

Good-Bye, Mr. Morgan

I want to thank everyone for your

kind words and deeds during my departure from Bright School. The memories from my 17 years with you are filled with children singing on stage, bounding out of their cars each morning, engaging actively in their classrooms, running and swinging on the playgrounds, reading quietly in the library, rolling frantically around the gym in the scooter races, cheering for each other in the talent show, reading for a million minutes, waiting excitedly for our flights to countries around the world...I could go on and on and on. The spirit of Bright School seen in the eyes and heard in the voices of children is what I will carry close to my heart in the years ahead. What an incredible and life-affirming gift they have given me over the years! I will cherish these memories the rest of my life.



But now it is time for Bright School to look to its future. It is poised to build upon its strong foundation and to continue giving children the joy of learning that will enrich their lives forever. And the best way to begin this next phase of the school's journey is to

welcome Kristin Watts in her new role as Head of School. I have no doubt you will share with her the same love and acceptance you so freely gave to me. The strength and success of a school community depends so much on the way we treat one another, the patience and understanding we bring to every conversation, and the grace we offer to everyone who cares about Bright School and its mission.

Finally, I ask that you stay in touch. One of my greatest joys in the future will be hearing about our wonderful students and the lives they build upon the foundation laid during their Bright School years.

With much love, O.J. Morgan Head of School, 2004-2021



I am so excited to be at Bright School! I have spent my first month on

campus getting to know the administrative staff and faculty better, meeting with Board of Trustees members, observing facility renovations, enjoying the sounds of campers playing during Bright Days, and preparing for the start of the school year. I cannot wait to welcome our full faculty on August 16 and see all of our students and parents arrive later that week.

My transition would not have been as smooth without the thoughtful guidance of O.J. Morgan, and I am truly thankful for his enthusiasm and support for my arrival. I feel very welcomed by the faculty, staff and board, and I appreciate their help moving into this new role.



One of my first priorities is building relationships within the entire Bright School community. I am committed to meeting each and every student and welcoming each by their names as I open the car doors in the morning, watch them going to lunch, and talking to them in the hallways and classrooms. I look forward to meeting every parent during events at school or out around town.

Bright School is a very special place, and I am truly honored and humbled to carry on its mission of providing a nurturing and loving environment for children to learn and grow.

Sincerely. Kristin B. Watts Head of School





For alumni, parents and friends of The Bright School







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Where They're Headed for College

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ON THE COVER

Head of School O.J. Morgan spent the night on the roof of the school on April 22, 2021, as a reward for students and their families reading one million minutes. The reading challenge took seven weeks to complete, and Mr. Morgan did actually stay on the roof overnight. Photo by Med Dement.

The Bright School does not discriminate on the basis of gender, age, race, color, creed, religion, disability, ethnicity, national origin or sexual orientation in the administration of its educational policies, admissions practices, financial aid decisions or other school programs and activities.

Bright Star Editor Elizabeth A. Davis '86

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BRIGHTBRIEFS











Costume Spirit

Students were allowed to wear costumes to school for Halloween this year, a break from the more recent custom of wearing Halloween t-shirts and accessories with uniforms. Students and teachers enjoyed dressing up while already wearing masks. 1. Emily Hon (right) and her PK class with assistant Denalyn Lindsey are all dressed up.

Mars Generation

Katie Shirley's kindergarten class met astronaut Don Thomas via Zoom and learned about his journeys to space. Dr. Thomas went on four Space Shuttle missions, the last in 1997. In all, he has traveled around the Earth more than 600 times. There are plans to send people to Mars in 25 years, and that means students in kindergarten today will be just the right age when that time comes. He encouraged "Mars Generation" students to learn more about space and aspire to be astronauts when they grow up. 2. Kindergarten teacher Katie Shirley (right) and assistant Hannah Layton give a thumbs up with Astronaut Don Thomas on the screen behind them via Zoom

Spelling Is I-n-t-o-x-i-c-a-t-i-n-g

The annual school competition for the Scripps National Spelling was held in January but changed slightly to follow social distancing protocols. Only the 45 fourth and fifth grade participants attended the bee in the Centennial Theater, and they were distanced throughout the audience seats. They could remove their masks to spell the words into the microphone in front of the stage. Fourth grader Anna Zmaj correctly spelled "intoxicating" in the tenth round to win the bee. Second place was fourth grader Pei-Ying Olsen, and third place was fifth grader Patrick Rice. 3. The top finishers Patrick Rice, Pei-Ying Olsen and Anna Zmaj with Mr. Morgan, who read aloud each word to the spellers.

Celebrating Cultures

The pandemic did not keep students from learning about different cultures and the way people celebrate holidays across the world and in our community. Kindergarten teacher Sonal Patel dressed in a sari and talked to students about Diwali, the Festival of Lights in India in November. They learned a dance with sticks and took home candles to represent the diyas used in celebrations. Fifth grade teacher Allie Hyer brought a menorah to school during Hanukkah and let students light it each day. The students played dreidel during her class. 4. Sonal Patel teaches Jasper Stone a dance for Diwali in her kindergarten classroom.

Community Service

When there is a need, Bright School rises to the challenge! Students collected unused Halloween candy and donated it to Hamilton County EMS to be distributed to front-line emergency workers. At Christmas, Sissy and William Oehmig and their family coordinated a donation drive for the Cheer Cart at Children's Hospital at Erlanger, and students took home a gingerbread house to decorate. For Valentine's Day, students made cards for residents at a nursing home after music teacher Cindy Beirne heard the residents there were having to isolate in their rooms because of the pandemic. Students made 131 cards for the 53 residents. Students also wrote letters to active military troops stationed in Japan for Veterans Day and collected coats for children and families in the community. 6. First graders Ava Taslimi and Mason Chaudhari help load candy into the EMS vehicle with Sgt. Chris Dill and school counselor Rachel Blanton. 7. Students in MacKenzie O'Neal's second grade class made Valentines for residents at a nursing home. 8. Fifth graders William and Sissy Oehmig with Santa and Mr. Morgan in front of the items donated to the Cheer Cart at Children's Hospital at Erlanger.

