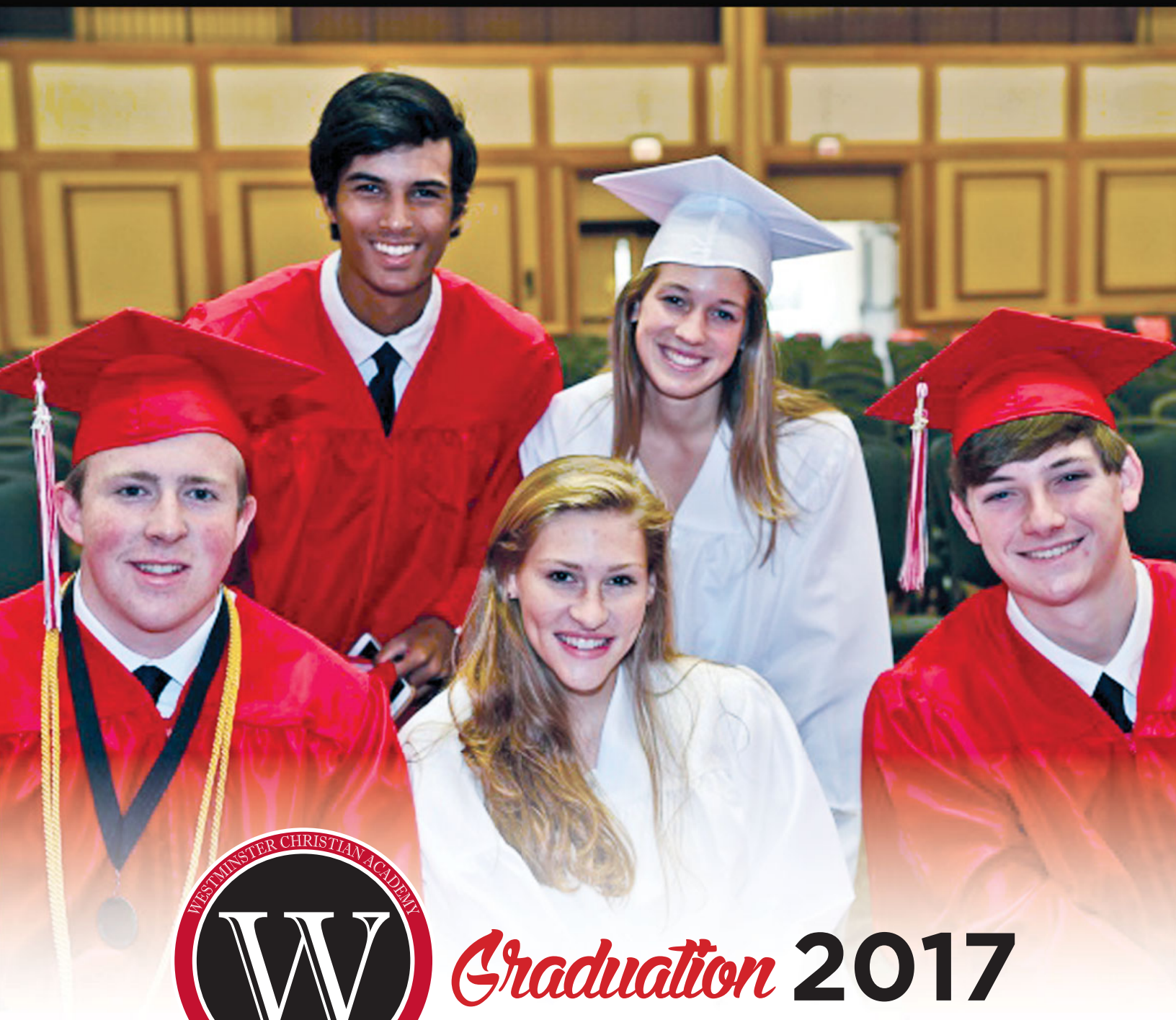
WESTMINSTER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY PRESENTS

Windows

SUMMER 2017



WESTMINSTER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY ~1964~

Graduation 2017

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Ways to Support WCA

Thank you for all the ways you help our school!

Smile.Amazon.com Log on to www.smile.amazon.com and select Westminster; you retain all the benefits of your Amazon account and WCA will receive 0.5% of purchases. Each time you shop, log in under www.smile.amazon.com.

Publix Partner Cards Pick up a plastic Publix Partner card at either school office and ask the cashier to swipe it before you check out.

Kroger Community Rewards Use your Kroger Plus card at www.kroger.com/community and select WCA to receive money back when you shop or fill up your car.

Box Tops for Education Collect the pink "Box Top" on many grocery products. Send to your child's teacher or drop off at the school offices. With each label worth 10 cents, these add up fast.

Plastic Lids Recycle your empty bottles and then drop the clean bottle lids in the buckets at school.

Westminster Christian Academy was ranked FIFTH out of the TWENTY "Best Christian high schools" in Alabama by the website Niche. These rankings were determined by SAT/ACT scores, the quality of colleges that students consider, student-teacher ratio, and parent reviews.

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy As To Students: *Westminster Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of our educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.*

SUMMER EDITION 2017
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Dear Westminster Family,

Any of us that have been privileged enough to be a part of a great team realize two simplistic principles that become evident through the course of that team's season of achievement.

First is the realization that we are building on the hard work, vision, and process set in place by all of those who have gone before us on the same journey.

Second is that there is no one individual or group of individuals that are responsible for the accomplishment, but indeed it was a 'team' effort that moved us to the successful accomplishment of the goal.

Concerning the first principle, Westminster is here and who it is because of a heritage of self-sacrifice predicated on vision. Beginning in 1964 and continuing until the present, deeply committed people who love Christ, love the students, and sense the calling of Christian education have all contributed to our present success. And success it is – what an incredible year of continued excellence in academics, arts, co-curricular activities, and the knitting of the family of WCA.

Concerning the second, take a quick look and you will see every worker from every campus and location of WCA using their gifts for the good of the students that are the heart of Westminster. Support staff, faculty, and administrators alike all are there for one reason – the Glory of God expressed through the vision of preparing students to impact God's kingdom through the education and life lessons learned through WCA. This place is eternal, not the bricks or mortar, not the curriculum or activities, but the students that walk the halls. Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for your patience and support as we work together for His school to continue to become even better in the accomplishment of this goal.

Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the *everlasting God*, the *Creator* of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can *fathom*. He gives *strength* to the weary and increases the *power* of the weak. Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who *hope* in the Lord will renew their strength. They will *soar* on wings like eagles; they will *run* and not grow weary, they will *walk* and not be faint.

Isaiah 40:28-31

WCA is a covenantal school that provides quality education from a Biblical perspective.

Commencement 2017

Westminster Christian Academy • May 19, 2017

CLASS UPDATES

73% of these seniors received a college scholarship
4.1 million dollars in scholarship money offered
1.7 million dollars accepted
72 Graduates
38 National Honor Society Members
36 Honor Graduates

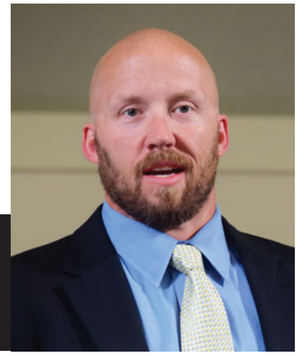
Westminster Christian Academy Class of 2017

Senior Class Verse

You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you. These things I command you, that you love one another. John 15:16-17

5 THINGS *to Know About...*

Garrett Keith
Strength and Conditioning



1. How did you become interested in a career in Strength and Conditioning and did you have a mentor who encouraged you in high school?

"When I was in 8th grade Coach Hooks came to my high school as an assistant football coach. As a middle school boy who grew up part of my life with a single mom, a dad who lived in another state, and eventually a stepfather who was a semi-truck driver, I was looking, although not really aware of it, for a strong male role model. That's not to say I was neglected at all. My family loved me incredibly and my stepfather is a great man, but due to his occupation he couldn't be around as much as he would've liked. Coach Hooks was that male role model that I needed. He was my pastor, teacher, coach, mentor, and was like another father to me, all in one. He introduced me to the weight room and strength training. He encouraged our football team to get in the weight room and develop our bodies through strength training to help us be successful. He taught us the basics and I couldn't get enough of it. My dad gave me a copy of *Arnold's Encyclopedia of Bodybuilding* and I would just pull exercises from it and every magazine I could get my hands on and used them to add to what Coach Hooks had taught us.

