St. Michael's School with the support of his parents, an experience for which he remained forever grateful.

Don pursued a dynamic variety of paths throughout his life spanning from the music industry to the oilfield. He left a lasting impact on the dispatch operations of Schlumberger where his innovative contributions revolutionized wireline dispatch, garnering the admiration and friendship of colleagues worldwide.

Don's love for music and driving together created cherished memories during long family vacations.

His love, generosity, and leadership is treasured by all who knew him.

Justin Meeker '70 (University School)

At the age of 72, Justin passed away peacefully at his home in Duncan, BC. Born alongside his identical twin Quentin, he grew up with a loving family, spending cherished moments at their home in Lindell Beach. Among other notable contributions throughout his time at the school, Justin led the rugby team and served as Head Prefect. Justin found his true passion in the study of Canadian history, majoring in the subject at the University of Victoria. He devoted his



life to his family and friends and enjoyed staying active with sports, hobbies, and gardening. Justin was a devoted father, and a dear friend.

Brian Cameron '71
(St. Michael's School)

Brian Cameron, a beloved husband, devoted father, and cherished grandfather, peacefully left us on September 12, 2022, at his Victoria home. Raised in Victoria, he flourished at St. Michael's School and Oak Bay High before studying Agriculture at the University of British Columbia. In 1981, Brian founded Pastiche Productions, leaving a legacy of award-winning video communications.



Brian's life was a tapestry of passions - from books to flying planes - each pursued with focus. A dedicated scuba diver, avid fisherman, and skilled golfer, he shared these joys with his family. Brian embraced camaraderie and was affectionately known as "Squito" at the Victoria Golf Club.

Through enduring love and support with Roslyn Goodall, Brian and Roslyn filled their lives with adventures and philanthropy. Roslyn, her sister, and his children dedicated

that same enduring love and support to caring for Brian during his illness, along with his compassionate medical staff. Survived by his siblings and family, Brian's memory lives on. Brian joins his loved ones in eternal peace; "Till we meet again."

Glen Mofford '73



We acknowledge with sadness the passing of writer and historian, Glen Mofford. Some of Glen's most recognized works explored BC's historic hotels and accompanying drinking establishments. His expansive work culminated in the engaging books: *Aqua Vitae: A History of the Saloons and Hotel Bars of Victoria, 1851-1917* (2016), and *Along the E&N: A Journey Back to the Historic Hotels of Vancouver Island* (2019). Most recently, his title *Room at the Inn: Historic Hotels of British Columbia's Southern Interior* was posthumously published by Heritage House in 2023. As our province's history lives on through these works, Glen's legacy will be remembered by the SMUS family.

Dennis Branson '75

Born in Victoria, Dennis always found solace in the ocean, boating, and the exciting



joys of scuba diving and sailing during his years at St. Michaels University School. Dennis followed in the footsteps of his father, Cecil Branson, who also attended the school (Class of '52).

In tribute to his adventurous spirit, Dennis' ashes will embark on one final journey, sailing from Salt Spring Island to the vast expanse of the Pacific Ocean.

Edward Cheung '75

Originally from Hong Kong, Edward's early years shaped him into the bold and fearless man we remember him as. In a momentously brave step, Edward moved to Canada paving the way for his family.

His entrepreneurial spirit drove him to establish a variety of successful ventures, from a hair and beauty supply business to a thriving real estate endeavour.



Fearless in his pursuit of success, Edward's determination and hard work were an inspiration. His unwavering commitment to providing for his family remains a cherished memory.

John 'Alex' Duby '81

With great sadness, we share the sudden passing from heart disease of John 'Alex' Duby. Although Alberta was Alex's first home, his many adventures carried him across Canada and the USA. Alex's love of rugby first bloomed at SMUS and his passion for the sport stayed with him through high school and beyond, playing recreationally in Calgary.

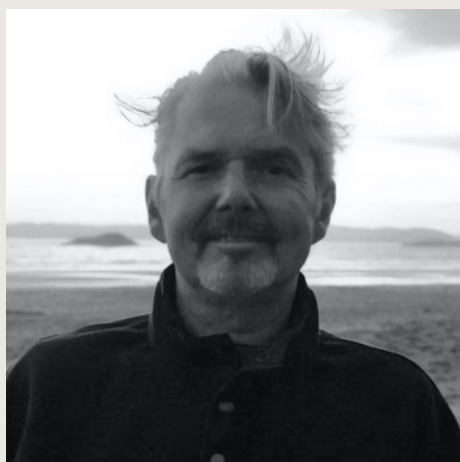
His many career paths reflected his adventurous spirit through pursuits such as obtaining a welding technology certificate, serving in the armed forces, and dedicating much of his career to the trucking industry where he delivered food across North America during the COVID-19 pandemic.