Outdoor High Jump

The 44th Bright School High Jump moved outdoors this year on the GMAC track after not being held last year due to COVID-19. Students in grades 3-5 competed. Third and fourth graders had to qualify by clearing 3 feet, 4 inches in P.E. class, and fifth graders could compete without qualifying. Catherine Curtis cleared 4 feet, 3 inches as the top girl. Banks Born, who was the top jumper two years ago as a third grader, cleared 4 feet, 6 inches as the top boy this year.

9. The top jumpers were fifth graders Banks Born and Catherine Curtis.

10. Fifth grader Ari Soss clears the bar.















5. Allie Hyer watches fifth grader Allison Crenshaw light the menorah.

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GRADUATION

Congratulations to the Class of 2021!



Fifth graders have their picture taken in front of the school on graduation day.

The 47 members of the Class of 2021 officially became alumni on May 28. Graduation was held outdoors on the field with families sitting at tables spread across the field. Students played hand bells and recorders. The celebration of the class also included honoring Mr. Morgan, who retired at the end of June following 17 years at Bright. Brooks McKenna, Sunjay Ravinder and Charlotte Hoss presented the class gift, Mr. Morgan's Country Garden, a landscaping project they completed outside the classrooms. Christopher Gordon and Addison Boehm unveiled a portrait of Mr. Morgan that was presented by Board Chair Austin Center '85. Third grade teacher Cindy Womack read a poem she wrote in honor of Mr. Morgan, who was the graduation speaker.



Families and graduates enjoyed the ceremony despite the somewhat windy conditions and near miss of a thunderstorm that hit downtown at the same time.



Parents, trustees and staff who are Bright alumni hand diplomas to their children at graduation. Kamri Busby '01 smiles with her daughter, Londyn.

RECOGNITION DAY



Twenty-nine fifth graders earned the President's Education Excellence Award. Bottom row, left to right: Stone Caputo, Patrick Rice, William Oehmig, Ari Soss, Grey Mullins, Caroline Trainor, Margaret Daniel, Meg Finger, Ann Boehm, Helen Kates, Lela Kate Sorrow, Nina Lail, Charlotte Hoss and Jack Houghton. Top row: Zoe Robinson, Addison Boehm, Thomas Gillenwater, Anderson Golden, Catherine Curtis, Addie Cannon, Thomas Anderson, Luke Sawrie, John Robbins, Henry Forrester, Sunjay Ravinder, Luke Mouw, Brooks McKenna, Quinn Davenport and Samantha George.

Mary Kilbride presented the Benjamin Kilbride Scholarship to fourth grader Charlie Scearce.





Austin Center
'85 presented the
Center Community
Service Award to
Carter Witt.



Addison Boehm won the Daughters of the American Revolution Citizenship Award, which was presented by DAR regent Linda Mines.



Meg Finger won the DAR History Award.



Erin Worthington '95 presented the Helen Murray Geography Award to Thomas Anderson.

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CITIZEN OF WORLD

Mr. Morgan with Lauren Yim '14

Lauren Yim '14

auren Yim tutors inner-city children and helps collect items for local food kitchens at her school. Because of her dedication to helping others, she was named the 2021 Citizen of the World, an award for young alumni.

The Citizen of the World Award recognizes alumni who are fulfilling the school's mission: "The Bright School builds a foundation upon which students become wise and compassionate citizens of the world. Its century of progress fosters the intellectual, artistic, physical, and moral growth of young boys and girls.'

To be eligible for the award, alumni must be current students in high school (grades 9-12), college. or graduate school. The winning alumni demonstrate leadership in service to others in the broader community. Anyone may nominate an alum for the award. Fifth graders read through the nominations (with names and schools redacted), score the nominees with a rubric, and select the winner.

Head of School O.J. Morgan presented the award to Lauren in the fifth grade math classroom as all the fifth graders watched. Lauren talked to them about the service work she has done, and they asked questions such as how she got involved in community service, what it was like going into sixth grade, what she hopes to be as a professional after college and if she has any free time. She told the fifth graders that she enjoys volunteering and giving to those in need.

Lauren, who graduated from Baylor in May, will be attending the University of Richmond this fall. In her hometown of Dalton, Lauren has helped collect and bag hundreds of winter coats each year to be donated to elementary children in Whitfield County in the Warm Hearts Coat Drive program. Lauren has taught Sunday School at her church, Rockbridge Community Church, since sixth grade. At Baylor, she has been involved in community service since enrolling as a sixth grader. She has volunteered at the Chattanooga Area Food Bank and Siskin.

Since ninth grade, she has tutored students at West Side Center every day after school. This year, she serves on the RESPECT board and has been a site leader. Lauren has written several grants to help students at West Side. She secured funding to purchase 80 backpacks and fill them with school supplies, ear buds, stickers and masks.

In 2020, she was chosen to go to Jamaica for a service trip through Baylor, but the trip was cancelled due to COVID-19. She was awarded the Joe Key Award at Baylor for her contributions to the school community. Lauren also was a board member of the Sustainabiltiy Club at Baylor and helped collect unused snacks and lunch food to be donated to local food kitchens. Outside of school, Lauren has volunteered at the Creative Discovery Museum and Erlanger Hospital.

Lauren Yim, winner of the 2021 Citizen of the World award, talks to fifth graders about community service.

THE OTHER NOMINEES WERE:

Aayat Ali '16, Lambert High School in Atlanta Sophie Peirano '14, Baylor Trey Hamilton '14, McCallie Sara Catharine Daniels '13. Furman University

ALUMNI PROFILES

LYN HARRIS '73 Digs Archives

yn Harris learned to enjoy history as she looked up facts in the World Book and clipped photographs from National Geographic magazines for school projects. She has made researching and telling history her life pursuit and was honored in October with the 2020 Chi Omega President's Award for her work.

Lyn has been the national archivist for Chi Omega since 2006, and in most years, she spends her time traveling around the country, visiting Chi Omega chapters and telling the stories of the fraternity. As the resident historian for Chi Omega, Lyn has met 25 of

the 30 recipients of the President's Award, which is the highest honor the fraternity gives to alumnae.

"I give Bright School credit for beginning my love of history," she said. "We made state booklets, and I would pull facts from the World Book, and my Mom got into finding old National Geographics. I clipped pictures to put in the booklets." At that time, students made a booklet for each of the 50 states. A similar version of the project exists today in the form of the fourth grade state project, in which each fourth grader is assigned a state

and creates a research project about it. Throughout high school at GPS and college, history was her best academic subject.