One of the greatest lessons I learned from Coach Hooks in the weight room wasn't physiology or biomechanics; it was the hard work and sacrifice necessary to fully reach my potential. I eventually learned this applies to every part of life, not just the weight room. Some of my friends and teammates stuck with the program while others were sporadic. Those same character traits could be seen in other walks of their lives. Through my years as an athlete and eventually as a coach, I really started to understand how a person's character could be revealed through the weight room and if they were willing to be molded, then their character could be changed. Through hard work, I was able to earn a full scholarship to play football at the University of North Alabama. Throughout my time at UNA, the weight room was a huge part of my life. I played four years at UNA and upon graduation returned to ACA to be an assistant football coach and the strength and conditioning coach.

Through the influence of Coach Hooks, Coach LeBlanc, and others in my life, I realized Christian education was an incredible mission field to pour into the life of young people. Since my sophomore year of high school, I realized I had a desire to help young people through teaching and coaching. Coach Hooks would let me teach some of the young players on the team different drills at practice, and I would also help a lot of the guys in our training sessions in the weight room. I believe the effort that was put into ministering to me through sports and weight training is what gave me a passion to do the same when I started searching for my calling. Some people would think that increasing the strength, size, and speed of our athletes is the most important part of my job, but I disagree. While this is vital, the most important thing for me as a coach is to pour into the lives of young people and give them the tools to be Godly men and women. I may not see the fruits of this for many years after they leave the program, but when it is evident that they have become what we define as men and women, it is an incredible sight to behold."

2. How would you explain to a student what Strength and Conditioning entails and justify the importance of the program?

"The term strength and conditioning coach is often thought of as someone who tells kids to pick things up, put them down, and running until somebody vomits. In some cases in the past, this may have been true, but the field has evolved greatly over the years. I would say phrases like "physical development coach" and "athletic performance coach" are more valid. Strength and speed are important qualities to train, but it is vital that proper movement patterns including landing, acceleration, and deceleration mechanics are a major part of the program especially in the early stages.

One of the most important reasons for this type of program is due to the changes in our society over the past 10-20 years. Three of these are the increase in use and availability of technology, the lack of time given to P.E. and recess in grade school, and the increase of sports specialization in our youth. Technology keeps children seated in front of a TV/video gaming system or on a cellphone for long periods of time instead of playing outside. When current 30+ year olds were in their youth, they spent it outside playing a variety of self-policed games and learning basic movement patterns through free play. Due to the focus on standardized testing in America, we have seen the time given to P.E. and recess decrease. Studies show this is harming our kids not only physically, but also in the classroom. Finally, the problem of early sport specialization has kept children in the same movement patterns throughout the year instead of exposing them to a variety of physical skills. Due to these reasons, it is incredibly important to create physical literacy, decrease the likelihood of injury, and increase relative and absolute strength through a proper strength and conditioning program.

Parents usually understand these justifications but young athletes strive for improvements in performance. They want to see their strength and power numbers improve as well as

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Elizabeth Flachbart
Senate Page

WCA Junior, Elizabeth Flachbart, spent the spring semester working as a Senate Page in Washington, DC. We caught up with her during her Spring Break to ask about this exciting adventure.

1. Why did you want to serve as a Page and what is the process to become one?

In 4th grade, we went on a field trip to Montgomery, and we were told about the Alabama Senate and the Page program. We were also told about the US Senate Page Program and that when we got to high school, we could apply. I have wanted to be a Page since that field trip.

I visited both Senator Sessions' and Senator Shelby's websites to find the steps to apply. I decided I would apply with both senators to double my chances of getting in. Then Senator Sessions was appointed Attorney General, and his appointment was taken away. Because of that, I only applied to serve as a Page for Senator Shelby. To apply, I had to fill out the application and send three teacher recommendations, a cover letter, and a resume. I applied late November and got the call December 7. I arrived in DC on January 29th. We were taken to the Capitol, given a tour of the Senate floor, and met our Cloak Room supervisor (the person who is in charge of the Pages). I started work on the 30th. I was sworn in just like a Senator – I swore to defend the Constitution from enemies both foreign and domestic to the best of my ability.

2. What was a typical day like and what were your duties as a Senate Page?

I generally woke up at 5:00 a.m. and headed downstairs to eat breakfast. The Webster Building houses the Pages. The top two floors are dorm rooms, and the kitchen and the school are in the basement. In my dorm room were four other girls besides myself. They were from Wyoming, Colorado, Virginia, and Illinois. School started about 6:15 a.m. Pages had to be on the floor 1 hour and 15 minutes before the Senate convened to set up. The earliest I ever had to be on the floor was at 7:00 a.m. (excluding the continuous overnight sessions we experienced), but we usually arrived about 9:00. We were divided up into two shifts. These were the people we worked with. We would work on the floor for an hour, then take a break for an hour while the other shift worked. We switched off every hour. Sometimes I got off from work at 6:00 p.m., but sometimes it was later, depending on what was going on in the Senate. If there was a vote taking place, all Pages had to be on the floor.

Pages delivered copies of bills, treaties, confirmations, anything that was passed to different clerk's offices. For example, when they passed a bill, we were handed a copy of the roll call (a list of all the senators and which way they voted).

We made copies of this and delivered the roll call. I delivered the roll call for the confirmation of Attorney General Sessions, and that was a cool moment for me as an Alabamian. We also ran errands in the Capitol for the Senators. Sometimes they needed us to deliver something to their offices.

While serving, I have had the opportunity to meet a lot of notable people. I met the Prime Ministers of Canada and Ireland. The day after President Trump appointed Gorsuch, he came to the Capitol, and we were able to meet him.

3. What is the Page School like?

It was definitely rigorous, but it was not harder than WCA. Kids in the program from public school found it more difficult. It was a different environment because a lot of it was independent work. We did a lot of work outside the classroom setting. If Senate worked late, then school might be delayed or canceled the next day. If it went all night, school was canceled. I am taking Pre-Calculus, U.S. History, Physics, and Composition.

4. What are some other interesting tidbits that you could share about being a Senate Page?

There are 30 senators who appoint a Page. There are 16 Republican Pages and 14 Democrat Pages. Whichever party is in majority has the most Pages. I work for all the Republican Senators, even though it was through Shelby's office that I received my appointment. A Page's political bent may not necessarily line up with the party whom they are serving: you, however, do serve the party of your appointing senator.

The number of girls and boys is usually even – 15 of each, but currently there are 15 girls and 14 boys, as one female Page chose to leave the program, and one senator appointed a girl when he was supposed to appoint a boy.

Pages had weekends off and could go out and explore with friends. One of my favorite memories is going to the Cherry Blossom Festival and flying a kite on the National Mall.

We could not have cell phones. They took our phones when we arrived, and we could only have them if we were checking out with our parents or on a break. Cell phones could be a distraction. We also heard confidential stuff, and they didn't want that being spread. We were also limited in talking to the press.

5. What have you learned that you will take away from this experience?

I have learned to be independent in things I had taken for granted. I missed not having to worry about everyday things, like doing laundry, and I missed being around my friends from home, but I formed many lifelong friendships through this program. I also had to seek out other Christians in the Page Program. Most of the Christians in the program were Catholic, so I attended a Catholic Church, but one of my friends told me he was willing to go with me to a Baptist Church.

I have definitely learned how to work cooperatively with people who come from different backgrounds and faiths. I've learned this from working with the other Pages and the Senators. I have learned to defend what I believe but not push away people in the process.

5 Things – Garrett Keith *continued from page 4*

their performance on the field. I explain to our students why strength and proper movement skills development helps on the field as well as testing them in different lifts and movements. When a student sees their vertical jump, squat, 20 yard dash, or any other tested movement improve, they understand the work they've been doing is giving them a better chance to be successful. The student simply wants to see improvement. I give them a chance to see that with the tools that we have at our disposal.

