

The Meeting House

2025-26



NEW SCIENCE CENTER LAUNCHES

*Robotics, Physics, Engineering, and a new
Makerspace opens, Page 12*

THE AI MATRIX

*Responding to the emerging technology
of Artificial intelligence, Page 18*



ON THE COVER

This winter, our new Science Center opened in the completely refurbished garden level of the Kumar Wang Library, capping off a remodel of the main, second, and third floors of the library. The new state-of-the-art science research center includes a Makerspace, Computer Science and Robotics lab, spacious Physics classroom, and Engineering & Research Hub. Read about other recent campus projects, including the Helen A. Dolan Center Theater, Lower School, and an exciting new venture on the horizon.

Read more on pages 12-13.



Our Mission

Guided by Quaker principles, Friends Academy educates our students to discover and develop the best of who they are and who they can become.

Our Belief

At Friends Academy, we achieve educational excellence by committing to the highest standards of learning and living.

Our diverse and welcoming community is strengthened by our Quaker values, which empower our students to inquire, reflect, and engage in their classrooms, in their neighborhoods, and in the world.

Because when we inspire students to learn and live with purpose, they can achieve greatness without sacrificing goodness.

The Meeting House Editorial Board

Andrea Miller P '22, '27
Jodie Sperico

The Meeting House Staff

Editor

Andrea Miller
Director of Institutional Communications
516.393.4295
andrea_miller@fa.org

Deputy Editor

Matt Gagne
Assistant Director of Communications
516.393.4257
matt_gagne@fa.org

Class Notes & Alumni News

Jodie Sperico
Director of Alumni Relations
516.465.1796
jodie_sperico@fa.org

Writers

Andrea Miller P '22, '27
Matt Gagne
Margaret Pegno Schwartz

Photographers

Alvin Caal

Welcome, and Farewell – From the 25th Head of School

Busy as each school year is, we are moving through a year in which Friends is completing three significant projects; and readies itself to resolve shortly (I hope), a fourth. Let me use this space to walk through them all and add a little color along the way.

A proud member school of the New York State

Association of Independent Schools (NYSAIS), Friends has spent 18 months preparing for its 10-year NYSAIS accreditation. Committees of colleagues and board members have evaluated every area of school life; noted areas of excellence and those in need of attention; and prepared a report that informed the work of a recent visiting committee – led by the head of a NYSAIS school and composed of members from schools across the state – that

visited us this spring. At the same time, we prepared a renewal report for the Friends Council on Education (FCE), focused exclusively on Quaker life and practice at Friends Academy. The NYSAIS committee had plenty of company this spring, as both its visit and that of the FCE cohort occurred at the same time. We were glad to welcome these good colleagues, as we seek to assess and enhance our work with all members of our school community.

Nine months ago, two colleagues – Brie Kraska '93 and Deidre Cooper – agreed to lead a school-wide planning effort for Friends' 150th year. Working closely with Director of Institutional Communications Andrea Miller, Director of Library Program & Information Resources Karly Hoenzch, Director of External Affairs Laurie Hindley, members of the Advancement and Alumni offices, members of the Board of Trustees and Parent Council and, of course, students from across divisions, they are rounding out the elements of a year-long celebration to inform and and connect each event that dots the annual calendar: Convocation, Peace Week, Fall Fair and Alumni Weekend, the annual Auction, and all the others that mark our time together. We will look forward to sharing their good work soon.

I am pleased to share with this larger audience the appointment of the new Principal of the Lower and Middle Schools, Judi O'Brien. A graduate of the University of New Hampshire and Columbia University, Judi is the Assistant Head of School for the Educational Program at Fay School in Southborough, MA, an independent boarding and day school enrolling 500

students in grades K-9. In one of the most competitive independent school markets in the country – greater Boston – Fay School is commonly regarded as its preeminent junior school. Judi began her teaching career at Fay, as well. At Harpeth Hall School (700 girls in grades 5-12) in Nashville, Judi served as Director of the Middle School and, with the sudden passing of its

then-head of school, as Interim Head of School. At Berkeley Carroll School in Brooklyn (900 students in grades K-12), she was a grade dean, history and humanities teacher, and Middle School Dean of Students. Our Head-Elect (and first Principal of the Lower and Middle Schools), Rik Dugan, has blazed a trail that Judi will follow, as he shines a light that will guide her steps.

As for me, I will use this space to offer my thanks and say goodbye, for by the time the next edition of *The*

Meeting House arrives on your doorstep in the Fall of 2026, Maureen and I will likely be in one of those far-off places we have promised to visit together. Time passes so quickly, and the journey from the start of my Friends career (in November 2022, as a candidate for the position) to its close (conferring diplomas on the great class of 2026) seems the stuff on which dreams are made. What a life I have been given: to linger on this beautiful campus with these most generous students, parents, colleagues, and alumni. How often – in a three-year span during which almost daily it appeared as though the world would spin from its axis – have I encountered gentle spirits, warm hearts, and fierce minds. How pleased and proud I am to place this marvelous school in Rik Dugan's strong hands. What a debt I owe to my colleagues: our students, parents, alumni, and friends of Friends; to the leaders and members of the Matinecock Meeting; to my board colleagues and, especially, to the most patient, gracious guide I might ever have wanted: Frank Ingrassia, Chair of the Board.

And as the poet e.e. cummings promised to one he loved as dearly as I love those whose fortunes find them at Friends: I will carry you in my heart always.

Thank you, and goodbye....

Paul J. Stellato



FRIENDS ACADEMY MULTIMEDIA

If you spot an icon throughout our issue, scan the accompanying QR code or head to our YouTube page at www.youtube.com/friendsacademyli to watch even more.

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Do you remember “resting awhile” on this bench? Taken at the start of the school year, this gift from Ward Burian '52, has recently been covered with snow and ice, but it won't be long before the daffodils flower and trees return to a dappled green.

FA'S EARLY HISTORY OF TECHNOLOGY

By Karly Hoeznsch, Friends Academy Archivist

An embrace of science and technology was key to the vision of Gideon Frost in founding Friends Academy, who believed in practical experimentation and hands-on learning. Later in 1876, when explaining his reasons for founding Friends Academy, Frost shared that "I had a desire to establish a seminary of learning in which the children of Friends, and others similarly sentiment'd, could receive literary and scientific instruction." For the next several decades, Friends Academy continued along the vision of Gideon Frost in providing courses that aligned with both Classical (humanities) and Scientific courses of study. Scientific courses provided training in architectural drawing, engineering, and other applied sciences. Friends Academy also looked towards ways to embrace new technologies.

'74



1869

Gideon Frost publishes a book on geology in 1869 entitled, *A New Exposition of the Leading Facts of Geology: Including a Disquisition upon the Origin and Formation of Petroleum and Coal*

1875

During construction of FA, Gideon Frost demonstrates chemical reaction with slaking lime

1878

Frost purchases FA's first telescope

1892

School installs steam-powered engine for drawing well water in order to replace the horse-and-treadmill solution used previously

1969

Early adoption of computing technology – students organized a dance in which partners were matched using a survey and punched card system. (Results were mixed.)

1971

Computer Science classes start; by 1973,

all 9th graders must complete one semester of Comp Sci

1971-74

Students used a remote time-sharing system with computers at Dartmouth and NYIT (the predecessor to modern-day cloud computing).

1974

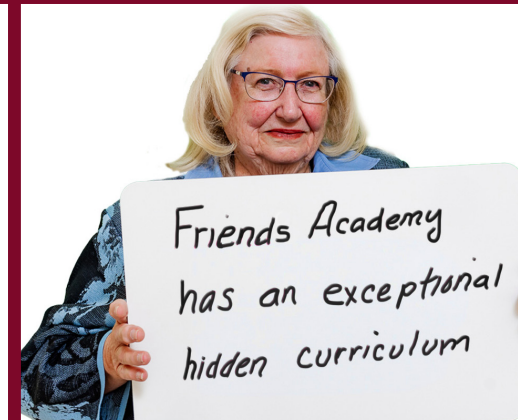
FA purchases a General Automation computer. To celebrate this milestone, Rahul Desai ('76) writes an article for the student newspaper in 1974 entitled "Intelligence Without Life."

"This year we have something absolutely new at Friends Academy: a computer of our very own. Yes, we have finally taken this giant step into the future. Small and amiable, to the surprise of those like me who expected it to be intimidating, our computer's capabilities are, nevertheless, ample for our needs. Besides the computer itself, we have three terminals which are linked up with it, discs upon which programs can be stored, and a paper tape machine, where tapes of programs can both be made and run."



149 Reasons to Give

The Friends Academy Annual Fund



L TO R, TOP AND BOTTOM: HENRY BRETT-CHIN '26; MARSHA BOYD, GRANDPARENT; JEFF '90, P'16, '20, '23, TRUSTEE; JESS FOSCHI '98, P'35, '37; SARA WEINSTEIN, GRADE 2 TEACHER; LITING CHEN P '32, '34

As we approach our 150th school year, we are celebrating all the reasons to support FA!

What's your reason?



Scan here to donate today!



SEEN@FA

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALVIN CAAL

Friends Academy Photographer and Videographer Alvin Caal selects his favorite images from the school year so far and tells us why.

Scan here to view even more photos on our Flickr page

60th Fall Fair!

I knew I wanted to photograph our students at Fall Fair but I wanted to provide context that they were also within an amusement park setting at this part of our campus. What better than to have them smile for the picture as I slow down the shutter to show motion in a still picture.



Upper School Coffeehouse

This scene was from a student-led coffeehouse. Our performer is framed by the drum kit and is shot from a low angle with a wide lens to give it an unconventional feel.



Service at The Regency

At a piano recital at The Regency in Glen Cove, I looked for a different angle as our students played for the residents. A small opening frames our subject with a reflection of the piano strings.



Forest Program

Capturing emotion in an image is crucial for storytelling. The story here, is the excitement the students demonstrated just being outside in our forest classroom!

I can almost hear the cry for the pursuit of academia.



Lower School Meeting for Worship

I captured this image at the Matinecock Meeting House in the peaceful moments of Lower School Meeting for Worship. What drew me to take this picture is that the student is positioned in the brightest part of the background, thereby drawing your eye to her. The diagonal leading line lent geometric interest.

AROUND THE QUAD

The midmorning lesson was a first for Varsity Chess team members and fourth grade alike. "Our goal is to really embrace the idea of community by teaching younger students chess," explained Varsity Chess player Meher Walia. "Playing chess was a core memory for me when I was younger," he recalled. "I remember when I was taught by older students and now I want to reciprocate." During the hour-long lesson, Upper School students walked through basic foundational skills and more strategic moves. "For beginners, we are teaching them the rules of how the pieces move, what checks are, and how to end the game. For more experienced players, as we watch how they play, we can show them openings and offer tips on how they can improve," said Meher.

— Andrea Miller, Director of Communications



MIDDLE SCHOOL SPEECH & DEBATE

By Matt Gagne
Asst. Director of Communications

A handful of fifth-graders sought out their teacher after one class to set the record straight.

The students had just wrapped up their final project in Speech and Debate, a new course introduced at Friends Academy's Middle School last fall. And they nailed it, making a strong case that students should *not* be allowed to have snacks in school. Afterwards, they told Mr. Chris Fischetti: "We don't believe anything we just said! We absolutely need snacks in school!"

"You guys convinced me," Mr. Fischetti said with a laugh. "I believed you were against having snacks!"

Fortunately, these were not policy debates but the culmination of a quarter-long class that all fifth- and sixth-graders are required to take as part of the humanities curriculum.

"One of the biggest wins from this class is public speaking and kids learning to present ideas in front of their peers," says Mr. Fischetti, a history teacher. "The



Mr. Fischetti (above) moderates the conversation about zoos while Mr. Dugan speaks to both teams at the conclusion of the final debate.

other is that they're learning how to make arguments, especially for something they may not agree with or believe in. They're learning how to frame issues, see multiple sides of a problem, and make cases for potential solutions."

The next quarter, a new group of students debated a different final topic: Conservation or captivity, should zoos exist?

Afterwards, Lower and Middle School Principal Mr. Alfred (Rik) F. Dugan III told both teams: "I am so proud of all of you. Your ability to think before you speak, to speak so eloquently, to think about each other's argument and case, and then understand the process of debate — these are all skills that are going to increase your capacity as leaders."

Speech and Debate classes begin with speeches (informational, impromptu, persuasive) and students are encouraged to lean into what they love. One of the most memorable was about Minecraft.

"The student was enthusiastic about it," Mr. Fischetti says. "Students get a lot more freedom in this class than they might have in math, English, science or history. When they have that agency and feel ownership over their ideas, they're able to deliver their speeches with excitement and passion."

The reason for adding Speech and Debate to the curriculum, and why it might eventually expand to all grades in the Middle School?

"Communication is one of the critical competencies, if not the critical competency of our time," Mr. Dugan says. "Developing that in young people at a formative age — so students can learn how to think and reflect and then articulate points of view, and simultaneously be compelled to listen and learn and research other points of view — is crucial to help them become critical thinkers and informed citizens of the world."





EVERY CORNER OF FRIENDS ACADEMY IS A PLACE TO LEARN SOMETHING NEW – TO EMBRACE THE CONSTANTLY CHANGING WORLD, WE HAVE BEEN RENOVATING AND TRANSFORMING THESE SPACES.

Beginning in the summer of 2024 and through the fall of 2025, we have completed three construction projects that improved the facilities of our school: the Helen A. Dolan Center Theater, the Lower School, and the first and lower levels of the Kumar Wang Library were redesigned and renovated.

THE LOWER SCHOOL

The Lower School is home to our youngest learners and will continue to be the foundational step. The full-scale renovation has reimagined the environment for these students. Brand new lighting to illuminate all corridors, modern flooring, and a redesigned lobby and library entrance, allows more natural light into this welcoming space.



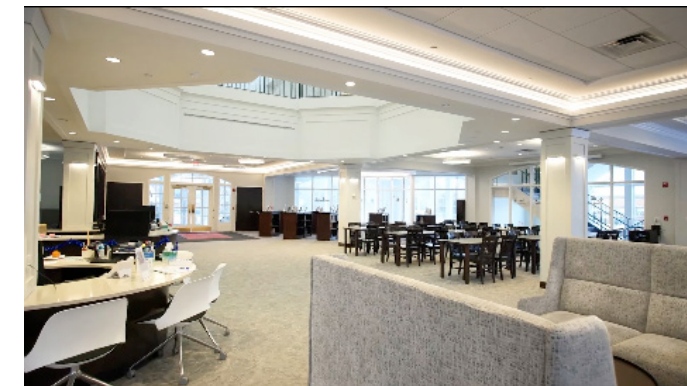
BEFORE



AFTER

THE HELEN A. DOLAN CENTER

Built in 1999, the Helen A. Dolan Center has been the home to many Friends Academy events. For 25 years, its theater has hosted numerous plays, assemblies, and special presentations. The top-to-bottom renovation of this area includes new lighting, carpet, railings, and seats. The space was carefully crafted and each detail was viewed and looked over by members of the Friends Academy Arts Department. The inaugural event in the updated space was an Upper School assembly held on October 21, 2024.



THE KUMAR WANG LIBRARY

Since its doors first opened in September 2000, the Kumar Wang Library has been a center of connection for students and colleagues. All of these new facilities complement existing library resources, including a vast collection of 50,000 volumes and access to an expansive digital collection, as well as new Bloomberg terminals that connect our students directly to the financial markets.

The main level has been refreshed to better support a new era of learning. Upgrades include improved lighting, updated carpeted flooring, a new circulation desk, and the creation of a flexible space – nicknamed



“The Hub” – designed to foster student collaboration, creativity, and exploration while also serving as an area for presentations.

The Lower Level of the library has been completely transformed into a state-of-the-art science research center which includes a Makerspace, Computer Science and Robotics lab, spacious Physics classroom, and Engineering & Research Hub. Elsewhere on campus, the new Biotechnology Research Lab, designed in partnership with Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, offers cutting-edge laboratory spaces and equipment to students and faculty.

UPCOMING: ADMISSIONS OFFICE

Due to a 30% increase in applications for this past year and continued interest for next year and beyond, we are creating a standalone building which will house our Admissions Office. This building will be situated between the Middle School and Withington House.

Scan here to learn more about upcoming projects in our 2026 State of the School



60TH ANNIVERSARY!

The Friends Academy Fall Fair reached a momentous milestone of 60 years and celebrated its largest friendraiser of the year in style – from rides, games, student booths, and an international food court packed with parent volunteers, to a petting zoo, athletic match-ups, and of course – reunions. The Class of 1975 gathered and shared moving messages in Meeting for Worship, before tours of campus and a luncheon. With nary a cloud in sight, spirits soared (almost as high as the Zipper!). Save the date for the 2026 Fall Fair – Saturday, October 17!



Clockwise: Throngs of fairgoers hit the booths, activities, rides, and games; marking our 60th anniversary at the Activities Tent; the Student Athletic Council raised money for great causes – and just had to get a little wet; cheering on our football team; rides a plenty on the Lower School field; the class of 1975 outside the Matinecock Meeting House; Fall Fair co-chairs Kara Kelly and Jen Tytel '05



See more photos of the Class of 1975 on page 57.



VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE! 

FRIENDS ACADEMY » IN BRIEF

READ THE HEADLINES, SCAN THE QR CODES, AND READ MORE ABOUT OUR STUDENTS!

FA IS 3RD IN THE WORLD!



Investment team breaks into top tier of Wharton Business Challenge

MEETING HOUSE TURNS 300!



Matinecock celebrates with a retreat and historical presentation

MIDDLE SCHOOL LEADS



Student-run conferences in the Middle School build confidence and leadership

FA RETURNS TO FRINGE



Alums abound as FA students take their talents to Edinburgh Fringe Festival

REGENERON SEMIFINALIST



Julang (Jerry) Wang '26 is one of 300 scholars named worldwide

GRADE 2 LOVES TO WRITE

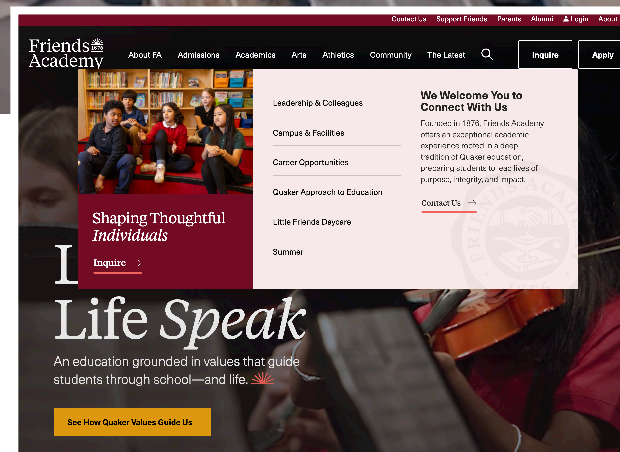


Technology helps spark a love for writing in Second grade



See How Quaker Values Guide Us

In anticipation of our 150th Anniversary, which we will celebrate this coming fall, our new website and visual identity brings to the fore the date of our founding, and with it, 150 years of Quaker education on Long Island.



Prompt... **What's Next for Friends Academy?**



THE NEW MATRIX

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IS MORE THAN JUST A BUZZWORD ON CAMPUS. THE EMERGING TECHNOLOGY IS RESHAPING THE GUIDELINES OF ETHICAL TEACHING AND LEARNING.

By Matt Gagne
Assistant Director of Communications

It's a Wednesday afternoon in mid-September, that time of year when a slight chill begins to grip the air and students start digging into the new school year in earnest: first tests, first presentations, first deep forays into new discoveries and untapped ways of thinking.

At first glance, the 11th grade American Literature class taught by Mr. Daniel Mendel looks to be the quintessential classroom belonging to the Chair of the English Department. The names of famous authors are written on white boards and discussed in conversation: Ralph Ellison, Toni Morrison, Ismael Reed, William Faulkner, E.B. White; more literary giants still to come in the days and weeks ahead.

But Mr. Mendel isn't just an English teacher at Friends Academy. He's also the Dean of Innovation. In this role, he's spent nearly the past year leading the process to architect the school's new, forward-thinking policy on artificial intelligence — which he's now putting into practice.

In a corner classroom on the second floor of the Kumar Wang Library, American Lit is being taught in new ways for the first time in the school's 149-year history. Or anywhere else for that matter.

The first assignment — Beyond the Algorithm: The Human Element in Literary Research — puts students at the intersection of tradition and modern technology. They're required to use AI as a first point of contact when researching the lives and works of American authors. "It starts out with just them and a blinking cursor," Mr. Mendel says.



Daniel Mendel, the school's Dean of Innovation and Upper School English Chair, views AI as an inevitable tool that all students must be able to wield responsibly.

In previous years, juniors would have been staring at a different blinking cursor as they crafted analytical paragraphs — precisely the kind of outdated assignment that can now be bypassed in the blink of an eye with artificial intelligence.

"Our school has a great tradition, but we can't keep doing the same things we've always done," Mr. Mendel says. "Do they need to learn how to write a paragraph? Absolutely. But if that's all we were doing, some would have run

that assignment through AI and submitted it as their own. They would have found a way around doing the thing we thought they needed to do before AI upended it.

"Beyond that," he emphasizes, "these students are capable of doing so much more than mere paragraphs."

At the beginning of the school year, students chose their author by selecting a literary quote that called out to them from a collection that had been printed and spread out on tables. Soon after, they began interacting with Gemini, the AI platform built by Google, about the nature of those quotes and the authors who penned them.

Their starting point of inquiry: What initial information did AI provide? What seemed to be missing or oversimplified? A bridge to deeper understanding: Fill in research gaps by consuming interviews, essays, original works, and scholarly reviews.

On this particular Wednesday afternoon, students begin presenting their findings — not just



"Our school has a great tradition, but we can't keep doing the same things we've always done."

— DANIEL MENDEL, DEAN OF INNOVATION

about their authors, but also about their research methods and how AI either helped or hindered the process.

“It’s our job to equip students so they’ll walk into the world as good, moral leaders,” Mr. Mendel says. “English class has always built foundational human values. By integrating AI, we are giving students what is timeless and also meeting them with what is timely.

“We need to prepare them to have different skills and talents to succeed in the future,” he adds. “Otherwise they might get eclipsed by other people who are trained to navigate this really complicated technology.”tai

If you happen to be confused about artificial intelligence — the upsides, the pitfalls, how it all works — you’re not alone. It’s a fast-growing, far-reaching technology that has been labeled in mainstream media as both the death and future of education. The paradox goes something like this: Students who use AI won’t learn for themselves. Students who aren’t using AI will fall behind those who know how to use it to their advantage.

Ahead of the 2025-26 school year, Friends Academy rolled out an AI policy to clarify how students and teachers can ethically engage with the technology. The policy, listed on page 44 of the Student & Parent Handbook, features a helpful use-case chart that has been replicated in this issue of The Meeting House (page 15).

Clerked by Mr. Mendel and Mr. Ken Ambach, the school’s Director of Technology, the AI policy was designed with input from Upper School students and teachers from all divisions of Friends Academy. The most essential framework, Mr. Ambach says, is understanding that “AI literacy is a part of digital literacy. From the earliest computer classes that students can take at Friends Academy, we’re talking to them about what is real and what is fake, what is true and what isn’t. The throughline is having the discernment to know the difference.”

The AI policy is centered on the Quaker philosophy of Continuing Revelation, the idea that beliefs shouldn’t be permanently fixed and that new insights can lead to deeper understanding. The policy’s purpose statement speaks to the heart of this: “Proactive engagement with AI, rather than avoidance, is essential for developing the intellectual and ethical growth of each student.”

There are three main pillars of the AI policy.

The first is authentic inquiry: AI should not replace but rather support critical thinking and personal inquiry.

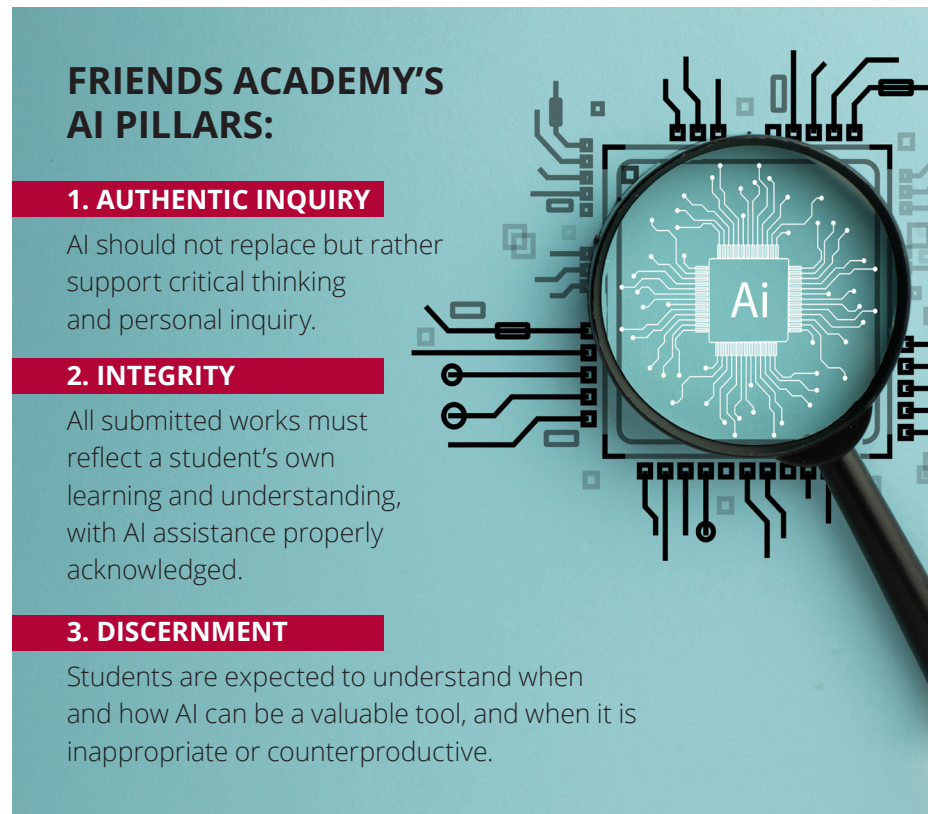
The second is integrity: All submitted works must reflect a student’s own learning and understanding, with AI assistance properly acknowledged.

The third is discernment: Students are expected to understand when and how AI can be a valuable tool, and when it is inappropriate or counterproductive.

In the Upper School, students

Level	Description	Permitted AI Use	Examples of Assignments	Student Expectations & Rationale
Level 1: No AI	No Generative AI tools are permitted. This level is for tasks designed to assess foundational knowledge, core skills, or a student’s unassisted thought process.	Absolutely NO use of GenAI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, DALL-E, Copilot, etc.). This includes brainstorming, outlining, drafting, or editing.	In-class essays, timed assessments, lab practicals, handwritten assignments, initial drafts of creative writing, debates, presentations where unassisted thought is paramount.	Rationale: To assess fundamental skills, memory recall, original thought, and the ability to produce work independently. This ensures students build a strong foundation before integrating advanced tools.
Level 2: Feedback & Editing (AI-Assisted Refinement)	GenAI can be used for feedback, minor editing, and refinement of student-generated work. The core ideas and content must be the student’s own.	GenAI can be used to: - Check grammar, spelling, and punctuation. - Suggest alternative phrasing or vocabulary (with student discretion). - Provide general feedback on clarity, flow, or tone. - Summarize long texts (that the student has already read and understood).	Essay revisions, refining a presentation script, improving clarity in a research report, preparing for an oral exam by asking AI to quiz them on content they already know.	Expectation: Students must still exercise critical judgment over AI suggestions and ensure the integrity of their original ideas. The work remains primarily their own, with AI functioning as a sophisticated proofreader or coach. Rationale: To enhance polish and refinement of student work, mirroring real-world professional tools, while reinforcing the student’s role as the primary author and editor.
Level 3: Ideas & Structure (AI-Assisted Brainstorming/Outlining)	GenAI can be used for initial idea generation, brainstorming, or outlining. The student is solely responsible for developing the content and drafting the full response.	GenAI can be used to: - Generate initial ideas for a topic. - Brainstorm different angles or approaches. - Create a basic outline or structure for a response. - Suggest keywords for research.	Essay planning, research paper outlines, project concept development, short story idea generation, preparing for a presentation’s structure.	Expectation: Students must clearly differentiate between AI-generated ideas/structures and their own developed content. The final work must be entirely written/created by the student. Rationale: To leverage AI as a tool to kickstart the creative process and organize thoughts, while still emphasizing the student’s unique voice and content creation.
Level 4: Co-Creation (AI-Assisted Content Generation)	GenAI can be used to generate specific content components as part of a larger, student-directed project. This level requires explicit teacher permission and clear guidelines on what can be AI-generated.	GenAI can be used to: - Generate text snippets for specific sections (e.g., a factual summary if the assignment is about analysis, not information gathering). - Create images, charts, or other multimedia elements. - Draft code segments. - Generate diverse perspectives for a debate (which the student then analyzes).	Projects where the focus is on synthesizing information, analyzing AI output, or critiquing generated content. Creative projects where AI is a tool for rapid prototyping.	Expectation: Students must explicitly identify and cite all AI-generated content. The primary learning outcome should be in the student’s intellectual engagement with, manipulation of, and critical reflection on the AI output, not merely presenting it as their own. Rationale: To explore AI’s capabilities for content creation, allowing students to focus on higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information, including that which is AI-generated.
Level 5: AI as the Focus (Full AI Integration)	AI use is central to the assignment’s learning objectives. Students are expected to use AI extensively, experiment with its capabilities, and critically analyze its output.	Extensive use of GenAI is expected and encouraged. This may involve generating entire outputs, analyzing AI’s limitations, exploring ethical considerations, or developing AI prompts.	Projects focused on AI ethics, prompt engineering, comparing AI models, analyzing AI bias, developing an AI-powered tool, or creating a piece about AI using AI.	Expectation: Students demonstrate deep understanding of AI’s functionality, limitations, and societal implications. The assessment is on their ability to interact with, critically evaluate, and reflect upon AI’s role in the task. Rationale: To prepare students for future environments where AI is ubiquitous, fostering deep AI literacy, critical thinking about its impact, and the ability to innovate with AI tools.

