



Senior Leaders Invest in Campus Culture

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"Showing up for each other is really what brings us together."

Our full community reunited August 31 for the Opening of School, with the day's events unfurling into a week of

new classes and connections. Seniors began the year as they mean to go on: with a vibrant, welcoming embrace for each member of the entire community.

"Starting off early, at [the Opening of School] Square Dance or Open Mic Night, the way we were getting up and cheering for each other helps set the tone," says Class of 2026 co-president Abraham Perry. "It'll carry over the momentum we want for the year."

Seniors agreed ahead of time on that tone, and the energy of their back-to-school momentum. As part of a crucial St. Andrew's tradition, seniors returned home early to discuss classwide values and goals, and how they'll help shape campus culture as mentors and examples for younger students.

The Class of 2026 spent several days engrossed in breakout discussions, as well as hands-on activities, like a card game where participants must reach a shared objective using only nonverbal communication. Through reflection, seniors decided to focus on the role they could play in maintaining strong community bonds and mutual support, and fostering a sense of belonging for all—especially as new Saints joined the family.

For Class of 2026 co-president Lila Lunsford, it helped to think of seniors who paved the way for her as a student leader.

"I was really quiet when I first came here, and I was remembering the seniors with a similar demeanor, and the ones who were really there for me and who really pushed me to be myself," Lunsford says. "If I'd been told as a freshman that I'd be doing this, I wouldn't have believed it at all—and I think I owe some of that to the senior leaders, and leaders in general, who coaxed that part out of me."

In playing a central role in shaping school culture during their final year, seniors have an opportunity to leave a unique mark on St. Andrew's—building on what they have

accomplished individually and as a group over the previous three years, and adding their class' voice to the chorus of nearly 100 classes that came before.

Returning to campus early also helps seniors get back into the rhythms of campus life they'll model to underformers, and to reconnect with the adults of St. Andrew's who also help scaffold the culture, according to Kristin Honsel, director of student life.

"They want to do a good job and leave a mark and lasting impression and want to make sure that the St. Andrew's that they inherited remains as great if not better for those that come after," Honsel says. "It's just so reaffirming: I get to work with kids who buy in and love this community."

The Class of 2026 hopes to lead by example when it comes to being an engaged member of the St. Andrew's family.

"We're very hands-on and active," Perry says. "That's what makes this community special."

"I definitely think [opting in] means showing up as much as you can," Lunsford says. "I think what makes St. Andrew's thrive is everyone showing up for each other, whether that's on the sidelines, in the crowd, on the court—being there and bringing that energy. Even if you've had a hard day ... showing up for each other is really what brings us together."