



Dear St. Andrew's Family,

On Monday, St. Andrew's welcomed Palestinian author Yousef Bashir as part of our Open Minds series. Mr. Bashir's compelling personal story about forgiveness and hope for peace between Palestine and Israel resonated deeply in our community. Conflicted about and frustrated by the hospitality and kindness of his father toward Israeli soldiers during the occupation of their house in Gaza, Yousef, a 15-year old boy at the time, could not understand his father's approach to life, given the harsh reality of war. However, Yousef began to comprehend his father's philosophy of compassion and acceptance the day he was shot in the spine by one of the soldiers living in his house. Rushed to an Israeli hospital, Yousef was saved and embraced by dedicated Israeli doctors who cared for his life. Through surgery and many months of rehab, they helped him regain his ability to walk; they never gave up on his recovery. Saving his life and accepting him without regard for his identity as a Palestinian, the doctors and nurses reciprocated Yousef's father's belief in humanity.

As I listened to Mr. Bashir's story, I could not stop thinking about one aspect of our St. Andrew's students that I so much admire: their ability to confront their fears and step out of their comfort zones for the benefit of themselves and others. As a teacher of Spanish, I see my students take risks as they communicate in a language they don't yet fully understand. I see them put themselves into the lives of others whose cultures and customs are different from their own. These students could always opt for writing or speaking the bare minimum, but that is rarely the case. Not long ago, I visited a math class. Students were working in small groups, engaged in solving problems, and most of them were facing difficulties, yet they did not seem worried about being wrong. Just last weekend, a number of students wrote original plays, and other students performed these plays for the very first time. Ah! And this was a completely student-organized event.

Intrigued by students' courage and motivation to step out of their safe spaces and

stretch themselves, this week I asked students to tell me their stories. Here are some of their perspectives. Katie Macalintal '20 writes: "One way I have stepped out of my comfort zone at St. Andrew's is by speaking up in English class. At first, I was worried about saying something 'incorrect,' 'stupid,' or 'insignificant.' As I received feedback from teachers and became cognizant of the culture associated with the discussion table, I started speaking up more and letting go of my previous worries. By contributing my thoughts and confronting confusion in English class, I have learned about the importance of asking questions, collaborating, and challenging my own ideas."

Isabel Hwang '20 reflects, "Through the constant love and support of my fellow peers and faculty members, I joined the cross-country team, started a brand new club, and overcame my fear of speaking in public. The culture of kindness at this school encouraged me to start a conversation with Mr. Gus, a wonderful driver for mentoring, and Ms. Darlene, a warm SAGE staff member. I believe that I've most changed by learning how to appreciate others. I wouldn't be who I am today if Charlotte [Gehrs '20] hadn't encouraged me to try running, or if Mr. Mufuka hadn't been so open to the idea of an Ethics Club, or if Model UN never challenged me to talk to *complete* strangers."

In the winter of his junior year, Cole Ferguson '19 decided to join the wrestling team. This was a brand new experience for him. He writes, "I had no idea what I was getting myself into but knew that I had to try it until the end. Though the practices and matches were so difficult, I stuck to it and decided to keep going with the sport. By the end of the season, I maybe wasn't the greatest wrestler, but had a priceless experience with my team and learned so much about myself and discipline." Similarly, Miles Abney '20 joined the swim team this past winter. Miles reflects, "Trying a new sport halfway through my junior year was a foreign concept to me. I was terrified of letting down my former winter team, not being good enough in the pool, and feeling ridiculous for trying something new so late in my high school career. However, I was amazed by how my former coach, my new swim coaches, and the swim team supported my decision. I absolutely loved every minute of the season and never felt unsupported or as if I wasn't good enough. I do vividly remember stepping out of the pool after my first race into the embrace of so many of my teammates. I had not only just placed last but had been disqualified, yet everyone encouraged me to keep trying and not get down on myself. The incredible culture of the team taught me how to challenge myself to not necessarily be the best, but to focus on improvement no matter how much improvement it is."

Through the voices of these students, one can sense how their courage to confront their fears and explore new endeavors, and to engage with themselves and others, is directly linked to the trust, respect, and care they feel they are given by their fellow St. Andreans. Emily Paton '20 says it perfectly: "St. Andrew's pushes you to form deeper relationships with peers and teachers and teammates." Connection and understanding is the fabric of our culture, and into it we sew trust, respect, and support so that we, as members of this incredible school, can each of us grow by exploring new ways of



thinking, new activities, new ideas. Just as Mr. Bashir's connection with the Israeli community brought him hope for change, so St. Andrew's students, in their welcoming, caring, respecting and trusting of others, build a culture of safety in which all may grow and become seeds of change and hope in the world.

All my best,  
Ana Ramirez

[aramirez@standrews-de.org](mailto:aramirez@standrews-de.org)

Dean of Leadership, Modern Languages Department Chair

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## Campus Visitors!