This chart was derived from the works of Leon Furze, an international consultant and PhD candidate from Australia who works with educators from K-12 and beyond to understand the implications and impact of generative AI in education.



FRIENDS ACADEMY'S AI PILLARS:

- 1. AUTHENTIC INQUIRY**
AI should not replace but rather support critical thinking and personal inquiry.
- 2. INTEGRITY**
All submitted works must reflect a student’s own learning and understanding, with AI assistance properly acknowledged.
- 3. DISCERNMENT**
Students are expected to understand when and how AI can be a valuable tool, and when it is inappropriate or counterproductive.

have school-sponsored access to two AI platforms created by Google: Gemini (for grades 9 through 12) and NotebookLM (for juniors and seniors). Because Friends Academy pays for academic licenses, all information entered into these tools by students and teachers is “black-boxed,” meaning Google doesn’t use it to train algorithms for the world at large.

Students do not need explicit directives or permission from teachers to use the technology, nor are they prohibited from using other AI platforms (Chat GPT, Gauth, etc.) beyond the school’s Google offerings.

In conversations with *The Meeting House* over the first half of the new school year, students across all grades of the Upper School explained how they’re interacting with AI.

Anecdotally, they say it’s been most helpful explaining processes in math and science. When students find themselves stuck doing chemistry homework, for instance, they don’t have to wait to ask a teacher for help. Instead, they can turn to AI as a tutor in the moment and follow step-by-step instructions on how to break down problems. Students say AI has been a valuable resource for turning study notes into practice tests, and for adapting notes to different learning styles. Notebook LM, for instance, turns written content into podcast form.

Students even deployed AI while vacationing during winter break. One used it while traveling abroad to translate languages



At an R&D meeting, junior Kevin Yu discusses AI’s impact on students.

and communicate with strangers. Another, stymied by a faulty golf cart battery, uploaded a video taken in the moment and received instructions on how to solve the problem (and it worked).

There are known drawbacks to AI, of course, which students say they are learning to navigate through trial and error.

While AI can help brainstorm ideas or explain the scope of topics in the humanities, students have experienced AI’s propensity to “hallucinate” or make things up when it comes to deeper research. A common refrain students shared: *Always check AI’s sources and make sure AI didn’t hallucinate fake sources.*

Beyond AI’s definable plusses and minuses, there’s a large gray area for students.

Some students who shared their experiences for this story (without being directly quoted) wonder if they might be relying on AI more than they should — or maybe not. They aren’t sure, even with the school’s new policy to lean on.

Their confusion highlights a pain point throughout education at large.

Let’s follow the progression over time.

There was a time before the internet when conducting research meant pulling countless books off library shelves. But as the internet flourished, the shelves became something of a relic. New research in every field was published online, and this rising digital tide cited and surfaced older research, making more expert information more widely available than ever.

Despite the technological leap, the internet turned out to be

similar to working with books. Students still had to consider the veracity of sources, and they had to engage with multiple works in order to understand a topic’s scope before making connections and explaining the essential takeaways in their own voice.

And then AI entered the chat. More than just the latest disruptor, the technology obliterates traditional ways of gathering information and synthesizing it into knowledge.

Let’s pause for a moment to check-in.

If you understand how AI obliterates traditional methods, you’re likely engaging with AI on a semi-regular basis. If that statement doesn’t resonate, this brief exercise may help.

Enter the following query into Google: “What makes dragonflies effective hunters?” Your assignment: Research the



How should Friends Academy adapt when the paradigm is shifting so rapidly from traditional ways to uncharted territories?

best sources and submit both a robust summary paragraph and a comprehensive list of bullet-points highlighting all key components.

If you’re short on time, of course, everything you need to know can be found at the top of that Google search in the AI overview section.

How powerful is the technology? AI processes information faster than humans; it considers a wider scope than humans; it organizes and points to its sources; it delivers results with digestible, retainable

clarity. Alumni technologists interviewed as expert sources for this story posit that AI’s “hallucinations” will become fewer and fewer in the coming years, meaning more and more people around the world will turn to the technology as a trusted source.

Which means AI poses far more than just a paradox for students; it also poses existential questions about the future of schools.

How should Friends Academy adapt when the paradigm is shifting so rapidly from traditional ways (school is about what students know and how they garner knowledge) to uncharted territories (what are students capable of doing with expert-level info that everyone can instantly access via artificial intelligence)?

“Our school is a place that has always coached up and produced exceptional students,” says Mr. Scott Hertrick, who has grappled in recent years with how AI is influencing students in his AP Research class. “If we keep teaching them to do stuff that can now be easily replicated by a machine instantly, I don’t know that we’re giving them the tools to still be exceptional.”

“We need to find the differentiators that will keep setting our students apart,” he adds. “How do we reach for a higher ceiling when so much more is on the table for everyone immediately?”



Unlike other AI browsers like ChatGPT or Claude, NotebookLM is encrypted within Friends Academy’s Google settings.



As seen in the background, Upper School English teacher and Director of Curricular Studies Scott Hertrick requires students to create visual designs of their thinking.

Whether it's dragonflies or any other topic, students know they can't copy and paste what AI produces and turn it in as their own — that's a clear red line — but there are still gray areas to navigate.

How much of an AI overview must students change to make it their own? What is the difference between paraphrasing AI overviews versus primary sources? What are the best ways to distinguish ownership of ideas in the age of AI? When do facts need specific attribution? When can they just be restated as widely known facts?

Students aren't the only ones feeling disoriented in AI's new wilderness. This winter, many of the same concerns led Ms. Amy

Delaney, the Chair of the Upper School History Department, to change her syllabus in 10th grade AP European History for the first time in her seven years at Friends Academy.

Given the time constraints of the semester and the new realities of AI, she dropped a research paper requirement. "I didn't think anyone was going to cheat," she says. "AI is just so prevalent that it's hard for them to navigate and detangle. I had to choose where we put our focus."

The crux of Ms. Delaney's lesson remained the same. Students assumed the identity of historical figures — Hobbes, Voltaire, Kant, Locke, Catherine the Great, and others — and debated in salon format that person's point of view on the French Revolution (even if that person wasn't alive to witness

it) and how their historical figure would view many of the enduring issues in modern times.

The sourcing requirements were robust. Students created a Salon Discussion Prep Sheet and had to cite their primary sources (three to four) and secondary sources (two to three) in MLA format.

"This class is operating in a traditional system, the AP model," Ms. Delaney says. "We can't afford to spend too much time doing a research paper and digging into all of the AI concerns when we need the time to prepare for the AP test, which maybe doesn't work as well anymore with the new realities of this technology."

Ms. Delaney still assigns research papers in other non-AP classes, where she helps students navigate AI as she finds her own way forward. "Teachers didn't have this technology when we were in school and I wasn't trained in how to teach students to use AI," she says. "But it's a reality we have to deal with."

"I think most students want to learn how to use AI in ways that are beneficial," she adds. "But at the end of the semester, with grades lingering in their minds, I think there's also that temptation to lean on it too much — to do the heavy lifting in a way that's not helpful."

Students were not quick to open up about the gray areas of AI for this story, even with assurances that they wouldn't be named or quoted, but none held back when describing their schedules.

They're busy. They feel pressure. They're prioritizing their time, energy, and focus between schoolwork, sports, clubs, after-school activities, service projects,

and all the hobbies that make them interesting, well-rounded people.

AI, they say, helps them be more efficient. To the extent they're using the technology — is it too much sometimes? — students say it's hard to have deep conversations with teachers when they don't know if any given teacher might be a purist (books only), a realist (the internet is a modern library) or a pioneer (AI is a frontier to explore and be tamed)?

To be sure, calling AI a frontier is something of a misnomer because it no longer exists on the fringe of everyday life. "The latest tipping point for AI," Mr. Hertick says, "is that you no longer have to seek it out — it's now seeking you out. It's in our emails, in our Google Drive folders, at the top of our internet searches. It feels inescapable."

In AP Research, Mr. Hertrick has a checklist of what students should consider in their methodologies of discovery: a source's credibility, bias, slant, perspective, and expertise. Students should also know how each source relates or connects to other sources, and they should understand how each source has shaped their own understanding of a topic.

Instead of students relaying their understanding with written paragraphs, Mr. Hertrick now has them share thoughts in one-on-one conversations with him or draw mindmaps in sketchpads.

"Can you draw something that synthesizes and makes sense of the relationships and connections and spectrums of opinions between different sources?" he says. "I'm assuming you can read an article and understand the core concepts.



Upper School History chair Amy Delaney has students engage in an 18th-century-style salon debate, with some wearing costumes of historical figures.

Rather than proving that by writing a summary, can you represent your thinking by showing it?"

Mr. Hertrick believes students are embracing these new ways of learning, but he also senses a subtext to the larger AI conversation — the loud unspoken part separating teachers and students. If an assignment hasn't been changed to work with or around AI, students can't help but wonder: What's the point of doing it

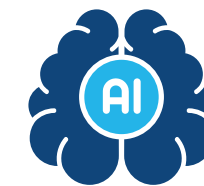
if AI can do the same thing faster?

"I'm helping students build the skills they need to engage with ideas," Mr. Hertrick says. "The challenge is to find work that is meaningful and feels personally significant for them. AI is forcing us to all reconsider what it means to teach and to learn in a way that is genuine, deep, and authentic."

With the idea of removing teacher-student power dynamics and engaging in honest dialogue, Mr. Mendel and Mr. Ambach regularly convene an AI Research & Development team to assess how the AI policy is working in practice.

Composed of TK Upper School students and TK faculty, this group reviews their experiences, compiles use-case studies (page TK), and considers blind spots when it comes to the technology. In these R&D spaces, students are encouraged to share their own AI experiences (or how their friends are using it) without fear of judgment.

"We want students to be part of the decision-making and part



"I think most students want to learn how to use AI in ways that are beneficial. But there's also that temptation to lean on it too much – to do the heavy lifting in a way that's not helpful."

– AMY DELANEY, UPPER SCHOOL HISTORY CHAIR

AI RESEARCH & DESIGN STUDENT-LED CASE STUDIES



What should happen in these six scenarios? Scan the QR code to the left to read each study in full and see if you can answer the questions posed by our students.



Shay Durrett '28 – A new student joins the school. Not knowing all of the norms, he decides to use ChatGPT to help brainstorm the basic structure of his essay. Seeing discrepancies in his writing, a teacher questions the authenticity of the essay.



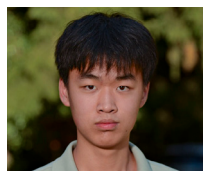
Elizabeth Gokey '27 – A busy student-athlete uses ChatGPT to create nightly summaries of her AP History readings and uses them to study/review before quizzes, discussions, and tests; her classmates, however, do the same work without AI.



Lucy Miller '27 – A student regularly uses AI for help with homework and sparking new ideas. Feeling lonely after joining a new school, the student asks AI for advice on how to make friends. Gradually, AI becomes this student's only friend.



Stefan Pappas '27 – A college begins using AI to look for “success-linked markers” in its admissions process. As a result, students with seemingly ideal applications are being passed over for those with lower GPAs and test scores.



Kevin Yu '27 – A student wants to solve school recycling/composting but his AI/tech-based solution may cost thousands and require more energy resources.



Daren Zhong '26 – A student completes a lab, successfully and by herself. However, she feels uncertain about interpreting the results and uploads all of her data to AI for analysis.



of the thinking,” Mr. Ambach says. “They’re sharing their experiences and they’ve been incredibly honest about it. They’ve expressed their anxiety about AI — what’s interesting is that their anxiety is much different than the anxiety that teachers have about AI.

“The students aren’t intimidated or scared by the technology,” he adds. “For them, it’s not a question of whether or not they should use it. They’re worried that it’s going to get them in trouble or affect their college applications. They’re worried about the systems that the adults are running and whether those systems will allow them to use AI tools the way they want to.”

When students in Mr. Mendel’s 11th grade American Literature class presented their findings in mid-September, they had the freedom to deliver their reports in any style: a short speech, a one-page visual aid, a pre-recorded video, a mixture of multimedia — anything but a traditional paper that could have been written by AI.

“The format can be up to you as long as it effectively communicates your journey of discovery,” Mr. Mendel told students. “Your presentation is not a report. It is a demonstration of your unique investigation. You will not simply state facts, but instead, reveal how your understanding evolved.”

Final instructions: Share why you chose the quote. Share a research twist. Demonstrate how a source



Director of Technology Ken Ambach (r.) says the AI policy is a living, breathing document that must continually adapt as the technology evolves.

beyond AI shifted your perspective.

One student chose a quote by Faulkner — “Art has no concern with peace and contentment” — because he found it to be confusing and wanted clarity. It wasn’t easy to come by. After finishing his research, the quote still created confusion at home, with the student’s mom expressing a different interpretation the night before the assignment was due.

That last-minute impasse prompted the student to seek out Mr. Mendel the next morning before class.

As a result of their conversation, the student amended his presentation to share that “sometimes people will have different understandings of the same thing, which means AI can be wrong. We have to make decisions with the most evidence — and just because someone tells you that you’re wrong, it doesn’t mean you’re wrong.”

Traditional education models have always zeroed in on the distinction between getting the answer right or wrong. By incorporating AI into the English

classroom, Mr. Mendel introduced a new matrix to assess students.

“I have feedback for everyone in this class about their public speaking, presentation skills, research techniques, and collaboration with the teacher,” he says. “These are all things that will make them better and more equipped to succeed in life.”

Because we can’t yet fully grasp how AI will shape the future, those human skills could prove to be more vital than ever.

A Friends Academy alum who graduated in 1998, Matthew Monahan has worked with AI throughout his technology career, which includes a stop with IBM’s Watson Health (more on his career and time at Friends Academy on page TK). Mr. Monahan’s advice to students: pay close attention to AI advancements in the coming years; consider how they might impact your college, major, and career. His most pointed question:

If certain fields use AI to replace entry-level jobs, then what will the path look like to become a senior person in those fields?

“There are a lot of implications,” he says, “but the reality is we don’t have most of the answers yet.”

As Mr. Mendel puts it, “People who were alive when the automobile was invented, they couldn’t have known all the ways that it would change society. They probably had reasonable guesses and a sense of the technology’s ceiling. I could end up eating my words, but I think there’s potentially no ceiling on how AI could change society.”

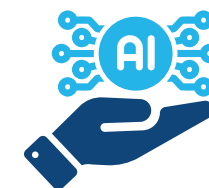
Mr. Mendel imagines such a future, in part, because AI can self-improve and make technological leaps without human intervention.

“Once an automobile is built, it requires a human to alter it,” he says. “We don’t know what AI technology is eventually going to do and how it’s going to change our world.”

As much as Mr. Mendel has immersed himself in the world of AI, it’s hardly his sole focus. After completing that AI assignment, his American Lit class read John

Steinbeck’s 1962 book, *Travels With Charley in Search of America*. Students penciled notes in the margins of paperback versions and discussed the novel in roundtable discussions.

“The world is increasingly



“We want students to be part of the decision-making and part of the thinking.”

– KEN AMBACH, DIRECTOR OF TECHNOLOGY

becoming digitized and isolated,” Mr. Mendel says. “We engaged in discussion-based learning with a book, which is an analog technology, and shared our thoughts and opinions face-to-face. Knowing how to use AI is a valuable skill, but so is learning how to talk with people, establish relationships, disagree constructively, and wait patiently to share your point of view.”

Like parallel lines converging in the distance, Mr. Mendel makes little distinction between his two roles as English Chair and the Dean of Innovation. For students and colleagues alike, he hopes to model balance instead of a tug-of-war between modern technology and traditional ways of academia.

“If you’re always preaching one versus the other, you’re limiting everyone’s sense of possibility,” he says. “I care deeply about simplicity. I look for tech-free zones in my life and in my teaching. I also believe in putting groundbreaking technology in young people’s hands and not depriving them of what’s available in the world.”

“It’s the contrast that makes things resonate and pop,” he adds. “In order to understand something deeply, you have to experience the opposite of it too.”

At home, Mr. Mendel’s daughters, Naomi, 4, and Amelia, 7, engage with AI in ways meant to fuel creativity.

Their dad uploads photos of them with their stuffed animals — a penguin and a monkey — and

turns everyone into characters in coloring-book-format. The kids color the print outs, continually adding pages to the fictional adventure story of their childhood.

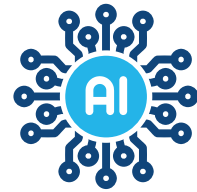
Mr. Mendel’s family also dabbles with Suno, an AI platform that turns text prompts, humming or lyrics into songs — vocals and instrumentation included. They

turned one acapella song that Naomi made about mac-and-cheese and laid it over tracks, turning it into a bopper that has been shared with and played more than 300 times by people in their extended family.

Which lands us back squarely in the paradox of AI: How will she truly learn music if she’s relying on AI to do it for her?

“Right,” says Mr. Mendel. “I’d never want her to learn about music from only an app. She also takes music lessons with a teacher. It’s the combination of the two things — the traditional and the innovative — that allows her to grow in ways that she otherwise wouldn’t in the absence of one of those tools.”

Even with its upsides, AI has been widely criticized for giving humanity so-called “AI slop,” which Google’s AI defines as “the overwhelming flood of low-quality, often inaccurate, AI-generated digital content (text, images, video, audio) that lacks human creativity, effort, or



“Our students are the future architects, implementers, and decision-makers in this space, which potentially has no ceiling. We must equip them to use AI ethically, morally, and wisely.”

– DANIEL MENDEL

meaning.”

To be clear, *The Meeting House* isn’t calling Naomi’s mac-and-cheese masterpiece AI slop. (Far from it, you little rockstar!) But the basic idea raises one of the most pertinent questions of our time: If anyone, anywhere, can endlessly create AI-generated content, what does it mean for art?

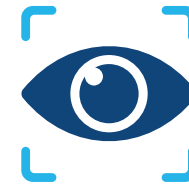
In the end, that which is timeless is always timely.

To borrow from Faulkner: Perhaps it is AI that ultimately has no concern with peace and contentment.

“AI could have more concern about peace and contentment if we lead in the right way and shape it in the right way,” Mr. Mendel says. “Nobody is wishing for the disruptiveness of AI. It’s not like teachers and educators are collaborating with AI companies, which have their foot on the gas.”

“Our students are the future architects, implementers, and decision-makers in this space. Because this technology potentially has no ceiling, it’s our job to provide the compass. We must equip them to use AI ethically, morally, and wisely in ways that are good for humanity. That’s our job as educators: to prepare them to live meaningful lives and lead the world.”

205 words



POV
Jaime Yeung '26, Artist



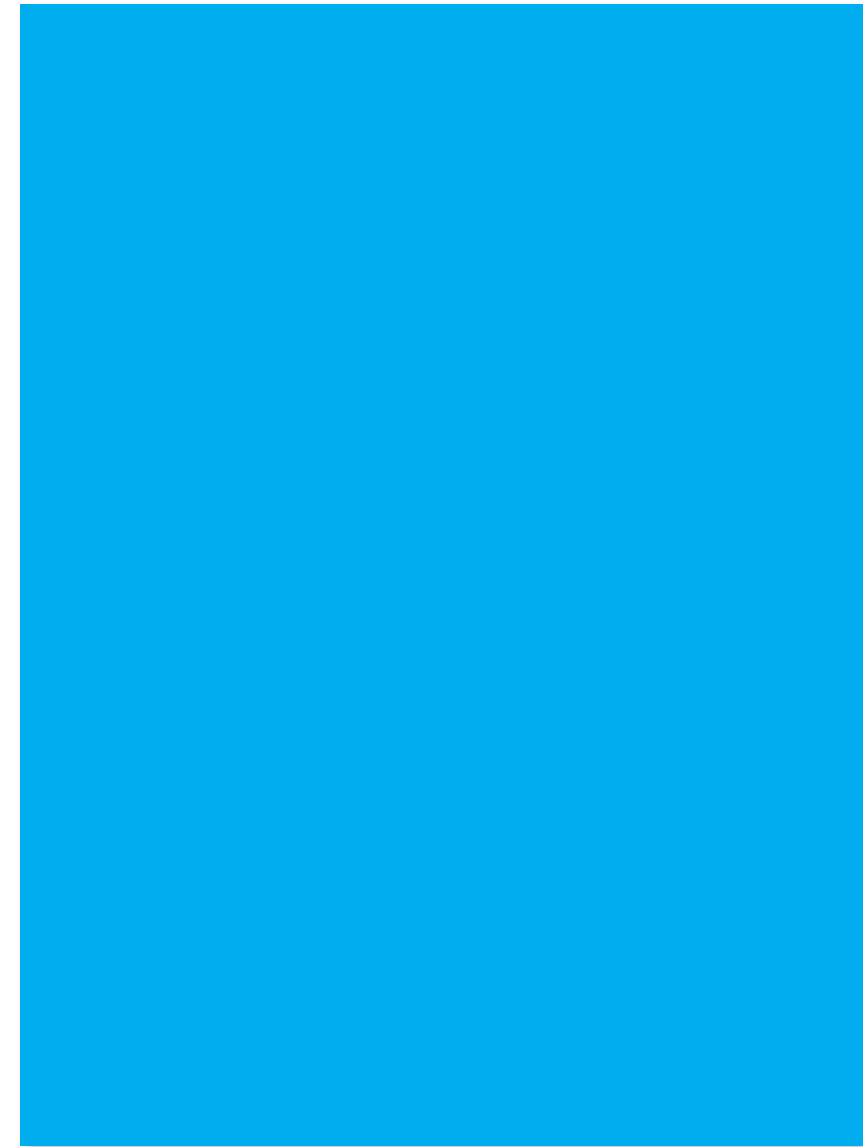
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INTERTWINED THEMES

An explanation of Jamie’s artwork by deconstructing the different parts...

A STAGE WHERE NO HERO STANDS ALONE

A LOOK INTO THE UNIQUE ENSEMBLE-DRIVEN WORLD OF FRIENDS ACADEMY THEATER

By Matt Gagne, Assistant Director of Communications

In early November, the Dolan Center Theater was turned into a fairytale village with foreboding music, dark shadows, woodland scenes scattered amongst the unused seats, and seven partitioned rooms at the back of the stage. Audience members were invited on stage for an immersive experience, free to follow any of the 11 characters from start to finish or bounce between story arcs as they pleased in the fall play, *Any Other After*.

In early February, the stage was used for a one-of-a-kind road trip in the winter musical, *The Lightning Thief*. With traditional audiences watching from their seats, the principal characters went on a cross-country, multi-dimension hero's quest from Camp Half-Blood, where demigods train in the summertime, to Los Angeles, where the main protagonists entered a portal to the Underworld to recover Zeus's lightning bolt and prevent a war from breaking out amongst the gods on Mt. Olympus.



Clockwise, seniors Andie Herman, Kody Mitchell, Jemima Constantino and Mackenzie Breg guide an ensemble cast of 9th, 10th, and 11th graders in "The Lightning Thief."

The two shows couldn't have been more different in either creative conceit or curtains-up execution, but they were guided by the same philosophy that serves as a North Star for the theater department at Friends Academy: Embrace the power of ensemble.

Theater Teacher Ms. Colby Christina Myers directed *The Lightning Thief* and addressed the audience before each of the three showings. "Our cast has poured a tremendous amount of time and effort into bringing this story to life," she said. "But in our program, we talk a lot about the power of ensemble — that no hero stands alone, that no story is told by only one person. So, what you're about to see is the result of trust and collaboration, both on stage and behind the scenes."

In the winter musical, 35 Upper School students shared the spotlight as part of the ensemble cast while 10 others worked behind the scenes. In the fall play, all 11 Upper School student-actors starred in their own leading roles while seven others worked behind the scenes on costumes, set design, and stage management.

“

What you're about to see is the result of trust and collaboration, both on stage and behind the scenes.

— COLBY CHRISTINA MYERS, THEATER TEACHER AND DIRECTOR

After the fall play, Director of Arts Mr. Andrew Geha explained to *The Meeting House* why the school put on a show that he had described to audiences before each of the three showings as "something very different from traditional theater."

"Every actor had equal weight in this show," says Mr. Geha, who conceived and directed *Any Other After*. "In a traditional play, only a few characters get the primary focus of the story. Devising an immersive show that gives every cast member equal ownership and stage



Daphne Li '26 in the roll of the "Evil Witch" captures Mr. Stellato's attention in this immersive play

time — a show in which every actor is essentially a lead — is philosophically in line with who we are as a Quaker school."

Across the two productions, students had robust opportunities to hone an array of skills.

In the fall play, students wrote significant treatments of an original script that explored the nature of fairytales and the untold backstories of fabled characters such as the Boy Who Cried Wolf, Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, the Good Witch, the Evil Witch, and Little Red.

They also had a chance to lean into improv acting, with each character engaging the interactive audience with questions such as: How do you know what true love is? Have you ever experienced it? What do you fear most? When was the last time you were afraid? Do you think you'll be remembered in 100 years?

In the winter musical, the dynamic, fast-paced show was packed with non-stop singing, dancing, sword-fighting, and special effects (a glowing campfire! Medusa's severed head! an exploding toilet!). Multiple times



The cast of "Any Other After" (left to right, starting on the bottom) Maya Singh, Kody Mitchell, Emily Mazur, Daphne Li, Jemima Constantino, Mackenzie Breg, Eleanor Lawton Flatters, Channing LaBonte, Charli Zahtila, and Charley Dai.



Scan here to read more about our Fall 2025 production:
Any Other After



Scan here to read more about our Winter 2026 production:
The Lightning Thief



Members of the cast of "Any Other After" bring the immersive show to its crescendo.

throughout the show, the entire cast (minus a character or two based on the developing plot) was on stage singing or engaging in group-conversation dialogue.

In advance of both productions, students had the opportunity to make larger-than-life costumes

and build versatile and intricate set designs.

On stage or behind the scenes, the essence of being in an ensemble at Friends Academy goes far beyond counting the group's numbers.

"An ensemble isn't just about many people having a part," Mr. Geha says. "It's about creating a place where everyone matters — where everyone knows your name and you know everyone's name. It's a place of safety and creativity and exploration."

And developing into well-rounded artists.

"Students are able to stretch all parts of themselves," Ms. Myers says.

"At Friends, they have a chance to train at an insane level of versatility — vocal coaching, acting coaching, dance coaching, combat coaching, costumes even. You learn how to multitask, how to balance your energy, how to manage your time.

You learn how to work as part of a group and how to work in high-paced environments. You learn how to tell another person's story and impact an audience. The opportunities are essentially endless."



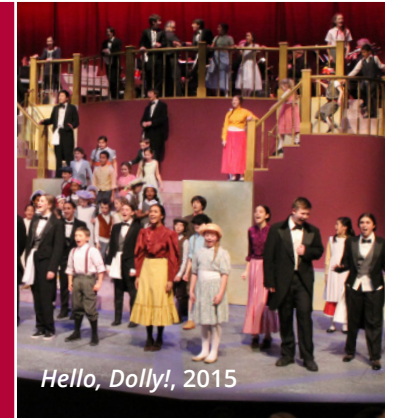
Mary Poppins, 2018

A HISTORY OF FA ENSEMBLE THEATER



*"If we stand as one...
Someday becomes
somehow."*

- "SEIZE THE DAY," NEWSIES



Hello, Dolly!, 2015



*Newsies!
2020*



A Midsummer Night's Dream, 2017



SpongeBob: The Musical, 2023

A CELEBRATION OF US

By Margaret Pegno Schwartz
Visuals, Social Media,
and Communications Specialist



The Friends Academy community was delighted and dazzled by student-musicians at the 2025 Winter Concert Series! The festivities were

kicked off with our annual Holidays with Friends celebration and concert. Beginning in the Art Gallery, attendees were wowed by the spectacular artwork created by students in Play Group through grade 12. Between musical numbers by our band, orchestra, and choir, videoa were shown where our students spoke about their favorite holiday tradition.

New for this year, orchestra teacher James Liverani brought together students in grades 6 through 12 for a special performance.