Our Lifetime Fitness class and after school strength and speed training develops leadership skills as well. We expose students to our core values and hold them accountable. I explain the meaning of "values" and our actions. Once they understand the basic concept, I introduce them to the five core values of our program. We take one value at a time and dig deeper into what it means for me as a coach and for them as an athlete. I begin pointing out examples of people who are putting those values into action. Then, I require two of our students to point out one other student per week who they have witnessed living out one of the core values. This final step has been one of the most rewarding and impacting parts of the program. When a senior who has set multiple records in the weight room stands up and recognizes a freshman who is new to the weight room as an embodiment of one of the core values, it is an incredible sight. This recognition from a peer can do wonders for a young student."

3. Congratulations on being named the AL State Director of NHSSCA. What are some of your specific responsibilities?

"Being chosen as Alabama State Director of the National High School Strength Coaches Association, NHSSCA, is a huge honor for me. The founders of the NHSSCA are Gary Schofield, Fred Eaves, and Kevin Vanderbush, and for them to choose me to be in this position over some of the great high school strength coaches in our state was very humbling.

As the organization is still in its infancy, the responsibilities are limited, but I am creating a database of all the strength coaches or coaches that oversee the weight room at each school in the state. As our organization grows, there will be added responsibilities such as hosting a state strength clinic and selecting a state high school strength coach of the year. This position has granted me some opportunities that I haven't previously experienced. I recently had the privilege of speaking at the NHSSCA Northeast Regional that was hosted at Notre Dame High School in Lawrenceville, NJ. It was a great experience sharing what I get to do with our students at WCA, and I was able to share the stage with some incredible speakers."

4. Tell me about your family. Do you encourage exercise and nutrition at home as well?

"Leah and I have been married for 11 years. We have known each other since middle school and were one year apart throughout our time at American Christian Academy. She is currently in school to be a nurse and juggles a crazy schedule with our two kids and the long hours of my job. We have two amazing children, Claire and Wilson. Claire is 5 years old and will begin attending WCA at the lower campus this coming fall. She is extremely excited about being a wildcat for the first time. Wilson is 3 years old and is a full-speed little boy. That guy never stops.

Exercise and nutrition are a passion of mine regardless of where I am. That doesn't mean that we only have perfect foods in our house, but it does mean that we are aware of how much and what we are putting in our body. My children have a good understanding of how much I enjoy exercising, and it's incredibly fun when Claire asks to exercise with me.

Hours of sleep- I typically get 5 hours of sleep, sometimes a little less, and on a good night 6 if I don't have much work to do. That is obviously not the recommended number of hours, but there are studies that show there is a small percentage of the population that doesn't require the normal 7-8 to fully function and I believe I am in that group.

Exercise- I train 5 days a week in the morning for about an hour. It is something I love to do and I don't think a strength coach can do the job correctly if training isn't a part of the normal routine. As a young coach, I heard the quote "never trust a strength coach who doesn't have calluses on his hands," and I've taken that to heart.

Meal plans- I cook and measure my breakfast and lunch on Sunday afternoon. I make a very simple breakfast that can be stored for the week and heated up daily. I grill out on Sunday, usually chicken, and have either steamed broccoli or green beans as my side each day during the week.

Water intake- I typically take in at least a gallon of water a day. There won't be many times during the day that you don't see me without a water bottle near by.

I consider myself incredibly blessed to have a job doing what I love and feel called to do. Working at Westminster with a very supportive staff and administration is something that I literally thank God for every day. The kids that I coach become a big part of my life, and I thoroughly enjoy being able to be a part of their life."

5. What is a typical weekday for Coach Keith?
- 3:40- Wake up
- 4:30- My time to workout
- 6:00- Start group training depending on the day of the week.
- 7:00- Prepare for the school day.
- 7:50-2:40- School day with up to 5 classes of Lifetime Fitness.
- *3:00-5:30 Fall-Football practice.
- *3:00-4:45 Winter and Spring - after school workouts. Clean up and set up of the weight room afterwards can take anywhere from 30-45 minutes.
- 6:00- Get home and have dinner with my family.
- 7-8:00 Bathe the kids and put them to bed. I enjoy the time I am with my kids at night getting them ready and putting them to bed since I'm not home in the morning.
- 8-9:30- This is my time with Leah to catch up.
- 9:30-10:30- This is my chance to get the work done that I wasn't able to finish during my planning periods. During the fall, this takes a little longer due to prepping for practice and watching film.
- 10:30-11:00- Fall asleep as soon as my head hits the pillow.

ANNUAL FUND IMPROVEMENTS

Benefit Students

Annual Fund donations allow WCA to purchase and provide items that are not covered by tuition. This year, we raised $254,312 and this provided funds to address some immediate needs to benefit our students.

At our Lower School, we purchased new risers to use for our music program, new playground equipment along with improvements to our playground border, and a new awning to connect the Lower School building with our Fine Arts modular to keep our students protected from the weather.

At our Upper School, we are renovating a downstairs classroom into our new AP Chemistry Lab to include gas, water, and electricity at workstations, new soapstone table tops and purchasing new supplies for our STEM classes. We are also updating our computer lab with 24 new computers, and a new chromebook cart with 30 new chromebooks.

In Athletics, we have added new PE lockers for storing additional equipment, made improvements to our strength and conditioning area, updated tennis and track uniforms and equipment, and made improvements to our baseball facilities with new batting cages and practice area, and new baseball and softball equipment.

In Music and Fine Arts, the Annual Fund purchased a new keyboard for Choir and created a new practice field for our Marching Band.

We were also able to help many families with needs-based tuition assistance.

This Fall, WCA will be introducing Naviance Family Connection which is a comprehensive website our students and families can use to make plans about colleges and careers. Family Connection is linked with Naviance, a service the College and Career Advisor uses to track and analyze data about college and career plans, so it provides up-to-date information specific to our school.

Family Connection will allow students to build a resume, complete online surveys and manage timelines and deadlines for making decisions about colleges and careers, research colleges and scholarships, and create plans for the future. More details will follow as we begin distributing this information to our seniors and their parents in August. Throughout the year, we will begin rolling out additional information to our 11th through 9th graders.

Thank you to all of our Annual Fund donors for investing in our mission and helping WCA become better for our students. Together, we are making a difference!

My Life After WCA

BY PHILLIP ALLRED, CLASS OF 1998

It's hard to believe it's been 19 years since I walked across that hot gym stage at Westminster Christian Academy's old campus! On that day, I could only think of one thing- leaving Huntsville and starting my new life! I wasn't mad at anyone or frustrated with my life. On the contrary, I was prepared to move on. My time at WCA had prepared me in so many ways for college and beyond. It was also within my time at WCA that I felt "the call." I knew God was calling me to preach and pastor. I knew He wanted me to spend the rest of my life in His service; I just had no idea what it would look like.

After high school, I spent 4 years at Trevecca Nazarene University in Nashville, TN. Then, unexpectedly to me (but not to God), I moved to Houston, TX to take my first professional job as a Children's Pastor. During my time at Trevecca, I met a beautiful woman and somehow convinced her to marry me! We both started our new life in Houston in 2002. I never imagined then that 15 years later I would still live here in Houston and still have the privilege of pastoring the same church. Through the years, I have served as the Children's Pastor, Associate

Pastor, Interim Pastor, Co-Pastor, and now Lead Pastor of Lake Houston Church of the Nazarene. It has been a gift to watch this community blossom and to truly be a part of families' lives throughout the last decade and a half. It has been a blessing to help others experience the Kingdom of God and share with them what it looks like to follow Christ in the NOW through the power of the Holy Spirit.

My wife, Stacey, and I have had the opportunity to minister side by side in a number of ways. She served on staff as the children's pastor of Lake Houston Church prior to becoming a mom, she continues to write amazing children's camp and VBS curriculum, and the two of us have traveled together to many different states as children's evangelists. She now volunteers in various ways at our church while also homeschooling our son, Elijah, who is seven years old. He is an incredibly energetic and creative kid who loves all things related to art, design, and entertainment. Elijah wants to be a Disney Imagineer when he grows up.

My brother, Robert Allred '02, has served with his wife as co-directors of an African Children's Choir called Daraja for the last several years. Daraja helps raise money and support for children's compassionate ministries around the world through a missions program called 410 Bridge. He has recently taken the job of a student pastor at a church in North Carolina. My sister, Emily Allred '04, travelled the world as a missionary during her twenties and she just got married earlier this year. Emily and her husband also live in Houston, TX where she is the general manager of a coffee shop, and they are both very active at Lake Houston Church of the Nazarene.