She joined Chi Omega at Mercer University and earned her master's degree in history at Georgia College & State University. Lyn then taught high school history in Macon, Georgia, and still keeps in touch with some of her students, who are only a few years younger than she is.

Lyn loved Chi Omega so much, she went to work for the fraternity in 1989 and held several positions including national leadership consultant, director of chapter services, and a national recruiter, working from the headquarters in Memphis. She returned to Chattanooga to care for her mother. Velda, who died in 2006.

The role of archivist turned out to be the perfect fit at the right time. Lyn decided to remain in Chattanooga but not work full-time, and Chi Omega's first-ever archivist stepped down. With her history and research background, Lyn was appointed archivist, which is a volunteer position.

Lvn Harris The job of the archivist is "making stories come to life," Lyn said. Chi Omega was founded in 1895, when women were first starting to go to colleges. But there were few women, and they decided to create social clubs, which became today's sororities.

Lyn has added new ways to telling the stories. She has embraced many forms of social media to reach current members and alumnae and create discussions with old photographs and memorabilia. She has expanded the sorority's collection in the museum in Memphis, particularly by acquiring old jewelry and rare Chi Omega artifacts through eBay. She researches chapter histories when chapters are celebrating notable anniversaries and usually travels to the chapters to give presentations.

Last year would have been Chi Omega's national convention, where Lyn would have been a speaker. This is only the second time the convention was not held or not held in person — the other was in 1918 due to World War I. "The convention is one of my favorite times." she said.

Lyn enjoys getting together with all the Chi Omegas and public speaking. "That's usually the No. 1 fear of most people," she said. "But I've always liked it. I've always

> been a ham." Lyn recalled that her speaking talents were discovered when she was assigned the role of narrator in "The Three Billy Goats Gruff" play in first grade. "I was the only child they could hear in the back of the auditorium." she said.

That's one of the many memories from Bright School she recalled along with Christmas, the Bright School lunch, Country Gardens and manual training (shop). Gymnastics was a big emphasis in P.E. at the time, which was taught by Coach Bill Wolcott and Mrs. Martha Bass. The gym show, which many alumni from the 70s through the 90s remember, was a big deal. "We wore navy shorts. We would march out and do calisthenics," she recalled. "Frank Bright was last because he could do flips."

There is hardly anything more memorable for alumni than the Bright School picnic. Lyn remembers going to the picnic at Warner Park. "We

would look forward to it almost more than Christmas," she said. "We would wake up that morning and listen to Luther to see if there would be a cloud in the sky." Chattanoogans used to listen to radio broadcaster Luther Masingill each morning to get the news and weather. The picnic would not be held in the rain.

And like many alumni, Lyn can recall all her teachers. Her favorites were Charlotte Mason for second grade, Mary Alice Peters for sixth grade and Margaret Stong in first grade. Many years later, Lyn discovered Miss Strong was a Chi-O at the University of Chattanooga in the 1920s, and she visited Miss Strong when she lived in the St. Barnabas apartments downtown. "It's hard to believe your teacher would be in a sorority," Lyn said. "I remember she was strict." As Lyn knows, everyone has a story to tell.

RAEWYN DUVALL'05 Dreams of Space

aewyn Duyall's first experiment with space travel was not as exciting as the science fiction books that fueled her interest and dreams of what lies beyond our planet and aglaxy.

As a fifth grader in 2005, Raewyn launched her rocket in science class like all her classmates, but hers caught in a tree. "They gave me a new rocket to launch at home." she recalled.

Since then, Raewyn has found her niche in engineering, worked at NASA, and is now leading a program to build a small rover that will be launched to the moon. She is a Ph.D. student in electrical and computer engineering at Carnegie Mellon University and oversees the Iris Lunar Rover project.

Iris, the size of a shoe box, will be the first robotic rover from the U.S. on the moon. NASA has never before launched a lunar rover. Iris is also unique because of her size. At about four pounds, Iris is going to the moon to "prove that small rovers can survive and operate on the

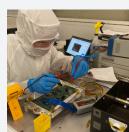
lunar surface," Raewyn said. "Something on this scale has not been done before." Iris is the first student-led rover in space and the smallest rover to ever ao in space.

Raewyn Duvall

The rover will send back photos, and researchers will monitor and evaluate how it interacts with and moves on lunar soil. If this proves successful, it will open doors for more small and less expensive robots to explore space. Iris is expected to travel in winter 2021 aboard an Astrobotic lander. Once on the moon, the mission will last about 72 hours, the life of the battery that will power Iris.

The project began in 2018, and about 250 students have been a part of the process to build and program it. Raewyn became involved in the project near the beginning as she was working in robotics at NASA as part of a student co-op. At NASA, she "fell in love with" the combination of robotics and space.

Her interest in space started much earlier. Raewyn is a fan of science fiction - Dr. Who mostly but also both Star Wars and Star Trek — and has been since Bright School. She credits first grade teacher Carol Cutrer with pushing her students to read and fourth grade teacher Vickie Hitchcock for reinvigorating her love of school. "I am glad Bright School put an emphasis on a full-rounded education with science and art and shop," she said. "I loved reading, especially science fiction, and I was always with a book, even at recess and lunch". Raewyn was talented even then in science and math, recalling one of the best compliments from a classmate was being



avionics board of the Iris, a lunar rover project she oversees at Carnegie Mellon

called "a math wizard." Her older sisters, Shelley and Linnea, graduated from Bright in 1993 and 1995, and brother, Nathaniel, graduated in 1999.

After graduating from Bright and GPS, she earned a bachelor's degree in computer science at Tufts University and spent three years at NASA while earning a master's degree in robotics at the University of Plymouth. Raewyn said she applied for a NASA internship on a whim in undergrad and enjoyed working in groups there. She became involved in the CubeRover project at NASA, and that led to her working on what became Iris at CMU.