Before the school closed for winter break, families were once again invited for performances by our Lower School. In a true celebration of the arts, the Friends Academy Arts Department has begun incorporating performances of the various dance styles are students are learning with dance teacher Yoaldri Messina. Students in grades 2 through four not only took to the stage with vocal and instrumental performances, but also ballroom dance. These performances were introduced to the Lower School concerts in the spring of 2025 and have become a special moment for audience members.



MUSIC FOR GOOD

TRI-M MUSIC HONOR SOCIETY

By Margaret Pegno Schwartz
Visuals, Social Media, and Communications Specialist

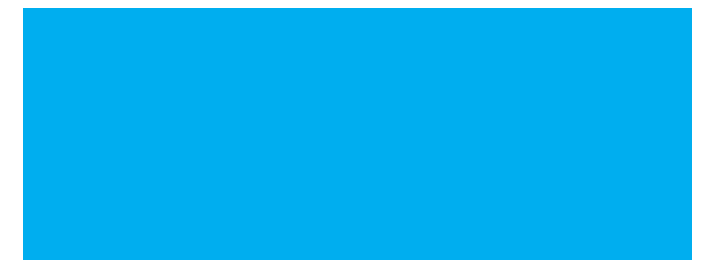


In only its second year, the Tri-M Music Honor Society has been making an impact on Friends Academy and the wider local community. The national organization was founded in 1952 and recognizes students who excel in the areas of Scholarship, Leadership, Character, and Service both musically and academically. Members have the opportunity to use leadership to make a difference through music-based service projects. Each fall, Friends Academy chapter leaders Tim Doran and James Liverani inducts new members through a Meeting for Celebration in the Matinecock Meeting House.

During the current school year, Tri-M has been making waves on and off campus. During an All-School Peace Vigil, members of the society sang to the school three songs including two by Quaker artists Ann Reed and Carrie Newcomer.

Also new to Friends Academy, Tri-M introduced the Coffee House. All students including those not in Tri-M were invited to sign up to perform various musical pieces as well as poetry and monologues. "Everyone was so prepared and so confident up there, they had the crowd leaning in the whole time," said Tri-M co-advisor Tim Doran, "It really shows how important community is here at Friends Academy."

In addition to on campus events, Tri-M has begun volunteering their time as service initiatives. In December, they visited The Atria senior living community in Glen Cove. Student-musicians shared the joy of the season by performing a mix of classic and modern carols for the residents. This musical visit created cherished memories, beautifully connecting our students with the community and offering their talents in meaningful service.



From the top, last year's inductees open this fall's ceremony.

Musical service at a Glen Cove senior center.

The Honor Society hosts an Upper School coffee house.

Tri-M Music Honor Society students at their induction ceremony in Oct. 2025.

2024-25

SPRING ATHLETICS

The spring sunshine brought out the best in our athletes! From a unforgettable New York State Championship win by boys tennis to the largest roster in FA spring rowing history to our first ever individual golf County Champion, there was a energy around campus that inspired us all.



HIGHLIGHTS

Baseball battled all season long. A strong senior class led the group, building a foundation for future success..

Softball injuries derailed what started out looking like a potentially strong season. Girls fought through to contend in their conference.s.

Boys Lacrosse had a very successful season, finishing near the top of the conference. Coach Lawler was named Coach of the Year, and the team competed in the final 4 of the playoffs at Hofstra University.

Girls Lacrosse finished 2nd in their conference with many girls reaching milestone statistic levels. The team had a big playoff victory over Mineola at the end of the season.

Track & Field continued its winning tradition. 9 athletes qualified for the state championships. Girls' 4x4 relay set a school record.

Girls Golf finished as one of the top teams in the County again. Junior Ava Estrella qualified for her 4th consecutive State Championship Tournament.

Boys Golf had another successful season. The team finished placing 2nd in the County Championship Tournament, and Junior Charles Nevin was the first FA individual golfer to win the County Championship

Boys Tennis had an historic season after they were crowned the New York State small school champions after winning the tournament at the Billie Jean King Tennis Center in Queens.

Crew had the best turnout for a Spring Crew roster in program history. The entire team qualified for the State Championship Regatta.

HONORS & ACHIEVEMENTS

Congratulations to our athletes who competed in County Championships and beyond!

SPECIAL AWARDS

Emma Brock '26, Girls Lacrosse – *Academic All-American & Unsung Hero*
 Juliette D'Addario '26, Girls Lacrosse – *Conference Player of the Year*
 Fiona Dougherty '25, Girls Lacrosse – *Scholar Athlete*
 Christina Grasso '25, Softball – *Scholar Athlete*
 Charles Nevin '26, Boys Golf – *County Champion*
 Sofia Schwarz '26, Girls Lacrosse – *Academic All-American*

ALL STATE

Will Bohner '26, Boys Tennis
 Akash Agarwal '26, Boys Golf
 Charles Nevin '26, Boys Golf

ALL COUNTY

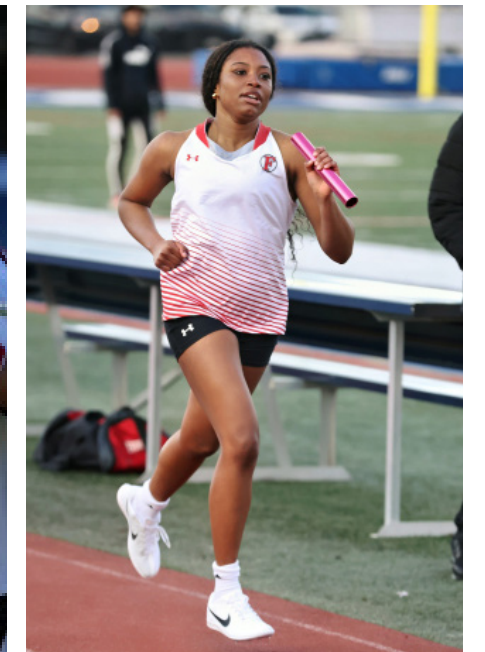
Lana Alvarez '28, Girls Track & Field
 Clarke Beard '25, Boys Lacrosse
 Joy Biondi '25, Girls Golf
 Will Davis '25, Boys Track & Field
 Ava Estrella '26, Girls Golf
 Cynthia Eustache '26, Girls Track & Field
 Aislinn Frazer '25, Girls Track & Field
 Gabbie Hudak '27, Girls Lacrosse
 Ava Jaklitsch '26, Girls Track & Field
 Cooper Mott '26, Boys Track & Field
 Tomas Puente Teixidor '25, Boys Track & Field
 Sofia Schwarz '26, Girls Lacrosse
 Jared Williams '26, Boys Track & Field
 Daren Zhong '26, Boys Track & Field
 Ryder Marcus '27, Boys Lacrosse – *Honorable Mention*
 John Tsioulis '27, Boys Lacrosse – *Honorable Mention*

ALL LEAGUE

Damian Balkcom '27, Baseball

ALL CONFERENCE

Lexi Cohen '26, Girls Lacrosse
 Ilaria Florence '28, Girls Lacrosse
 Luca Kraska '28, Boys Lacrosse
 Eleni Vrahatis '25, Softball



SPRING 2025 BY THE NUMBERS



Track & Field athletes qualified for the State Championship



Crew team members qualified for the State Championship



In Boys Tennis State Championship



In Nassau County: Boys Golf



Dedicated Baseball Seniors



Boys Lacrosse Coach of the Year: Ryan Lawler



Softball seniors leading the team through the postseason



Year in a row Ava Estrella qualified for the Girls Golf State Match



In Conference: Girls Lacrosse

2025-26

FALL ATHLETICS



The fall season embraced a true sense of community. With the addition of varsity volleyball, one of our largest cheer squads in FA history, and two Nassau County Sportsmanship Ambassadors, the Quakers had each others backs and set an example for students across divisions.



HIGHLIGHTS

Volleyball had its inaugural season in FA history. A young group of enthusiastic students took the court for the first time in upper school history. They learned their way through the season to finish with a two-game winning streak. Senior Arielle Roberts was named Scholar Athlete, and Sophomore Malia Blount was named All-County Honorable mention.

Girls Soccer battled until the very last day of the season. They fell just short of the playoffs, but led by a great group of seniors, they set the tone for the future. Dani Berritto was named Scholar Athlete, Lana Alvarez was named all conference, Jenna Fragias and Sophia Diaz were named All-County honorable mention, and Kat Goldstein was all-county.

Boys Soccer celebrated a historic season earning Co-County Champion honors. They won their conference and fought their way to the last day of the county schedule.

Crew was out on the water every day, fighting through all the elements. Traveling up and down the East Coast to compete in regattas.

Cross Country boys and girls both qualified for the State Championship. The boys finished 8th in the state, and the girls finished 6th.

Cheer inspired the crowds and the players on our teams at soccer and football games. They also taught our Lower School students different cheers at the Lower School clinic.

Field Hockey had a bounce-back season and first Conference Championship in many years. Earned the #4 overall seed in the playoffs.

Football combined with Roslyn this year for another hard-working season.

Girls Tennis continued their tradition of excellence and earned the #2 seed in the playoffs.



The inaugural Varsity Volleyball team is coached by Hava Davis, previously a coach for Hofstra Women's Volleyball, Director of Dining Services Christina Mariakakis, and Melinda Harris

HONORS & ACHIEVEMENTS

QUAKER PRIDE RUNS DEEP WITH 36 INDIVIDUAL AWARDS GIVEN BY SECTION VIII

SPECIAL AWARDS

- Dani Berritto '26, *Scholar Athlete*
- Jack Byrnes '26, *Scholar Athlete*
- Abby Frazer '26, *Girls Cross Country – Nassau County Sportsmanship Ambassador*
- Emily Goldstein '28, *Field Hockey – Unsung Hero*
- Dylan Leon '26, *Boys Soccer – Class A Player of the Year*
- Raphi Loizides '27, *Boys Cross Country – Nassau County Sportsmanship Ambassador*
- Sebastian Martinez-Sierra '27, *Boys Soccer – County Championship MVP*
- Taylor Price '26, *Field Hockey – Exceptional Senior*
- Arielle Roberts '26, *Scholar Athlete*

ALL STATE

- Dylan Leon '26, *Boys Soccer*
- Ariana Maderia '29, *Girls Cross Country*
- Charlotte Yanke '26, *Girls Cross Country*

ALL COUNTY

- Teddy Dugan '31, *Boys Cross Country*
- Kat Goldstein '26, *Girls Soccer*
- Carlos Hernandez '27, *Boys Soccer*
- Raphi Loizides '27, *Boys Cross Country*
- Mircea Manu '26, *Boys Soccer*
- Grace Parziale '27, *Girls Tennis*
- Sofia Schwarz '26, *Girls Tennis*
- Jack Steinberg '27, *Boys Soccer*
- Jonathan Almendares-Montes '26, *Boys Soccer – Honorable Mention*
- Malia Blount '28, *Volleyball – Honorable Mention*
- Paige D'Anna '27, *Field Hockey – Honorable Mention*
- Sophia Diaz '26, *Girls Soccer – Honorable Mention*
- Jenna Fragias '28, *Girls Soccer – Honorable Mention*
- Malia Blount '28, *Volleyball – Honorable Mention*
- Ella Woods '28, *Field Hockey – Honorable Mention*

ALL DIVISION

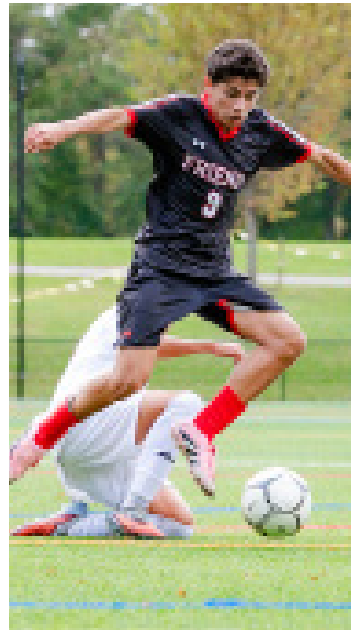
- Grace Parziale '27, *Girls Tennis*
- Sofia Schwarz '26, *Girls Tennis*

ALL LEAGUE

- Lisali Peiris '27, *Field Hockey*

ALL CONFERENCE

- Lana Alvarez '28, *Girls Soccer*
- Luca Kraska '28, *Boys Soccer*
- Olivia Lichota '28, *Girls Tennis*
- Aidan Lloves '26, *Boys Soccer*
- Dylan Price '27, *Boys Soccer*
- Justin Wang '28, *Boys Soccer*



FALL 2025 BY THE NUMBERS



Win in **Volleyball** program history was on Sept. 19, 2025



Goals scored by **Girls Soccer** sophomore Lana Alvarez



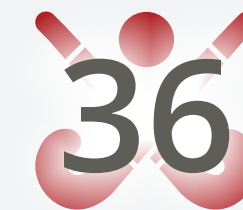
Cross Country runners qualified for the State Championship



Goals scored for **Boys Soccer**



Football tripled their scoring total in the last 3 games



Field Hockey goals scored in 14 games



Girls Tennis seed going into the playoffs

CLASS OF 2025 COLLEGE SIGNINGS

After years of hard work and storied high school careers, several seniors have signed to continue their athletics journeys at the next level. Friends Academy commends our college signees, as well as all graduating members of our athletics program.



Counterclockwise from bottom left:



Teah Login
Emerson College
Women's Tennis

Fiona Dougherty
Kenyon College
Women's Soccer

Aislinn Frazer
West Virginia University
Women's Track & Field

Will Davis
Bowdoin College
Men's Track & Field

Shawn Beaman
Colby College
Men's Squash



The 1876 Society

Support Friends Academy through a Planned Gift

"Nothing I have done my entire life has given me more pleasure and satisfaction than seeing the enormous progress our once modest, little school has made during the past 60 years. Trustees, alumni, parents and students have transformed our beloved FA into a living example of what can be achieved by dedicated people who share a common goal."

- Ward Burian '52



For more information on planned giving, please contact Laurie Hindley, Director of External Affairs at 516-393-4269 or laurie_hindley@fa.org.

FACULTY MILESTONES

From conference presentations to newly published books to prestigious awards, read through some of the achievements of our current colleagues. And, we are thrilled to welcome back the return of our former colleagues happenings on pages 46-47! *To submit former colleague updates, please email Dean of Faculty Mentoring Tamara_Clark@fa.org.*



Abby Cook-Gonzalez

On Nov. 10, 2025, Director of Early Childhood and Little Friends Daycare Abby Cook-Gonzalez and Play Group teacher Sasha Marra headed to Buffalo, NY, to present at the NYSAIS Teaching and Learning Conference at the Nichols School. Their presentation, "Tuning into Children: Responsive Design for Fluid and Meaningful Dramatic Play," complemented a day of other innovative teaching practices in independent schools.



Sasha Marra



Ken Ambach



Becky Manteria



Daniel Mendel

Dean of Instruction Becky Manteria, Director of Technology Ken Ambach, and English Department head and Dean of Innovation Daniel Mendel presented, "AI Policymaking in K-12 Education" at the NYSAIS Assistant Heads/Division Heads/After-School Directors/Deans Conference 2025.



Meghan Leonhardt

Middle School Science teacher presented two workshops at FA, in preparation for the the Roots to Routes conference (which was unfortunately canceled to the winter storms): the first, "Heard in the Hallways," helps educators brainstorm how to deal with identity-based comments between students; the second, "The Neuroscience of Bias," takes a deep dive into how our brain is hardwired to engage in bias and how to intentionally recognize and mitigate that bias.



Ann Marie Tidona

Congratulations to Ann Marie Tidona, Director of Finance, Operations, and Strategic Projects, who has been named the 2026 Ken White Distinguished Business Officer by NBOA. This prestigious award is given to exceptionally active and inspiring chief business officers who have dedicated their careers to supporting others in the field beyond their own school campus. Ann Marie also spoke on the panel, "Unknown Economic Incentives: Public Finance Strategies for Not-for-Profit Leaders," hosted by Empire Government Strategies. In announcing this honor, Head of School Paul Stellato said, "She has played critical roles in caring for the financial health of the school and ensuring that colleagues and students enjoy the resources they will need to do the important work of the school. In each of these roles, her love of Friends Academy and her deep commitment to its people shine through."



Andrew Geha

Director of Arts Andrew Geha signed a book deal in September 2025 with The Peachtree Publishing Company. His first novel, *The Most Incredible Mission Berg*, will be released in the summer of 2027.



Laurie Hindley
Director of External Affairs

We are delighted to welcome and introduce Laurie Hindley, our new Director of External Affairs who leads our Advancement Office, and began a new chapter at FA (for her and us!) on July 1, 2025.

Before coming to us, Laurie spent several years at The Hewitt School in NYC as their Director of Advancement, and prior to that in a similar role at Dulwich College in London. She began her career as a history teacher at Regis High School in NYC before moving to The American School in London, where she taught and directed alumni and fundraising programs.

Laurie is a frequent presenter at professional conferences, and has worked to raise more than \$100 million for independent schools over the course of her career so far. A graduate of Princeton University and Long Island native, Laurie is delighted to be living in Locust Valley with her English husband and their two children who are now students at Friends.



For nearly 150 years, Friends Academy has remained steadfast in its mission – to educate students to become their best selves and contribute to the common good.

Learn how our rich history continues to guide our vision for the future with a tour of our school.



Connect with our Admissions team directly to ask them questions about Friends Academy.

Applications are open for the 2026-27 school year.

Friends Academy

friendsacademy.org (516) 676-0393 270 Duck Pond Road Locust Valley, NY 11560

To the Friends Academy Class of 2025, We know you are changing the world for the better. Congratulations!



Friends Academy's graduates have achieved educational excellence by committing to the highest standards of learning and living. We congratulate them on their next journey knowing they are exceptionally prepared for college and a life of authentic purpose.

The Class of 2025 is currently enrolled at:

Barnard College
Boston College
Bowdoin College
Bucknell College
Clemson College
Colby College
Colgate College
Columbia University
Cornell University
Duke University
Embry-Riddle
Aeronautical University
Emerson College
Emory University
Fordham University
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Georgia Institute of Technology
High Point University

Howard University
Indiana University
Kenyon College
Lehigh University
Lesley University
Louisiana State University
Massachusetts College
of Art and Design
McGill University
New York University
Northeastern University
Princeton University

Providence College
Purdue University
Rice University
Rutgers University
Skidmore College
Southern Methodist
University
Syracuse University
The New School
The University of Texas
at Austin
Trinity College

Tulane University
University of Chicago
University of Connecticut
University of Maryland
University of Miami
University of Michigan
University of Notre Dame
University of Richmond
University of Southern
California
University of St. Andrews
University of Virginia
US Air Force Academy
Vassar College
Villanova University
Wake Forest University
Washington University
in St. Louis
West Virginia University
Yale University



TAMMY'S CORNER

I am fully in the swing as Dean of Faculty Mentoring and I must admit, I am thoroughly enjoying being in this role. I have the unique opportunity to work with all of our new colleagues, as well as our veteran colleagues, in a position in which I can support, guide, and honor them. It is quite rewarding as I realize that amidst every new group of colleagues, it is quite possible that some of these colleagues may decide to make Friends Academy their permanent home and become long-standing members who will help to create an even better community and richer culture. In this role, we have created a robust mentoring program in which our veteran colleagues regularly meet with our new colleagues. Our veteran colleagues provide guidance and motivation and share their expertise to help guide our new colleagues. Our amazing colleagues truly care about education and they immensely care about our students. I am thrilled that I can support and work with all of our colleagues. It is my honor to be filling a much-needed position as a liaison, cheerleader, and advocate.



Tammy Clark
Dean of Faculty
Mentoring

Please enjoy getting to know a little bit about our newest colleagues:

Colby Myers
All-School Theater Teacher

At FA, I advise the Black Student Alliance, creating a consistent space for student leadership, dialogue, and community. I direct and teach across all divisions and productions, centering student voice, collaboration, and storytelling. This year, I made my FA directorial



debut with the Upper School musical *The Lightning Thief*, working alongside the incredible creative masterminds in our Arts Department to bring a student-centered and community-driven vision to the stage. I also design and facilitate theater courses such as Cultural Show and Tell Improv and Ethnodrama/Verbatim Theater that connect the arts with social impact, identity, and belonging. I'm most proud of building spaces where students feel seen, heard, and empowered – whether that's in the classroom, the rehearsal room, or through student organizations. Watching students grow in confidence, take creative risks, and claim ownership of their stories has been incredibly meaningful.

FUN FACT! I am a professional dancer of 20 years who specializes in traditional African Dance. I have been a feature performer of Dance Africa at the Brooklyn Academy of Music since 2010.

Andy Goldstein
Director of Safety & Security

I was recognized as a subject matter expert within my former agency in the Operational Medical Support and Rapid Response Disaster Relief programs. I developed the curricula and instructed both programs, led the agency's response to multiple disasters as a leader on



the ground and from headquarters. I designed and led our medical support of most of the National Special Security Events my agency participated in for the last several years. I enjoy conducting outreach to schools and other organizations regarding my former agency and hope to continue that here, representing Friends Academy. I am proud of my three smart kids who are going places.

FUN FACT! I enjoy playing guitar and trying to learn new songs.

Nancy Gunning
Upper School English Teacher

This year I feel that having transitioned from a seasoned and successful career as an administrator in a high achieving local public school to returning to the classroom as an English teacher has been my biggest professional accomplishment. Returning to, what I



perceive to be, the most important part of any school organization – teaching – has been both humbling and inspiring. I am incredibly proud of the rapport that I have built and continue to build with my peers and my students and their families. I felt an immediate and genuine connection with my students, and I understand that if my students feel supported and safe and that they can trust me, then I can ask them to do hard work and set my expectations high.

FUN FACT! I didn't realize how many connections I already had at Friends with staff and students and parents at Friends. So many of my interactions have yielded conversations like, "I know so and so" or "my really good friend had you as her AP teacher in Great Neck." I attribute this to Ms. Tamara Clark's piece of wisdom when she told me, "good people, know good people." I see it as a sign that Friends is truly my new home.

FORMER COLLEAGUES NOTES



Matthew Bradley and Melinda Wenner Bradley

Former Middle School teacher Melinda Wenner Bradley: "It was wonderful to be back at FA in September and to speak on the topic of support for families in faith communities as part of Matinecock Meeting's 300th anniversary. Amazing to see former students who are now parents themselves and serving on the FA Board! Matt and I took a selfie outside the Middle School, "where it all started" for us. He is the Head of School at Plymouth Meeting Friends School and I am the Director of Faith & Play Stories, in addition to consulting with Quaker meetings and Friends schools on program and curriculum development. We traveled to Kenya in October, where I led a training for Sunday School teachers at Friends Theological College and he visited Kenyan Friends schools. Our three children are young adults – Ellie is a teacher at Mary McDowell Friends School in Brooklyn, James is a senior at the University of Notre Dame majoring in Political Science, and Will is a first-year student at the University of Vermont majoring in Forestry."

Former Lower School Principal Steve Castar:

"I have been an Early Childhood Coach for CUNY for the past 10 years. I plan on retiring on January 26, 2026. Lots of things to fill my time: pickleball, pool, golf, pottery, and some early childhood leadership coaching. However, the most fun will be spending time with my granddaughter Maya. My daughter Rebecca had Maya on April 1, 2025. Everything people say about grandchildren is all true. She is a delight. Maya is growing up right before my

eyes, soon to be 10-months-old and counting. Adam is pursuing a career in the podcasting industry. Amy continues to work and loves her job as a financial advisor. Looking forward to reading about my Friends' colleagues.

Former Lower School teacher Jaimee Connors: "Hello Friends! Life after FA has been busy, just as life during FA was busy! The family is great...My older son, Jack, is a senior, and has been doing all the exciting things that come with that. My younger son, Evan, is in 8th grade and devotes much of his time to training and traveling with his ice hockey team. My husband, Keith, retired after 24 long years in law-enforcement. He now works part-time as a security guard in our home district. I received tenure last year (yay!) in my new school district (West Islip), and I am now in my 5th year. I teach an adorable, smart, feisty group of Kindergarteners. Life is good, but of course I still miss all my friends at Friends! Hope everyone is well!"

Former Communications Specialist Amanda (Ghysel) Delfino: "Since my time at FA, I've moved into a career in higher education communications, first at Pace University's Dyson College of Arts and Sciences and now as the Assistant Director of Communications at NYU's Wagner Graduate School of Public Service. I also graduated with my Master's in Higher Education Administration and Student Affairs from Pace in 2023. And a lot has happened personally too! My husband, Matt, and I got married in June 2023, bought our first home in Seaford in May 2024, and are expecting our first child this April! I think fondly of my time – and especially my colleagues – at FA. I would love to hear what others have been up to and would enjoy time to reconnect!"

Former Business Manager and Hockey Coach James Evans '68: "Much has happened since leaving my faculty and my administrative position at FA. I spent 15 great years working for Friends. As many know, I am also an alum. My journey after Friends took me to Utah where I worked for a boarding school, took a break from teaching and worked

as a human resources manager for a luxury hotel in Park City while I pursued a Master's Degree in Education at Westminster University; I ended up on the faculty of Western Governors University (<https://www.wgu.edu>), a non-profit, online institution of higher learning. My students were studying to be licensed elementary, secondary, and special education teachers. This experience was an opportunity to get in on the ground level of on-line, competency-based college education. I worked from my home office. While still with Western Governors I moved to Louisiana to be closer to aging parents. I retired in 2013 when I realized that my parents were going to require more of my time than my schedule allowed. My parents are gone now. Currently, I live in Florida with my partner. We are enjoying great neighbors and the freedom to travel. We go to Brazil frequently, which is where my partner grew up. Last August we rented a lakeside house for a month in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. We will be cruising in February and will add that experience to our list of cruises – Alaska, Spain, and Canada. Brazil is on the travel schedule for next August. We like to be in cooler places during our summer here. It will be winter there (which is similar in climate to Florida's winters – very mild and tropical). If anyone is coming to Florida anytime soon, look me up! Email me at wejr@icloud.com."

Former Middle School teacher Verónica Guevara: "I am currently in Madison, WI, teaching Spanish at an IB school. I took this position as my son asked me to move closer to MN, as he and his new wife are planning on starting a family. I will travel with them to Guatemala this summer."

Former Upper School Math teacher Alec Lash: On June 25, 2022, I married Britt Carnegie. We welcomed our first, Caroline, to the world on October, 9 2024. We are expecting our second baby girl early this summer. I'm currently teaching high school mathematics at Greenwich Country Day School in CT while Britt teaches math in the middle school. Former Friends Academy colleagues, Joe Helpert, Rob Waller, and Jesse Tennyson also work at GCDS with us.

FORMER COLLEAGUES NOTES



Alec Lash, and his wife Britt

Former Upper School History teacher Marshall Lindner: I retired from FA six years ago and we moved to the Richmond area to be closer to our daughter's family. For two years I coached middle school soccer and baseball at Collegiate School in Richmond. It is an independent school, where our daughter works and our grandsons attend. I later became the head boys' soccer coach at our local public school, Goochland High School, for three seasons. That made a grand total of 50 years as a high school soccer coach and 30 years as a head baseball coach. A good number to finally retire from coaching. I currently substitute teach at both Goochland High and Middle Schools about 3 days a week – mostly in Physical Education, but other areas too. I still really enjoy being around the kids and the faculty and being part of the business of education. I guess my 35 years of teaching and coaching at Friends Academy, with its extraordinary colleagues, students, parents and players, stood me in good stead to continue doing what I loved. FA will forever be a special part of my life. Very few people have enjoyed their career more than I have."

Former Lower School Principal Deborah McCrimmon: "My life continues to be full of mini-adventure and a bit of

slowing down with age. I still work for Baltimore County Schools as a long-term substitute teacher. Right now, I am a librarian for two months. I taught Sunday School for seven years and have been very busy volunteering in the community via my sorority. I have done a bit of traveling by air & by sea. I have recently visited many states, as well as Dubai, Greek Isles, Hawaiian Islands, and Bermuda, and will travel to Portugal in a few months. I visit NYC regularly to indulge the arts. I will be in the city next month for the NYC ballet and in April for my group's quarterly theater trip to see the play *Proof*. Pilates and Book Club are my favorite activities. The grandchildren are adults now with the eldest becoming an elementary school educator like her grandmother. All is well. Peace and joy to you all!"