Life has been busy for me since I left WCA and I have felt prepared every step along the way. Here are a few ways that I believe God used my time at Westminster:

1. Commitment. Mr. Hammond, Mr. Himebook, Miss Mangum, Mrs. Huston, Coach Lanier, and ALL the other teachers at WCA during my time there helped me to learn what it meant to commit fully and stick it out. I watched their long careers and without me even knowing it, I learned what it looked like to stick things out and work at one place to help a community grow.

2. Biblical Desire and Canonical Context. As most young people growing up in a Christian home, I knew many memory verses and read the Bible. However, it wasn't until my time in Mr. Hammond's Old Testament class that I gained a love and desire for the Story of God! He showed me the importance of the Old Testament in the cannon of the scriptures. I went on to minor in Old Testament studies and spending a lot of time sharing with others the importance of seeing the ENTIRE Bible as God's story for us.

3. Inter-Denominational Acceptance and Cooperation. While at WCA, I had the privilege to know and understand many Christians from different denominational backgrounds. Did we disagree? Yes, but I realized we also agreed on a lot! I've spent the last 19 years since high school trying to focus on how I agree with my brothers and sisters from other denominations, rather than arguing about our disagreements. A phrase that has helped me a lot in the years since WCA has been attributed to St Augustine: "In the essentials we have unity, in the non-essentials we find liberty, and in all things we give charity (Love)." This statement is how I strive

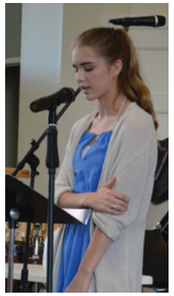
to live my life in relation to other denominations and even those who would not yet understand the power of Christ Jesus. It is my hope that they may experience the love of Christ, as we the Church Universal, strive to live out the Kingdom of God. I'm thankful for my friends who are serving in other denominations as pastors and lay-people for the glory of Christ.

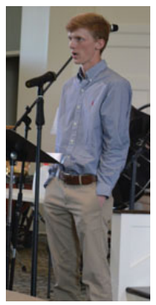
I'm so grateful for the rich life that God has given me in my adult years, and much of it can be linked to what I learned and experienced in my time at Westminster Christian Academy. Thank you WCA for giving me such a wonderful foundation for the path I have walked and the journey to come!

Fine Arts

Fifth Grade Band students participated at the Solo & Ensemble Competition on Saturday, April 1st. Each of these students received a superior rating on their duets: **Chloe Schoen, Belle Kelly, Mia Byrd, Lydia Bruns, Jasmine Feld, Knox Keel, Katie McDaniel, JT Ligon, Jessica Miskovish, Lauren Webber, and Tatum Causey**.

The artwork of WCA Upper and Lower school students is being exhibited in the Children's Community Gallery at the Huntsville Museum of Art, May 23rd through August 13, 2017. The Lower School student works being featured are **Jasmine Feld, Anna Heering, Noah Anderson, Abigail Norris, Kahlan Fleming, Ella-Carnes Gunn, Haley Hubbard, Amber Bowab, Morgan Tishaw, and Ava Rutledge**. Middle School artists are **McKenzie Hendrix, Emma Hammond, Ellie Hundley, Amanda Dowling, and Emma Ligon. Brooke McAdams, Lanie Hammond, Jansyn Gordon, and Emma Hinely** are representing the High School. The gallery is located on the Plaza level of the Museum and is always free to all.





WCA's Fine Arts Department held their annual **Fine Arts chapel on Thursday, May 11th**. The band and choir both performed while artists **William Martin, Caroline Wood, and Laurel Holloway** shared one of their art pieces with the audience. The band played *Flight of the Thunderbird* which included the 7th grade band members. Soloists were **Zack Benton** on Alto sax and **Patrick Younes** on trumpet. *Let it Shine* featured **Taylor Thompson, Anna Cummings, and Megan Harris** on Flute and **Zack Benton and Josh Talley** on Alto Sax. **Jessa Wylie** performed a jazz vibraphone solo. *The Great Locomotive Chase* had many soloists including **Taylor Thompson, Lauren Rigby, Emma Wingfield, Jesse Litton, Matthew Graham, Christopher Johnson, Matthew Thompson, and Rachel Pearsall**. The band made a "splash" with a homemade "wave drum", and 10 students were placed around the sanctuary with milk jugs with a little water in them to give the effect of the mighty Mississippi River. The choir performed *Kumbaya, Let Us Sing, Jubilate Deo, Beauty and the Beast*, and *Old Time Religion Medley* with the band accompanying and **Leela Hudnall** as the soloist.

Pianist **Nathaniel Pride**, Sophomore, recently won the $500 First Place Award in the Decatur Music Club Scholarship Audition. He also performed in the Winners Recital at Auburn after winning the Alabama Music Teachers Association piano competition. This competition starts with thousands of piano students in district auditions all across the state. Those who receive superior at the district audition advance to state. After the state audition, winners are selected to perform in the State Winners Recital. This year, Nathaniel was one of 13 selected to perform in the Winners Recital.

WCA had four All State Band Students in the Montgomery competition. **Lauren Rigby** placed 1st chair clarinet in the Senior High White Band. **Justice Bright** placed 1st Chair percussion in the Middle School band. **Amanda Miskovish** placed 3rd chair French horn in the Middle School band, and **Matthew Thompson** placed 8th chair trombone in the MS band.

The WCA Bands retreated in the late spring for a couple of days. It was a great time of fun and growing together as a group and also closer to God. The activities included devotions; games; zip line; paddle boating/kayaking; and an activity room with ping pong, pool tables, and other fun things. Two of the most memorable group activities were dividing into groups to perform skits based on assigned key words and also groups went into the woods and found items to make music and create a performance. There were some really creative performances for both of these activities. Notably, the winning musical performance used limbs, rocks, and pine cones to accompany a song which was written by Rachel Pearsall. It was called the Flattery Song. During the course of the song, each judge was showered with compliments and they handed out fake money. It was hilarious and done very well.

Lower School HIGHLIGHTS

Our 4th and 5th Grade participated in a Math Contest through The Math League (www.mathleague.com). Our students did a great job! Our top scores in 4th Grade go to **Kahlan Fleming, Peyton Fox, Ella-Carnes Gunn, Raymond Norris, and Morgan Tishaw**. Our top scorers in 5th Grade were **Wyatt Donaldson, Caleb Goode, Josh Goode, Coston Korotky, Jadyn Lindberg, Clara Norris, Eli Peebles, and Ashley Wilson**.

The Fifth grade classes had a Shark Tank-like Entrepreneur competition. They formed companies, came up with project ideas, wrote formal pretend loan requests to banks, created budgets, loan comparison and earnings charts, and used some graphic design software to create posters, work on logos, business cards and brochures. Finally, they did website design for their company. Our winners with "Talk Watch" by D.O.T. Inc. were **Jasmine Feld, Ryan Johnson, Mia Byrd, Tyler Kelly, and Chloe Darwin**. They received a hands-on learning experience by traveling to two businesses as a reward.

Kindergarten classes had several spring activities. They enjoyed the outdoor classroom/garden for a picnic with parents, and they also celebrated Cinco de Mayo with a Mexican Hat Dance. They celebrated Mother's Day with a brunch at Cyn Shea's Café.

Field Day was held May 11th. Coach Knight and his team put together a great day of competition, fun, and games.

WAYS 5th/6th Baseball Team won their last game of the season at Central school in Brownsboro. They ended the year with a service project at the Downtown Rescue Mission serving a meal on Saturday, May 13.

As part of an economics unit and as a service project, our **Fourth Grade Classes** sold handcrafted tissue paper flowers for Mother's Day. The students profited $980 and donated the funds to St. Jude and Compassion International. The **4th graders** also celebrated the end of the year with Beach Day activities.

Before heading off to the Upper Campus, the **5th graders** took a last walk through the lower school hallway on Tuesday, May 23. They were cheered on by all the students and teachers at the Lower Campus.

K4 Student and teachers had an end of the year celebration on Tuesday, May 16, while **K5 students and teachers** had an end of the year celebration on Thursday, May 18. Students performed for their family and friends through music, poetry, and scripture.

Upper School HIGHLIGHTS

WCA DI Teams recently performed in the state tournament. All the teams scored either in 2nd or 3rd place and did a great job representing our school.