Celebrated author Jesmyn Ward came to St. Andrew's on Tuesday, April 9 to attend classes, talk with students & faculty, and give a lecture in Engelhard Hall to the entire School community. St. Andrew's English classes have read her novel *Salvage the Bones* and her memoir *Men We Reaped* for many years. This year, her novel *Sing, Unburied*,

*Sing*— which won the 2017 National Book Award for fiction— was the summer all-School read. *Salvage the Bones* also won the National Book Award for fiction in 2011; Ward is the only woman and the only person of color to have won two National Book Awards. You can read more about Ward's visit [on our website](#).





"What did Jesmyn Ward teach us this week? So much," Dean of Teaching & Learning Elizabeth Roach said after Ward's visit. "From the moment she answered the first question posed by a student at 10:15 in the morning until she signed the final student's book at 10:15 at night, Jesmyn Ward put us all under her magical spell as she gave generously and graciously to everyone she met at St. Andrew's. Although we all felt entranced by her beautiful words and her otherworldly presence, we also felt connected to her because she is, at the same time, so real."







On Monday, April 15, we welcomed Robert Malley P'19, President and CEO of [International Crisis Group](#), and Yousef Bashir, [Palestinian memoirist](#), to the Engelhard stage as part of the School's Open Minds initiative. Robert and Yousef spoke to students about the Israel-Palestine conflict, with Robert presenting Israeli perspectives and Yousef presenting



Palestinian perspectives. The Open Minds initiative was begun by Head of School Tad Roach and Chair of the Board Scott Sippelle '81 P'08 at the beginning of this school year. The goal of the initiative is to give students and faculty the chance to hear from and authentically learn about "both sides" of a particular national or international issue, and to discuss the varying perspectives with civility and respect.





Olympic rower Dominic Seiterle '94 was back on campus last weekend to speak with student-athletes and join us for a christening of the new crew shell that has been named in his honor. Dominic began his rowing career at St. Andrew's, where he was in the boat with current boys rowing Head Coach Will Porter '96. "He was a brilliant rower at St. Andrew's and Dartmouth," Coach Porter said, "but is most famous for sitting in the six seat in the Canadian Men's eight in the 2008 Olympics." He has also won gold medals at the 2007 World Rowing Cup regattas, the 2007 Henley Royal Regatta, and was 2006 Canadian National Rowing Gold medalist in the single scull. Watch Dominic's remarks to students on [our YouTube channel](#).





Last weekend, we celebrated the beauty of mathematics with Dr. Po-Shen Loh, Associate Professor of Math at Carnegie Mellon and founder of Expii, a free math learning platform. Students signed up for faculty workshops and breakout sessions with Dr. Loh that explored how math is everywhere. Workshop topics included Math & Organized Crime, Math & Art, Math & Baseball, Math & Poker, and more! Watch Dr. Loh's fascinating talk on discovering game theory in a pair of dice [on our Livestream channel](#).







On Wednesday, the Science Department welcomed William H. Kafer Jr., grandfather of Aubrey Malloy '20. Mr. Kafer was the Network Operations Manager at NASA during the [Apollo program](#). During his career, he was based primarily at [Goddard Space Flight Center](#) in Maryland. Mr. Kafer was responsible for overseeing the interface and coordination of the tracking stations that monitored and guided the Apollo missions to and from the Moon, and which also received Neil Armstrong's famous "one small step" live transmission and converted the feed to be televised around the world. He shared with students technical documents and memorabilia from a number of Apollo missions.









## ***It All Begins in the (Outdoor) Classroom***

Spring is finally here, and many teachers brought their classes outside to enjoy the sunshine and blooms.

### **Physics with Mr. Sanchez**







**Math 1 with Ms. Gahagan**







**English 2 with Ms. Reddy**



**AS Bio with Mr. O'Connell**





**Intro to the Arts with Mrs. McGiff**







.... And one decidedly indoor class. **Mr. Hoopes' Advanced Film Studies** class is shooting a "creepy thriller" under the stage of the Forbes Theater.



## *Life in O'Brien*

In the past two weeks, we have been treated to not one, not two, but three completely student-led arts showcases. Students organized every aspect and performed every piece in each of these events. First up was the Student Choreographic Showcase, in which student dancers choreographed and performed their own original works of dance. Watch the showcase on our [Livestream channel](#).







Next up was the Musical Theatre Showcase, in which students performed numbers from a wide variety of musicals. This year's Showcase was organized by acting students Cristle Ike '19 and Austin Brannan '19, and students ran every aspect of the performance, from the lighting to the music to the cues. Watch the performance [on our YouTube channel](#).







Finally, last Saturday night, the Playwright Club put on the Student Playwright Showcase. Student actors performed plays written and directed by students in the



club. You can watch each play [on our YouTube channel](#) (note: some language is rated PG-13!).







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## *Griffin Up!*

Saints girls varsity lacrosse, currently ranked fifth in the state, topped Tatnall 13-12 at home on April 4.







Saints boys varsity lacrosse bested Charter School of Wilmington 5-4 at home yesterday.