Former Middle School English teacher Tinia R. Merriweather, Ph.D.: I remember my time at Friends Academy fondly and think of it often. I feel very grateful to have started my teaching career in such a wonderful, supportive school. I started working at Friends Academy in the Fall of 1996 when I was 22 years old. I was fresh out of graduate school at Teachers College, Columbia University (M.A. Educational Psychology) and my undergraduate program at my beloved alma mater, Spelman College (B.A. Child Development and Elementary Education). I had



Tinia R. Merriweather

wanted to be a teacher ever since I was in Kindergarten – and finally, I was one! I taught on the Beta Team (3rd and 4th grades) with Parm (Pat Parmalee), Mrs. Izzo (Chelle Izzo), Mr. Rob (Chris Robertson), and Ms. Lamb (Jocelyn Lamb Martone). I stayed at FA for 11 years – four years in the LS and seven years in the MS. And... I'm still teaching... now in my 30th year in the classroom! (Don't do the math on my age!) I have been teaching in the

Ethics Department at the Ethical Culture Fieldston School (www.ecfs.org) for the past 19 years. I started at Fieldston when I left FA to pursue my Ph.D. in Applied Developmental Psychology at Fordham University. Because I was teaching and going to school, it took me 11 (looooooong) years to finish my degree, but I did indeed 'phinally' get PhiniseD. I graduated in 2018. In addition to teaching at Fieldston, I also teach at NYU Steinhardt in the Graduate Program in Applied Psychology. My students are getting M.A. degrees in either Mental Health Counseling or School Counseling. This semester will be my lucky 13th semester at NYU. (My first semester teaching there was Spring 2020 – whew!) I really enjoy teaching graduate students, but I'm grateful that I also still teach middle and high school students. As a developmental psychologist, I specialize in adolescence. And I still spend the bulk of my days with tweens and teenagers. I love this! At NYU, I have taught Human Growth and Development, Research Methods, and Program Development and Program Evaluation. I'm teaching Program Eval again for Spring 2026. At Fieldston, I teach a variety of courses: 7th Grade Ethics (Introduction to Social Justice Education), 10th Grade Ethics (A study of freedom and justice), Comparative Religion, Advanced Peer Leadership, and Silence & Noise: The Politics of Storytelling. Many of the ideas that I still incorporate into my classes, whether I'm teaching middle schoolers or graduate students, were formed during my foundational years at Friends. I am ever so slowly also working on a book that brings together my teaching experiences, my passion for equity and justice, and my scholarship in applied psychology. I hope to be able to pitch it to publishers later this year. Stay tuned."

Former Upper School English Department head Geoff Nelson: "Hey FA folks, Since I left Friends, I did a five-year stint as English Chair at the Masters School in Dobbs Ferry, before moving to the Hopkins School in New Haven, CT in summer 2024, where I currently serve as Dean of Faculty. It was a welcome change from NYC, after nearly 20 years there, and my partner Angela and I have been loving New Haven, as it's a bit closer to my family in Providence and reminds me

Continued on Page XX

FORMER COLLEAGUES NOTES

of that city and my upbringing in some uncanny ways. I miss many FA folks and have had the good fortune to stay in touch with some former and current faculty, as well as many students from my 12 years there. Wishing all of you well, and don't hesitate to reach out if you're in New Haven or want to come take a tour of Hopkins."

Former Advancement Campaign Coordinator AJ Pegno: "While I left Friends, I still remain connected through my daughter attending Friends Academy in Play Group! Currently I am working at East End Hospice in Westhampton Beach in Development and Events and working towards my MBA. Recently I have returned to Friends Academy in a smaller capacity of running a Little Lax program for kids ages 4 and 5 years old."



Above: Emily Pursino and her family; top: one of the sunsets they've been soaking up and photographing

Former Upper School Math teacher Emily Pursino: "I have such fond memories of my time at Friends Academy. Since leaving I have relocated to Bluffton, SC with my family where we are soaking up the beautiful sunshine in the Lowcountry. I continue to tutor math and I teach at my children's hybrid school. We homeschool for the other days. I also became a Holistic Health Coach and spiritual & physical well-being is a primary focus. I currently am pregnant with my 5th child and life truly is a blessing. God bless everyone!"

Former Director of Athletics Alan Quackenbush: "I am spending time with my four grandchildren and continue to network with athletic administrators across Nassau and Suffolk. I also had the opportunity to accompany two veterans to Washington, D.C. through the Honor Flight LI program."

Former Upper School Science teacher Casey Reed: "I'm currently in my 5th year of working at Tandem Friends School, a Quaker School in Charlottesville, VA. I've been able to spend a lot more time with my family (parents, siblings, and my lovely nieces and nephews) since I moved back here. My proudest accomplishment so far was being selected as graduation speaker in 2024! I really appreciated my time at Friends Academy and the connections that I made, but I feel like I have found my home. Former colleagues, let me know if you're ever in the Charlottesville area!"

Hassan Robinson '90: "I attended FA from 1986-1990. I am currently Principal of Highland Park Elementary School, in Manchester, CT. After FA I went to Cushing Academy Prep School and then Springfield College on a full scholarship to play Basketball and Baseball, while majoring in History/ Secondary Education. I was drafted to the Houston Astros



Hassan Robinson '90

baseball organization in 1994, where I spent five years in the minor leagues. Upon retiring from baseball, I taught and coached in Springfield, MA and then East Hartford, CT from 1999-2014. I've been an administrator since. I'm married with three children and reside in East Hartford."

Former Middle School Principal Steve Rubenacker: "After a three-year assignment as Head of School at Rosarian Academy in West Palm Beach, we returned to New York in 2018, where I became Head of The Bridges Academy, a small PK-8 school in West Islip. I am now in my eighth year here, and things have gone extremely well. Although Bridges is a young school - only in its 14th year - we were thrilled to receive our NYSAIS accreditation for the first time in 2023. Hard to believe, but beginning with my time at FA, I am celebrating my 25th year in independent school education this year. The family is doing great. Thomas and Daniel are both enrolled at Chaminade, and we are gearing up for the college search. Two years ago, Kate decided to reenter the workforce and joined us as one of our Early Childhood teachers at Bridges. She is most definitely a crowd favorite, and we are incredibly lucky to have her."



Christine Saunders with her daughters and FA Head of School Paul Stellato

Former Middle School Principal Christine Saunders: I have been enjoying my first year as Head of School at St. Michael's Episcopal Day School in Carmichael, CA. The lessons I learned while at Friends Academy shape my new work in countless ways. St. Michael's was honored to have Paul Stellato speak at our Installation Ceremony in October. Peter, Evelyn, Aurie, and I send our best

FORMER COLLEAGUES NOTES



Christine Saunders at her installation as the new head of school at St. Michael's Episcopal Day School.

wishes to everyone at FA as you look ahead to celebrate Year 150!"

Former Middle School Principal; Upper School Principal and Assistant Head of School Deb Schoman: "I moved off LI on Sept 30 after closing on our Babylon property. We owned a house up near Glens Falls for over 10 years and we decided to move up north! Our kids live in different places - CT and FL. We still love to ski and have a great circle of friends already from skiing upstate over the many years."

Former Upper School Spanish teacher



Deb Schoman, with her growing family!

Kate Scudellari: "I've been spending time between Manhattan, London, and Long Island. I left the Logistics world (on an indefinite hiatus) after the birth of my first son. I am currently in my "power pause" while raising two very young and amazing boys. Also, I'm still tutoring, supporting Epilogos Charities (El Salvador), and loving everything Spanish. I cherish every moment shared with FA colleagues and students. I still feel your Light. I will return to the classroom... someday."

Former Middle School History teacher Dan Smith: "I was at FA from 2001 to 2009. I spent a few years at school in my home state of Utah before moving overseas with my wife Nadia and three kids in 2013. Since then I've been an administrator at schools in India, Thailand, Singapore and now Vietnam. We still remember our days at FA with great fondness and are so grateful for the opportunity I had to start as a young teacher there and the support and friendship we had starting our young family on the Elm Avenue Circle."

Former Upper School French and History teacher Richard Streaun: I taught in the Upper School from 1983-86. After earning a Ph.D, I went on to teach lots of subjects in the humanities and social sciences in various public and private institutions from eighth grade through graduate school, retiring in 2016. I still work at a children's camp in Maine in the summer and enjoy hiking, theater, concerts, and travel in the winter. On a rare recent trip to Long Island, I was thinking of some of my former students. I'd love to hear from them and former colleagues."

Former Upper School Principal Thomas Woehrl: "I shall be 91 come March. I am residing in an independent senior living community named Luther Manor located in Wauwatosa WI, a suburb of Milwaukee. I prepare my own breakfasts and lunches and eat dinner with other residents in the dining room. I enjoy singing in the choir, which performs several programs per year for residents. I do not drive anymore, but various family members take me to appointments and out to eat. My health is good considering my age."

Former Upper School Learning Specialist Susan Young: I am currently one of a team of remedial reading intervention teachers, language literacy teachers, at Greenwood School in Putney, Vermont. I live in a small, dirt road town with a cat in a cozy apartment and teach boys to decode, spell, and comprehend literature. I have worked in many schools with similar missions and this is one of the best, but it is far from family and old friends.

To submit former colleague updates, please email Dean of Faculty Mentoring Tammy Clark at Tamara_Clark@fa.org. Please send all photos to Director of Institutional Communications Andrea Miller at Andrea_Miller@fa.org.

FACULTY RETIREMENTS

Allison Doherty

35 years at FA

“In any career, how does one remain vital and vigorous over 34 years? Allison Doherty has found the answers in the sheer breadth of her involvement and achievement. She is skilled as an artist and award-winning



printmaker, painter, and fabric designer; she is a lover of the natural world, logging hundreds of miles traversing the trails of Long Island as she sees faithfully to a daily habit of walking outside every day, rain or shine.

She played a leadership role in founding the Global Studies Program and our school's literary magazine, Gnosis; and while that work was going on, she was also on the water: coaching crew, fall and winter, for 15 years. This former chair of the visual arts department directed the Dolan Center art gallery, curating and coordinating scores of exhibitions. The list continues.

Draw a straight line from the founding of any enduring program and you will find a colleague there; look for any program that flourishes and you will see the care and attention lavished on it by one or two people. For 34 years, those lines have led to and from Allison Doherty.”



“

Draw a straight line from the founding of any enduring program and you will find a colleague there.



Aggie Jones

22 years at FA

“In 22 years, Aggie has supported and guided the work of seven athletic directors.

As one of the longest serving, most respected athletic coordinators among the 58 Section 8 schools (and the greater constellation of public, parochial, and independent schools across the state), Aggie has been formally recognized twice: in 2007, with the New York State Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AHPERD) Nassau County Bondence Westring Secretaries Recognition Award; and in 2015, with the New York State Athletic Association Judith A. Martens Secretarial Award of Excellence.

In those years, Aggie knew that building a large, successful program began with getting all the details right. Lucky for us that details were her specialty. Her love for Friends Academy has been returned many times over, and with this recognition, we do so one more time.”

“

Her love for Friends Academy has been returned many times over, and with this recognition, we do so one more time.

In the spring of 2025, at the close of the school year, we said farewell to two Friends Academy icons – Studio Art teacher **Allison Doherty** and Athletics Coordinator **Aggie Jones**. (Excerpted remarks from Head of School Paul J. Stellato)

FROM THE PRESIDENT

LAUREN RUSSO '09

Dear Fellow Alumni,

I write after completing my first full year as Alumni President, honored to have stepped into this role after Peter Stein '79 graciously served in this position for the past 17 years. Peter embodied the Quaker principles and I hope to continue to follow his example while I am honored to be serving in this role.

This year kicked off with the annual Fall Fair, which was a wonderful time for the Friends community and the larger community to come together for a day filled with fun and games! The Fall Fair is always a personal favorite; it marks the beginning of fall and the school year. As we grow and move and explore life's opportunities, the Fall Fair provides a single day for all alumni to come back to "home base" and reconnect with the school, teachers, and old friends. I am fortunate to have stayed in touch with many of my classmates from 2009 but love seeing alumni from all graduation years. As always, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all alumni



Lauren Russo '09
Alumni Board President

who generously donate to the Alumni Association – whether by volunteering at Fall Fair or through financial donations. Our Alumni Association is only as strong as the people who support it! We are so grateful for all of the support, and I encourage everyone to participate.

The winter season naturally lends itself to being a period of reflection and introspection. The snow covered landscape serves to quiet the noise of our everyday lives and provides us with a much needed moment of peace and quiet.

This past December, we were fortunate to gather for the annual New York City Alumni Reception, where we heard remarks from Head of School, Paul Stellato. Paul provided a state of the school, and it is always wonderful to hear about the bright young students who are working to make this world a better place. Friends has provided, and continues to provide, a wonderful space for students to explore many different opportunities.

Finally, as we look forward, we have the 150th Anniversary of Friends. This is a momentous occasion which will be marked with celebration. Stay tuned for announcements regarding special events!

All my best,
Lauren

Lauren E. Russo

Lauren Russo '09
President, Alumni
Association

Garrett Dooley '05 (fourth from left) and Lauren Russo '09 (far right) welcome graduates and friends on behalf of the Alumni Association under the Alumni Tent during Fall Fair.



REUNIONS & GATHERINGS!

The Class of 2005 gathered at the Coach Meeting House in October to celebrate their 20th reunion. See anyone familiar? Director of College Counseling Ed Dugger and Upper School Spanish Teacher Edgar Posada joined the reunion too!



2005



2015

The Class of 2015 can't believe it has been 10 years! Members of the class met up at Monk McGinn's in NYC in February to hang out and reconnect.

About the Alumni Association

The Friends Academy Alumni Association fosters a vibrant and engaged global community of alumni, strengthening connections between former students and the school. Through a variety of events, communications, and volunteer opportunities, the Association promotes ongoing relationships among alumni and encourages their contributions to the school's mission. By facilitating networking and

collaboration, the Alumni Association empowers graduates to share their experiences and insights, while cultivating leadership and philanthropy within the community.

To learn more about how you can help or to nominate a graduate, please reach out to **Jodie Sperico** at Jodie_Sperico@fa.org, Director of Alumni Relations.

FROM THE ALUMNI OFFICE

JODIE SPERICO, DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI RELATIONS

Dear Alumni and friends,

Warm greetings from Locust Valley! Each year, I am reminded of the enduring impact of a Friends Academy education, and recent alumni gatherings in Washington, D.C., New York City, and Boston offered joyful proof of the connections that continue to unite us—no matter how far from campus life may take us.

I am especially grateful to our dedicated Class Representatives, whose care and creativity bring the Class Notes section of this magazine to life. The stories shared reflect the remarkable breadth of experience, accomplishment, and purpose of our more than 4,300 alumni. If you have not yet submitted an update, I invite you to do so—we would be delighted to feature your news in a future issue.

As we look ahead, I am excited to share that Friends Academy will soon mark its 150th anniversary, beginning this fall. This milestone will offer many opportunities to reflect on our rich history, honor those who have shaped our community, and celebrate what lies ahead. No matter



Jodie Sperico
Director of Alumni Relations

Jodie

Jodie Sperico
Director of Alumni Relations
jodie_sperico@fa.org
516-465-1796

where you live or when you graduated, we look forward to welcoming you into these moments of connection and celebration. Your continued engagement with Friends Academy—through attending events, volunteering, planning reunions, or supporting the Annual Fund—strengthens our community in meaningful ways. Thank you for the many ways you stay connected. If you are interested in getting involved or simply reconnecting, I hope you will reach out. I would love nothing more than to welcome you “home” and explore how Friends Academy can remain part of your journey.

Warm regards,



WASHINGTON, D.C.

Hosted by the Alumni Office, we welcomed and caught up with some wonderful alumni in New York (opposite page) Washington, D.C., and Boston this past year.



BOSTON



WASHINGTON, D.C.

REUNIONS & GATHERINGS!



Gideon's Guard (above) drew alumni from the 50th year and beyond to a special luncheon at the Jackson House on Fall Fair weekend.



1975

The Class of 1975 (left) celebrated 50 years of being FA alumni at the 2025 Fall Fair and Homecoming. Gathered in the Matinecock Meeting House, classmates shared memories they have from their time at FA and stories of their lives since graduating.



NEW YORK CITY

JEFF LEACH '73 & MATT MONAHAN '98

INSTALL IT. USE IT... FIGURE IT OUT

New technologies always pop up and disrupt the world.

What doesn't change at Friends Academy is learning to adapt

with the times. The proof is in the careers of technologists

Jeff Leach '73 and Matthew Monahan '98, who have sage advice

for current students when it comes to artificial intelligence.

By Matt Gagne
Assistant Director of Communications

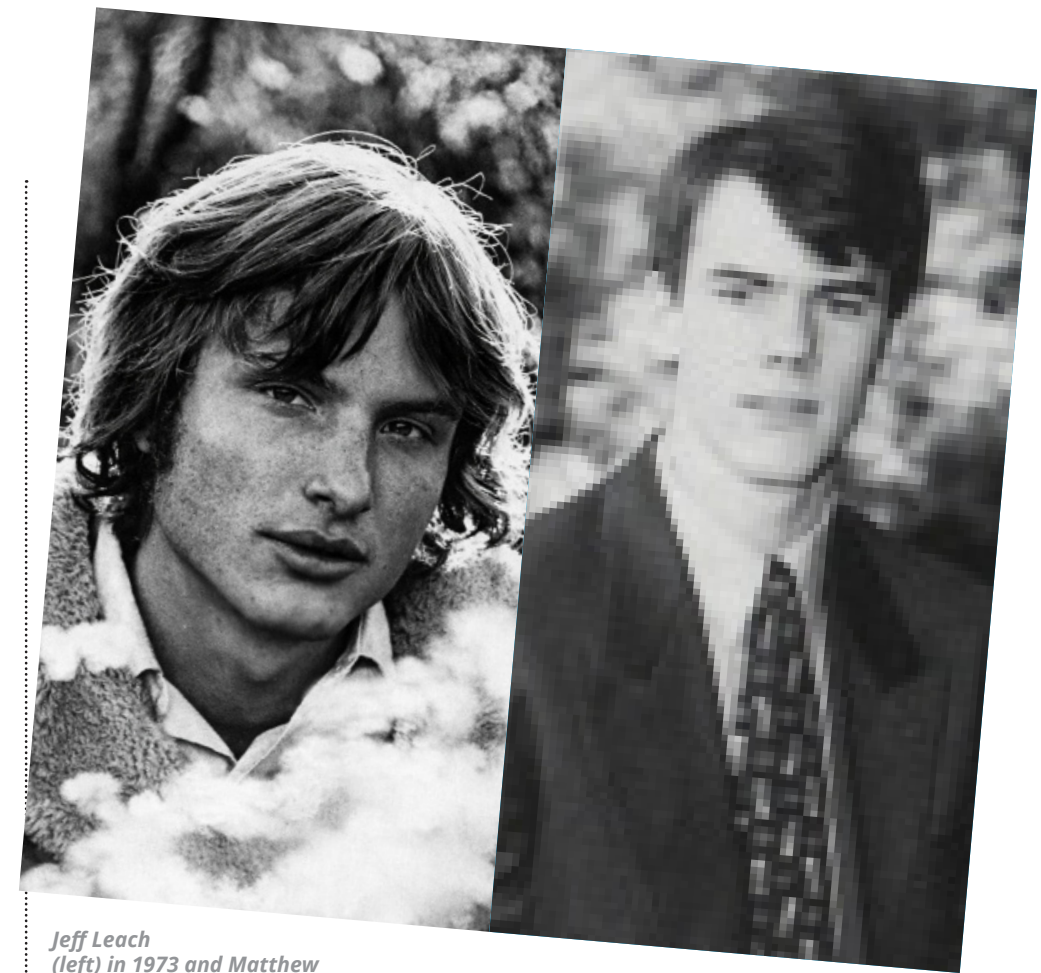
A quarter-century separated their high school graduations, and the world changed in myriad ways from 1973 to 1998 with the advent of personal computers and the internet, but Jeff Leach and Matthew Monahan both credit Friends Academy for their ability to thrive in an ever-changing technology landscape.

Despite the age gap and their different career paths, Jeff '73 and Matthew '98 highlight the same takeaway from their time on campus. The school, they say, did not necessarily give them the tools to work in technology. Rather, it instilled in them a mindset to always adapt to the latest advancements and new ways of doing business.

To this day, Jeff credits Friends Academy for giving him "the ability to think on my feet, to deal with the unexpected, to find a solution, to think outside the box." His teachers at Friends Academy, he says, "Taught me to have no fear and to always believe in myself."

Retired since 2015, Jeff is a Syracuse University graduate who lives in the suburbs of Chicago and still takes on the occasional consulting gig. From his point of view, it's more important than ever to understand what's happening on the cutting-edge.

"It used to be that knowledge became obsolete and had to be refreshed every seven years," he says. "Now it feels like every seven seconds, and a lot of that is being



Jeff Leach (left) in 1973 and Matthew Monahan (right) in 1998 graduated FA 25 years apart and still find similarities in their career trajectories.

driven by artificial intelligence."

At the start of the 2025-26 school year, Friends Academy issued a forward-thinking policy about AI to help students and teachers navigate this tech frontier. Upper School students have access to Gemini and NotebookLM, two AI tools created by Google, and they've been given guidelines on how to ethically use those tools in alignment with Quaker principles.

Modern exploration of technology hasn't changed all that much since the late-1990s, when Matthew recalls having access to computers, high-speed internet, and commercial software on campus while they were far from commonplace everywhere else.

When putting together the school newspaper, for instance, he worked with Aldus PageMaker, the pioneering software in desktop publishing. Who hovered over his shoulder, issue to issue of *Inkwell*, showing him all the ins and outs of the program? No one; precisely what made it such an indelible experience.

"Install it, use it, figure it out," says Matthew, who attended Adelphi University before doing masters-level studies at Hofstra University. "That was the exemplar of the entire environment. You want to try something out? Go ahead. We'll support that effort."

Matthew, who lives in Cary, North Carolina, is now the Senior

Continued on page 56



Jeff Leach retired in 2015 after a career with giants like the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and IBM.



I never had any fear about [transition] because Friends Academy gave me the attitude of, hey, just do it, just keep moving forward, just trust yourself.

Director of Product Management/Data Strategy at Verint, a software developer that helps companies bolster customer experiences with AI tools. He works daily with the technology and says, "It's very important for schools like Friends Academy to incorporate AI into the curriculum and do so in the right ways. AI literacy and awareness is absolutely critical and should not even be up for negotiation."

It's not just the technology of the future, he emphasizes, but the technology of the moment — and rapidly becoming a requisite tool in nearly all professions.

"Any knowledge-worker who is not using AI needs to recognize they're probably falling behind," Matthew says. "I can't think of a knowledge-worker-type role that can't leverage AI in some way . . . as a practitioner of product management, if I do not learn how to leverage this tool, then I will fall behind. I will not be as productive. I will not be as capable. Other people will far surpass me and that will be career-limiting."

When it comes to the careers of Jeff and Matthew, Friends Academy isn't the only place that shaped them as technologists.

They both made stops at IBM.

Jeff worked for Big Blue as a Websphere Industry Solution Architect from 1999 to 2012, handling accounts for government agencies, investment firms, established corporations, and Silicon Valley startups. His IBM years came in the latter half of a celebrated career that placed him in rooms at NASA and the Navy's Top Gun fighter-jet pilot training program.

Prior to joining IBM, Jeff had worked at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and changed how the

world did business by turning a 45-minute trading window into a 1-second process with never-before-done coding. He also won a Computer World Smithsonian Award after designing and executing a program to ensure that 85 trading firms on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange would be Y2K compliant within a year's time — a project that often had him working 72-hour windows with little to no sleep.

"I adjusted to new technology coming out of IBM's laboratory in England," Jeff says of his early career wins, an adaptation that made his eventual transition to IBM a no-brainer. "I never had any fear about it because Friends Academy gave me the attitude of, hey, just do it, just keep moving forward, just trust yourself."

Matthew, a third-generation IBM employee in his family, started doing contract work for IBM from 1996 to 1999 when he was still a student at Friends Academy. In that role, he provided technical support and remote network administration for Fortune 500 corporations and government agencies.

In 2018, he returned to IBM for a one-year mid-career stop as a Technical Project Manager for one of the most renowned AI projects in the world, Watson Health. His work included architecting artificial-intelligence and machine-learning data pipelines for medical imaging analysis; he also led the process to provide annotated imaging data to help develop cancer-detecting computer vision algorithms.

Often bouncing between startups and big firms throughout his career, Matthew has been at Verint for the past four years and taken a keen interest in how schools are adapting to AI.

"Some school districts across the country have banned all uses of AI because students can use it to produce or mimic the output of assignments, bypassing the process of learning," he says. "When well constructed, a lot of school assignments should be less about the output and more about the process you use to get the output."

One lesson from his time at Friends Academy sticks with him all these years later. Matthew recalls donning goggles in Mr. Richard Abbene's Biochem class and standing a good 15 feet away from a Bunsen burner that heated a small amount of oil in a crock. From 10 feet away, Mr. Abbene squirted water into the crock.

"It flash-exploded," Matthew says. "It was just a Bunsen burner and a ceramic crock, but we learned to be aware of how hot things can get. And it was just water and oil — safe things for the most part — but when not used correctly, they can be dangerous. It was a really good lesson."

Matthew was recently reminded of that lesson as he watched freshmen and sophomores at his daughter's high school use a compound mitre saw to cut wood and create theater scenery.



Matt Monahan with his wife, Christine, and their children; Matt believes that students need to be taught how to use AI correctly, starting with the fundamentals.

Oh my goodness, imagine all the ways this could go wrong, having to pick up somebody's fingers off the floor, he thought to himself. "But the reality is it's a tool and someone's going to use it," he says, "so teach them how to use it correctly. Teach them how to be safe. Start with the fundamentals."

You don't need any form of AI to help connect the dots from there.

"The same rules apply to AI," he says. "Don't put the tool in a box and say, 'Don't touch it.' Take it out carefully. Teach students how to use it correctly. Same as we should be teaching kids how to use social media; same as we should be teaching them how to use computers and Google and the internet. It's not a different exercise, it's just a different tool."

In other words, it's the same mindset that has sustained both him and Jeff — and so many other Friends Academy alums — throughout their careers.

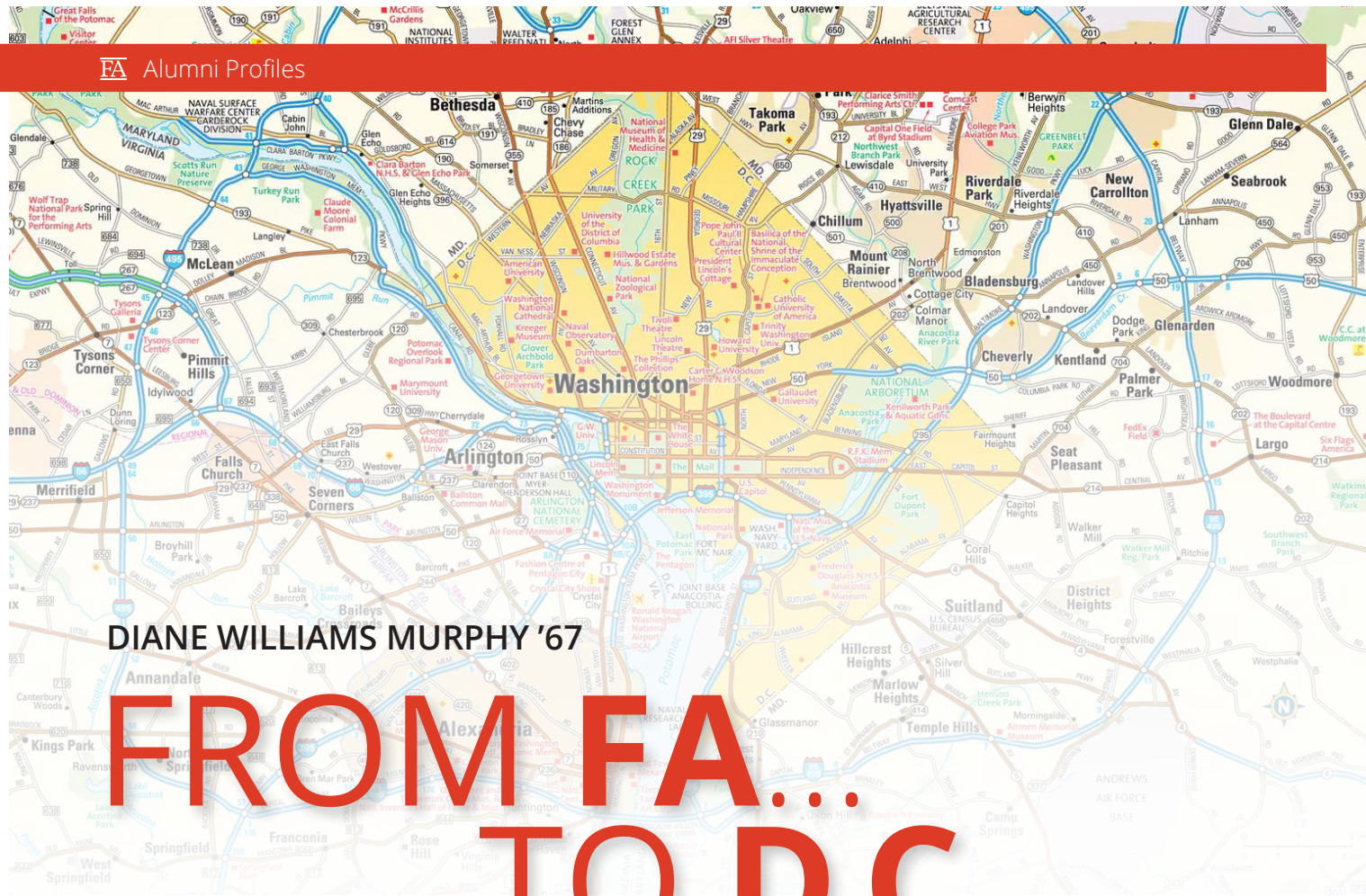
"Your education doesn't stop when you leave school," Jeff says. "Life always comes back to the basic values of school: reading,



Students shouldn't try to compete with AI when it comes to their careers. Figure out how you're going to work with it, how it's going to assist you.

writing, arithmetic. The basics never go away. You have to learn the basics. But students shouldn't try to compete with AI when it comes to their careers. Figure out how you're going to work with it, how it's going to assist you. AI has a lot of value, and I don't think it's ever going to go away."