Members of the **National Honor Society** helped the Better Business Bureau with Shred Day on Earth Day, April 22.

The **2016-2017 Yearbook Staff's** yearbook was inducted into Walsworth Yearbook's 2016-2017 Gallery of Excellence. This distinction is awarded to those yearbooks that consistently demonstrate superior quality.

High School and Middle School Awards Programs were held in May near the end of the school year. Many students were recognized for the achievements in academics and the arts. For WCA, there are 3 awards that are unique to us alone. The **Scott Lawrence Award** is given in memory of Scott Lawrence, a former student of WCA who had Muscular Dystrophy. This award is presented to a senior who has exhibited the qualities that were so evident in Scott's life: a love for Jesus Christ, a joyful attitude, courage when facing adverse circumstances, hope and trust in God's faithfulness despite the outcome, thoughtfulness toward those around him, a servant's attitude, an encourager in words and deeds. This year's winner was **Emilie Rogers**. The **William Craig Aiken Scholarship Award** is named after Craig Aiken, a longtime supporter of the school. Craig tirelessly worked at the school in a volunteer capacity, even though he had no children of his own to attend WCA. This award is presented to the senior who has a servant's heart and is dedicated to placing others ahead of self. This year's winner was **Hayden Goode**. The **Discipleship Awards** are voted on by the students themselves. Each class chooses a girl and a boy whom they believe are doing their best to exemplify the Christ like life. Winners were as follows: **6th Grade – Jennifer Hamilton and David King; 7th grade – Emma Norris and Dalton Fancher; 8th grade – Isabel Zecher and David Johnson; 9th grade – Lauren McAdams and Cade Rawlings; 10th Grade – Jansyn Gordon and Matthew Dull; 11th Grade – Laurel McFadden and Henry Lynn; 12th Grade – Emma Lynn and Christopher Johnson**.

The **8th grade** attended the Alabama 4-H Center located on the Coosa River in Columbiana on May 3-5. The students enjoyed archery, canoeing, rock climbing and participated in academic classes involving water analysis and animal life.

Thirteen **WCA Students** had the opportunity to have lunch with **Mississippi State University President Mark E. Keenum**. Dr. Keenum only hosts a few of these luncheons each year, and WCA was honored to have him. Dr. Keenum spoke to the juniors and seniors on finishing strong and paying attention to their grades. He also encouraged them to equip themselves for the future. He advised them to get the best education they could, to live their lives with integrity, and to work hard and apply their talents. He told them, "Armed with a good education, you can make a difference and have a lasting impact on the world you live in."

Bible Students in **11th grade** displayed their gifts for a final time. **Lilly Stevens** imagined Paul's empty prison cell with the word "Rejoice!" written on the wall. **Josh Matthewson** created one of Ephesian 6's pieces to God's armor - the shield of Faith. **Brooke McAdams** created predestination and freewill in tension as we see God reaching down for someone's hand.

Jacob Richman, Luke Best, Walker Hamilton, Hunter McWhorter, Caden Best, Brooks Reinhardt, and Ian Thies recently participated in SOS – Service Over Self, a mission organization that seeks to improve the housing condition of disadvantaged persons in Memphis. Although the immediate goal is to provide safer, drier, and warmer homes for residents, the ultimate goal is to introduce them to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

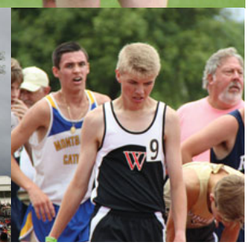
Sixth Grade Dog Day was on April 21st. After doing research and writing a paper, students gave a speech for their classmates on the dog of their choice. Many students brought their own pets or the pet of a friend or another family member to share with the class.

Westminster students won big at the State Spanish Club Convention placing 2nd in Exhibits and 4th in T-shirts, designed by **Brooke McAdams**, who also placed 1st in Painting. Other awards included: **Jansyn Gordon** - 3rd Place Poster; **Megan Harris** - 2nd Place Vocabulary; **Isabel Zecher** - 2nd Place Sight Reading 1; **Sarah Madison** - 3rd Place Sight Reading 2; **Lilly Stevens** - 2nd Place Sight Reading 3; and **Christine Thompson** - 3rd Place Literary Recitation. Muy bien hecho estudiantes!

WCA FIRSTS FOR ATHLETICS

American Speed Skater Bonnie Blair said, “Winning doesn’t always mean being first. Winning means you’re doing better than you’ve ever done before.” WCA Athletics can certainly attest to this as we had several teams that did better than they have done in past seasons, and Track and Field, Girls Tennis and Boys Golf, and all had firsts this past spring.

Outgoing Athletic Director Dick Spybey summed the success of the teams, “Winning can be contagious and I think that’s part of the reason for our department-wide success. Also, God has blessed us with committed coaches. Our staff has stayed true to our philosophy...we enjoy winning but it should never define “who” we are. It’s been an honor to lead this bunch!”



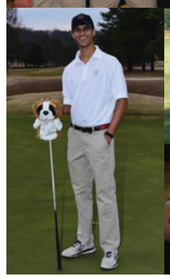
Track and Field

The WCA Track and Field Team first impressed this season at sectionals with the boys team finishing 3rd overall and the girls team finishing 8th overall. Through the course of the season, 16 school records were broken. Since its inception, the team has regularly had athletes advance to the State Championship. According to Coach Corderyl Sunday, “We had a total of 17 athletes make it to the State Championships in over 15 events this season.” The boys 4x100 relay team, made up of **Michael Parker, Alex Stanley, Josh Randall, and Auston Leslie**, took home All State Honors placing 6th in the relay race. Another notable accomplishment was **Noah Jones**, who placed 9th in pole vault after only training for a month. Coach Sunday also said, “History was made this season when **Auston Leslie** became the first Wildcat to win a State Championship in a field event, winning the 4A boys long jump with a jump of 22-3.5. Auston also finished as the State Runner-Up in the boys triple jump.” Coach Sunday noted, “The 2017 track season was great for the Westminster Wildcats.”

WCA had three **Varsity Girls Soccer** Players named to the AHSAA 4A/5A All-State Girls Soccer Team. **Natalie Fogle and McKenzie Nowin** were named to the First Team, while **Lilly Stevens** was named to the 2nd Team. Lilly was also chosen to play in the North/South Game. The state published the end-of-year team rankings for the various soccer classes in Alabama. Westminster Christian Academy has been ranked #7 out of the 15 teams ranked. A lot of factors weigh in including strength of schedule and season results.

Girls Tennis

Girls Tennis Coach Christy Howell walked us through the season. “The WCA Girls Tennis team went undefeated in our area until the last week of the season, losing to Randolph only 5-4. **Bella Wimberly** went undefeated throughout the regular season at #1 singles.” The Sectional Tournament for 4/5A was held at Point Mallard in Decatur. Several players advanced to the finals: #2 doubles - **Katy Hardin and Michaela Bolyard**; #1 singles - **Bella Wimberly**; #2 singles- **Michaela Bolyard**; #5 singles - **Emma Lynn**; and #6 singles - **Sarah Hardin**. **Olivia Conners, Katie Hodges, and Laurel Holloway** rounded out the accomplished team. “Overall, the team finished 2nd place in the tournament and moved on to State,” Coach Howell said. The 4/5A state tournament was held in Mobile in early May. **Bella Wimberly, Katy Hardin, and Emma Lynn** all advanced to the Quarterfinals where they were defeated by UMS-Wright, who went on to win the State Championship. Although WCA Tennis Teams have advanced to the State Tournament in the past, this was the first time any players have advanced to the Quarterfinals. Coach Howell praised her team, “I am very proud of the team for all of their hard work this season.”



Boys Golf

Through the years, individual golfers have made an impression and even advanced to the State Championship. This season, the Boys Golf Team was the first team to advance to the State Championship. During the competition, only five boys on each team compete. This year, **William Martin, Jake Lackey, Rily McRoy, Parker Todd, and Brett Clark** played in the tournament. All five boys compete each day, but the highest score is dropped each day of play. After the two days of competition, **Rily McRoy** emerged as the #5 4A golfer.

The **WAYS Track and Field Team**, comprised of 21 4th through 6th graders, recently competed in the Huntsville Independent School League against 8 other schools from our area. WCA’s WAYS Track and Field team hosted the meet at Brockway’s Earl Van Dyke Stadium for the first time in school history. The first meet had 280 students on 9 teams participating. During the regular season events, every team member placed well enough in at least one of their events to score points contributing to the team’s success in its first season.