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FAREWELL TO FACULTY & STAFF

Melanie Nestler SCIENCE

Melanie Nestler joined the faculty in 2016 and taught science to grades 1-5, focusing the curriculum on conservation, appreciation of nature, and curiosity of the world. Of course, her lessons included owls for fourth graders and rockets for fifth graders. Mrs. Nestler, and her husband, Helge, who served on the Board of Trustees and was instrumental in the installation of the school's

solar panels, are both engineers by trade. They earned a patent for a stationary bicycle they created that generates electricity when pedaled. The "solar bike" is a teaching tool, and the Nestlers first brought it to Bright when their daughters were students. Gesa '13.



Greetja '16, and Beke '17 have since graduated, and Mrs. Nestler says they are excited for their mother to have more free time to spend with them.

Cindy Beirne MUSIC

Cindy Beirne, who has taught music for more than 25 years, came to Bright in spring 2019 while Stephanie Bowling was on maturity leave. The pandemic was



particularly difficult for her music classes and performances since we did not have many of the all-school programs. There were no plays except fifth grade, Thanksgiving program or Grandparents' Day this year. Still, Mrs. Beirne creatively planned

an outdoor performance by the fourth and fifth graders for Thanksgiving and for the entire school for Grandparents' Day that were both videoed and shared with families. She figured out how to teach recorder by covering the ends with cloth to make them safer. While choir was not allowed last year, she had five groups of hand bells meeting every morning at 7:15, and they performed an outdoor concert in May for families. For her efforts to support the school community, Mrs. Beirne was the 2021 recipient of the Michael G. Murphy Award as voted by her peers.

Noelle Coleman

Noelle Coleman came to Bright in 2015 as a third grade teacher and then moved to the Kilbride Enrichment Center as an instructional support teacher. She most recently worked with second and third grade students within literacy and



mathematics. Her kind and encouraging spirit motivated students to reach their potential. Mrs. Coleman's children attended Bright: Nehemiah '18, Liliana '20, and Amalia finished fourth grade last year.



Matt Laver FIFTH GRADE

Matt Lauer joined the faculty in 2019 and taught fifth grade math. Overall, he has nearly 20 years' experience in teaching. Students enjoyed his droll sense of humor, funny sayings like calling them "youngsters," and his

inexplicable way of always seeming calm and never overly excited. His demeanor was caricatured in the fifth grade play.

Ed Hammonds CUSTODIAN

Ed Hammonds joined the staff in 2009 and was a favorite of children around the school, especially in the Early Childhood Center building, where he worked most of the time. Known as "Mr. Ed" to the children, Mr. Hammonds



worked in banking and local government before following in his father's footsteps by working at Bright.



Hannah
Layton
KINDERGARTEN
ASSISTANT
Hannah Layton joined the
faculty in 2016 as a Bright
Afternoons counselor,
became an assistant to
Katie Shirley in PK and
then moved to kindergarten.

She was a positive and loving instructional assistant in Ms. Katie's classroom. Mrs. Hannah is a new mom to son Chip, born in April.

Scarlet Hardy THIRD GRADE

Scarlet Hardy came to
Bright last fall and was one
of two new teachers in third
grade. Despite first meeting
all her new students and
colleagues while wearing a
mask, Mrs. Hardy made an
impression for being calm,



organized and good-natured through a difficult school year. She was well loved by all her students, and we look forward to having her on campus as a substitute teacher next year.



FIRST GRADE
Susanna Fricks was a
new teacher last year
and enjoyed sharing her
pregnancy with her feisty
first graders. Her daughter
Lily was born in February.
LeAnne Sharpe took over

her class during her maternity leave. She always created a fun and loving environment for all of her students to shine in and outside the classroom. We look forward to having her as a substitute teacher next school year.



Wady Ashe
KINDERGARTEN
ASSISTANT
Mady Ashe joined the faculty
in 2017 and was a JPK
assistant before moving to
kindergarten as assistant to
Sonal Patel. Her daughter

Millie was born in April.

Denalyn Lindsey

PK ASSISTANT
Denalyn Lindsey joined the faculty in 2019 as a Bright
Afternoons counselor. She often substituted in upper grades and was assistant to
Emily Hon in PK last year. As she pursues her master's in



education, Miss Denalyn will be on our team as a substitute teacher and Bright Afternoons counselor.



Kelsey Riner
KINDERGARTEN
ASSISTANT
Kelsey Riner joined the
faculty in 2019 and was
assistant to Bill Greene in
kindergarten. She put off her
wedding due to the pandemic

and got married last fall. All

of her students and parents

enjoyed her loving and kind spirit.

Lynne Stutts PK ASSISTANT

Lynne Stutts joined the faculty in 2019 and was assistant to Emily Hon in PK, and she finished last year as assistant to Katie Shirley. Her gracious heart will be missed in the classroom. However, she will continue to support Bright

School students as a substitute teacher school year.

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Welcome, Mrs. Watts

Kristin Watts becomes 13th head of school

BY ELIZABETH A. DAVIS '86

n July 1, Kristin Watts started her tenure as the 13th head of school to lead Bright after the retirement of O.J. Morgan who had held that position since 2004. Mrs. Watts previously served as the director of St. Anne's Day School and Enrichment Programs in Atlanta for five years and was director of admissions for Trinity School in Atlanta for 11 years prior to her time at St. Anne's.

During her professional career, she has worked with all levels in education from college to infants but found elementary to be the best fit. After college, she worked in admissions at Siena Heights University in Michigan before working in both development and admissions at Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana.

She moved on from that position to become the director of enrollment management at University Lake School in Hartland, Wisconsin. Mrs. Watts taught leadership skills classes in the high school at University Lake but found herself drawn to the lower school when she did assessments for preschool and younger grades. "I knew my next role had to be in elementary," she said. That is when she moved to Atlanta to be director of admissions at Trinity School, which enrolls ages 3 years through sixth grade, a community very similar to Bright.

Mrs. Watts grew up in rural Adrian, Michigan, where her parents still live. Her father was an accountant, and her mother was a nurse and earned a master's degree in vocational education. Her brother is an elementary learning specialist outside of Detroit.

Her first impressions of Bright School came through meeting faculty and administrators when they visited both Trinity and St. Anne's when she worked in Atlanta. Her impressions of Bright were very positive and reconfirmed when she interviewed for her current role last fall.

Most recently, a group of early childhood teachers visited St. Anne's Day School to see the outdoor classroom after Bright started its eco-literacy program in fall 2019. "I was so impressed with their professionalism and enthusiasm.