Left, Matt and his son



DIANE WILLIAMS MURPHY '67

FROM FA... TO D.C.

With a foundation from her Friends family, alumna's career spans multitudes

By Laura Schoeffel P '17, '20, '22

Diane Williams Murphy tells extraordinary stories. You listen, and a pattern emerges in which her personal narrative is interwoven with so many of the key events and players of the past half century in America. She chuckles at the notion of how her career began as many good stories do: two men walk into a bar. In this version, Murphy was dating the bartender and looking for a job in Washington, D.C.

Murphy's Friends Academy chapter began in ninth grade, when her

Diane with her dad Joseph Williams, who she notes is her hero and mentor, in 1967



family moved to New York from a small town in the San Francisco Bay Area. They looked for a school with a similar close-knit community for Diane and her older brother, Chip. "I felt at home on the first day at Friends," Murphy says. Looking through old year books, she is struck by the warmth in the handwritten notes: "It was as if we were a family. We knew everybody." She credits FA with teaching her to write—a skill that has remained at the heart of everything she does—and with encouraging her to learn at her own pace: which, as it turns out, is very fast. Intellectually curious, Murphy threw herself into her classes, but also her friendships, music, clubs, and sports. Her great supporter was always her father; beyond cheering at all of his children's games, he would tell Diane that she could do anything she wanted if she just worked hard. He was always her example, a self-starter and innovator, credited with introducing the nation's first all-purpose credit card at Bank of America. Murphy remembers him on the phone, raising money during the six years he was an FA trustee, his example as a talented fundraiser sinking into her consciousness.

Murphy had big plans and heightened agency. She wanted to be a concert pianist and to liberate her mother's birth country, Poland, from the Soviet Union. She convinced FA's headmaster to allow her Russian-born French teacher to teach a section of Russian, recruiting three other students. In the Cold War era, this felt like a tangible first step toward her goal of becoming a spy. At age eighteen, she succeeded in playing the piano at Carnegie Hall.



Diane worked on several campaigns for White House candidates, including John McCain.

Murphy continued her study of the Russian language and piano at Northwestern University. A life-changing summer abroad in the Soviet Union prompted a last-minute, junior year transfer to Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. After graduation, plans to join the foreign service



Diane in the 1966 yearbook

fizzled when the position she was offered in Vienna meant analyzing and reporting data back to Langley: "I wanted to be the person creating the data."

Enter the two men in the D.C. bar, looking for someone to join them in the congressional press office of the new House minority leader. Murphy jumped at the opportunity. It was the height of Watergate, and as press secretary, she met everyone of the moment, including Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, Leslie Stahl and



Diane credits FA with teaching her to write – a skill that has remained at the heart of everything she does – and with encouraging her to learn at her own pace.

Continued on page 60



Diane with her daughter Meghan in D.C. at the National Air and Space Museum. Diane helped to fund the "Future of Space" exhibit

Sam Donaldson. She worked hard, soaking up information and asking questions—always asking questions: "I loved it. And working on Capital Hill was why I got hired for other jobs down the road." This included joining the same two men when they formed their own PR firm, Smith & Harroff. Together they ran some 30 political campaigns for various House candidates, including John McCain and Bill Cohen, along with projects in the energy and defense sectors. It was an exhilarating experience.

Murphy's "can do" mentality is a consistent thread in her success story, but at age 28 she faced a challenge that briefly rocked her confidence. Along the way she had married and given birth to a daughter and a son; suddenly, she was divorced, the mother of two young children, and she needed to earn more money—fast. Starting her own PR company was a bold response, but there was an urgency that lit a fire under her. She remembers the steep learning curve of building a business, but she dug in, she hustled, learned by doing, and for 15 years as CEO of Federal City Communications, she crafted

a unique portfolio, representing artists and corporations, counseling government and political leaders, and leading campaigns for the National Air and Space Museum and IMAX. She grew her client roster exponentially, providing communications strategies to clients in aerospace, defense, and telecommunications, including giants like Lockheed Martin, Motorola, and the aircraft manufacturer, Grumman. When she began consulting for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Murphy's childhood dream of Polish liberation came that much closer to reality when the Soviet Union collapsed and Poland began accession talks to become a member of NATO.

Threads disperse and then sometimes weave back together, and Murphy built on her successes and the connections she made early in her career, eventually taking on new roles. She is emphatic about how much she benefited from mentorship, and thrived in environments where there were few, if any, women in leadership positions. She'd become VP of EADS North America (Airbus), and then join the leadership team at Northrop Grumman Aerospace. She would be a founder of XPRIZE,



which incentivizes innovative approaches to solving the world's most urgent and complex challenges.

Given her work with moonshot innovators, it is not wholly surprising that, in 2008, Elon Musk recruited Murphy to serve as his VP of Marketing and Communications for the fledgling company, SpaceX, saying, "She will help us communicate effectively as we grow and work to revolutionize access to space." SpaceX went on to become the most valuable private company in the world, putting Murphy in a position to do whatever she wanted with the next chapter of her life.

If founding The Aquarius Group is an epilogue of sorts, it is not yet looking like the conclusion to this story. Murphy is fully engaged in running an international, multi-disciplinary public relations firm, representing leaders in AI, aerospace, education, tech, biotech and more. Even now, Murphy seems to have her finger on the pulse of the nation, and she is still asking a lot of questions, like: How can we optimize AI as a tool for good? Who is going to scale it and who is going to keep us safe? She does not have a degree in tech or engineering, but that has never stopped her before: "Do what you know. Get mentored by smart people to learn what you don't know. Scramble and learn the tech as you go. The future is AI."

To this day, Murphy is a dedicated youth mentor. She is proud of her mentees, but she takes special joy in the time she shares with her grandchildren, seven and four, who live just eight minutes away from her home in California: "I am so lucky."

Diane with her family left to right: Her son Ian, Diane, her daughter-in-law Erin, her daughter Meghan, her grandchildren Rose and Charlotte



The Distinguished Alumni Award

Friends Academy presents the Distinguished Alumni Award to an alumnus who exhibits a deep-seated commitment to community outreach, social justice, environmentalism, local and global peace, and/or service to Friends Academy.

From protecting the rights of the underserved to championing the students and faculty of Friends Academy, these distinguished alumni serve as role models for us all!

RECENT RECIPIENTS



Lois Juliber '67
Retired Vice Chairman of Colgate-Palmolive and Canada

Helped ensure success of indigenous young peoples of Africa and Canada

David Seeler '59*
Former Friends Academy Trustee and owner of The Bayberry Landscaping

Credited FA community with helping him through undiagnosed dyslexia

**Please see David's memorial, page 92*

Aisha Palmer Mix '91
Rear Admiral – one of the highest-ranking U.S. Public Health Service officers in the nation

Advises Surgeon General and U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services

Andy Menzin '81
Friends Academy Board of Trustee; Chief of Gynecologic Oncology, Central Region, at Northwell Health

Longtime champion of Friends Academy

Michele Pistone '82*
Faculty Director, Mother Cabrini Institute on Immigration; Founder, VIISTA; Immigrant Advocate; Law Professor

Uses the law to advocate for refugees' rights

**Please read more about Michele, page 67*

Peter Stein '79
Longtime president of the FA Alumni Board; orthopedic surgeon

Travels yearly to perform volunteer surgeries in underserved communities

Please consider nominating a fellow alum for this honor by submitting their name to the Alumni Office at alumni@fa.org or by calling 516-465-1796.

AS SEEN AROUND CAMPUS...

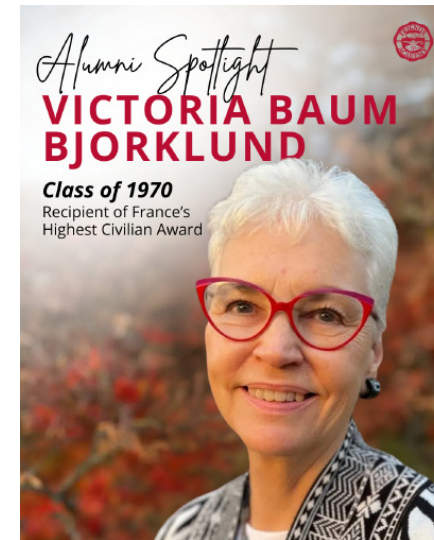
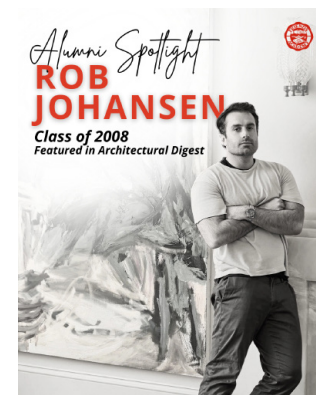
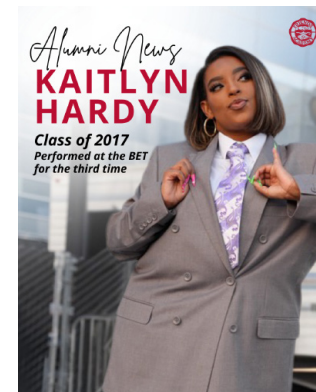
We are hearing from alumni more and more throughout the year and couldn't wait to highlight their remarkable

achievements. Here are a few of the alumni we have highlighted on our social media pages this year!



Clockwise from top: Erica Sklar '12 speaks to Upper Schoolers at Fall Sports Assembly about her journey from student-athlete to cardiothoracic surgery nurse practitioner; Sibling dentists Alan Jurim '98 (with his children Sam '27, Jake '29, and Brody '31) and Barbara Jurim '96 giving a lesson to Lower School students; Lauren Beckett Jackson '05 (right) visits FA for Women's History Month, discussing her career as an Emmy-nominated editor and producer; Trevor Dineen '16 speaking to students about his experience in the Peace Corps; Melissa Errico '88 (right) invited the FA community to the Tilles Center for her performance of *The Secret Diary of Mrs. Santa* photographed with Victoria Baum Bjorklund '70 and Liz Baum Schnelzer '87

AND ONLINE!



Read more about Victoria on Instagram!

Congratulations to **Victoria Baum Bjorklund '70** on being named a Knight in the Legion of Honour, France's highest civilian award! Victoria is a trailblazer in nonprofit law and a renowned advocate for philanthropy, having advised major foundations and humanitarian organizations around the world. In her acceptance speech, Victoria warmly remembered her FA French teachers, Mme Sampidas and Mme Zezulin, who helped spark her lifelong connection to France. She also reminded us all "that the humanities are worth studying and can lead to wonderfully exciting careers like the ones that I have enjoyed."

In recognition of her extraordinary achievements, Friends Academy awarded her the Distinguished Alumni Award in 1996 — our highest alumni honor.



Read more about Michele on Instagram!

We are proud to celebrate alumna **Michele Pistone '82**, Professor and Faculty Director of the Mother Cabrini Institute on Immigration at Villanova University and our 2019 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient, who recently had the honor of meeting His Holiness Pope Leo XIV in Rome. Through her lifelong commitment to immigration and refugee advocacy, Michele's work continues to inspire others to lead with compassion, courage, and purpose. Her scholarship, teaching, and service remind us that caring for one another — especially the most vulnerable — is a shared responsibility that transcends borders and backgrounds.

She has dedicated her career to advancing dignity, justice, and hope for migrants and refugees, embodying the values at the heart of the FA community.

Let's get social!

To see milestones as they happen, follow us online by searching Friends Academy on your preferred social media platform!

CLASSES 1951-1963...

A collection of notes sent in from class representatives throughout the year.

1951

George H. Gifford, Jr.
georgegifford@danielgale.com

Marilyn Smith Worthen passed away on May 12, 2025, in Greenville, SC. She attended Friends Academy and North Side High School, before graduating Bucknell University where she majored in Spanish and French.

At Bucknell, she met her husband of 61 years, Hugh Joseph Worthen of Bennington, VT, and the Bronx, NY, who passed away in 2015. She was a loving and devoted mother to her two sons. After living briefly in Vermont, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania, the family settled in Sudbury, Massachusetts, where they lived for 42 years where she hosted bridge clubs, enjoyed antiques, square dancing, playing bocce, and a good bourbon.



1955

Naomi Johnson Dempsey
naomi.dempsey100@gmail.com

Arthur M. Geoffrion
ageoffri@ucla.edu

Art Geoffrion still enjoys good health, his two daughters, five grandchildren, and all of his usual activities in his 20th year of retirement from the UCLA Anderson School of Management faculty. Much less so, the administration's assaults on universities, which could destroy our country's world leadership in education and research and much of what that does for all of us. Luckily, there was no damage to his home from the great Pacific Palisades Fire though the same can't be said about his one remaining investment property.

Stephie Giardino Dobrinin reports that she is delighted living in Devonshire Independent Living, in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. She has stopped playing golf, but participates in various other activities. One son lives in Ridgefield, CT and the other in Greenwich, CT. She has three grandchildren.

Naomi Johnson Dempsey is still living in Madison, CT and is having trouble keeping up with the weeds like she used to.

Herb Cares writes that he is still seeing patients for Mass General Hospital Neurosurgery Service four days a week, and has a forensic neurosurgery practice on the fifth. MGH and the Brigham are merging, so he is spending a lot of time on multiple committees and subcommittees in a year or two.

Joan Konvalinka Hawkins is in good spirits and still lives in the house we all remember in Glen Cove.

Peggy Egan Alley writes: I have not been writing, but am thinking through the possibilities of a mystery involving the very nasty accountant who worked for the Dutch in New Netherland. Maybe I can get it done this year. I have been enjoying my history studies as never before. I met the Dutch scholar working on the long lost papers about the 1600s Dutch settlement of Long Island and Manhattan and sent him my latest book which he and his wife both read. (That took courage on my part.) I did wonder if my old photo of our meetinghouse was going to be on display at the celebration this past fall. Been putting my extra money aside for my grand niece to go to graduate school. She recently finished college magna cum laude so she has earned it! Since my own boys have decided not to increase the world population, that's all the news for now.

1956

Peter Galbraith
carloway78@gmail.com

Peter Galbraith shares: I am attempting to replace the irreplaceable Anne Smith as class representative.

I would appreciate hearing from members of the class of '56 or others who might have news about them. Sadly, within the last two years my three siblings, Ann Galbraith Hayward '52, John Galbraith '55, and Susan Galbraith Markey '61 have died. As many of you know, they had been living on the West Coast of the US and Canada for many years. They are greatly missed! Debby and I are living in a life plan community in Shelburne, Vermont, just south of where we had been living since 1997 when we made our third move to Vermont. I talked to **Tom Bentien** and he and Charlene are doing well, spending summers in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont and the rest of the year in Florida. According to a recent Columbia University publication, Burlington, VT is now a refuge city for people concerned about climate change. Please join us ASAP.

1959

As reported by David Seeler, before his passing in October 2025. To learn more about David and his FA legacy, see page 88.

Wendy Stone: Works out with a trainer 3 times a week, and plays golf other days. She and her husband enjoy their three wonderful rescue dogs and also their grandkids who are at North Arizona University.

Tom Carter: Ramonda and I joined their son, Adarsh and wife on a 31-state, seven-national park drive, beginning in Key West. It was 41 days on the road trip. They ended their trip in Los Angeles.

Robert Pickles: Still the dedicated doctor he continues volunteering at the clinic for uninsured people. He says, "I am generally appalled at the state of medicine these days."

Susan Guerin Dundon: Sue and her husband Ron just returned from a South African safari. "5 a.m. wake up calls and 6 a.m. departures into the Bush." Every comfort provided as they enjoyed the wildlife, including a visiting Impala at their door every morning.

Carol Fuller Dennison: Enjoys her peaceful life in Vero Beach, FL and convinced her sister Gail to sell her house and join her in Florida. She also has two great granddaughters, (4 and 2), who live with parents in Spokane, WA.

1960

Bob Powell
vigihawk@gmail.com

Bob "Boom" Powell says: Trying something new – the Decade Class has shifted to [reply all] for emails—so we all get to read some lengthy missives. So, for these notes, the hard-working, ever conscientious class secretary is swiping quotes he finds interesting and risking the wrath of his classmates because they weren't the "most important", or, "Not what I meant."

Susan Stein Danoff shares: I continue to work as a retired judge. I hold special hearings for teens in foster care between the ages of 16 and 21 who do not wish to be adopted nor to return home to parents/guardians. I don't like my job, I LOVE IT!!! Lastly, I continue to exercise. My specialty is deadlifting. And I am proud to say that I weigh 130 pounds and can deadlift 125 pounds – almost my own self!!! Pretty great for an 83-year-old person!!!

John Trauth shares: I went to French Polynesia in February along with Leigh Spencer Sorensen. She moved out to the SF Bay Area a few years ago and came to a presentation I made on the eight greatest French philosophers at the Marin Philosophical Society. It is said that, if we live long enough, life makes philosophers of us all!

Bob Hadden says: I have had an adventurous life and two college degrees. (Wesleyan in 1964; psychology and anthropology. Pratt Institute in 1974; mechanical engineering so I could earn a living.) Toronto 20+, dual citizen, renovated theatre, home of circus, now Redwood Theatre, officially became Quaker, Toronto monthly meeting.

Fred Kuffler says: Linda and I will celebrate our 60th anniversary.



Andy Dott with a senior midwife at a hospital in Ethiopia.

We used to talk about growing old together, and all of a sudden, we had. I still labor part time for the greater good of the ocean shipping industry. Remember, 90% of everything moves by sea. After playing the role of Senator Phogbound in Lil Abner, (I mistakenly thought then that no one in Congress could be that clueless) I resumed thespian activities this spring. A group of residents at the CCRC where we are living did a reading of Katzantakis' *Odysseus: A Verse Tragedy*. I was *Odysseus*; one of my lines; 'If only I had the strength of my early reckless youth.'

Andy Dott shares: I've done several medical mission trips in the last year, including Guatemala, Ethiopia, and Tanzania. See the picture of the senior midwife in Guatemala – she's 82 years old. Can you imagine the wisdom that she possesses after so many years of delivering babies?

Michael Samuels says: My French wife and I live in Villeneuve-lès-Avignon France in Provence in winter and in Tinos Greece Cyclades islands in summer. Both are places of the Virgin Mary miracles and wind. I write a Facebook poem each day about visions and dreams and life here. I live a lot in a place beyond time space separation where all is one love. I navigate a complex expat life between two countries two houses very lucky. I did not come back to the USA this year to bear-dance with women like I did in previous years. (I was a bear dancer with native Americans for 20 years more.)

Louis Licht says: We are beginning to notice our beloved commodious house is a bit commodious these

days. However, it gives a great space to pursue learning to play the Viola da Gamba and practice the cello. I'm perhaps my Viola teacher's oldest student, but she is very tolerant. Except in the summer, I'm part of the cello section in a "Senior Chamber Orchestra." The first chair just turned 90, so there is still opportunity to move up. Our "briò" may not be as fast as others but we all enjoy the challenge and as elders we can say we know the score.

Bob Powell shares: As I think many of us have discovered the secret to not being "old" is to work with the young. I flight instructed at my club's nine day glider camp. The three students were 18, 17, and 17.

1963

Paula E. Howe
phowe0612@comcast.net

Peter Dott passed away on April 17, 2024 at age 78. He attended Friends and graduated from Oakwood Friends School in Poughkeepsie, NY. He pursued undergraduate studies at Syracuse University and went on to earn a Master's Degree in Public Administration from the University of Washington.

Peter began his professional life in New York City's financial sector, where he worked at firms including White Weld, Kuhn Loeb, and L.F. Rothschild. He later transitioned into a successful long-term role with Northwestern Mutual. In addition to his business career, he was actively involved in social and club communities, such as serving on

CLASSES 1963-1966...

committees at the New York Yacht Club. Peter is survived by his brother, Andrew "Andy" Dott Jr., an FA graduate from the class of 1960.

1964

Lesley Birkett Jacobs
Lesleyj3@aol.com

Lesley Birkett Jacobs writes about the class's 60th reunion in October 2024. She says: Our Class of 1964 was filled with brains and beauties—48 eager beavers ready to rocket. Some of us had known each other since elementary school; others had joined

less than three years before graduation. Twenty-four dames and twenty-four guys navigated our schooling together and, remarkably, have kept coming back for reunion after reunion.



I know this because I browbeat—no, encouraged—everyone to gather every five years. Really, I did. And always with the grace I learned at Friends. Truly. And this reunion? It was the best ever. Why? Because we were simply so happy to be together again.

One of the first events was dinner at Umberto's in Glen Cove. Why Umberto's? Because our traditional Friday night dinner was always—at Stango's. Oh yes! **Sue Notides Melzig** (you remember—we went to Lochearn Camp together) found this wonderful replacement, and it set us off with laughter right away. Some of us (not me) didn't look familiar at first, but eventually we all sat down and enjoyed great food and even better conversation. Talk, talk, talk!

Saturday morning we reconvened—on our best behavior—at the Matinecock



Members of the class of 1964 Zoom with classmates who could not join them on campus for their 60th reunion

Meeting for Worship, shared with the 50th-year class. It was absolutely wonderful and deeply moving.

Gerret Warner and **Steve Piro** spoke about the lifelong impact Quakerism had on them. Extraordinary—especially because men don't often speak so openly or meaningfully about faith. They blew us away and truly set the tone for the rest of the weekend—and beyond.

Afterward, we had a photo shoot, returned to the School, and then headed to the Gideon's Guard Luncheon—always a great spread and a great time. Later, we gathered again at the School for a Zoom get-together with classmates who couldn't be there in person. The joy just kept flowing, and—damn—we looked good. Ask **Douglas Altchek!**

Some people revisited old homes, toured the new Long Island, or rested up for the big dinner at Jeanine's American Bistro—an awesome meal and an equally awesome event. We even changed seats to keep things historically accurate. It was wonderful to see **Alan Mark** and his wife, **Sophia Lotowycz Stoller** and her husband, and to feel just how much fun it was to be together again. After dinner, we staggered off to wherever we were laying our heads, preparing for Sunday brunch—another historically accurate

tradition we've kept at every reunion. I still struggle with the coffee, but I digress.

This final gathering was a perfect ending. **Cathie Bush Wardell** appeared—unchanged, of course. **Bobbie Friend** and her husband joined us, as did my dear son, Charlo. Although my friends know I live in a Victorian village, they still assume I live in a Victorian mansion. I may have implied that once or twice, but I don't. Here's the best part: we set up a beautiful buffet in my dining room, and my neighbor generously brought over her long table for the outdoor deck. It was a lovely day. Did anyone go outside? NOOOOOO. Did anyone leave the living room? NOOOOOOO—except to refresh their plates. All we wanted to do was talk, talk, talk with our dear, dear old pals.

We loved being with **Jeff Davis**, **Gerret Warner**, **Charlie Otto**, **Betsy Malcolm Eklof**, **Sophia Lotowycz Stoller** and her husband, **Indira Licht Garner**, **Jeff Bloom** (the best helper evah), **Marvie Sutton Campbell** (a delight), **Perry and Sue Notides Melzig**, and **Ned Frey**. And we missed you, **Douglas Altchek**, **Cathy Kanu**, **Nina Stein Wolf**, **Linda Burley Glaser**, and others. We never wanted it to end.

Two weeks later, we learned that **Gerret** had died—a shock to our world and a blow to our hearts. He was so

happy to be with us, and we were so happy to be with him—and with **Jeff Davis**, his musical pal. Now we understand even more clearly that our time together is growing shorter. So I think we need to gather again—sooner than five years from now. And I hope we can hold a Memorial Meeting for Worship for all those we've lost. The Lights will be on.

1965

Robert D. Tilden
rdtilden@yahoo.com

Robert "Bob" Tilden shares: Nothing to quote, but **Mike Bruce** is still ridin' and ropin' in Colorado, **Brandt Rising** and **Sandy** are still making the field house into a residence, a task that has had no end. **Bill Benjamin** summers on the Cape but retreats inland for the winter, **Joe Williams** moves from Montana to Florida, and **Susy Deane Norton** summers in Massachusetts and then summers again in New Zealand, much as **Angela Van Rynbach** does between Shelter Island and Puerto Rico. **Eric Koster** just sold his houses in New York and Massachusetts and bought a house in Vermont... with all three transactions in the air simultaneously. Among those who seem anchored, **Dave Laemmle** is in Maine, **Carol Curran Lyall** is at the shoulder of the Cape, and **Liz Otto Blanchette** and **Mike Brown** aren't too far away. **Robin Neuschel Reeves** and **Jack Beuttell** are both in Virginia, not too far from **Wendy Miller Coslett** on the DelMarVa, and **Jay Tucker** in western North Carolina. **Annamarie VanTuyl Mazioka** has been in Florida for decades and **Barbara Kemp** has been in San Francisco for about as long. **Peggy Attridge Young** has settled in Washington state, and **Lynn Barker Caruso** has spent most of her life in California. **Jay Cawley's** life has always been centered around horses, and is in Carlyle, PA. **David Pratt** has been in Vermont for years now. Long ago, **Larry Piro** moved to rural New Hampshire from the Boston area. **Steve Beslity** lived in New Jersey in his

early years, spent most of his working life in England, and retired back to his original house.

Robert Tilden: After four years of Air Force, I moved to the boonies, married a local, and went native. Our own hands built our house and outbuildings, paycheck at a time. We tend our yard and gardens, the chickens, our vacation rental, and we fix whatever breaks. My fortune rests in the soul of a strong wife.

1966

Helen Lotowycz Rising
HRising@aol.com

Sandy Lotowycz Rising reports she has heard from Dave Gallagher, Nancy Rauch Douzinas and Jim Edmonds.

Clinton Bush writes: I am living a busy and rewarding life on Key Biscayne, with plenty to accomplish each day. My real passions these days are singing (Master Chorale of South Florida and church choir) and sailing out on Biscayne Bay. I also divide my time between the church vestry, church school board, Master Chorale board, the Cruising Club of America, Rotary, and Indivisible.com. And still working four days a week, and planning to continue as long as health holds out.

Carol Edgerton Downey in Vermont writes: Basically we continue to enjoy the views from our home, but not so much the long winters, definitely not the mud season, and the summers are just way too short. If you're hoping to garden, it's a crap shoot! Between the unending rain this spring and summer, followed by intense heat and humidity, and all wrapped up with cold and cloudy before the end of August, we had six weeks of actual summer up here. Hardly worth opening up the pool for. However, on the brighter side, I do keep in constant contact with **Nancy Gad-Harf**, **Nancy Rauch Douzinas**, and **Sally Hubbard Cronk**. We try FaceTime every few weeks,

and it isn't always easy trying to get everyone on one call on any special day. But, we persevere and it's so worth the effort. I must say, having met these amazing women 65 years ago, and continuing our friendships to this day has been one part of attending FA that will always make me grateful. On the other hand, it is so very sad to think of all the friends we lost in our small class. Just doesn't seem fair.

Neola Caveny writes: I'm leaving for Micronesia and checking off another entry on the "Bucket List" – Nan Madol, an archaeological site on the island of Pohnpei. I'm also stopping on Palau, for the snorkeling – and to make the long trip from Hawaii worthwhile. You wouldn't believe how difficult it is to get from Hawaii to Micronesia (except Guam, where I lived for a while in 1975 – direct flight from Honolulu). One of the flights is on Nauru Airlines – I had to look it up – which has a once-a-week flight at 5AM. After four trips to French Polynesia, it was time to explore more of Oceania. Fall of 2023 I went to Uganda to track the wild mountain gorillas, then to Kenya on a "safari" (luxury tents) to see the animals – another trip that had been on the list for decades. Fall of '24 I was in New Zealand (North Island) for almost three weeks with two Hawaiian friends, spending time with their Maori 'ohana (adopted family) and hiking through native forests. Also spent 8 hours in Te Papa, the national museum, which is the most incredible museum I have ever seen – anywhere. This November, I'm going back to New Zealand, with a different friend, to see the South Island, with the same wonderful Maori guide, who is now my 'ohana. Penguins! After two hip replacements and now arthritis in one shoulder (I REFUSE to get another metal joint!), I just wish I'd started doing this in my '60s. But it's hard to tear yourself away when you live in Paradise (Maui).