FACULTY AND STAFF
Recognized for Service

A Recognition and Celebration Breakfast was held on Friday, May 26th to honor all of our Faculty and Staff. A delicious breakfast was prepared by Becky Hartley and the wonderful ladies in the Upper School cafeteria. More than 90 faculty and staff members enjoyed great food and fellowship together.

5 Year Service Awards

Stephen Hooks recognized the following staff for their service years at WCA:

- 5 Years of Service: Charlie Benford, Tammi Burruss, Emily Donaldson, Lori Druzynski, Mary Hayes, Ron Klein, Alyssa Knight
- 10 Years of Service: Carey VanKirk
- 15 Years of Service: Amy Madison and Jeff Rogers
- 20 Years of Service: Karen Boyd and Kerry St. John
- 25 Years of Service: Dawn Baker
- 30 Years of Service: Doug Madison

Special recognition gifts were also given to Dick Spybey (9), Linda Cyr (17), Bobbie Mitchell (19), and Joanne Tritt (19) as they transition into new adventures. They have impacted WCA and our students more than words can ever express. We sincerely thank them for their dedication, service, and love to Westminster Christian Academy.

We are grateful for all of our dedicated faculty and staff who contribute so much to the mission of WCA. You are making a difference! We look forward to another great year in 2018.

15 Year Service Awards

20 Year Service Awards

25 Year Service Award

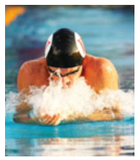
30 Year Service Awards

We will miss you Coach Spybey!

WCA students past and present created special artwork to share their appreciation to Miss Mitchell and Mrs. Tritt.

Special baby shower gifts for Mrs. Herron.

Alumni UPDATES



Braxton Conners ('15) will be joining the Florida Atlantic University swim program this fall after two years attending, but not competing, at Auburn. While at Westminster, Braxton was named a NCSA High School All-American as well as a USA Swimming Scholastic All-American. In 2014, he led WCA to a second-place finish at the AHSAA 5A State Championship meet where he was named All-State in both the 100 breaststroke and 200 medley relay.

Gemma Ruth Gil was born on May 22, 2017 at 12:45pm. She weighed 6 pounds and 11 ounces, and was 20.5 inches long. She was born with a full head of hair, and has stolen the hearts of her parents **Rudy and Jacki Gil (Class of 2005).** Rudy is currently working as Communications Director at Aviagen, while Jacki is running her stationery business, Salt + Paperie. They are looking forward to their favorite pastime, traveling with Gemma this fall to Chicago, California, and Disney World!

Amberlynn Boydston Albritton ('13) graduated summa cum laude from Auburn University with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Following graduation, she will be working in the medical intensive care unit at Brookwood Baptist Medical Center in Birmingham, Alabama.

Nathan Newman '06, and his wife, Jessica, live on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC. Nathan graduated from Reformed Theological Seminary, DC in May 2017 and accepted a call to serve as assistant pastor at McLean Presbyterian Church in McLean, VA, located just outside of the nation's capital. In addition, he serves as an Air Force Reserve chaplain, most recently on the United States Air Force Academy Cadet Chapel staff. Jess serves as special assistant to the U .S. Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos. She and the secretary, though many years between them, are graduates of Holland Christian Schools and strong school-choice advocates.

Jay Madison ('13) and Sierra Thurman were engaged at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens on April 8. Jay has completed his degree in mechanical engineering from UAB. Sierra has her psychology degree from UAB and is employed as a behavioral therapist at the Riley Center. Their wedding will be held June 30, 2018 at the Huntsville Botanical Gardens.

Elizabeth Randall ('13) graduated from Samford University on May 12, 2017 with a Nursing Degree. She had the opportunity to serve on a medical mission trip to Peru with a group of Samford nursing and pharmacy students to grow in sharing her faith through her future profession. She also had the opportunity to study abroad for a January Term in London with Samford's Nursing School. She was very involved in her campus ministry, Campus Outreach, attending two Summer Beach Projects. She will be serving in Australia for a month this summer with Campus Outreach to share the Gospel with college students there. After she returns, she will live in Birmingham and begin her first job as a Registered Nurse at UAB Hospital on the Heart Lung Transplant ICU and could not be more excited!

After graduating from WCA in 2005, **Chase Stephenson Daws** attended UAH and earned a dual degree in philosophy and political science. In 2011, after some begging, he finally convinced his wife Holly that he was marriage material. They married and moved to Nashville, Tennessee where Chase did college ministry as an RUF intern at Belmont University. After 2 years in Nashville, they moved to Philadelphia where he recently got his Master of Divinity from Westminster Theological Seminary. Their time in Philadelphia was particularly sweet as they welcomed their first little boy, Gabe, into their family! Ministering to college students through RUF had not left their hearts and minds, so they are eager to begin their new chapter as Chase will be the next RUF campus minister at the University of California, Berkeley.

The **Class of 2007** recently celebrated 10 years on May 19th and 20th. Sallie Keene Stokes and Sara Barnett planned a fun weekend, full of activities that highlighted Huntsville. Friday night was an evening reception at Church Street Wine Shoppe, and Saturday morning was spent in Big Spring Park with kids and puppy dogs. Saturday night included dinner at Stem and Stein, owned by fellow WCA alumni **Ali Petty King ('04)**. It was a weekend full of fellowship and reminiscing!

Noah Baker, Class of 2011, received his Doctor of Pharmacy degree from Samford University's McWhorter School of Pharmacy on May 5, 2017. Proud parents, Ed and Dawn Baker, are grateful to WCA for its part in Noah's education. "Noah spent 13 years of his life at WCA, and all of his teachers, coaches, staff, and classmates helped build the foundation that led to his success at Samford," said Noah's mom. Noah is working for Walgreen's Pharmacy.

Sallie Keene Stokes ('07) and her husband Kyle welcomed their first child, Keely Harper, on April 21, 2017. Keely is named after Sallie's grandmother, Eleanor Keely Beltz Shihadeh, who passed away in December 2016. Sallie's father, former WCA soccer coach Tom, can't wait until Keely is old enough to play soccer for the Cats! Kyle and Sallie are smitten with this precious gift from God.

Tyler Scarlett ('98) and his wife Rebecca recently celebrated their 15th wedding anniversary. They also celebrated Tyler's 10th anniversary as the Senior Pastor of Forest Baptist Church in Forest, VA. Tyler is a graduate of Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA, where he is now a professor of preaching. He is also a doctorial graduate of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, NC, and a contributing author to *Preaching Magazine*. Tyler and Rebecca added to their Scarlett Nation in July 2015, when they adopted 2 brothers from South Africa. The names of their children in the picture from left to right are Solomon Livingstone, Josiah Wilberforce, Faith Elliott, Abraham Moffat, Jeremiah Tyndale, and Samuel Spurgeon.

To update your contact information, email **michelle.benton@wca-hsv.org.**
If you have an alumni update for us, email **david.hammond@wca-hsv.org.**

Students Achieve

ACADEMIC AND ATHLETIC SUCCESS

Often, we hear students say they can not do it all and do it well. Past studies, however, reflect high school students who participate in sports also have competitive dispositions which motivate them to do well in school. Evidence exists that student athletes who tend to be more positive in educational attitudes, aspirations, and behaviors also acknowledge their sports competitiveness motivates their academic endeavors.

WCA has many successful students who excel in both academics and athletics. 2017 graduates Chris Johnson, Emma Lynn, Kate Porter and Annie Willis are shining examples of this competitive spirit.

Chris Johnson was selected as a regional winner of the Bryant-Jordan Scholarship, which recognizes and honors Alabama students who have achieved a level of excellence in the areas of academics and athletics. Chris participated in football and baseball while also participating in the marching band. Chris has played the trombone since he was in the 7th grade and won the John Phillips Sousa Scholarship from the WCA Band Boosters, which is the highest honor a high school band can give to a student. Chris also received the Trustees Scholarship from Union University where he plans to attend and major in Biochemistry. "While I am still praying about my future plans, I believe the Lord is leading me to help others through medicine," Chris said.