I learned a lot from them and thought Bright would be a great place to be," Mrs. Watts said.

Teachers visiting other schools is a long tradition at Bright, going back to when founder Mary G. Bright took her teachers to schools around the country to observe and study. Bright is often a place where teachers from other schools visit as well. Mrs. Watts has done the same at St. Anne's and will continue to encourage teachers at Bright to travel.

This past school year was exceptional and challenging for teachers and administrators at all schools, but especially for Mrs. Watts, who was guiding her school through the pandemic and transitioning to Bright without the ability to meet

people as much as one would normally because of health restrictions.

She is eager to build relationships with faculty and staff, students, parents, alumni and all other members of the school community. "Relationships are the most important. I am excited about the opportunity to get to know people," she said.

Trinity helped spark her interest in the overall operations of a school, and she aspired to lead a school. When the St. Anne's position opened, she jumped at a

chance to grow professionally. The most important skill she honed at St. Anne's was managing, overseeing and collaborating with 40 teachers. Certainly, last year was the biggest test of that.

"When the school year ended, I told teachers to go back and read their emails from last August and remember all the what-ifs and fears we had when school started," she said. "I feel good about what we accomplished."

Now her attention turns to Bright School, where she is ready to forge new relationships with all ages within our community.

Mrs. Watts comes to Chattanooga with her daughter, Colby, who will be entering second grade. Her husband, Jay Watts, has been the director of athletics at GPS since 2017 and is a graduate of the McCallie School. Her stepson, Campbell, is a senior in high school this fall in Atlanta.

Please join us in welcoming Mrs. Watts to Bright School!

Above: Mrs. Watts with her husband, Jay, and daughter, Colby.

INTRODUCING New Jeachers



The Bright School welcomes four classroom teachers. three special area teachers and three early childhood assistants. From left to right: Kristen Curtis (maternity leave substitute for Ashley Linehart in P.E. and cross country coach), Claire Millsaps (third grade), Kimberly Rawlston (performing arts director), Wendy Rogers (fifth grade), Julia Mayo (music), Shannan Portwood (first grade), and D'Arcy Hughes (science). Not pictured: Lauren Pritchett (second grade), Bailey Fraebel (kindergarten assistant), Amy Hutcherson (PK assistant), and Mary Katherine Wheeler (JPK assistant). First grade teacher Karen Smith is moving to the Kilbride Enrichment Center to be a reading interventionalist, and Lynn Shelton, our eco-literacy teacher, is now officially a special area teacher and will teach environmental science classes in kindergarten, PK and JPK.

THE BRIGHT SCHOOL

ALUMNI GATHERINGS



The study of Tennessee is a tradition in fourth grade. Local attorney and historian Maury Nicely '83, pictured with Charlie Mossburg, Leighton Large and William Arnold, told stories about our state and city during the Tennessee Celebration.



Lew Card '90, father of students Josie and Charlie, provided the musical entertainment for the fourth grade's celebration of Mr. Morgan at the cabin.



Judy Rowland '51 donated her psaltery to Bright School. Alumni may remember learning to play one. Students today learn to play autoharps, which are similar but larger. Pictured with the psaltery, from left to right, are Judy with her greatniece and nephews Bo Valentine, Helen Davenport, Quinn Davenport '21, Mac Valentine, and music teacher Cindy Beirne.



Olivia Fine '05, far right, joined the faculty in the spring as a kindergarten assistant in Sonal Patel's classroom.

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After teaching and being a school administrator for more than 40 years, O.J. Morgan is known to many people. It is not uncommon for him to encounter young students, former students, parents, grandparents and colleagues anytime he ventures outside his home.

During the pandemic, these encounters became more emotional with parents and grandparents thanking him over and over for opening school to in-person learning and keeping it open all year.

"Everywhere I went, even the grocery store, people would stop me and say thank you for staying in school," Mr. Morgan said. "Families were so grateful."

Indeed, Bright School opened last fall and remained open the entire year, with children and adults wearing masks, social

distancing as much as possible, washing hands, disinfecting everything and monitoring health every single day. Some of the classes had to quarantine, and there were cases of the disease in the school The 2020-21 school year happened, but it was not the same. There were many changes to the schedule, usual routines and access to the building.

"The good part was seeing the resilience of people, from 3 year olds to adults. It's a good sign when everybody comes



Japan, and Germany, all countries Mr. Morgan visited with Bright School students. Evanne Early, Maleah Hodge, Mykenzi McGraw and Layla Large give Mr. Morgan a big hug after presenting him with a German flag blanket.

together to keep Bright School doing what it does best, which is educating young children," Mr. Morgan said.

But this school year was not going to the be the same with or without the pandemic. This was going to be a year of transition. Mr. Morgan announced in November 2019 he planned to retire in June 2021, after being head since 2004. The national search

Mr. Morgan cuts the ribbon for "Mr. Morgan's Country Garden," the gift from the Class of 2021. Fifth graders cleared brush and spread mulch with the help of parents, teachers and especially Lynn Shelton '87, our eco-literacy specialist, to create the garden and path behind the 1987 wing. PHOTO BY VICTORIA MOUW



First graders check on Mr. Morgan to make sure he is OK on the roof. Students walked by during the day, and some families even visited Mr. Morgan after dark to see him on the roof

for his successor began a year ago and ended last fall with the hiring of Kristin Watts, who officially became the head of school in July. Also, there was the continuing Building a Bright Future Capital Campaign to raise \$4 million to fund a three-phase renovation project. It was put on hold due to COVID-19 after the first phase was completed, and it restarted last winter. The school surpassed the goal in May, and the

In short, leadership of the

"When it comes to a head of

School community and in our greater

O.J. Morgan!" said Board of Trustees

Chair Austin Center '85, who talked

to Mr. Morgan every day during the

community, there is no one like our

second phase began as soon as "When it comes school ended to a head of school school was going to be hugely important this past year, and so, the and the impact 17th and final year of Mr. Morgan's tenure at Bright was challenging, someone has on harrowing at times, disappointing students, teachers, in the number of traditions that had to be put aside for safety's sake and colleagues, friends, finally exciting in that the goal was accomplished and some normalcy and families in returned toward the end of the year our Bright School The school was able to celebrate all of those things and Mr. Morgan, community and in particular. in our greater school and the impact someone has community, there on students, teachers, colleagues, friends, and families in our Bright

—BOARD OF TRUSTEES CHAIR AUSTIN CENTER '85

is no one like our

O.J. Morgan!"

school year to make sure all was well.