From an elevation of 7,000 feet **Priscilla Terry** writes: Life in Southeast New Mexico is never dull. We are in the midst of recovering from last summer's

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devastating fires in and around our village of Ruidoso, and then, this summer we experienced horrible drought until our summer rainy season arrived – this is affectionately known as monsoon season! I have been helping the residents who lost everything in the last four floods that began July 4th weekend. Our church is a disaster relief staging area with volunteers from AK, AZ, MO, OK, TX, and NM. We feed around 40 workers three meals daily from our church kitchen and recruit church members to help in the laundry trailer and kitchen. Meeting people from all over is so entertaining! I even learned several phrases in U Pick (the Eskimo word for themselves). My reflection on the meetinghouse is profoundly simple. I never realized how important, and how spiritual, silence could be. At first, I never appreciated going to Meeting for anything other than being able to walk outside school with my friends. As time went on and I grew up, married and raised our children, silence became something difficult to attain – that perfect silence of looking inward with time to wait for any answers for guidance and direction. Now, as a believer, I confess that I do celebrate the silence I have discovered on our porch amid pine trees and 7000' up in the mountains. There is a peace that one enters to see more clearly, more deeply into creation, nature, and its comfort for the soul. Matinecock Meeting House was a beacon of light to me when I had no idea how important it would become almost 60 years later! Today, I am grateful for my Friends Academy education and insight to prepare me for meaningful events and opportunities later in life!

Todd Smith shares: Traded the heat of Arizona for the humidity of CT. In May, Cathy and I retreated to our summer home to be near four of the five children and six grandchildren. We'll be on Candlewood Lake with family, friends enjoying boating and eating lobster. Planning a motorcycle trip across AZ to CA, NV and UT paralleling the Colorado River, Lake Mead, the canyons/parks of Utah and AZ. The trip



Brandt, Clint, Danielle and Sally at Perez Art Museum

will take ten days and traverse 3000 miles. Christmas and New Year's we'll be cruising the Pacific Ocean sailing along the southern California coast into Mexico to Puerto Vallarta and returning to San Diego. Recreational life begins in retirement!

Holly Harris Lovejoy writes: Petty



Peter Lyman, Steve Beslity, Thor Eckert, Didi Dickson Witmer, Brad Lovette, Dennis Witmer, Candace Adelson, Ned Maher, Doug Simes and Sara Simes at dinner in Nashville.

typical Lopez Island fishing activities like shrimping, crabbing, and salmon trolling are happening here, but the biggest event is that we have finally sold our last remaining commercial boat in the CA squid fishery. All we have left now is a 21 ft. runabout and my rowboat, and our commercial oyster farm in front of our house. We are truly enjoying semi-retirement. Recently, I came across a 2016 Rising Christmas card – it was a great card! This winter I want to gather around my kids and grandkids to get a good shot of all of us. There are five kids & three grandkids, several spouses, dogs, cats, etc.

Margie Chapin writes: I'm still living in the Bay Area, up in the Richmond Hills. I work full-time as an accountant at a law firm in downtown Oakland. The twins are now 49! Miranda has lived in Siena, Italy for the last 24 years, so I have two granddaughters, (21 and 18), who speak English as their second language! Demetrius lives very close to me and has a 14-year-old daughter. I can't believe that we are this close to our 60th reunion. It's gone by so fast!

Sandy Lotowycz Rising shares: Brandt '65 and I are grateful to spend three months in Islamorada, FL. **Brandt** and sister-in-Law **Sally Rising Dean**, class of

1968, drove to the Perez Art Museum in Miami and had a lovely lunch with **Clint Bush** and his friend, Danielle.

1967

Sherry Lyon Emmanuel
slemmanuel49@gmail.com

Brad Lovette shares that members of the class gathered in October 2025 for a mini-reunion in Nashville, TN, with planning assistance from **Candace Adelson**. **Steve Beslity** '65 joined as an honorary member of the class, and **Bill Wicker** was present but missed the photo.

1968

Anne Maher
amaher@kkblaw.com

Bob Piro: After nearly 30 years, Bob sold his magnificent horse farm in Norwich, VT to a former employee who has continued to run it as a training and boarding center for Eventing and Dressage. Bob decided to retire as, "I didn't want to be found slumped on the tractor since I was still haying 90 acres and making about 10,000 bales a season for our horses." He and Mary bought a house in Boxford, MA, near their two daughters. They brought two of their horses with them to MA and they continue to ride. Bob stopped competing but still occasionally jumps. Mary competes in Dressage and recently got her Silver Medal (which, Bob notes, is a BFD). He would love to have any of us stop by for a visit.

Mary Watkins' research on Quakers as slaveholders and slave traffickers the 100 years before they became abolitionists was published by Pendle Hill Pamphlets: "Hypocrisy, Racism, and Self-Interest on the Path to Reparations: Quaker Complicity with Slavery (1657-1776) and White Supremacy." Her book from which it is drawn is due out this fall: *White Work and Reparative Genealogy: Reckoning with Ancestral Debt as a Path to Racial*

Reparations (Palgrave Macmillan). She also volunteers for the AFSC's Immigrant Rights Program in Newark, doing psychological evaluations for asylum seekers in detention. And, of course, playing with grandsons galore!



Laurel and Art on an Alaska cruise

Laurel Brandt writes that she and Art took a small boat cruise in Alaska in August 2024 and plan to visit Spain and Portugal next. They spend most of the summer at their lakeside cabin in Maine where they swim, boat, walk, bike, cook/eat, and hang out. Congratulations to **Willy Merriken** and his wife, Louise, who celebrated their 50th anniversary and have 9 grandchildren! They have been busy traveling up a storm. They completed a 12-day self-driving tour of Colorado to visit four national parks, clockwise from Denver to Black Canyon of the Gunnison, Mesa Verde, Canyonlands, Arches, and the Colorado National Monument. The surprise of the trip was Black Canyon which greatly exceeded his expectations and which he "heartily recommends to all." They also visited Mount Vernon, which was "fabulous," and then took a two week trip to the Florida Keys, and then to Tampa to see their nephew's clam farming operation! They are off to London, Paris and Normandy next!

Cliff Dasco and Sheri are doing well up on the coast of Maine. "The summer is always glorious: fresh strawberries

and tomatoes, sailing, mosquitoes and houseguests!". Cliff left one biotech company a few weeks ago to become president and chief medical officer of another, and has also enlarged his clinical practice at a community health center. He finds "it very rewarding being able to take care of people regardless of payment capability. Daily, I am reminded about our unrequited idealism of 1968 and the importance of seeking to recapture it."

Jim Evans notes that he and his partner, Alex, live in a great "over-55" community in Florida that is gated and close to everything they need. After living in Ruxton, LA to care for his parents, he is happy to be back near all the kinds of activities he enjoyed while still living in New York. "This is fitting for the twilight of my life," he writes. He has taken two cruises and visited Alex's family in Brazil. Jim is still very active in the Presbyterian Church and serves on the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Boynton Beach.

Susan Abrams Butler writes that she is still enjoying her work as CFO for an architectural firm, working 30 hours a week. She visited her 4- and 2-year-old grandchildren in Hungary for the month of April, and hosted them here for a month this summer. She will be back to Budapest for Christmas where she and her daughter plan to visit some European Christmas markets.

Greg Tarone writes that, "I am trying to enjoy and appreciate life's charms and surprises, welcomed and unwelcome, living in Fairfield County, Connecticut, with my law and real estate office in Mount Kisco, NY, providing an interesting, balanced contrast in cultures, pace, attitudes, and even laws."

Bob Curtain and Melanie are enjoying living at the Jersey shore, and spending time with their five kids and eight grandkids. Bob was running his club's sailing program and working as a volunteer Medicare Counselor for the state. But recently, his life took

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an interesting twist: "After 12 years of retirement from some very interesting careers, I now find myself as Mayor of my small town of Ocean Gate, NJ." The previous Mayor was convicted for stealing from the town. Based on his business experience, Bob was then asked to run for office and was elected! Other than a stint on a planning board, he had never been in municipal government or run for office. "To say it's been interesting is an understatement but it has been very rewarding. It has been great to start a whole new chapter at this stage of my life!"

Paul Hand reports that all is well in Phoenix. He and Bunny continue to enjoy volunteering for a group that bags and delivers food to thousands of the needy in their community. They also visit members of their church who are housed in assisted living facilities. Paul had shoulder replacement surgery in February, and endoscopic spine surgery in 2024. After years of constant lower back pain, and after 6 hours of surgery, he walked to the car for the ride home: "No pain killers, no PT; just no pain and now back in the gym for 3 days a week."

I, **Anne Maher**, have nothing new to report (except for a 5th grandchild on the way!). Peter and I continue to be avid walkers and nature lovers. We're hoping to get a trip scheduled to Japan for 2026. This year, most of the "Friendly Class" will celebrate three quarters of a century on this earth. How did that happen?

1972

Karen Spero Albers
klalbers@charter.net

Maurice Kerins wrote: Hello, classmates. I have realized that it's been a while since I contributed an update. The biggest development in our lives in the past decade or so was Joan's retirement from Jones Day in 2014 and our relocating to San Antonio,

TX, her home town. After some time, we bought a home in an historic neighborhood, close to downtown. Professionally, for me, mergers and takeovers in the Capital Markets sector of finance limited job options and in 2012, I left my last bank employer and I got my real estate license. During this time, I also taught Business Ethics at Paul Quinn College in Dallas. With our move to San Antonio, I continued in real estate, and although I developed a solid business, I decided that it was time to move on during the pandemic. As the pandemic wound down, I was offered a part time position in a local Bicycle Shop. I was there for two years when Trek Bicycles purchased the shops and laid off all the part time employees. Selling bikes – especially to kids – was so much fun I have at times wondered, should I have been there all along? San Antonio has a good trail network and I am still riding. Otherwise, for the most part our health is good, although Joan and I are both on a first-name basis with our physical therapists! I hope everyone is well.

Mike Della Ratta wrote: After retiring from Adidas Japan in 2014, I moved to a village at the foot of Mt. Fuji and set up a one-person consulting company that lasted until 2022. At the same time, my Japanese wife started a dog and cat rescue service with a small network of like-minded animal lovers. Oh, how I wish I knew back when we built our house that it would soon need to accommodate up to 25 energetic kittens, some with mothers, others without. Our main "boarders" are stray cats that we trapped and treated but we get five or so abandoned dogs a year. Our efforts have resulted in a huge reduction in euthanized cats in our prefecture. They say that it is important to have a purpose in life. Well, I guess we found ours. I am sure that all of you have had, or currently have, medical challenges. As for me, I was diagnosed with Parkinson's three years ago. It has been a blessing in disguise as I increased my exercise routine and actively practice stress management. It has remained at

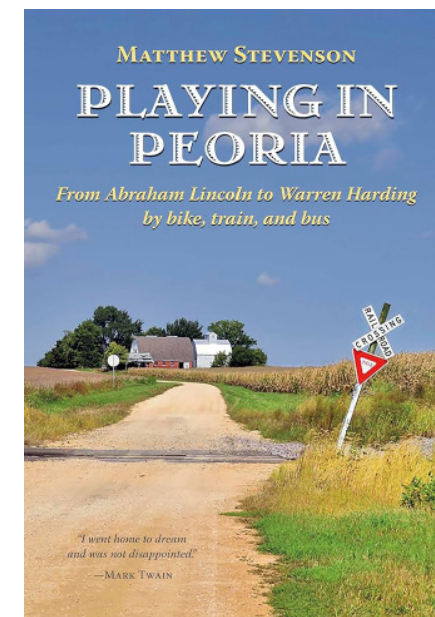
Stage 1 since the initial diagnosis, and I intend to keep it that way. I am now into my 39th year living overseas with no plans to return to the U.S. For those of you interested in traveling to Japan, I would be happy to show you around this wonderful area. The swans await your arrival.

Kevin Glynn wrote: We've moved into our new lakeside home in San Marcos, CA and have been very busy settling into our new home. I'm keeping busy re-learning San Diego after so many years away but am happy to report it is essentially unchanged. It helps that our children work nearby as well so it's good to see them. Now that Helen is retired, we're planning a trip to visit Egypt next spring and cruise down the Nile. I'm volunteering aboard the USS Midway Museum which is a lot of fun. The welcome mat is always there for those of you who might, in the depths of winter, might enjoy some warm sunshine. I'll leave the light on.



Kevin Glynn, Docent, USS Midway, San Diego

Matthew Stevenson wrote: We're besotted grandparents for the first time – Raymond Stevenson – and wish he was closer than London, as we're still in Switzerland. But getting to England isn't all that complicated. I carry on with my books, with two coming out this year: Playing in Peoria about American presidents from Lincoln to Harding, and another about a group of World War I poets and writers, Friends of a Kind. (Peoria reads like a Liz Roosevelt term paper; the other is an essay for Harry Shaw.) To get around for my research, I remain devoted to my folding bicycle and European trains – for sure, eccentric, but for me a great pleasure. And Friends of a Kind has a chapter about a drive I made with Kevin Glynn across the north of Ireland.



Matthew Stevenson's book

Philippe Bennett wrote: The past few years have been momentous. After nearly 20 years as a partner and head of the NY IP practice at Alston & Bird, I temporarily retired from law, and focused more on another passion, namely, the sport of fencing. Well, in brief, and to my surprise and pleasure, ideas I had for the design of fencing



Philippe Bennett in competition and 2024 National Champion Veteran 70 Men's Foil winner

facilities succeeded. My company, Radical Fencing, helped rebuild the Varsity fencing rooms at Harvard, Yale, and Columbia, as well as two of our Olympic training centers – with more to come. Each facility integrated innovations I patented that minimize the forces, impact and risks fencing imposes on the body. These new fencing rooms and floors are now the new state of the art in the sport. Who knows perhaps I will build one for FA should it get into the sport. In addition, with respect to my own



Karen Spero Albers, Jim Kane and Jamie Bergford with spouses at lunch in Seattle

competitive fencing, this past July, I won the individual men's U.S. National Championships in foil in my age group, was on the silver medal veteran team at these 2024 National Championships, qualified for my 7th U.S. Veteran World team that competed in Dubai, and won a bronze in the individual men's foil at the FIE 2024 World Championships, and was part of the U.S. veteran silver medal U.S. world veteran foil team losing a close match to France (second U.S. silver in decades). Also, my long-time club, the Fencers Club in NYC (that I have been a member of for decades and have been Chair of the Board since 2020), had two of our women foil fencers (one who is on the current Harvard fencing) win team gold for the U.S. at the Paris Olympics, as well as an amazing individual silver!

Karen Spero Albers wrote: John and I continue to enjoy retirement. Whether we are cruising European ports, camping in state and national parks with our fur babies, hangin' out at home with a good book or cycling along the Columbia River, it's life on our terms. In April, Melissa and **Jimmy Kane** joined us in LaConner, WA to attend the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival and visit a myriad of scenic sites in the Pacific NW. As an extra perk, the four of us met up with **Jamie Bergford** and her husband, Geoff, for lunch in Seattle. It may be time to start thinking about another class reunion for 2026. There are no plans to date, but several

CLASSES 1972-1973...



Karen Hohner, Cheryl Larimer Arnedo, Larry Mincer, Masha Sampsidis Slobodskoy, Jane Dillof Mincer and their spouses

classmates have expressed interest. After all, this could be our last hurrah, so why not start the conversation and keep your mind open to possibilities. With that said, share your thoughts to email klalbers@charter.net or watch for news/updates on our FA Class of '72 Facebook page. Stay well – Much love!



Melissa and Jim Kane, John and Karen Spero Albers at Skagit Valley Tulip Festival in April 2025

1973

Jan Klocke O'Sullivan
danjan85@aol.com

2025 is the year most of us turned 70—weren't we just 17?! Happy Birthday to all! Here's how we are celebrating our milestone year and, for some, starting new chapters. From **Jeff Hull**: My wife and I both turned 70 this year, so our big birthday trip was to the Grand Canyon for six



Bonnie and Jeff Hull in the Grand Canyon

nights of camping at the South Rim, including a mule ride on the rim on Bonnie's birthday, hiking down into the canyon, sunrises, sunsets, star gazing, and meteor showers.

Steve "Benj" Benjamin checked in from Miami. He's been sailboat racing as usual and took a week between events in Newport and Block Island to visit **Neal Fowler** in Dennis, MA. Neal is doing great with wife Kathy, two sons, and a new granddaughter (his first).

Woody Simes writes: After more than 40 years of windsurfing, now I am a beginner learning to Wing Foil here at Columbia River Gorge. It has been fun hanging out with **Clay Trauernicht**, and I am in touch with **Billy Morris** too! I am still searching for **Peter Thomas**, so if anyone has his contact information, please let me know.

Nick Seamon (and many other

classmates) have been nostalgic about years of following rock bands: I was too young to go to Woodstock, but I have been following the Dead since 1971. Went to Watkins Glen (600,000 people) with the late John Shipman and his brothers in July 1973. Last year, I went to the Sphere in Vegas to cap off 53 years of great music. Life on our farm continues to be great. Our five grandkids have been a blessing. (Note from Jan: I enjoy stopping by the Black Sheep Deli to see Nick any time I'm near Amherst, MA.)

Cyndy Beach Koch reported celebrating more than a milestone birthday this year: Mark and I just celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary at Round Hill in Jamaica with our children and grandchildren!

Kris Horvath wrote: This past year has turned our world upside down. We've been working toward simplifying our lives, though we've discovered that simplicity isn't all that simple! We sold our large home in Ponte Vedra Beach, moved into a rental just five minutes from our grandchildren, and will eventually settle into a smaller, more manageable home. Our third grandchild, Maria, arrived this year, and her big brothers Mason (4) and Max (2) are growing fast. Last year, on the way to Australia, we stopped in San Francisco to visit Julie and **Cliff Gardner** and spent a few days at their place near Tahoe. It felt like no time had passed. Travel continues to be a shared passion. Bronwyn and I explored the



Cliff Gardner and Kris Horvath



Cyndy, Mark and their family in Jamaica

Christmas markets in the Baltics last winter and have been going back and forth to our home on St. John every few months.

Speaking of **Cliff Gardner**, he wrote in from Warsaw, Poland: I took a trip to England, where my wife Julie was traveling with her twin sister, then hiked the Rob Roy Way in the Scottish Highlands; 79 miles in six days. Fantastic hiking – and I am not even a hiker. Then I visited Poland and Lithuania for the first time. I'm still enjoying my largely homicide defense practice. Julie and I are planning a bike trip in Tasmania.

Chris Rising Turner and **Jesse Mohan** discovered that they live near each other! Chris writes: We've enjoyed long breakfasts together catching up. We didn't know each other well at Friends; now we seem like-minded, and it's been a joy. Stay well, stay real, stay true, and care.

Peter Zullo writes from Gloucester, VA: I am retiring at the end of this year after 41 years of practicing medicine as an internist. I'm looking forward to spending time with family and six grandchildren and exploring additional interests, including going back to school for American history courses at William and Mary and taking some cooking classes as well.

Colleen Connell Meyer sent us her news as "Life since FA in a nutshell": After grad school, I joined the State Department, where I met my husband, Matt, in the Foreign Service Officer training course. Although we were

serving on different continents, we got married a year later in Delhi. We were faced with a stark either/or choice: get married or accept that our lives would rarely if ever overlap. So late one night we sat on one of the minarets of the Taj Mahal and decided – not very romantically – that we'd throw in our lot together. We wed in haste and were profoundly married for nearly the next 40 years.

Our son and daughter were both born abroad. We were posted to five countries, capped off by seven fantastic years in Cape Town, and we had countless family adventures. Our son briefly attended Kindergarten at FA during Desert Storm – when the bombing started, the kids and I were evacuated from the US Embassy in Islamabad, where we were both serving at the time, and I brought the kids home to my parents' house for the duration.

After serving overseas, we opted to leave the Foreign Service rather than face life in the D.C. area. We bought a 43-acre horse farm on the Vermont side of New Hampshire and started a horse-related business. Matt died unexpectedly in 2023 after a miscalculation in what was supposed to have been a day surgery. I am carrying on with the farm and the business, imperfectly, and I have found strong new friendships in a local bereavement group. I have also been blessed by the pure joy of three more grandchildren born since Matt died. Each year our family has spent a month together on a Greek island – babies and all – putting aside all distracting things for the

closeness and renewal that this time together brings us.

Jeff Leach wrote: I am a Master Mason and a Shriner. I look forward to serving at a children's hospital, helping care for kids with disabilities. As a direct descendant of patriots who fought for American independence, I proudly marched with the Sons of the American Revolution in the Arlington Heights, IL Fourth of July and Memorial Day parades, honoring the legacy of my family who fought to secure our nation's freedom. (Read more about Jeff in our profile of him on page XX.)



Jeff Leach supporting the Shriner Children's Hospital in Chicago

Elaine Gould: I am still Chair of the Department of Radiology at Stony Brook Medicine – Renaissance School of Medicine – working full time. I split my free time between Oyster Bay, Block Island, RI, and East Marion, NY. I try to sail when I can. I have three grown children: Catherine, in Newport, RI; Edward in California; and Matthieu in Huntington.

Susan Nappa Cocke: We are still living in Bluffton, SC, and Phil and I are both still working! We own our own businesses – Phil has partners, and I am running mine solo. Entrepreneurship stays in your blood!

Eli Ray Goodrich sent a brief update:

CLASSES 1972-1982...

I'm still in Huntington with a large growing family and still working.

Melinda Abood wrote: I am still working at UBS, now 37 years. My husband is a soccer coach. One daughter is in LA, and the other in NY. We went hiking in Alaska two weeks ago, which was fantastic. I play tennis every day and love living in New York City. We spend the winter months in Naples, FL.

From **Jan Klocke O'Sullivan**: I caught up with **Billy Dudjoc** by phone. Shortly after he turns 70, he'll be doing another Closer to Free Ride in memory of a friend who was also passionate about raising money for the fight against cancer.

As for me, **Jan**, I'm on the Board of the American Friends of Lafayette, so I've been running around the country trying to keep up with General Lafayette during the Bicentennial of his 1824-1825 Farewell Tour. Lafayette was in the U.S. long enough to celebrate both his 67th and 68th birthdays while traversing 6,000 miles and all 24 states by horse-drawn carriages and steamboats. I have been flying and mostly driving; it's exhausting, but lots of fun! The events include welcome ceremonies, parades, banquets, and balls. For my 70th birthday, I'm going to France!

1974

Evette Beckett-Tuggle
evettebt@gmail.com

Evette Beckett-Tuggle writes from SC: Our 50th Class Reunion, in October 2024, was a wonderful highlight of my year. Many thanks to the Reunion Committee members that joined with me to make it a fun and memorable time for all that attended. Thank you, **Jackie Feldman Aaron, Tim Andrea, Roberta de Araujo, Michael Gordon, Leslie Lawrence, and Anita Peters**. FA Alumni Relations Director, Jodie Sperico did a superb job in planning the various activities hosted by the school during the Homecoming weekend. Several classmates offered reflections during the Meeting for



Laurie Bruckner Bastis, Evette Beckett-Tuggle, Jacalyn Feldman Aaron, Adele MacDonald Kristiansson, and Robin Walker Jeffery

Worship. We were greeted graciously by FA Head of School, Paul Stellato, at his residence over lunch and enjoyed a yearbook photo montage of reunion attendees from our class. The tour of the school was especially fun and took many of us down memory lane as we recalled various facilities and how things used to be before all of the wonderful additions and renovations that have been made. **Michael Gordon** and I sang excerpts from the musicals, *A Three Penny Opera*, *Oh! What a Lovely War*, and *The Boyfriend*, and danced the Charleston on the stage of what used to be the Girls' Gym, one more time. The reunion dinner was held nearby at The Basil Leaf Café, adjacent to the Locust Valley train station. It was warm and inviting and several classmates shared their gratitude for the special time we were able to share in just seeing each other again. My daughter, **Lauren Jackson Greco '05** attended as my guest and openly gave high praise to our class for what she viewed as an authentic spirit of warmth and cohesiveness. We left the reunion with the feeling that the 50th reunion would not be the last time we would gather as friends. And that's a good feeling, indeed. The 26 classmates in attendance at the reunion (some with significant others) included: **Jackie Feldman Aaron, Tim Andrea, Laurie Bruckner Bastis, Evette Beckett-Tuggle, Peter Brockway,**

Robert Connery, Dori Eden, Gray Goodman, Michael Gordon, Betsey Glick Heidt, Sandy Hull, Robin Walker Jeffery, Tom Kaufman, Roger Levine, Cliff Lovette, Adele MacDonald Kristiansson, William Oelsner, William Picoli, Pam Spiegel Sanders, Josie Merriken Scupp, Julia Sefton, Roger Stern, Suzanne Bohner Toomla, Greg Van Raalte, Ed Weiss, and Laura Schmidt Wilkinson.

Joanne Cassullo writes from TX: I got married to Monk White (a Texan!) at The Colony Hotel in Palm Beach. The Aqua Belles, the famous synchronized swimmers, performed during cocktail hour.



Maria Cuomo Cole, Monk White, Joanne Cassullo, and famed fashion designer, Kenneth Cole from wedding

Peter Johnston writes from CA: I wish I could have made it. All is well here in Manhattan Beach. I am retired with a little traveling and a lot of golf. Peggy is from WI, and we have a place there, so we go often. Our son Peter lives in MB; he is single and has no grandkids yet.

1978

Thomas Hawkins
thawkins@outlook.com

Greg Andrea, 65, of Locust Valley, passed away on April 22, 2025, after a lengthy illness. A proud alumnus of Friends Academy and The New Hampton School (NH), Greg excelled in hockey and lacrosse, winning multiple



championships in both sports. He went on to graduate in architecture from Hobart College in 1982, earn a master's degree from Virginia Tech in 1984, and a further graduate degree from Harvard University Graduate School of Design in 2006. A distinguished architect, he was a member of the National Council of Architectural Registration Board and the Long Island Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and was honored with the Annual Award for Design Excellence by the New York State Institute of Architects for work whose vision left a lasting imprint on the architectural landscape of Long Island and the Hamptons. He is survived by many, including his brothers, Frank "Tim" Andrea '74, John Andrea '76, and Douglas Andrea '81.

1979

Susan Cosmopulos
susancosmopulos@gmail.com

John DiMatteo is still living in Centerport, NY with his wife, Angela,



Michele Pistone meeting Pope Leo XIV at the Vatican

and enjoying their first grandchild, James Louis DiMatteo. With multiple sailing trips over the past five years, expenses exceeded income requiring John to return to the practice of law. As John recently joked: "First World problem, for sure, but a problem nevertheless. Fortunately, I still think I can earn a few dollars before I hear those feared words 'Go home boomer, you're too old for this.'"

Susan Thomas Cosmopulos: Life for my husband and me seems to be speeding up instead of slowing down! Two of my sons got married within a year of each other. One in Maryland and one in Aspen. We just got back from California where my other son lives with his wife and my grandson, who just turned two! Added one new hip in May to my two new knees! Next time I won't wait. We are crazy busy with family and work, but no complaints. Drop me an email so we can add you to the class notes!

Dan Gleitman: I'm writing from the Swiss Alps. Pauline and I are in the middle of ten days trekking on the Tour du Mont Blanc. Amazing views, and intense ascents and descents for our 25th wedding anniversary. Still doing my IP management and External Technology role for Halliburton in Houston, 42 years now, and Pauline is deep into her yoga teaching and studio. Boys are doing well - Jonah just graduated University of Texas, and is an engineer for a startup in Austin. Aaron is also studying engineering, at Vanderbilt, and rock climbing every weekend. That's all for now - got to load up my backpack.

Jackie Mykoff Anscher: Life has come full circle for me; I am back at Friends Academy working at Little Friends Daycare, which is housed in the Withington House. Ironically, only I know who Ted Withington was! I find myself walking the expanded campus that Ted probably dreamed of and remember muttering back in the late 70s, "No Ted, not more land!" Alexandra Troy and I have reconnected and socialized often, old friends are the best. I am still teaching Spin and actively involved in the lives of my children and grandchildren. My hubby is retired and waiting for me to slow down...which isn't happening any time soon.

Amanda Walpin Leath: My oldest son is getting married in October, so we are doing a lot of wedding stuff in preparation for it. Other than that, I've been traveling - went birding in Belize, visited Thailand with a college friend, and recently spent time out in the Southwest. Unfortunately, I was downsized during a budget and people reduction at my organization - considered launching into an early retirement, but the fiscal side of my brain has prompted me to look for a new job - we shall see what happens; send me good vibes!

Carol Lind Stone: I live on the northern end of the Chesapeake Bay, and have been a pilot for American Airlines, previously named USAir and USAirways, for 37 years. I fly the Boeing 787 aircraft from the Philadelphia Airport. My routes are to 16 cities in Europe, and to one in the Middle East.

CLASSES 1985-1996...

1982

Ellen Greene
ellenjgreene@gmail.com

Michele Pistone, Professor and Faculty Director of the Mother Cabrini Institute on Immigration at Villanova University and Friends Academy's 2019 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient, recently had the honor of meeting His Holiness Pope Leo XIV in Rome. Through her lifelong commitment to immigration and refugee advocacy, Michele's work has continued to inspire others to lead with compassion, courage, and purpose. After graduating from FA, Michele earned a B.S. in Economics from New York University, a J.D. from St. John's University School of Law, and an LL.M. in Advocacy from Georgetown Law. She has dedicated her career to advancing dignity, justice, and hope for migrants and refugees.