While health concerns redirected his path from some of his endeavours, such as exploring the possibility of scuba diving and underwater welding, Alex's passion, love for life, and unique character carried him through these challenges.

Martin Wilkinson '81

Martin Wilkinson passed away peacefully after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Martin was an extraordinary father and thoughtful friend. He could only be described as encouraging toward everyone and always filled with positivity. Martin was also an accomplished investment advisor, known and respected by many in the industry.



Throughout his life in Victoria, he built an incredible community of friends, family, and associates. The SMUS community, along with Martin's close-knit class of '81, will continue to remember and honour him each year during Alumni Weekend. 'Marty's Party' at the Bard, will carry forth the same enthusiastic spirit that Martin dedicated to organizing this event with every passing year.

Megan Jessiman '83

With heavy hearts, we remember Megan Jessiman, a brilliant mind and a loving soul who left an indelible mark on all who knew her. Born in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Megan's thirst for knowledge and love for reading were evident from an early age. She shone as a student, excelling academically while earning numerous honours including being SMUS Head Student. Her learning journey led to prestigious universities like Princeton, Yale and Columbia, where she pursued her passion for philosophy and psychiatry, ultimately earning both a PhD and MD.



However, Megan's proudest achievement by far was being a devoted mother to her daughter Katharine. Her love for life, her ability to find joy in simple pleasures, and her warmth endeared her to many. She treasured moments with family and friends, creating cherished traditions and celebrating life with infectious enthusiasm. She is deeply missed by her parents, Ian and Rae Jessiman, sister Stacey ('86), niece Alienor ('23) and nephew Pierre ('25).

The legacy of Megan's brilliance and optimism will forever shine.

Sussex Davis '89

Sussex entered SMUS in Grade 6. He not only excelled academically but found a community of friends with his natural ability to make all people feel welcome and accepted. Throughout his school years, he volunteered with various community organizations including Queen Alexandra Hospital.

Sussex had an impressive lifelong career with Power Measurement Limited and their corporate successor, Schneider Electric. For many years, he led their Latin American marketing and sales team. Sussex dedicated



himself to becoming fluent in Spanish and Portuguese, and spent much of his time in Latin America, making a host of friends and memories.

Although never a smoker, Sussex sadly died after a three-year struggle with lung cancer.

People came from around the world, including many of his '89 classmates, to attend his celebration of life. Sussex leaves behind his loving partner, Madleen, his mum and dad, and his sisters, Noelle ('93) and Genessa. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends, colleagues and the SMUS community.

Robert Duncan Fraser '91



With sadness, we acknowledge the passing of Robert Fraser. While born in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Robert journeyed here, to Victoria, BC to attend SMUS as a boarding student. His family and friends will miss him dearly and remember him always.

Ashley Cornwell '98



Ashley joined SMUS in Grade 4 in 1989 and went on to graduate from our school in 1998. She recently returned to the school as a dedicated and friendly library supervisor for the last five years. In her afternoons in the library, Ashley made connections with many of our boarding students studying in the library space during prep. She will be dearly missed by so many within our community.

Andrew Van Der Westhuizen '04

Andrew's journey began at St. Michaels University School in Grade 4, where he went on to become Head Boy, leaving an indelible mark on the hearts of his classmates. Andrew's exceptional talents and genuine spirit touched countless lives.

He was a devoted family man, role model, and mentor to all. He was especially treasured by his brother, Michael. Through his diverse talents in sports and music and an exuberant zest for life, Andrew was surrounded by an expansive community of friends. Andrew's compassion shone brightly during his career as a doctor.

Andrew embraced his love of nature and adventure with cherished family moments skiing at Sun Peaks and winter camping in Manning Park.

Andrew's resilience during his battle was inspiring and the kindness of his medical teams was deeply appreciated. We take comfort in knowing his loving heart beats on through the legacy of blood and organ donation.

A lion-hearted gentle giant, Andrew's memory lives on. His compassion, patience, and remarkable ability to connect with others will forever be cherished. The outpouring of support from around the world reminds us that he is gone but never forgotten.

Kixi Creek

Beatrice (Kixi) Creek passed away on November 6, 2022 in Comox, BC. Kixi was a longstanding member of our SMUS staff and faculty community, and together with her husband, Carey, she left an indelible mark on her colleagues and our students. She lived



her life full of purpose, compassion, and adventure. Her artistic abilities were limitless, and her sense of humour unforgettable. She will be deeply missed.

Brian Hallgarth

Brian found community and camaraderie with SMUS during his role as a groundskeeper and maintenance helper. He was a meticulous worker from start to finish and showed great pride in the school and community. Brian's presence at the lunch table was sure to bring great laughter and enthusiastic debates over his favourite team - the Vancouver Canucks.