"The list of accomplishments reads like a lifetime of achievements: upgrading our classrooms, upgrading our curriculum and technology, community building, construction, working on the transition, managing COVID-19, a capital campaign raising \$4+ million. He has done it all. And that was just this year!"

Mr. Morgan's arrival at Bright is truly a case of being in the right place at the right time. Over 23 years at Baylor, he taught English and then became assistant head. His children, James '05 and Sarah Spence '08, were students at Bright, and he was serving on the board when the search began to replace then-head Michael G. Murphy. Mr. Morgan had been a finalist for head jobs at schools outside Chattanooga, and then Jim McCallie '50, who was on the search committee, looked around and suggested Mr. Morgan become a candidate. The committee saw the wisdom of that advice and hired Mr. Morgan.

Over the last 17 years, there have been many changes to campus. Look around, and you will see Mr. Morgan's influence – the renovation of the auditorium to the Centennial Theater, the Hill playground and Guerry International Plaza, Peeples Pavilion, GMAC (Gus McCravey Athletic Complex) track and field, the solar panels that save the



Remember when? Mr. Morgan, right, dressed as Dumbledore, with facilities manager Paul Davis as Hagrid and registrar Joe Mosier '81 as Harry Potter and Merrill Levine's first grade class in 2010. This is one of many costumes Mr. Morgan has worn for the sake of learning.

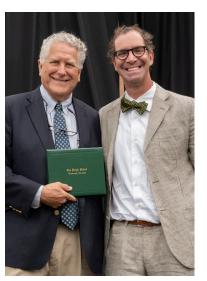
school \$400-\$500 a month on energy, and the current renovations to infrastructure and classrooms.

More than the physical aspects, there is a strong connection to the

past and present. Mr. Morgan dove into the history of the school and its founder, Mary G. Bright, a local teacher who was inspired by and studied under progressive education leader John Dewey at Columbia University. Miss Bright wanted children to have



Bird watching was one of kindergarten's activities with Mr. Morgan, and that is one of Mr. Morgan's favorite things to do. They saw all kinds of birds, including turkeys!



Board of Trustees Chair Austin Center '85 presents an honorary diploma to Mr. Morgan at graduation on May 28, 2021. PHOTO BY MED DEMENT

an awareness of the world around them, and she took her teachers around the country to learn about new teaching methods. Today, vou see this carried out in the responsive classroom, community service efforts, the Germany program, eco-literacy and the gardens and more.

Mr. Morgan aspired to create a community "of people doing something profound, and it is hard to think of something more

important than developing young people and helping them learn to express themselves, to read and write, to get excited

about the world, to feel good about themselves, and that adults in their lives really care about them," he said. The community succeeded in coming together this year more than ever.

He says this daily contact is what he will miss the most in retirement. Mr. Morgan and his wife, Dr. Anne Barron, who also retired at the end of June, plan to travel and visit their children and grandchildren. Daughter Mary lives in Washington, D.C, and has two sons, Henry and Elliott. James Morgan used his archaeology background to found Cumberland Applied Research Associates in

Chattanooga and is currently pursuing a master's degree in aerospace engineering while serving in the Air Force ROTC, and Sarah Spence is working in Chicago at Evergreen Real Estate Group after completing her college degree in Switzerland and Portugal.

Mr. Morgan energetically promoted the school and loved more than anything to connect each day with students,



During the Spring of Gratitude, each grade celebrated Mr. Morgan. Here, Mr. Morgan watches JPK students play in the mud kitchen.

faculty, staff and parents. Each morning, Mr. Morgan stood on the concourse, sipped coffee and talked with shop teacher Richard Parks as they waited for the first carloads to students to arrive and be greeted with kind words and a smile.

Being an elementary school principal means parking your pride and being silly sometimes. A selfproclaimed kid at heart, Mr. Morgan has been slimed, had ice water dumped on him and been dunked in a water tank. He's dressed as George Washington (twice this last year!),

The last two months of the school year were dedicated to Mr. Morgan and dubbed the "Spring of Gratitude."

Dumbledore from Harry Potter and Hannah Montana. He's landed on the field in a helicopter, soared above the school in a hot air balloon. and camped on the field. One of the last things he wanted to do was to spend the night on the roof of the school like he had two previous



Mr. Morgan donned his George Washington outfit and danced the Virginia Reel with third graders and special guest, Ms. Janie.

times to encourage students to read. Last year, he challenged students to log a million minutes of reading, and after seven weeks, he was up on the roof again and did stay there all night. As proof, he read aloud two books and streamed it live via Zoom! "It was fun. I knew the kids would be excited," he said.

The last two months of the school year were dedicated to Mr. Morgan and dubbed the "Spring of Gratitude." Each grade celebrated Mr. Morgan during a designated week, and the school community came together in ways it had not been allowed to previously because of the pandemic. Children sang in the theater to an audience of Mr. Morgan and their teachers, for instance.

With the availability of the vaccine, conditions improved so that the fifth grade could perform a play, and graduation was held on the field. Fittingly for the year, a section of curtains behind the stage blew down during graduation. The ceremony continued, and another chapter in the life of Bright School ended in joy and celebration.

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WE DID IT! **Campaign Surpasses Goal**

One of the last items on O.J. Morgan's to-do list before retiring was to complete the Building a Bright Future Capital Campaign, which publicly launched in March 2019 and was put on hold the following year due to the pandemic. When the campaign restarted in winter 2021, the school raced to the finish line and kept going, surpassing the \$4 million goal.