1985

Laura Schaffer Match
lematch7@gmail.com

Laura Schaffer Match shares: Classmates and friends including **Tiffany Thomas-Smith**, **Laura Match Schaffer**, **Merri Kaye Yacenda**, **Gina Pistone Plansker**, **Lara Zises**, **Michele Pistone '82**, **Ed Grauer '84**, **Gennifer Geller '87**, **Chris Dowling** and **Derald Preston** caught up over Zoom in June 2025 in support of Tiffany Thomas-Smith, who won her race for Judge for Court of Common Pleas of Bucks County, PA in November 2025.

1987

Barry Joseph
barryjosephnyc@gmail.com

Justin Melkman: Been a while since I checked in. Feeling very grateful these days. I recently celebrated my 28th year at The Daily Show where I'm currently co-executive producer. The job remains a blast and I get to dress like a 15-year-old, which is huge as I have still not recovered from having to wear a jacket and tie every day at FA.



Tiffany Thomas-Smith with FA alum ahead of November election. Missing from photo is Philippa Barnat Miller '85



Justin Melkman

I play guitar in a couple of punk rock bands – Dr. Ex & The Break-Ups, and Recreational Outrage! This endeavor affords me the opportunity to live out my childhood dreams in 30-45 minute increments, ideally twice a month. I just finished my latest comic book, *Nemesis Rising*, which chronicles the all-too-true tale of accidentally confronting my elementary school bully. I'm recently engaged to a wonderful artist and we live in Gowanus, Brooklyn with our 80-pound black Lab, Izzy, who is sitting right next to me!

Susie Shuttleworth: I'm still working in advertising, live-action commercial production, and living in Red Hook, Brooklyn (Fun fact: **Steve Kunken '89** is my neighbor). My daughter is at Vanderbilt in Nashville majoring in music composition.

Drayton Wagner Martin: It's been 12 months filled with some highs and

some lows. We still live on the North Shore of Massachusetts and love hearing the waves out the windows on particularly windy days. My two sons went to Skidmore with my youngest graduating this past May. They are both working in Boston, so, while we are empty nesters, we still have the luxury of seeing them often. To distract from the quiet, my husband and I decided it was time for a new black Lab puppy to join our ranks and keep our 8-year-old yellow Lab entertained in the absence of the boys. Caution to anyone thinking about a puppy... super cute but definitely just like having a baby! On the truly stressful side, my mom experienced two separate but equally life-threatening illnesses last summer and fall and it took every ounce of energy and resourcefulness to navigate all the complexities around that. Amazingly, she is doing great, as stubborn as ever, and I know I am blessed to be able to write that. Finally, for the first time since graduation, I am on a pause from working, which has been one of the biggest and most welcome adjustments I've faced. Marketing has served me well as a career but launching another sandwich or coffee beverage does not seem like the most inspiring way to spend my energy these days. High school feels like more than a lifetime ago, a fun lifetime ago, for sure, so I'll wrap by wishing you all lots of fun.

John Buffa: I continue to be a co-founder of a NY-based Multi-Family Office with my partner, **Joel Talish '84**. I reside in northern NJ, with my wife Gina and three adult daughters,

Blake, Alexa, and Taylor. Blake (NYC) is the founder of a social media-Digital Brand ambassador company, Alexa (Boston) works for Communications at Vertex Pharmaceuticals and Taylor (NYC) graduated Summa Cum Laude from U Miami Law and is starting as an Associate with Simpson Thacher and Bartlett Law Firm. My daughter, Blake, is a pediatric cancer survivor, and our entire family is very active in the public charity we formed in 2006 called Go4TheGoal Foundation. Thanks to **Michael Gallo** for keeping the crew together – I get to see **Jim Pagett**, **Rob Mortati**, **Toby Zacks**, and **Mike McCormack** often and stay in touch with others who live out of the tri-state area, mostly via social media. (**Emily Beiles Kaufman** lives nearby in NJ, but sadly we don't get to see each other very much.)

Emily Beiles Kaufman shares: She is currently the Board President of her local school board after seven years of service. My husband and I are almost ready to retire but not quite. He continues to work for the software company he founded, although he recently sold it. He also continues to serve as a volunteer for the local fire department. My children are always amazed at how small Friends Academy is but how many people I know who are making contributions through community service, the arts, and their professions. My kids are almost adults; my son Graham is 19 and a rising sophomore at PSU; my daughter Phoebe is 21 and a senior at Virginia Tech. We love joining them for fall football games and have been doing some traveling on our own as well. I recently saw **Kristina McGovern Constantino**, **Lee Rosenberg**, and **Tom Barbella** for lunch out in Long Island and we had a great time catching up.

John Scola: Two of my boys have successfully graduated and have entered the "real world," albeit one is threatening to go back to school. My youngest son is at Union College. Now that the house is empty and I travel a fair bit for work, my wife, Stephanie, joins me when I travel to the more interesting locations around the world. Really starting to enjoy this new phase

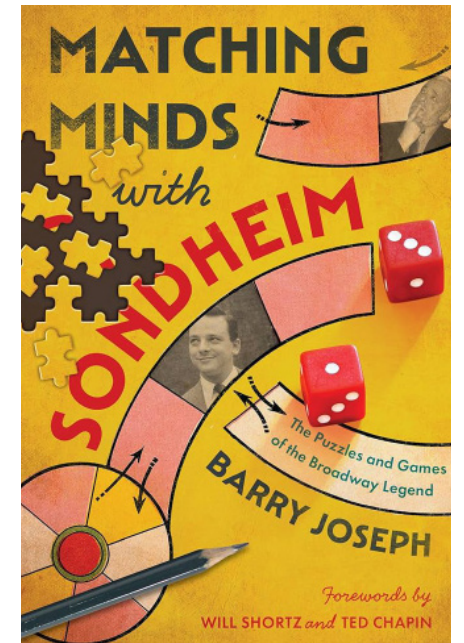
of life. Hope all are well and safe.

Eric Covington: No big changes are coming from Suffolk, VA. I continue to work at the Hampton VA Medical Center as a staff chaplain, where I provide spiritual and emotional care for the Hospice and Community Living Center (the VA's nursing home and skilled nursing facility) residents, their families, and hospital staff. In July, my wife and I drove from VA to St. Louis, MO, and back to attend an international conference for Seventh-day Adventist chaplains. We also celebrated our 21st wedding anniversary. Besides working and serving in church, I enjoy the company of my family, including our 8-year-old grandson.

Alfred Levitt writes: We're coming up on 40 years? That sounds nuts to me. But maybe I've done the math wrong.

Liz Baum Schneizer: Recently, I flew back to NY after three weeks in Cape Town, South Africa. I was there with my husband, Doug, to complete the handover of our brand-new performance catamaran, a Balance 442. Doug and I sold our house in Northern Virginia, where we had lived with our three kids for 26 years, with the goal of sailing full-time. Though we both still work, technological advances since the pandemic mean we can both work remotely, so we're going to "seas the moment" and live on the water. Our annual circuit will include time in the Caribbean, the Chesapeake Bay and the Long Island Sound as well as points farther north. I'm hoping to sail to Nova Scotia to see the Northern Lights sometime in the next few years. If you live near the coast and want to meet up sometime, reach out by email! Part of our goal is to spend more time with family and friends now that our home sails with us. (liz@schnelzer.org)

Beth-Anne Febre: I am still teaching Kindergarten in Tampa, but six years ago I started teaching the English half of a dual language program. I have a partner that teaches the Spanish half. It's an awesome program where both homerooms are submerged in Spanish for 50% of the day in all subject areas. My girls are finishing up



Barry Joseph's new book

their bachelor's degrees and my son, who is a nurse working for a cardiac surgeon, recently got engaged and I am adding a daughter-in-law to our mix. My husband, Mario, and I are looking forward to retirement. It sounds really weird to say that, I don't know where the time goes. Take care and be well!

Andy Bart reports that **Sandy Williams**, **Paul Murphy**, and **Todd Grupe** are producing a song cycle cabaret show about the inner thoughts of Laverne & Shirley. They are in discussions with Barbara Eden and the ghost of Elaine Stritch.

Speaking of Elaine Stritch, **Barry Joseph's** new book came out this fall – *Matching Minds with Stephen Sondheim: The Games and Puzzles of the Broadway Legend*. (**Melissa Errico '88**, penned the back-cover blurb). He celebrated his 24-year anniversary with his partner this summer, as his youngest child entered 11th grade and his oldest in his second year at McGill.

1996

Luke Cass
lukecass@gmail.com

Nicole Nadel shares: I currently reside in Charleston, SC with my husband Stanley Wilhelm and my twin 13-year-old boys, Tristan and Sebastian

CLASSES 2000-2017...

Wilhelm. After graduating medical school in 2006, I practiced emergency medicine for 15 years. During the Covid-19 epidemic, I transitioned into practicing aesthetic medicine. I'm proud to say that my husband and I currently own and operate Totality Medispa (with four locations) and Totality Skincare, an online medical-grade skincare shop.

Brian Shields shares: After 3½ years of battling to get our son home, we finally secured his visa and our family is complete! Jack Elliot Shields turned 4 in April and we are so happy to have him home with us!



Shields family photo

mini-reunion where they spent the day catching up, visiting the Central Park Zoo, and downing ice cream.

2000

X
X

Mimi MacKinnon was named Vice President, Global Conferences & Events at Ares Management.

2004



Jonathan Koenig, Sam Eisner, David Greene and Jason Jacobs with their children

Angela Batista Forrest
batista1023@gmail.com

Jonathan Koenig
jonathan.h.koenig@gmail.com

Jonathan Koenig shares that members of the class and their children had a

2005

Garrett Dooley
gsdooley@gmail.com

Genevieve Dreizen cofounded Fresh Starts Registry – the first and only Divorce Registry, featuring an Expert guide, resources and education – with her sister, Olivia, class of 2003. Fresh Starts has been featured in The New York Times, Forbes, New York Magazine, and more for revolutionizing how we support fresh starts with expert referrals and curated product registries. She lives in Edinburgh with her husband Thomas, but tries to make it back to visit her family (**Lis Dreizen & Harry Dreizen** class of '78, **Collin Dreizen '09**, and sisters **Olivia Dreizen Howell '03**, and Tess) a few times a year.

Julia Ingersoll shares: My husband and I welcomed our second son, Theo, in September of 2023, and our eldest son, Pete, is entering 2nd grade! Our family is complete and locked in for the wild ride ahead! I am now president and majority owner of Callan Consulting Engineers, a full service MEP/FP (Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing, Fire

Protection) design and consulting firm, doing work all over the U.S. and across all markets from commercial to mission-critical to industrial and institutional.

Rob Abney writes: After 15+ years working in marketing and brand strategy for companies across media, tech, finance and beauty, I launched my own marketing consultancy – Abney Strategy. I now help small businesses and startups clarify their story, strengthen their marketing, and grow with purpose. Based just north of Manhattan, life is full with family, work, and plenty of attempts to stay in shape.

Garrett Dooley shares that he is engaged to **Xxxx**

2008

X
X

Morgan Taylor, Vice President of Business Operations for the NY Liberty and LI Nets, has been named to City & State's 2025 Long Island Trailblazers list, joining leaders making an impact across Suffolk and Nassau counties. She



was also highlighted in a June 2025 *Newsday* article for her work with both organizations.

2014

Simisola Akinola
simisolaakinola@yahoo.com

Nearly 30 members of the Class of 2014 gathered at the Winslow in the East Village to celebrate their 10th Friends Academy reunion! The event was a joyful reunion, filled with laughter and camaraderie as they reminisced about their school days and shared cherished memories.



Member of the Class of 2014 reunited at the Winslow in the East Village

Ryan Dobrin shares: I've been an Adjunct Professor at Montclair State University, directing Dave Malloy's *Natasha, Pierre & The Great Comet of 1812*, a brilliant adaptation of a section of *War and Peace*. With a 26-person cast and full orchestra, this gorgeously idiosyncratic musical has been a joy to dive into. I was also honored to be included in Theatrely31's Class of 2025, which highlights "theatre



makers poised for a meteoric rise" and I'm grateful to be recognized as I continue navigating this career and industry. As Producing Artistic Leader of The Movement Theatre Company, I also served as Associate Producer on Eisa Davis' *The Essentialist*'t at HERE Arts Center and Co-Producer on Brian Quijada and Nygel Robinson's *Mexodus* at Audible Theater.

2015

Marianna Cuomo Maier
mariannacm430@gmail.com

Cameron Hellerman
cameronhellerman@me.com

Danielle Kahn
danielle.kahn@wustl.edu

Caroline Sgaglione recently graduated from Yale School of Environment with a Master in Environmental Management. She is pursuing a career in the intersection of urban planning, data science, and climate resilience.

Paige Sklar recently joined Lazard Asset Management as a Vice President on the Channel Marketing team.

Vivian Zetterstrom graduated law school and passed the bar and was admitted to the NY Bar and now a practicing Big Law attorney in NYC.

Marianna Cuomo Maier is celebrating the three-year anniversary of her practice, Grata Wellness, which she founded to help people regulate stress, reconnect to themselves, and feel good in their daily lives.

Javana Clark and Jakob Scheidt married on September 13th, 2025, in Reading, PA. Javana and Jakob met at Tulane University in New Orleans, where Jakob was in law school, and Javana was pursuing her Master's in Social Work. Their wedding ceremony was held at Reading City Church.



Javana Clark and her new husband, Jakob Scheidt

Officiated by Ed Dugger, the ceremony included a meaningful Quaker ring-warming ritual. The joyful event brought together many loved ones, including numerous Friends Academy friends and family, including alumni **Kelsey Crocco Hamling, Julia Neisloss, Marianna Cuomo Maier, Steph Gherlone, Caroline Sgaglione,** and **Danielle Ramsay**. Javana and Jakob now live in Hyattsville, Maryland, just outside Washington, D.C.

2017

X
X

Kanan Patel founded beauty brand, Kayura, at the intersection of ancient Ayurvedic healing wisdom and modern



pharmaceutical science. With a Master's in Pharmaceuticals and Cosmetic Science from Long Island University and a passion for inclusive beauty, Kanan created Kayura to deliver holistic, science-backed skincare that works for all people and skin tones.

CLASSES 2018-2021...

2018

Lauren Nagel
lauren_nagel@aol.com

Ally Zucker
allyzucker13@gmail.com

Leila Baadarani has joined the Sotheby's Institute of Art to pursue her Masters in Art Business after two years as a Foundation Relations and Grants Management Analyst at The Rockefeller University.

2019

X
X

Olivia Lizza has stepped into a new role as Manager of Academic Advising and Student Events at Boston University School of Hospitality Administration after serving as the Alumni & Events Specialist.



2020

Billy Duke
billy_duke@fa.org

Julia Rae, formerly Julia Satovsky has been named a Creative Partnerships Coordinator at NBCUniversal, where she helps bring branded content campaigns to life across the company's



Peacock streaming platform. She holds a BA from NYU Gallatin School, where she pursued an individualized major titled, The Gendering of Media, and studied screenwriting. She has written two screenplays, one of which is currently

in development. In her new job, she draws on her experience in marketing and brand strategy, with a focus on storytelling and cross-platform engagement from her previous roles at Marvel Entertainment and The Paley Center for Media.

2021

Samantha Kallman
samkallman5@gmail.com

Riley Schultz
schultzriley03@gmail.com

Riley Schultz writes: After graduating from the Manhattan School of Music, I am pursuing an MBA in Arts and Entertainment Management alongside my internship at Foundations Artist Management.

Sam Kallman writes: After graduating from Villanova I moved to NYC where I work in Wealth Management at Bank of America.

Isabelle Rosen writes: After graduating from UT Austin, I moved to New York City to join a public relations firm that works with clients across the construction, real estate, and broader business industries.



Alex Kramer writes: I moved to NYC where I am attending NYU and pursuing my Master's in childhood education with a dual certification in general education and special education.

Albert Paniccia writes: After graduating from Providence College, I moved to New York City to embark on a career in brokerage.

Chris Dillmeier writes: After graduating from the University of Miami, I moved to New York where I am getting my Master's in integrated marketing at New York University.

Micheal Walrath writes: After

graduating the University of Miami, I will be staying in Miami to work for a Tech startup called Roam that is changing the future of work, and building The Office of the Future.

Lindsay Lee writes: After graduating from Cornell University, I am working in Asset Management at JP Morgan in New York City.



Emma Knopf writes: After graduating from Penn State, I moved to NYC and am working as a wealth management analyst in the Private Bank at Bank of America.

Emily Brown writes: After graduating from Dartmouth College, I am thrilled to have the opportunity to further my education at Columbia University, where I am earning my Master's degree in Social Work!

Jasmine Carnevale writes: After graduating from the University of Chicago, I moved to NYC where I work in Quantitative Finance at Citi Bank.

Brianna Vissichio writes: After graduating from the University of Richmond this past May, I moved to New York City and now work in media and advertising for Jaguar Land Rover.

Julia Gulbransen writes: I am teaching at Green Vale and pursuing my Master's in Literacy Education from Hofstra.



Johnny Donohue writes: After graduating from Hamilton College, I moved to Washington, D.C where I work as a Policy Analyst at Venable LLP.

Riya Subbiah writes: After graduating from Georgetown, I started medical school at NYITCOM. I'm happy to be back in New York and close to family and friends!

Skylar Mott writes: After graduating from Lehigh University, I moved to Boston where I am scaling startups in commercial real estate and storage.

Zander Byers writes: After graduating from Southern Methodist University I was promoted to general partner at Telperion Capital where I invest in defense tech and reshoring heavy manufacturing.

Madison Poll writes: Following graduation from Boston University, I began freelancing for an event company. This led to a planner position where I travel far and near producing events, but home remains NYC.

Billy Lawrence writes: I graduated with a degree in finance from the University of Texas at Austin and I'm currently working in commercial real estate at Wells Fargo in NYC.

Adrienne Coleman writes: I recently graduated from Dartmouth College and am now working in New York as an Investment Banking Analyst at UBS.

Zara Ward writes: I graduated from the University of St Andrews with an Honours degree in Neuroscience. I am currently furthering my Neuroscience studies through an MSc at UCL, with plans to pursue a career in biotech.

Jack Towse writes: I graduated from the Juilliard School with a BM in jazz trumpet. I've started a Master's degree program at the Manhattan School of Music and continued to work in off-Broadway shows.

Ava Morey writes: After graduating from Amherst I moved to NYC where I work as a paralegal at Skadden. I am grateful to still talk with friends from FA every day!

Shivani Patel writes: After graduating from NYU I just moved back to Long Island where I work with my sister, **Kanan Patel '17**, at her skincare startup, Kayura Effect.

Spencer Kreigstein writes: After graduating from Georgetown, I moved to NYC where I work as a paralegal in civil litigation and I am an assistant coach on the Fordham University Sailing team.

Is your class not listed?

Are you interested in working with current class representatives?

We are looking for new volunteers to represent each graduating class year. If you are interested in serving as a class representative, contact Director of Alumni Relations, Jodie Sperico at jodie_sperico@fa.org.

Caroline Green writes: After graduating from Williams College, I moved to NYC where I work in Investment Banking at Goldman Sachs.

Lauren Stewart writes: After graduating from Colgate, I moved to NYC where I work as an analyst at JLL. Thank you FA, for a great education and the best friends!

Gretchen Waechter writes: After graduating from Lafayette College, I started working for Cintas on Long Island for their Management Training Program.

Mary Droesh writes: After graduating from College of the Holy Cross, I am pursuing a Master's degree in professional nursing at the University of Pennsylvania.

Will Hunter writes: After graduating with a BS in Aerospace Engineering at UIUC, I am currently continuing on to graduate school.

Ariel Kalimian writes: Following my graduation from Cornell University, I work with Kalimian Equities, a firm focused on commercial, residential, and hospitality real estate.

Thomas Robin writes: After graduating College of Charleston, I pursued a career in med-device sales.

Carleigh Zelman writes: After graduating from USC, I moved to Los Angeles full time where I work in Investment Banking, specifically Financial Sponsors and Leveraged Finance at Santander.

Liz Schwab writes: After graduating Boston College, I moved back to Boston. I now work as a paralegal at the District Attorney's Office!

Charlie Cooper writes: After graduating from Lehigh, I moved to NYC where I work at Ashley Longshore Gallery, as well as Berry Campbell Gallery.

Lilah Donnelly writes: I am getting my J.D. at UT Law.



2025

Xxxx
Xxxxx

Xxxx
Xxxxx



Class of 2025 graduates with their alumni parents (L-R): Heather Adler Schoen '96 with Zoe, Michael Brielmann '90 with Hayden, Lara holding a photo of her late father Louis Fortunoff '82, and Nicole Tsakanikas Skolnick '91 with Ava and Grace

In honor of those we have lost...

Olivia Hammerschlag Yarrow Benford Jenney '46

Olivia Hammerschlag Yarrow Benford Jenney, age 96, passed away on September 21, 2025 in Pennington, New Jersey. Born April 14, 1929 in New York City, she attended several schools there before studying journalism at Boston University and working at the U.S. Embassy in Paris. After returning to the U.S., she contributed to the 1954 Eisenhower campaign and later worked in advertising. She married David M. Benford in 1954, and later Ralph R. Jenney in 1978; her career included leadership roles in education, real estate, and civic organizations in New Canaan, Connecticut and McLean, Virginia.



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Margery Peterson Lee '47

Margery Peterson Lee, aged 94, of Gladwyne, PA, passed away peacefully at home on June 18, 2025. Born in Bronxville, NY, she grew up on Shelter Island and graduated from Bryn Mawr College with a B.A. in History in 1951. She built a distinguished career in educational administration and alumnae leadership, and together with her husband, collected and donated major works of contemporary art to institutions including the Philadelphia Museum of Art.



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Joan Hochstuhl Wallace '50

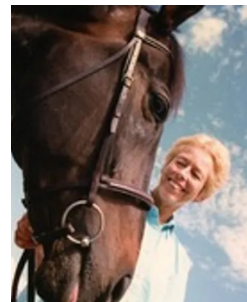
Joan Hochstuhl Wallace, 93, of Lakeville, CT, passed away on October 30, 2024. Born in Syosset, NY, she studied at Lasell College, Columbia University, and the Art Students League, later working in public relations for The New Yorker and the Museum of Modern Art. A talented artist and photographer, her work was widely exhibited. Joan and her late husband, George A. P. Wallace, were active in the arts, progressive politics, and environmental causes.



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Susan Webb Porter '54

Susan Webb Porter, 89, of Mequon, WI, passed away on August 3, 2025. Born in New York City, she attended Middlebury College, where she met her husband, William "Bill" Porter. Together they raised four children in Milwaukee and Mequon. A lifelong lover of reading, art, animals, and theater, Susan was an avid equestrian and devoted supporter of the Washington and Ozaukee County Humane Societies, volunteering for over 30 years. She was also active with the Sports Car Club of America for four decades, sharing her husband's passion for racing. Known for her wit, warmth, and independent spirit, she will be deeply missed. She was preceded in death by Bill in 2006.



Washington and Ozaukee County Humane Societies, volunteering for over 30 years. She was also active with the Sports Car Club of America for four decades, sharing her husband's passion for racing. Known for her wit, warmth, and independent spirit, she will be deeply missed. She was preceded in death by Bill in 2006.

Michael "Mike" Hellman '55

Mike Hellman, 87, of Hilton Head Island, SC, passed away peacefully on May 24, 2025. He was educated at Friends Quaker schools and earned bachelor's and master's degrees in chemistry from Dartmouth

College. Mike held leadership positions at Procter & Gamble and Estée Lauder before working as a financial analyst with Merrill Lynch. A devoted community leader, he served in numerous local organizations, including Sea Pines Country Club, CSA, ASPPO, and St. Luke's Church, and volunteered with Habitat for Humanity. He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Connie Eadie Hellman, Friends Class of 1955, and their four children, including Timothy Hellman '81 and Jennifer Hellman '82, who also graduated from Friends Academy.



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Mary Allen Griffing Spindler '57

Mary Spindler of Lincoln, Massachusetts, died on July 11, 2025. She earned her bachelor's degree in American Studies from Stanford University in 1961, studying under



novelist Wallace Stegner, and went on to complete a master's in Education at Harvard University in 1962. Mary began her career as an elementary school teacher at Hanscom Air Force Base and later spent many years tutoring reading at the Carroll School in Lincoln. She also worked at the Lincoln Library during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Deeply committed to her community, Mary played a key role in the 1986 restoration of Flints Pond (formerly Sandy Pond). She served on the Lincoln Historic District Commission and was an active member of the Lincoln Historical Society, where she eventually served as president.

Peter E. Gise '58

Peter Gise, 84, of Los Altos, CA, passed away peacefully on October 17, 2025. Educated at Friends Academy, Lafayette College, Northwestern University, Stanford University, and Santa Clara University, he had a distinguished career in science and

engineering, including teaching postgraduate students at Santa Clara University, instructing naval officers at Lockheed Martin, working on semiconductor chips at Fairchild Corporation, and contributing to the field of consumer electronics through his work at Artificial



Muscle. Peter authored numerous technical papers on semiconductor metrology and two textbooks on modern semiconductor fabrication. Outside of work, Peter coached youth sports, enjoyed photography, model boating, RC car racing, cycling, dirt biking, and car racing. An ordained minister with the Universal Life Church, he also officiated weddings.

Carl Werner '58

Carl Werner, 83, of Downingtown, PA, passed away peacefully on August 27, 2024. A graduate of Cornell University and Fairleigh Dickinson University, he continued



his pursuit of knowledge at the College of Financial Planning, where he became a Certified Financial Planner. After serving as a Communications Officer in the U.S. Navy, Carl enjoyed a distinguished career in finance, holding roles as Securities Analyst, Trust Portfolio Manager, Financial Planner, and Vice President at First National Bank of Chester County. Deeply committed to his community, he was active in the New Jersey Jaycees, the West Chester Chamber of Commerce, served as President of the West Chester Rotary Club, was a board member of the local American Red Cross, and a Church Council Member at Calvary Lutheran Church. Carl shared his life with his beloved wife of 58 years, Linda Werner, and their children and grandchildren.

Bonnie Rouzee Clarey '59

Bonnie Rouzee Clarey, 84, of Coronado, CA, passed away on June 21, 2025. Born in

Honolulu in 1941, she shared her birthplace with her husband of 62 years, Rear Admiral Stephen Clarey, as both of their fathers were naval officers stationed there. A graduate of Smith College, Bonnie later earned a master's degree in educational technology from San



including Colgate-Palmolive, Pillsbury, and Dannon Yogurt. An accomplished equestrienne and tennis player, she also shared a lifelong love of travel with her husband, exploring destinations from Africa and India to Europe and New England. Bonnie is survived by many including brother, George "Mike" Rouzee, a FA graduate of 1958, and his wife, Deborah Burling Rouzee, also class of 1958.

Joan Stubenbord Clark '59

Joan Stubenbord Clark Taylor, 82, of Milwaukee and New York, passed away on April 2, 2025, after a battle with cancer. After Friends Academy, she studied mathematics at



Thomson McKinnon. Joan shared a life of travel and adventure with her husband, Michael Acton Taylor, visiting all 50 states and 84 countries where they sought out unique food, good jazz, and experiences that evolved into inspiring stories. She was a devoted mother and stepmother, and cherished grandmother to five grandchildren.

David Seeler '59

David Seeler, passed away on Sunday, September 28, 2025 at age 83. He is survived by his beloved wife Ngaere. He owned and operated the Bayberry Nursery in Amagansett, NY since 1970. David graduated from Friends Academy in 1959 and served on the Board of Trustees from 2019-2022. Please visit page xx for an extended memoriam of David.



Elisabeth Watt Birmingham '63

Beth Birmingham, 81, of West Hartford, CT passed away on November 3, 2025. Beth was a graduate of William Woods College and Cedar Crest College. Her academic interests led her to membership in the National Honorary Drama and History



Fraternities. Beth taught at the Garden City Community Church Nursery School, Unami Middle School (Social Studies), Chalfont, PA, and was the Lead Teacher for the Noah Webster House in West Hartford. She was elected Town Clerk of East Granby, where she proudly served for many years. A longtime member of the East Granby Congregational Church, she served as a Deacon and was on many committees. Her varied volunteer work included serving on the East Granby PTA, East Granby Public Library, Cub Scout Pack 70 Principal's Advisory, and Cultural Arts Councils, and was on the Board of Directors of the Windsor Locks Federal Credit Union.

Sarah "Sally" Parlette Sams '63

Sally Parlette Sams, 80, of Athens, GA, passed away on August 26, 2025, after a courageous battle with Parkinson's disease. A graduate of Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Sally lived a life defined by love, family, and devoted service to her community. After graduating with honors, Sally moved to Chapel Hill while her husband, Walter A. "Corky" Sams, III, completed his senior year,



during which she worked as an assistant psychometrist at UNC. She and Corky married in June 1968, and together raised three children, finding joy in their grandchildren. Corky remained a devoted husband and caregiver throughout her illness. An avid gardener and graduate of the University of Georgia Master Gardener course, Sally was deeply involved in local organizations. She contributed to Athens Academy, served as a docent, Trustee, and president of the Friends of the Georgia Museum of Art, and was a past president of the Junior Ladies Garden Club in Athens. She also served on the Sanctuary Committee at First Presbyterian Church and hosted numerous community and social events in her home.