Focus, hard work and commitment seem to be an underlying theme in his life. "Being able to excel in academics, athletics, and band was tough, but not impossible," said Chris. "It is difficult to balance your schedule, but hard work is required to be great at anything in life. High school is challenging, but listening, asking questions, and studying ahead is advantageous. When at practice or on the playing field, give 100% of your focus and energy to the sport or to band and your instrument."

"WCA has been a blessing to my life. Westminster has provided me with an excellent education, but more importantly, a grounding of my faith. The teachers, coaches, and administrators all came together with the same goal of encouraging and strengthening me in my faith walk," Chris shared. 'I encourage other students to pursue their passions in academics, music, and athletics but at the same time, ground yourself in your relationship with Jesus Christ. I also want to thank my parents for their encouragement and prayers for my life. I could not have achieved anything without their support and Godly example."

Emma Lynn was the Valedictorian of the 2017 Senior Class. Emma participated in JV and Varsity basketball during the first years of high school but focused on tennis in her junior and senior year. The tennis team advanced to the state playoffs this year where she advanced to the quarterfinals and helped her team come in 11th out of 17 teams. At the end of the tennis season, Emma won the Christian Character award for her team. Also, Emma Lynn and Christopher Johnson won the Senior Class Discipleship Award, which was voted on by the senior students. Each class chooses a girl and a boy whom they believe are doing their best to exemplify a Christ-like life.

Emma says she sets a hierarchy of priorities to handle her busy schedule. "My family and academics always came first. To be a student athlete, I had to always give everything I had in the moment," Emma explained. "While at tennis practice, I focused on tennis. I did not think about my To Do list or my upcoming projects or tests. 110% of my physical and mental energy went into tennis, and I got more out of my allotted practice time. The same goes for school. When in class, I take notes to stay engaged instead of detaching and daydreaming about an upcoming tennis match. I did not do it perfectly, but this is how I managed sports and school."

Emma managed well and was offered numerous scholarships to many distinguished colleges. Emma chose to attend Davidson College in Davidson, North Carolina, where she will double major in French and Francophone studies and Biology, or possibly French and Economics. "I have not decided if I want to go more of a medical route or a business route, but a second language will allow me to connect to more people and expand my horizons."

"Westminster has been a great runway for me," Emma said. "Just like air traffic control, luggage loaders, airplane fuelers, etc. get a plane ready for takeoff, I think WCA's teachers and student community have prepared me to fly. My teachers have invested in me, cheered me on, and advised me throughout my time here. I cannot thank my wonderful teachers enough for everything they have taught me. Thank you for loving and guiding me through the years. Westminster will always hold a sweet place in my heart. My parents have helped me work towards the goals that I set for myself, my friends and mentors encouraged me, my siblings made me laugh and bolstered my morale when I reached a point of frustration and exhaustion," Emma continued. "Our current Speaker of the House, Paul Ryan, said 'Every successful individual knows his or her achievement depends on a community of persons working together.' I happen to agree with him on this statement when applying it to my personal accomplishments."

Kate Porter was the Salutatorian of the Senior class of 2017. She also won a Presidential scholarship, Dean's scholarship, and a True Blue Legacy scholarship to Auburn where she plans to major in Software Engineering. Kate has also excelled in basketball and softball while attending Westminster. She was named to the All- Area Basketball Team for Area 14 of Class 4A in her junior and senior year and All-Area and Regional Champion in softball as well. Kate also helped lead her 2017 softball team to the number two spot at the State Championship recently.

"It takes hard work and you have to stay focused on the rewarding aspects of both athletics and academics," Kate said. "You have to be willing to come in early and stay late and sometimes skip other things you want to do like sleeping and hanging out with friends. It is not impossible but you have to want to do it. It is a mindset of putting everything into keeping your eye on your goals. It is exciting to see the effort payoff now. "

Kate transitioned from her old school and attended Westminster for two and a half years. She recommends trying new things, like softball, in school. She also encourages studying for the ACT. "It will help your score tremendously and help you earn more money for college," Kate shared. "I would also encourage everyone to really enjoy times with your friends to focus on relationships and create some lasting memories."

"I enjoyed my time at Westminster. It was a new environment for me with new friends, a rigorous academic schedule which prepared me for college and helpful teachers and staff members who wanted to see me succeed," Kate said. "I just really appreciate all my family, friends, teammates, coaches, and teachers for all they have poured into me."

Annie Willis was offered numerous college scholarships and has signed to play softball at Troy University. "To me, these offers represent a recognition of all the hard work I put into academics and softball. I plan to enjoy my college softball career at the D1 collegiate level, but my major is undecided at this time." Annie said.

Annie has received many awards and honors during her time at WCA. During her senior year, she was named to the girls All-Area Basketball Team for Area 14 of Class 4A. Her Softball awards are unprecedented – Annie set a state record with 263 consecutive games played from 2012-2017. She was named the 2017 All Huntsville Region Team - Player of the Year and the 2017 ASWA 4A All-State Team - Player of the Year and Pitcher of the Year.

She accomplished all this while battling pain from a stress fracture in her throwing arm. She threw 23 shutouts, 5 no-hitters and 3 perfect games for the Class 4A state runner up and was also a force at the plate, hitting .464 with 12 home runs, 8 doubles and 64 RBIs.

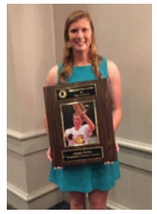
"I've developed good time management skills over the years, and I'm proactive about getting my assignments done. I try to stay on top of all my work so it does not pile up and overwhelm me," Annie explained. "It is a lot of hard work, and I have had to sacrifice time with friends and other activities to get school work done or attend practices or lessons. I've known for a long time that I wanted to play softball at the collegiate level, so I've worked hard to achieve that goal. I would encourage other students to focus on their goals as well."

Annie has a long history with Westminster. Her grandfather, Charlie Edgar, was one of our original founders, and her mother, Katie, is both a WCA alumna and elementary teacher. "I've been at WCA since Pre-K so I'm a 14-year senior, and I've been friends with some of my classmates all of that time," said Annie. "I think my time at Westminster has prepared me well for college and for being a student-athlete at the collegiate level. My teachers have been supportive and caring, and they want their students to succeed."

"I appreciate all that my parents and my family have done for me. I've had a lot of great coaches and they have all played a huge part in helping me with my academics as well," Annie shared. "I appreciate all my friends and their support over the years. Softball is a team sport and it takes the entire team to be successful, so my teammates are a big part of any success I have had. Playing softball at WCA has been so much fun."

RECORD SETTING *Season*

Disappointment is defined as "the act of failing to fulfill the expectations or wishes of". The 2017 Softball Season ended with a disappointing 4-0 loss to Northside High School in the AHSAA 4A State Championship Game. It wasn't just the team who felt the disappointment, but the entire school felt it with them. Coach Mandy Lowman commented, "While I know runner up is nothing to be ashamed of, I also know how badly the girls wanted the title of champion." "It was bittersweet placing second in the State Tournament," said Senior Annie Willis. Even with this loss in the title game, the WCA Lady Wildcats had the best softball season in school history, and we are extremely proud of all they accomplished and the examples they set along the way.



The record setting season, the wins, the fun, and the friendships far outshine any losses the team might have experienced. "Even as an outsider looking in, the oneness and fun the girls had together was impossible to miss," said one fan. Coach Lowman said, "One day, we are all going to be able to look back on this season and remember how good of a team this was and how much fun we had! We will remember the van rides, the beach trip, dance parties at practice, and winning a bunch of ball games." Annie said, "We had a great season, and the WCA softball team is a great team. We had so much fun together." Lauren McCoy chimed in, "Being on a team with these girls is such a huge blessing in my life. I've never been on a team that gets along the way this one does. We're goofy, we make each other laugh, we stand up for each other, and, most of all, we love each other. After a rough day at school, there's nothing better than being able to come to practice and be around people who make you forget about what made your day so rough in the first place." Sharon Webber, mom to team member Olivia, said, "As one of the few middle schoolers playing softball, my daughter was initially a little nervous about being on a high school level team (and so was her mama!). However, without exception, each of the older girls welcomed their younger teammates and were very intentional about including them in every aspect of being on the team. My daughter felt like she was truly a part of the team, and this is largely due to the way the upperclassmen encouraged, led by example, and formed friendships with her. It was a great model for the younger girls to see, one I hope they will follow and show when they are the upperclassmen on the team. It was a great season!"