"I wanted to end my time on a high note with the goal of finishing the campaign, and I am so heartened and humbled by the outpouring of support and dedication. While my retirement is bittersweet, I am leaving Bright knowing it is in good hands, it is strong and it is headed in the right direction," Mr. Morgan

The purpose of the campaign was to modernize the classrooms and infrastructure, much of which was more than 50 years old. Renovations for phase 2 began as soon as school was out at the end of May. Phase 2 included new flooring, bleachers, lighting and paint in the gym and new HVAC for the 1987 wing and the

Phase 1 renovations, which included infrastructure improvements, new technology, and furniture in the first-third grade classrooms, were completed in summer 2019. Feedback from the first phase was overwhelmingly positive from teachers, students and parents. The improved classrooms and updated technology and furniture provide more flexibility for today's teachers and curriculum and a more positive environment for today's learners. The new heating and cooling system and windows are more energy efficient and dependable.

The third and final phase is being planned for next summer and includes the library and special area classrooms and the 1987 wing (fourth and fifth grade classrooms, science and

"This campaign helps ensure that our school continues to provide the highest quality education for young children that lays a foundation of success for the rest of their lives. It ensures our teachers have the classrooms and equipment to make their instruction even more effective," Mr. Morgan said

A big thank you to campaign chair Betsy Ranalli, director of development Kim Brown; and current and former trustees Austin Center, Betsey Kates, Chris Curtis, Ward Davenport and Maria Matthews for getting the job done!







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The first phase of renovation in 2019 included updated classrooms. The second phase in summer 2021 included renovation of the gym and installation of new HVAC.

Building a Bright Future Capital Campaign Donors

Gifts given on 6/1/21 or after only appear on this list if they were postdated 5/31/21 or earlier: therefore, this list reflects commitments as of the end of the fiscal year.

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Current and former parents, alumni, trustees, teachers and Bright School friends enjoyed an afternoon of fun and games at TopGolf in May. Mr. Morgan and campaign chair Betsy Ranalli unfurled a "We Did It!" banner to announce the big news of the day.

The event, held outdoors and in place of a large gala due to the pandemic, was a big success and created momentum as the school vear ended.

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Austin served three years as board chair. Former board chair Julie Guerry honored him at the end of the school year with the "Austin Center '85 Student Art Gallery," which will be located in the main lobby and used to display student artwork. Austin was joined by his family at the Board of Trustees event that honored O.J. Morgan and included the announcement of the art gallery. The Center family. from left to right, Marilyn, Morton, Celeste '80, Austin, and Trent '83. Austin's older brother, Sherman, graduated in 1976.

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Gifts to Bright School 2020-21



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Cindy Smith, mother of Hannah Bradford

Thank you to our voluntéer leaders

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION **PRESIDENT**

Lucy Sawrie



Lucy served as PA president during a challenging year for events and activities at the school. She has been a dedicated and committed parent volunteer as her three children have been at Bright, Lucy was presented the National PTA Life Achievement Award for her efforts. At this year's graduation. from left to right, Lucy, Luke '21, Chloe '20, Daniel '85, and Max, a rising fifth grader.

Becky Stimson

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Laura Galbraith '98 Dr. and Mrs. John Galbraith

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This annual report lists gifts and pledges received through May 31, 2021, including gifts to the Building a Bright Future Campaign. Every effort has been made to ensure that this report is accurate and complete. If vour name was inadvertently omitted or appears incorrectly, please accept our apologies and notify the advancement office.

GIFTS AND MEMORIALS TO THE BRIGHT SCHOOL LIBRARY

(August 2020-May 2021)

Bill & Mary Mabie in memory of Judy Oakes

Sarah & Jeremy Walker in memory of Judy Oakes O.J. Morgan in memory of Fontaine Patten Moore

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O.J. Morgan in honor of the administrative staff; Rachel Blanton, Kim Brown, Elizabeth Davis. Rachel Gentry, Elizabeth Jackson, Renee' Kropff, Sabrina McAllister, Brooke Moore, Elizabeth Oakes, Kendra Reasor and Stacy Sisk

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Gifts to Bright School 2020-21

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Southern Sleepovers

Southside Pizza

Southside Social

St. John's Restaurant

Sunshine Girl Designs

Taco Mamacita

The Blue Collection

The Mustard Seed

The Pottery Place

The Sandbox

Sweetly Southern Cakery

The Tellus Science Museum

Top Notch Mobile Detail

The Timeout Chair Male Grooming Spa

Stray Dog Designs

Sports Barn

Sue Bartlett

Sugar's Ribs

Sunbutter

Skin/Edit Kim Fugate

Scout & Cellar

Sockwell

Scenic City Boot Camp

Scenic City Wine & Cheese

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Thank you to our volunteer leaders!

PAJAMA PARTY **AUCTION CHAIRS**

Ann Marie Eichelberger and Ashley Ladebauche

AUCTION COMMITTEE

Betsy Conroy, Elizabeth Jackson, Megan Manning, Pierson Brown, Jaye Brewer, Jane Batson, Catharine Daniels, Amy Hicks, Allison Cyrus-Walker, Mary Carlie Corbitt, Tara Freeman, Ginger Thomas and Keri Williams

STAFF SUPPORT

Kim Brown, auction director; Amy Hutcherson; Sabrina McAllister, and Stacy Sisk



Ann Marie with children Chandler, a rising fourth grader, and Kate, a rising PK student.



Ashley and husband Andrew with children Ava, a rising fifth grader, and Tucker, a rising kindergartener.

Vine Street Bakery Walden Club **Wanderlinger Brewing Company** Wauhatchie Glass Works Wheeler Lewis Designs

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IDEALEASE









GIRLS PREPARATORY













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GRADUATE GARLANDS

2014

Hunter McVay won the Rickie Pierce Salutatorian Award, presented to the GPS senior who has maintained the second-highest grade average during her four years in upper school. She also was a National Merit Scholarship Finalist and inducted into Cum Laude.



Mady Oliver won the Greene-Hanlin Award at GPS, given to students who show joyful eagerness, display outstanding leadership qualities, and have an enthusiastic approach for the GPS Singers.

Sophie Peirano was named a semifinalist in the National Merit Scholarship Program and was also honored as an Abshire Leadership Fellow at Baylor. She won the History Award at Baylor.

Paige Ryan was selected to the 79th Baylor Round Table this fall and was named a Commended Student by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

Sierra Haberhern and Camilla Zavala were elected to the Baylor Student Leadership Board.



Nick Skonberg was elected to Baylor's 105th Honor Council and played a major role in the Baylor Players' production of All the World's a Stage, a pandemicappropriate performance featuring scenes from classic theater. He won the Theater Award at Baylor.