His memory will forever be treasured as a caring partner, stepfather, brother, uncle, and cherished friend.

Stephen Martin



In 1993, Stephen and his wife Penny joined the SMUS community as parents to Andrew, Geoffrey, and Brian ('00, '02, and '05, respectively). During his long journey with the school, Stephen immersed himself in a myriad of roles, ultimately culminating in his position as Board of Governors Chair (1998-2008). In appreciation and recognition of his dedication and invaluable contributions to SMUS, he was awarded the *Vivat Award*, the school's highest honour, in 2007. Our thoughts are with his family as we mourn his loss. Stephen will be greatly missed and remembered always.

Sunny Pollard



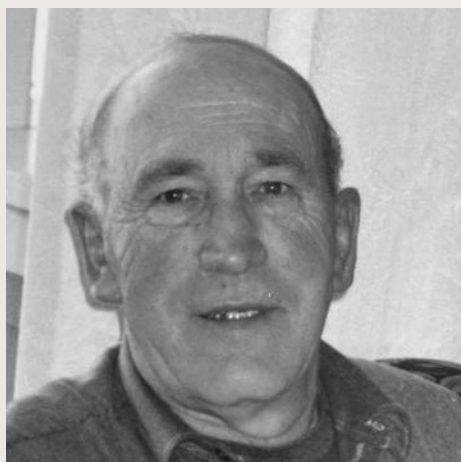
With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of Sunny Pollard, who passed away peacefully on November 14, 2022, after a valiant battle with dementia. Sunny joins her loving husband, Chris Pollard, who dearly departed in February 2021. Sunny is survived by her children Matt (Lesley) and Lindsey, her grandchildren Jessica and Eric, and former daughter-in-law Justine.

Family and friends will always remember Sunny's bright smile and happy disposition. A

lifelong lover of sports, arts, and music, Sunny built a legacy that shines through her work as a dedicated primary teacher at SMUS's Junior School for nearly three decades. Her passion for nurturing artistic young minds left a lasting impression on generations of students, instilling in them the power of creativity and a lifelong love of learning.

May her memory serve as a guiding light to the hearts she touched.

Erwin Presthofer



Erwin was the school carpenter, fixer of all things, and occasional groundskeeper from 1955 to 1997. For over 40 years, he immersed himself in the community. He knew and greeted all the students by name, and they, in turn, knew him. By all accounts, he was a comforting presence and a fixture on campus.

Anthony 'Tony' Quainton



Tony attended St. Michael's School from 1942 to 1944, and later moved into boarding at Phillip's Academy, in Andover, Massachusetts, from 1948 to 1951. From there, his post-secondary journey took him from Princeton University in New Jersey

across the Atlantic to Oxford in London. Tony had a distinguished diplomatic career. He lived in multiple cities around the globe and spoke an impressive array of languages namely: Hindi, French, Russian, and Spanish.

Tony's journey with SMUS from a nine-year-old boarder from Seattle to, most recently, an Advisory Governor with our Board of Governors made him an invaluable and cherished member of our community.

We are deeply saddened by Tony's recent passing. He leaves behind his wife, Susan Quainton (nee Long), three loving children, and nine beloved grandchildren. It would be difficult to capture and articulate the legacy that Tony has left at the school, but we take comfort in knowing his name will live on through the Quainton Family Music Room in our new Junior School Annex.





Welcome New Alumni

Above: Grad Class of 2022. Below: Grad Class of 2023.





Alumni Weekend

— — — — —
MAY 3-5, 2024

MARK YOUR CALENDARS. ALUMNI WEEKEND WILL BE HERE BEFORE YOU KNOW IT. BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY AND JOIN US ON OUR RICHMOND ROAD CAMPUS TO RECONNECT WITH OLD FRIENDS, MEET NEW ONES, AND SEE WHAT'S NEW. THERE WILL BE SOMETHING FOR ATTENDEES OF ALL AGES. WE CAN'T WAIT TO WELCOME YOU BACK!

MILESTONE REUNION CLASSES

DID YOU GRADUATE IN A YEAR THAT ENDS IN 4 OR 9? WHAT ABOUT 1979 OR EARLIER? WE HAVE SPECIAL EVENTS JUST FOR YOU, SO MAKE SURE YOU REGISTER! [SMUS.CA/ALUMNI/EVENTS](https://smus.ca/alumni/events)

If you would like help planning your reunion please reach out to Denise Rees at denise.rees@smus.ca

If undeliverable, return to

**St. Michaels University School
3400 Richmond Road
Victoria BC, CANADA V8P 4P5**