The team's closeness contributed to their impressive season. The Ladycats won 7 different tournaments, and they outscored opponents 318-61. They posted 51 wins, the most in school history, and only 4 losses, the fewest in school history. The team will be listed in the state record books for Most Home Runs in a season with 39, Most Shutouts in a Season with 29, and Lowest ERA in a Season with a 0.75 Team ERA. Team members also hit 67 doubles, 4 triples, and 39 Home Runs. They finished the season as the 4A State Runner-Up, the best finish in school history.

In addition to those accomplishments, the team was ranked first in the ASWA rankings all season and climbed as high as 14th in MaxPreps National Rankings, 13th in USA Today National Rankings, and 13th in the National Fastpitch Coaches Association.

Several of the team members were also recognized for their individual accomplishments. Annie Willis and Lauren McCoy were named to the 2017 All Huntsville Region 1st Team, while Olivia Aycock was named to the 2nd Team. Emily Peyton received Honorable Mention. All four of these ladies were also named to the 2017 ASWA 4A All-State Team. Four players made the 2017 4A State All-Tournament Team: Annie Willis, Olivia Aycock, Lauren McCoy, and Macy Kate Toon.

The most decorated player was Senior Annie Willis. In addition to the above accomplishments, Annie set a state record with 263 consecutive games played from 2012-2017. She was named the 2017 All Huntsville Region Team - Player of the Year and the 2017 ASWA 4A All-State Team - Player of the Year and Pitcher of the Year. She was also selected for the 2017 Super All State Team and the USA Today All-USA Softball Team, Third Team, and she has been

continued on page 23

Founders Award
DAVID & DIXIE HAMMOND

During our graduation ceremony on Friday, May 19th, the Paul Alexander Founders Award was presented to David and Dixie Hammond.

"During our 50th anniversary year, we established the Founders Award to honor those who have made significant contributions to our WCA mission and vision. It was named after our first recipient, Paul Alexander," said Kerry St. John, Upper School Principal. "David and Dixie Hammond joined the WCA faculty in the early 70's and have given their lives to the school. David has just completed his 47th year and Dixie has completed her 43rd. They have both held many roles over the years. The Hammonds received this award for their faithful service in furthering the mission of Westminster Christian Academy."

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow His precepts have good understanding. To Him belongs eternal glory. Psalm 111:10

David and Dixie's children; Matt (1992) with wife, Rochelle, Aaron (1993) with wife, Erica, and Emily Donaldson (1995) with husband, Jeremy (1996) and grandchildren; Emma, Carter, Jackson, Aaron, Clara, Chloe, Wyatt, Julia, and Chase were gathered to celebrate granddaughter, Morgan's, 2017 graduation.

Record Setting Season *continued from page 22*

named 2017 Miss Softball. Annie is the first player from Westminster and only the second player from Madison County to win this award. "This honor is given to the best softball player in the state as voted by the Alabama Sportswriters. It is a very huge deal to win this!" said Coach Lowman. When you consider that Annie played most of the season with a stress fracture in her throwing arm, this becomes an even more amazing feat. Annie said, "Being injured for most of the season was no fun, but I wanted to do my part to help my team, so I just played through it. By the post-season tournaments, my arm was hurting a lot, but we'd come too far to let it stop us. I think adrenaline carried me through a lot of games."

The goal for the team from day one was to make it back to the State Tournament. "We played well together to achieve our goal of making it to the state tournament this year, " said Annie. Along the journey, they focused on the team and each other, on creating fun memories, and on giving glory to God. Lauren McCoy reflected on her teammates, "They've helped me realize that life's too short to care so much about what others may think, and that it's okay to have a little fun. I love this team, and I wouldn't trade them for the world!" Coach Lowman shared some final thoughts on the season, "They put their heart and soul into it and came up just a little short and that will always hurt. We have nothing to be ashamed of, and I couldn't be prouder to claim these girls as my team! They love each other, and their joy for life is contagious to all those around. I feel blessed every day I have the opportunity to be their coach, and I am looking forward to next year! "

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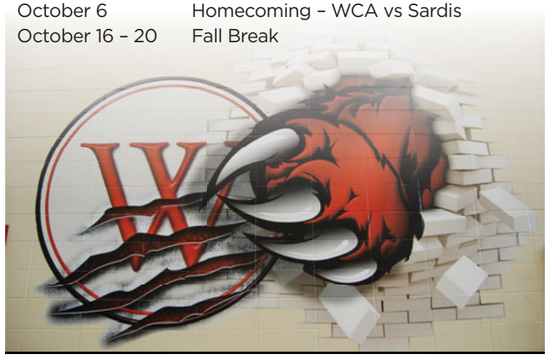
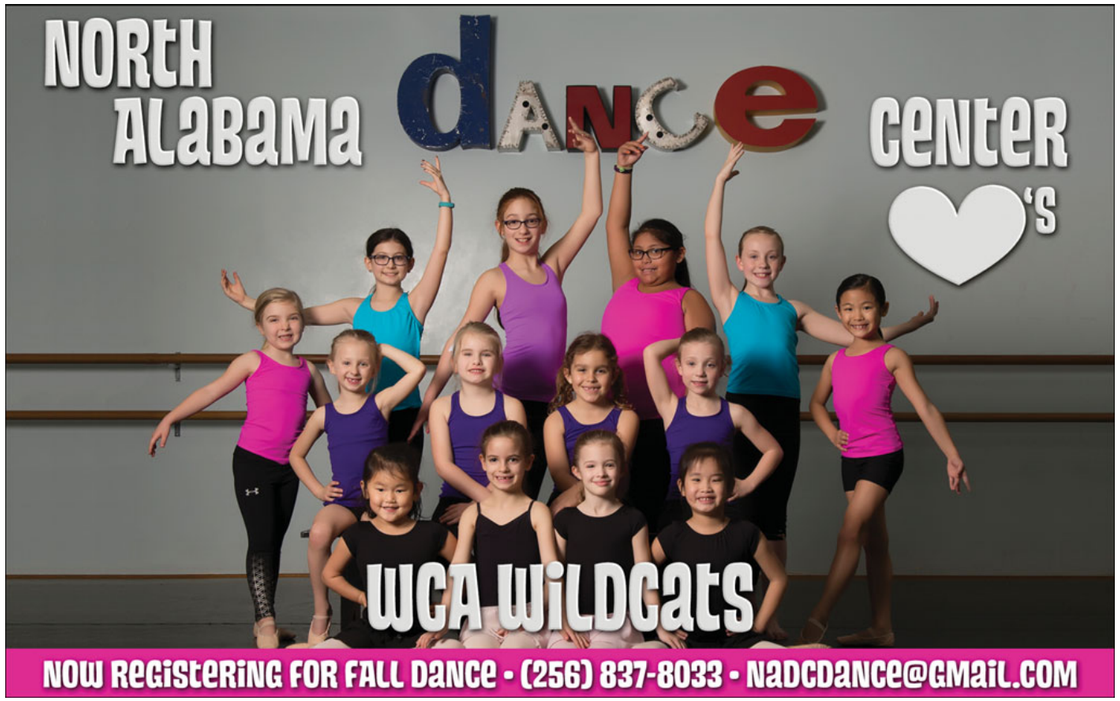
Looking Ahead

August 7	Upper School Open House
August 8	Lower School Open House
August 9	First day of School – ½ day
August 11 – 12	Senior Retreat
August 18	Back to School Bash
August 25	WCA vs New Hope at Home
September 4	Labor Day
October 6	Homecoming – WCA vs Sardis
October 16 – 20	Fall Break





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Offering the life and light of Jesus Christ to Huntsville, Madison County and the world

"In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." John 1:4

For over 50 years, Westminster Presbyterian Church has ministered to Huntsville and Madison County, and our single greatest ministry continues to be Westminster Christian Academy. WCA was founded on the conviction that providing the children of believers the opportunity to learn in an environment that integrates the study of the creation with the knowledge of the Creator in His Son, Jesus Christ, is a vitally important mission of the church. We remain committed to this mission and thank you for granting us the privilege of assisting you in nurturing your children in the faith.

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Sunday School, 11:00 am

Sunday Evening Worship, 6:00 pm

Wednesday Night Youth Ministry, 6:15-7:30 pm

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