Baylor senior Tess Margio was selected to the DII-AA East All-Region volleyball team.

Priyanka Sud was presented the Eula Lea Jarnagin Love of Language Award for French at GPS.

Laila Siyam was presented the Eula Lea Jarnagin Love of Language Award for Spanish at GPS.

Baylor senior Christopher Young was named a Commended Student by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation and won the Band Award.

Baylor senior **Kistler Hampton** was named to the USA Fencing High School All-Academic second team.

2015

Nick McKenney was elected to Baylor's 105th Honor Council and was given one of the Jumonville Awards for the best all-round male and female juniors determined by a vote of upper school students. He also was selected for the Sumner Smith Award that goes to the junior who lives out Baylor's mission of making a positive difference in the world with kindness, positivity, sensitivity, perseverance, and humor.

Caleb Nunes served on the newly created Student Health Council and was elected to the Student Leadership Board at Baylor.

Maddie Kim served on the newly created Student Health Council at Baylor and was named to the USA Fencing High School All-Academic team.

Kye Hamilton was a supervising editor and camera operator on the Baylor Players' production of All the World's a Stage.

Javen Johnson was inducted into Keo-Kio, McCallie's senior leadership organization.

Amaar Memon won second place for his website created for the Southeast Tennessee regional competition for National History Day. He also was inducted into Keo-Kio at McCallie

Sophia Baleeiro served on the newly created Student Health Council at Baylor.

Caroline Clark won the Dorris Chapin Wells Award, given to a beloved and enthusiastic member of the GPS sophomore class who has an infectious personality, exudes creativity, is loyal to her classmates, and is dedicated to the GPS experience. She was named to the Best of Preps in tennis by the Chattanooga Times Free Press, which also named her father and McCallie head coach, Jeff Clark '85, coach of the year for boys'

Kollin Claridy was named a member of TEPS, the sophomore honorary service organization at McCallie. Students were not able to serve last year due to COVID, but they were recognized by the school.

Carson Coffman was inducted into TEPS, the

sophomore honorary service organization

Helen Guerry was named to the Best of the Preps by the Chattanooga Times Free Press in tennis at Baylor. She reached the doubles state semifinals at

Addie Margio was elected to the Baylor Student Leadership Board.

2018

Reife Hawkins and Max Hickman were members of Baylor's Middle School Advisory Council.

Max Hickman won the French Award at Baylor.

Isabella Moore won the Studio Art Award

Maggie Tansor won the Dance Award at Baylor.

2019

Daniel Bruce qualified in the 400m in track at the Junior Olympics/AAU National Championships in Houston this summer.

2020

Reese Finlay, Avery Levin, Matilda Joels, Mary Handly Templeton-Phillips, and Katie Grace **Tuder** were chosen to be members of Baylor's Middle School Advisory Council.

2021

Charlotte Hoss qualified in the 100m and the 4x100 relay at the Junior Olympics/AAU National Championships in Houston this summer.

Births

Mary Howard Ade Glover '98 and her husband. Fvnn. are the new parents of Fynn "Van" Glover, born March 27, 2021.



In Memoriam

Sam Campbell III '46 Cameron Coker '97 Marie Crimmins '41 Mary Allison Levi '55 Rebecca Jane Sterchi Parry '43

Dorothy "Presh" Pattee '32 Theresa Swafford '60 Johnathan Swords '07 Becky Stimson fourth grade teacher

CLASS OF 2014

Where They're Headed for College



The Class of 2014 gathered in May for a celebration of their high school graduations. Their fifth grade teachers Brenda Austin, Vicki Everett and Brenda Austin, who have all since retired, joined them in remembering all the memories from their time at Bright. First row: Eve Smith, Laila Siyam, Jenna Miller, Molly Smith, Lauren Yim, Brooke Romanchik, Ethan Nunes, Gigi Barringer, Sydney Terfloth, Camilla Zavala, Parker Stanford, Hunter McVay, Jessica Little, Emma Brandao, Hunter Miller, and Nolan Robinson. Second row: Priya Bhushan, Sierra Haberhern, Paige Ryan, Sophie Peirano, Ivan Reap, Tristan Anderson, Christopher Young, Nick Skonberg, Kistler Hampton, Sawyer Jones, Cole Butler, and Stormy Edens.

Tristan Anderson. . University of Alabama at Huntsville Gracie Mae Bankes.. . University of Tennessee, Knoxville Gigi Barringer .. Tennessee Tech University Priya Bhushan.. .University of Georgia Emma Brandao .Bucknell University Cole Butler University of Mississippi Stormy Edens Colorado State University Kendall Gentry... University of Tennessee, Knoxville Sierra Haberhern. . Virginia Tech Trey Hamilton .. . University of Alabama at Huntsville . University of Tampa Kistler Hampton.. Morgan Haynes.... . U.S. Military Academy (West Point) Sawver Jones.. . University of Tennessee, Knoxville . University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Jessica Little.. Tess Margio... .Rollins College William McClanahan. .East Tennessee State University Hunter McVav University of Georgia Jenna Miller.. . University of the South Hunter Miller ... University of Tennessee, Knoxville Ethan Nunes.. .Oglethorpe University Florida Southern College Mady Oliver ...

Sophie Peirano		
Jacks Pollard	The Juilliard School	
Ivan Reap Gap Year/University of Alabama at Birmingham		
Nolan Robinson University of Tennessee, Knoxville/Georgia Tech		
	through the Talent Initiative	
Brooke Romanchik	University of Alabama	
Paige Ryan	Princeton University	
	Mercer University	
Nick Skonberg	New York University	
Molly Smith	University of Tampa	
Eve Smith	Alfred University	
Parker Stanford	Auburn University	
Bo Starks	University of South Carolina	
Priyanka Sud	University of Tennessee, Knoxville	
Sydney Terfloth	Ithaca College	
John WattsUi	niversity of Tennessee at Chattanooga	
Lauren Yim	University of Richmond	
Christopher Young	Syracuse University	
Camilla Zavala	Auburn University	
Emilia Richtberg and her family moved back to Germany. She will be		
working in a school for the disabled for a year and then attending a		
university to study primary school education.		



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