Todd Brooks '72

Todd Brooks passed away on February 29, 2024. He graduated from Drew University and earned his medical degree from Meharry Medical College School of Medicine, later completing his OB-GYN residency at the University of Tennessee. Todd began his career as an obstetrician-gynecologist before becoming a general practitioner. He especially valued his work providing medical care to prison inmates. A memorial service was held in Memphis, Tennessee, at Divine Life Church.



practitioner. He especially valued his work providing medical care to prison inmates. A memorial service was held in Memphis, Tennessee, at Divine Life Church.

Charles P. Meade '79

Charlie Meade, 63, of Bronxville, NY, passed away unexpectedly on September 9, 2024. A Brookville, NY native, he earned a B.A. in Finance & Political Science from Adelphi University in 1984, then later graduated Summa Cum Laude with a B.A. in Architecture from New York Institute of Technology in 2002. Both of his siblings, Paul Meade '77 and Regina



Meade Lafaire '83, are also Friends Academy graduates. After nearly two decades on Wall Street, Charlie shifted his career to architecture and became a respected property-loss consultant. Dedicated to service and community, he served as President of St. Joseph's Parish Council, led the Community Fund of Bronxville, Eastchester & Tuckahoe, acted as Cub Scout Leader for Pack 5, and joined The Bronxville School's Facilities Committee following the 2007 flood.

Robert M. Spingarn '85

Rob Spingarn, of Palm Beach Gardens, FL, passed away on April 7, 2025, after a long battle with cancer. A graduate of Columbia College and Columbia Business School, Robert had a distinguished career as a securities analyst spanning more than 30 years with Salomon Smith Barney, Credit Suisse, and Melius Research.



He was recognized as the top securities analyst in the United States across all industries by Forbes magazine in 2008. Beyond his professional accomplishments, Robert was deeply engaged with his community, sharing his love of tennis, nature photography, and mentoring others in finance and investing. He is survived by many including his sister, Elizabeth Spingarn-Stanton, a Friends Academy alumna, class of 1988.

Jesse A. Rines, Jr '87

Jesse Rines passed away on October 18, 2024. A memorial service was held on December 6, 2024, at Smyrna Tabernacle Deliverance Center in St. Albans, NY. Jesse will be remembered for his warmth, faith, and kindness. He was predeceased by his sister, Melody Rines '71, also a Friends Academy graduate.



Burton Poggensee '04

Burt Poggensee passed away on October 30, 2024, with a service held in Atlanta, GA, on November 7. A graduate of the Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Burt was known for his creativity and artistic spirit. He is survived by many including his sister, Amanda Poggensee Parmer '99, also a Friends Academy alumna.



FACULTY, STAFF, AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES IN MEMORIAM

This year we lost members of the Friends Academy community whose vocation and volunteerism made an impact in the lives of so many.

Richard L. Eldridge

Excerpt from obituary written by Richard's family.

Richard Eldridge passed on Friday, October 2, 2025 at the age of 85. Rich is survived by his wife of twenty-six years Rosaria (Roe) Golden, stepdaughters Ria and Nora, son David and daughter Susan, former spouse Lucy, sister Muriel, nephew Ross, niece Kerry, and five grandchildren: Ember, Bee, Jaime, Ruthanne and Lucy. Son-in-law Seward and daughter-in-law Lisa also survive Rich, as do a great niece and two great nephews.

Richard served on the Friends Academy Board of Trustees from 1993-2002. In 2002 he was named interim head of school for the 2002-2003 school year.

In his career, Rich served as principal of Buckingham Friends School in Lahaska, Pennsylvania, Friends Seminary in Manhattan (New York City), and The Willow School in Peapack-Gladstone, New Jersey. He was Assistant Dean of Faculty in the Division of Humanities at the Community College of Baltimore in Maryland. He in addition to serving on the Board of Trustees at Friends Academy, he also served on the board at Oakwood Friends School in Poughkeepsie, New York.

After retiring from The Willow School at the age of sixty-five, Rich

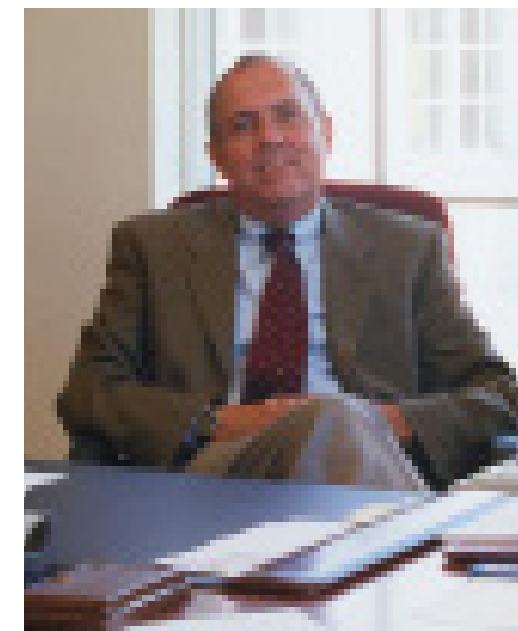
went on to become an adjunct professor at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey where he taught remedial writing and grammar to incoming freshman. He also served as a consultant to The Hudson School in Hoboken, New Jersey and Westbury Friends School in Long Island, New York, as they prepared for new leadership.

After suffering a stroke in January 2009, Rich continued to make an impact on the lives of those around him. He served as a volunteer for the Westchester Martin Luther King Jr. Institute for Nonviolence, and the Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Library in White Plains, New York, where he curated new

books on social justice, equity and inclusion for the library's collection.

Rich was a scholarly man, having earned a B.A. English from Oberlin College, an M.Ed., English from Cornell University, and a Ph.D., American Literature at the University of Maryland. However, Rich always said that he was not the smartest person in the room whether he was with faculty, staff or students. He believed that everyone is a teacher and can be a lifelong learner, and that formal education, which is not available to everyone, does not determine an individual's value.

To say that Rich will be dearly missed is an understatement because to have known Rich was to always want to be around him.





One of Michael's favorite sets from *Neverwhere* in 2013 combined iron and steelwork.

Michael Grant

Letter from Head of School Paul J. Stellato to the Friends Academy community.

Michael Grant passed away on Sunday, April 6, 2025 at the age of 72. He leaves behind his daughter, Meli '04 and our thoughts are with her.

Before retiring from Friends Academy in 2022, Michael was the Technical Director of the Helen A. Dolan Center for 20 years, where his brilliance with set design and construction shone in every production. His career at Friends was preceded by an equally brilliant two-decade career as Technical Director for the esteemed Public Theater.

"Michael instantly elevated the quality and professionalism of every show he worked on. He was the caretaker of the Theater and kept it and those who used it in immaculate and safe working order. Most importantly, he was a brilliant mentor to many, many students," shared our Director of Arts Andrew Geha.

Michael's sets are the stuff of legend – from the immense four-foot deep pool he built on stage for the set of *Metamorphosis*, to the 40-foot tall iron tressel of *Neverwhere*, to a life-sized barn in *Much Ado About Nothing*, to the rollicking Times Square set of *Guys and Dolls*. The list goes on and on.



One particular memory shared with me illustrated the dedication and ever-present professionalism of Michael. When Superstorm Sandy devastated Long Island and shut down Friends Academy for two weeks, Michael was undeterred – coming in every day to work on the set for the *25th Annual Putnam Spelling Bee*. Because of Michael, the show always went on.

Family, friends, and colleagues gathered together on June 21, 2025 at the Matinecock Meeting House for a Quaker Memorial Meeting for Worship in honor of Michael.



Set for 25th Annual Putnam Spelling Bee, built by Michael during Superstorm Sandy in 2012

Bettina Hummerstone

Excerpt of obituary written by Bettina's children

Bettina (Tina) Anne Hummerstone, 86, of Fairfield CT, passed away peacefully on Wednesday January 7, 2026 at Bridgeport Hospital, Bridgeport, CT with her loving daughter Amy class of 1981 and son James class of 1982 by her side.

Born in Baltimore, Maryland, Tina grew up in Princeton, New Jersey and attended Smith College in Northampton Massachusetts where she graduated cum laude and then received a Master of Arts at Stony Brook University in New York.

Tina had a tremendous impact on everyone she touched, but especially with children as a teacher, administrator, volunteer at camps for the terminally ill and, beloved grandmother.

Starting her career as a French teacher, she rose through the ranks to become a top administrator at prestigious private schools including Friends Academy, the Key School

(Annapolis, MD), Stuart Country Day School of the Sacred Heart (Princeton, NJ), Oak Knoll School of the Holy Child (Summit, NJ) and School of the Holy Child (Rye, NY). But her greatest joy was spending time with her grandchildren, who loved her great humor, fun spirit and shared love of



sweets.

Bettina worked at Friends Academy from 19xx until 19xx beginning tenure at Friends Academy as an Upper School French teacher. She also served as Upper School Assistant Principal and later Upper School Principal.



Bettina (right) pictured in the 1968 Friends Academy yearbook

Alice Kaplan

Excerpt from obituary written by Alice's family.

Alice Kaplan passed on August 4, 2025 after a short illness at the age of 88.

She married Allan Kaplan in 1956. They had three children: Seth, Isabel '78 and Caroline '83. When Caroline was 8, Alice went back to school and got a Masters of Library Science. Alice worked at the school librarian at Friends Academy from 1973 to 1983. She then became a librarian at Planned Parenthood Federation of America. This job was the beginning of a long relationship with Planned Parenthood including many years of board membership of the Long Island affiliate.

For a change of pace, in the mid-eighties Alice built a small antiques business called Alice Kaplan Antiques which specialized in sterling silver frames, objects and serving utensils. While working in this business she was also volunteering in the health center of the same local Planned Parenthood affiliate. Her experience there motivated her to acquire a Masters of Social Work.

Alice then devoted herself to serving as a bereavement counselor at an organization in Greenwich, CT called the Den for Grieving Children. There she supported families who had

experienced a death, including several groups with families who had lost a parent in the 9-11 attacks.

Alice married Jason Aronson five years after Allan died.

They enjoyed an active life in the city. She took advantage of many cultural opportunities and had a very busy social life. Her bridge group in Greenwich met for decades as did her book

club. It wasn't easy to get on her calendar! She had many friends and family members who loved her deeply. Her generosity and interest in others were boundless. She was a surrogate mother and grandmother to many people. She is survived by her husband, Jason Aronson; her brother Steven Drucker; her children, Seth, Isabel and Caroline Kaplan; her grandchildren Jason and Abigail Cheskis, Justin Kaplan and Jack and Joshua Clark; sons-in-law Andrew Cheskis and Douglas Clark; and daughter-in-law Amy Fitzgerald.



Alice Kaplan in her classroom at Friends Academy

David Seeler

Excerpt from eulogy written by Friends Academy Board of Trustees President Frank Ingrassia

David Seeler passed on September 28, 2025 at the age of 83. He is survived by his beloved wife Ngaere. We will be celebrating our 150th anniversary during the 2026-27 school year. If you do the math, his experience with Friends Academy has amounted to 70 years, which is almost half of the time Friends Academy has been around. Also doing the math, David spent only a short four years with us considering the more than 8 decades of a very full and richly lived life that he walked this earth.

For almost 7 decades he has been unwavering in his devotion to the school.

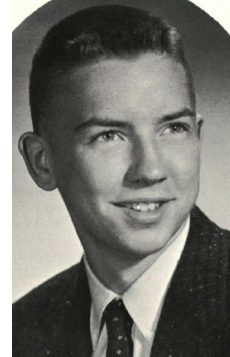
He is one of our biggest fans, or perhaps better said he is one of our greatest ambassadors. His passion for the school was remarkably strong!

You would not be alone in asking "But why"?

Let me try to shed some light on this, because it is a remarkable story. A story that touches me deeply and speaks to why I too am so passionate about how Friends Academy is so special.

When David joined Friends Academy, he was by his own account, a mediocre student. He spoke often about struggling with the academic rigor of this college prep school. But he had a couple of teachers that saw the potential in this young man and like guardian angels, they did all they could to keep him afloat.

Despite all the assistance, he was dismissed from Friends Academy, not once, but twice over failing grades.



The second time bordered on the disastrous. Two months before graduation he failed out for the second time when he did not pass a test in his German class. Ultimately, he was reinstated but he failed to complete the course and because he was one credit short of the graduation requirements he left Friends with a "certificate" rather than a diploma.

David was quite funny about this. When interviewed for the Fall 2024 edition of *The Meeting House* he said "I was probably the only person in the history of the school who was thrown out twice and came back. And I was the only person who graduated without a diploma. It's nice to be first at something".

But this is the point in the story where I guess you are incredulous. How in the world David was so staunch a supporter of the school for so long? Why did he ask that in lieu of flowers donations be given to Friends Academy, a place that he had so many struggles with?

So, it is senior year in 1959 and David doesn't have a high school diploma. Now, even at this early point in life, David knew what he wanted to do next.

His passion for gardening was already in full bloom, and he applied to the University of Georgia because of their landscape architecture program.

You would be right to think it is not easy to get into college when you don't actually have a high school degree. Most would think it impossible, in fact.

Once again, David's teachers, helped him to achieve his goal to become a landscape architect despite the small detail of not having a high school diploma.

This same teacher that had mentored him and believed in him all along called the admissions department at the University of Georgia and basically vouched for David.

He said, "take him, and if you do, he will amount to something." They did and he certainly did.

As he later discovered, it wasn't at all because of his intellectual abilities that David struggled so much.

When he was 30 years he took a scuba certification course and failed to pass the written test not once but twice. His instructor couldn't believe it as he knew David had mastered the material. So, he tested him orally. David scored 100 percent and it was then that he discovered that he had dyslexia.

David told me and anyone who would listen, that despite not being a great student, his teachers believed in him.

They recognized then the enormous spark of talent, even the greatness that would be the future David Seeler. They helped plant the seeds that made David who he would later become.



David Seeler at Friends Academy

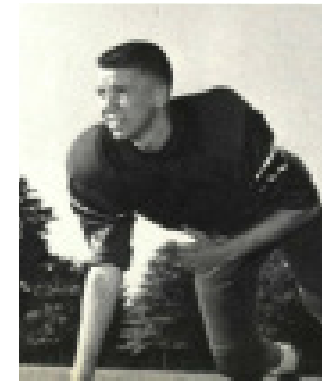


David, and his wife, Ngaere, at Friends Academy after receiving the Distinguished Alumni Award.

They believed in him when he didn't believe in himself. They took significant steps to send him on his way despite some enormous hurdles to be overcome. He always felt he owed them & Friends Academy a debt of gratitude for his enormous success later in life.

Over the last 60+ years David has continued to demonstrate his passion for Friends Academy by "paying it forward".

David has served as the class representative for the Class of 1959 for decades, organizing reunions, collecting updates from his classmates for *The Meeting House Magazine*, and soliciting donations for the Annual Fund. He is known by his classmates as "the Seal" and he in turn called them the "Master Class" He spoke to his classmates regularly, some of them every week since graduation.



In 2018, he called my predecessor and asked to be appointed to the Board of Trustees, and we honored that request in 2019. He served three years despite the great distance from Amagansett to Locust Valley. I can say that he was a great board member because he had views, he spoke up, and he always was on point.

He was honored with the Friends Academy Distinguished Alumni

Award at our closing convocation in 2023. And on that day, David received something that he had wanted since his time at Friends Academy- he was awarded his high school diploma!

In his Alumni Profile interview, David summed up the impact FA had on his life.

"My time here at Friends was really critical for me to develop my life and give me focus. As you age, some of your perceptions change-some through experience, some anger, and that develops the core of where you will end up at the end of your life. You're going to sit back and ask what did I do that



Landscaping and water projects that David conceived and designed

made a difference."

Well David, you did a lot to make a difference, especially at Friends Academy.

Kal Wynot

Messages from the Friends Academy community that have been collected in remembrance of Kal.



At 4:05 AM on Super Bowl Sunday, February 9, 2025 Albert (Kal) Wynot Jr. passed away in Scottsdale, AZ at the Brookdale Memory Care Facility. He was 79 years old, and he is survived by Judy Wynot and their three sons Blake, Erik, and Gavin.

Kal worked at Friends Academy from 1969-2006. He served as a Science and Physical Education teacher as well as the Director of Physical Education and Athletics. After 37 years of teaching and coaching he retired.

The United States Lacrosse Association presented him with the award, "In recognition of 300 victories" at the National Lacrosse Coaches Convention in Philadelphia. His total record was 336 wins, 217 losses and 1 tie. This record put him in the top 50 men's lacrosse coaches in the country. He had 27 seasons with a winning record at friends. During this time, Friends has won three Metropolitan Lacrosse League Championships, placed first in the Catholic League and had an undefeated season.

The world is less for his absence. For those of you who did not know him, Kal was a gentleman's gentleman. Kind hearted, big hearted, and a quiet force of sportsmanship and grace on this campus.

– Andrew Geha
Director of Arts

Kal was an amazing colleague and generous soul and if you ever got the chance to hang out with them you would know how much fun it was to be around both Kal and Judy. The stories they would share of life on campus and in general would have you rolling on the floor in stitches. Sending love and light to the family and trust they will find comfort in all the great memories.

– Ann Marie Tidona
Director of Finance, Operations, and Strategic Projects

Kal was a man with the utmost integrity, and always a voice of calm and reason.

– Jen Newitt
Upper School Assistant Principal and Science Department Head

A kinder man one could not find than Kal.

– Sharon Lapointe

I feel fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with Kal during our time together at Friends. Kal's dedication to Friends and his profession was evident by the amount of time and energy he put into his teaching and coaching.

The success of the lacrosse program was largely due to his tireless efforts in preparing for each season, and finding ways to make the program better. He started the North Shore youth program when his boys were young and in a short period of time it became the North Shore PAL program. Later on he arranged to have Friends Academy be the home field for the program and I remember many Sunday afternoons officiating games with him. This gave the school a lot of exposure. Later he organized what was one of the first indoor winter lacrosse leagues in Nassau County. Teams from throughout the county came to play on Saturdays and Sundays, giving the school more exposure and giving Friends and other HS athletes an opportunity to hone their skills during the winter. The time he spent speaking with other HS and college coaches, attending clinics and conferences together, as well as arranging travel to various tournaments led to the Friends lacrosse program becoming one that competed regularly for post-season play and was highly respected. What crystalized that respect however was the fact that he set the expectations for how to compete and play with integrity and sportsmanship...winning with humility and losing with grace. As a result, the lacrosse program was held in high regard throughout the county and Kal was highly respected as a coach by the community of coaches, officials and players.

Kal had the ability to teach and relate to the youngest of students up through high school in his physical education classes and every student benefited from his teaching.

Kal left a lasting impact on countless athletes and students in his time at Friends. He was a great colleague and friend and the school community and campus was a better place for his involvement and influence.

– Alan Quackenbush
Former Director of Physical Education & Athletics, teacher, and coach

I met Kal in August of 1983 when I joined the F.A. community. Kal became one of my first friends at F.A. We would be colleagues as well as friends for decades. We both coached Fall and Spring sports for so many great years together. Kal was not only a true friend, but also a person for whom I had so much respect and admiration. He was a fantastic Physical Education teacher as well as a magnificent coach. More than anything, Kal reflected the school's mission to nurture our students and players to become good people. Whether it was lower school students or varsity athletes, Kal always gave them his very best. I am so thankful for all the wonderful years that I spent working with Kal, and he will forever be an inspiration in my life.

– Marshall Lindner
Former Upper School History teacher and coach

I was saddened to hear of Kal's passing. He and I worked together for 37 years, as he was my assistant athletic director. He was smart, dedicated to the school and hard working. I often said that the only reason he was not the AD and I was, was because I got there first. I never could have done my job as well as I did without Kal as my right hand man.

Kal coached basketball, soccer and his first love lacrosse. His athletes loved playing for him because he cared so much for each athlete. He gave 100 percent of himself to the boys on his team and expected the same commitment from them. I was fortunate to have my two sons play for him. I am convinced that they are better human beings because of Kal's influence. I will tell you a story that encapsulates the kind of person Kal was.

Friends Academy was in the Catholic League in lacrosse. We were playing Chaminade who had 1200 boys in their school and we had 320 boys in ours yet we were playing for the championship.

As time ran out in the last quarter, we were up by one goal and Chaminade scored. It was so close to no time left that the officials and the two coaches came up to the scorer who was one of our managers and asked her if the ball crossed the line before time ran out. You could see the young girl was upset. Before she could say anything, Kal said let's count the goal and go into overtime. Kal would never put winning above doing what he felt was the right thing to do.

Kal was a wonderful role model and he gave so much to so many in and off the playing field.

I also knew Kal and Judy on a personnel level as we both lived on campus. His three boys, Blake, Eric and Gavin grew up with my two sons Todd and Brett.

We were friends for 57 years and he was one of the finest people I knew.

I will miss him but I am grateful and blessed that I have had him in my life for so long.

– Martin Jacobson
Former Director of Physical Education & Athletics



Top and above, Kal Wynot with former faculty and students

Elizabeth Roosevelt

Messages from the Friends Academy community that have been collected in remembrance of Liz.

I knew Liz but not well. She was at FA in the US history dept and I was in MS as a young teacher! My son Matt had her for history in one of her final years. She was a huge sailer for all of her years- even into her old age. She lived literally on the water in a house on Oyster Bay. She was the daughter of James Roosevelt- a cousin of Theodore (I think). My son rescued a beautiful old wooden yacht from a field in Massachusetts and renovated it. He did a lot of research into the origins and learned that it was originally owned by James Roosevelt and launched at Sagamore Yacht Club in the 1930's. The yacht, a NY32- 45' in length- was named Esmeralda. Matt contacted Liz and she said she vividly remembered sailing aboard as a young girl! If you need a colleague memory or story, I can reach out to a few US retirees who may be able to write some more personal recollections.

Deb Schoman
Former Assistant Head of School, US Principal,
MS Principal

Elizabeth Roosevelt and I were close friends during our years teaching at Friends Academy. Our goals and beliefs overlapped, perhaps noticed by many of the students. We shared similar relationships with our students, simple straight forward concepts: you are here to do a job, so it is important that you focus and get to it, but at the same time that work can be more than an education in this subject matter. Liz' was American History, mine Chemistry and Liz' advice increased my productivity promoting success with a good number of my students; building trust being at the core. Racing sailboats was perhaps the outside activity that drew us together. We did not sail together, but we had this similar passion that a Saturday out on the water, most often Oyster Bay, cannot be topped. Each day out on the water, 'drifting' or challenged in a breeze stirred in our very beings. Liz' reputation as a racing sailor stretched farther than mine, but we stood on equal ground when sharing our adventures.

Richard Abbene
Former US Science teacher and soccer coach



The end of the year student award for History was named the Elizabeth Roosevelt Award several years ago. This was a very well deserved honor for someone who was so dedicated to the teaching of History. It was my privilege to be a colleague of Liz for many years in the FA History Department. She was a true History scholar, and was always willing to share her knowledge. I was also always interested in her views of both Franklin Roosevelt and Theodore Roosevelt, both relatives of Liz. She cared about History, Friends Academy and her students and it was a pleasure to be in Liz's Department."

Margaret and Marshall Lindner
Former LS Art teacher and US History teacher
& soccer coach

In the early 80's Miss Roosevelt came in one day and asked our American history class what questions we would ask the President of the United States if we could sit next to him tomorrow. We made some literal sophomoric jokes. The next day Miss Roosevelt was not in school. When she returned to class on day 3, she wanted to know if anyone knew where she had been the day before. I had been the only person that saw the news of her sitting next to Ronald Reagan and giving him an award from the Theodore Roosevelt Association. The great smile on her face was pure Miss Roosevelt.

David Schulman '84

She was a demanding teacher. Those who were able to access her approach and style of teaching admired her greatly. Those who could not manage to do that were quite negative about her. I recall one brother and sister who had opposite responses to her. The brother found her extremely difficult, so much so that their mother told me not to enroll his sister in her class. I had to call the mother in July to tell her the only way I could schedule her daughter's advanced French course was to enroll her in Liz's class. She was not happy but agreed to this. Several weeks into the year the mother told me that her daughter was thrilled with Liz! This showed the mother (and me) that the experience of one sibling may be the opposite of another. I always got along fine with Liz. She, Sally (Vuillet - former Spanish teacher, Assistant HOS and College Counselor) and I were of the same generation and shared many views. Coincidentally, the three of us retired in 1995. I recall the delicious dinner at a restaurant in Bayville facing the Sound held in our honor. When Liz took the fall semester off one year on sabbatical, Sally and I team-taught her AP Art History course. Upon returning, Liz, her students and their parents seemed quite satisfied with our approach. (Perhaps that had something to do with the fact that Sally and I were the top administrators in the Upper School!)

- Tom Woehrle
Former US Principal and Religion teacher

Friends Academy 1876

150TH ANNIVERSARY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

As Friends Academy celebrates its 150th Anniversary, we invite you to help preserve the stories that define who we are.

WHAT IS THE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT?

The Friends Academy Oral History Project is a global initiative to collect and archive personal memories from alumni, families, faculty, and friends in honor of our sesquicentennial. These voices—spanning generations and continents—capture the lived experiences that have shaped our school community. Your stories will be meticulously recorded, transcribed and compiled into a commemorative book or digital collection.

WHO IS PCI?

Publishing Concepts, LP (PCI), a trusted publishing company that has worked with educational institutions across the country for more than a century—and with Friends Academy over the years on our printed alumni directories—to conduct interviews and update contact information of our community members. This outreach is legitimate and authorized by FA.

WHAT IS THE TIMELINE FOR THE PROJECT?

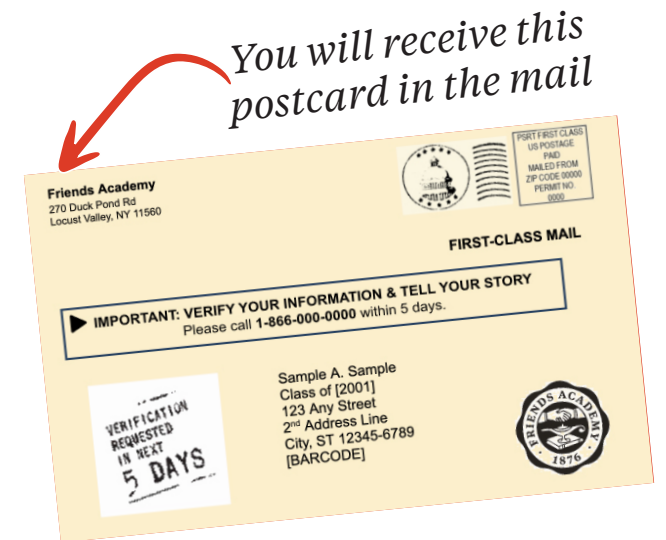
PCI will begin to reach out to members of our community spring 2026 and move into production in the fall of 2026. Merchandise and Oral History Publication orders ship in May 2027.

HOW CAN I BE PART OF THE PROJECT?

Participation is free, and all members of our community are welcome to take part. Simply call the toll-free number provided in the postcard or email you receive, verify your identity by confirming your contact information, and share your story with PCI's professional interviewers. Participants will also have the optional opportunity to purchase commemorative keepsakes, including a printed coffee-table book featuring collected stories and Friends Academy-branded memorabilia. Only members of our community who wish to participate will be included. If you prefer not to participate, simply decline when contacted or disregard the outreach.

HOW DOES FRIENDS ACADEMY BENEFIT?

Legacy – sharing and collecting stories preserves the history of our school.




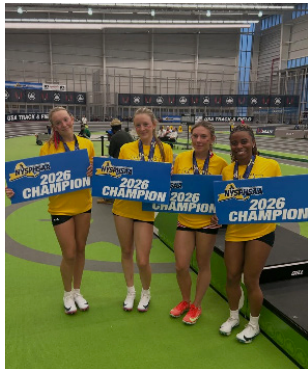
Scan here for more information



➔ Find us online...

for campus news, snapshots of student life, and behind-the-scenes videos!

 @friendsacademy



The FA girls' indoor track 4x400m relay are New York State Champions

 FriendsAcademyNY

INTRODUCING OUR 26th HEAD OF SCHOOL



ALFRED (RIK) F. DUGAN III
EFFECTIVE JULY 2026

Rik Dugan is announced as Friends Academy's 26th Head of School

 @friendsacademy




It's back! Opened in the fall of 2025 is our school store

 @friendsacademy



The Black Students Alliance hosts the first BSA Talks event

 @friendsacademy




K-8 led Peace Vigil highlights Quaker Changemakers

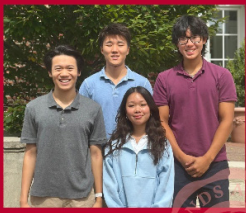
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All-School theater teacher Colby Christina Myers introduced improv with cultural show-and-tell

 Friends Academy

NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP FINALISTS



CLASS OF 2026
Daren Zhong, Bryan Bin, Jaime Yeung, and Jacob Kim

Four members of the Class of 2026 are named National Merit Scholarship Finalists

 @friendsacademy



Grade 3 visited the DNA Learning Center for their annual Strawberry DNA Extraction experiment