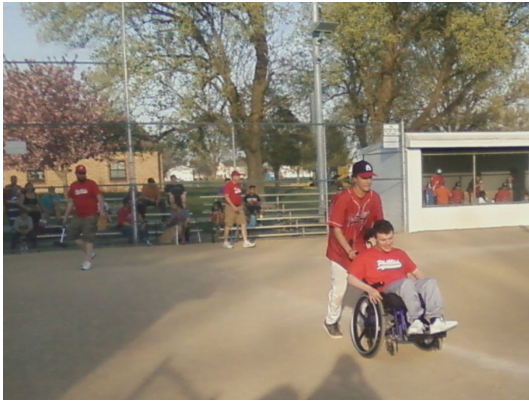




Saints baseball traveled to Silver Lake Elementary School this week, where they



buddied up and played baseball with some young local athletes with special needs. "It's one of my favorite days of the year, with smiles all around," said Head Coach Mike Mastrocola.



Girls crew seniors presented Mr. Roach with the Cathy Coffman Cup at School Meeting after their April 6 regatta on Noxontown Pond. Rowing against five teams, the



Saints came in first place in three races (2V8, 3V8, JV4) and second place in three races (1V8, V4, Freshman 8), and won the Coffman Cup for the fourth year in a row.



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### *Meanwhile, elsewhere on (and off) campus...*

Owen Pinto '20, Hannah Murphy '19, and Piper Ackermann '19 organized a "Phone-Free Weekend" April 6-8. The weekend kicked off with a Chapel service in which students shared brief talks and readings about their relationships with their phones; you can listen to the talks [on the Podcasts page of our website](#). Students were encouraged to turn in their phones to faculty members for the weekend starting Friday afternoon, and SWAG offered a weekend packed with phone-free activities, including tree-planting, honey-harvesting from SAS beehives, voluntary trash pickup on Noxontown Road, a cookout at the home of Dean of Students Will Robinson, and "Fyre Fest," a dance on Rodney Point. A few photos from the weekend are included below—all taken by faculty who chose NOT to turn in their phones for the weekend.

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After the weekend, Arts Department Co-Chair Ann Taylor took her advisees out for ice cream as a "treat" for having given up their cellphones.





Students participating in SISE—St. Andrew's Incubator for Social Entrepreneurship—have been working hard all year to develop and implement solutions to current social, cultural, and environmental issues. On April 6, students presented their small-business proposals before SISE founder Sophie Stenbeck '98. Select projects will be receive funding and move forward to the next stage of development.







Miles Abney '20 organized student participation in Delaware's annual Walk for Autism, held this past Saturday at Fox Point State Park north of Wilmington. April is Autism Awareness Month, and on the Friday before the walk, SAS Health Center nurse Jennifer Sparks gave a Chapel Talk on her experiences as a parent of a child with autism. Her son Dylan was the grand marshal at the parade!



Math teacher Eric Finch has begun an outreach program with Our Daily Bread, a soup kitchen in Middletown. "I have eight students, mostly III Formers, who have committed to serve dinner there once each month for the next three or four years," explained Mr. Finch. "Sports schedules can be a hindrance, but I had three students join me for our first dinner last Thursday: Griffin Batson '20, Rocco White '22, and Edmund Cayley '22. They were amazing—they worked hard from 4:30 to 7:30, helping me and two other adult volunteers to serve dinner to around 30 guests. SAGE Dining Services generously provided the food."





Greek 1 students took a mirror selfie with their National Latin Exam results. The mission of the National Latin Exam is to provide "every Latin student the opportunity to experience a sense of personal accomplishment and success in his or her study of the Latin language and culture."





The women of M Dorm celebrated the birthday of Parkie Mosley '20 with Associate Director of Counseling Lindsay Roznowski (front center, better known as "Miss Roz"), who was on duty that evening.



Our steadfast Polar Bear Plungers are also enjoying the fruits of spring, and were rewarded with a relatively warm dip in the pond in early April.





## *Can't Help But Connect*

Thanks to everyone who joined us for a Coast to Coast Toast last Thursday evening! More than 600 Saints gathered in 38 locations around the world to raise a glass to SAS.







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## Upcoming Events

Fri, Apr 19 - Tue, Apr 23 — Long Weekend  
Fri, May 3 - Sat, May 4 — Trustee Weekend  
Fri, May 10 - Sun, May 12 — [Arts Weekend](#)  
Fri, May 17 — Classics Colloquium  
Sun, May 19 — VI Form Dinner  
Sat, May 25 — [Awards Night](#)  
Sun, May 26 — [Commencement](#)  
Fri, Jun 7 - Sun, Jun 9 — [Reunion](#)

[All-School Calendar](#) | [2018-19 School Calendar](#) | [2019-20 School Calendar](#)

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## We Leave You With This

Admission Office Manager Diane Fagan joined the Class of 2019 on their recent day trip to NYC to see [The Band's Visit](#) on Broadway, and students snapped a group photo with Ms. Fagan, who is retiring at the end of the school year, after the performance.

"It's a great memory for me," Diane said. "I'm going to miss these kids!"



