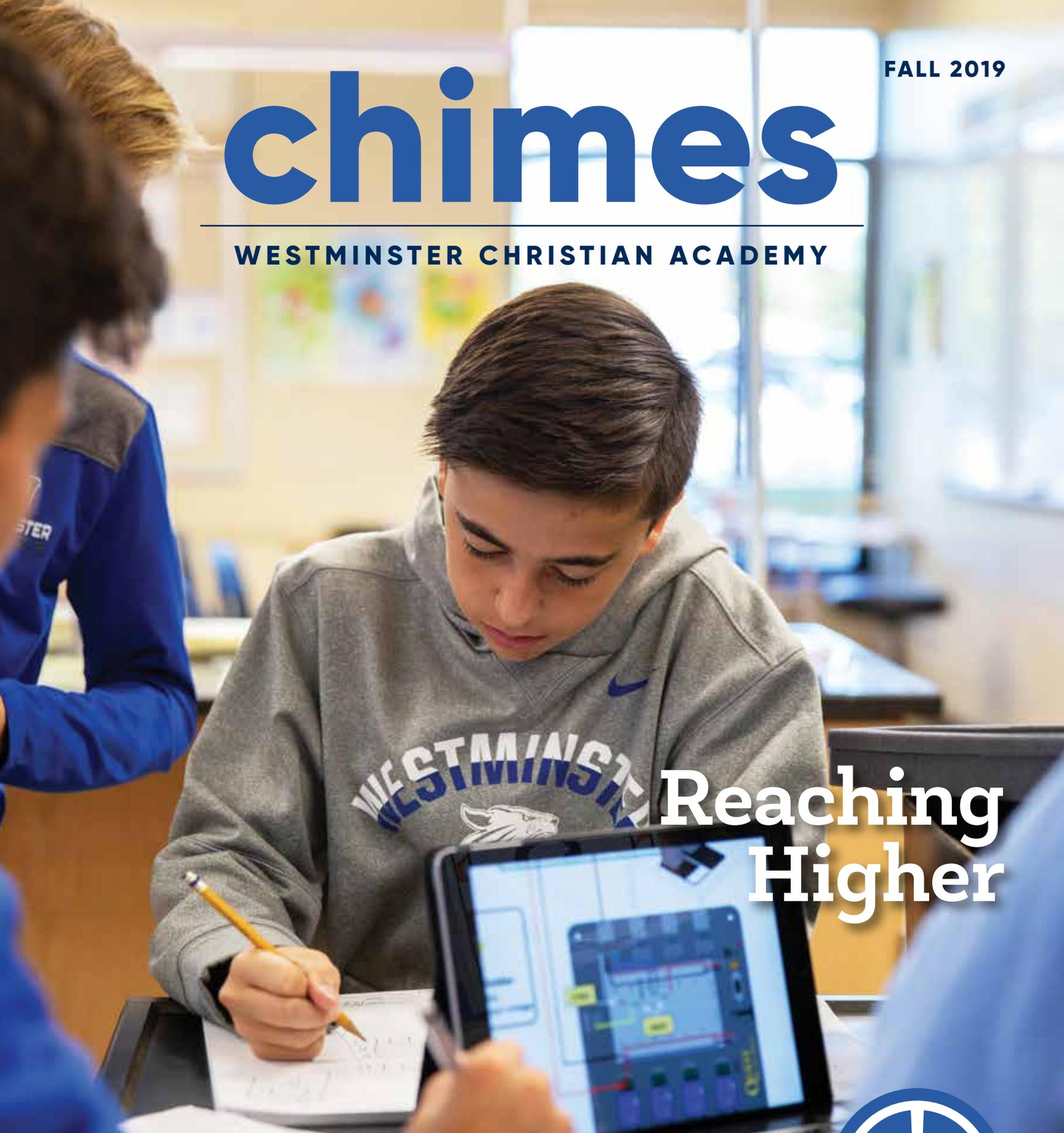


FALL 2019

# chimes

WESTMINSTER CHRISTIAN ACADEMY



Reaching  
Higher

IN THIS ISSUE:

Exploring Stewardship  
through Science

Meet Our New Director  
of Spiritual Life

Answering  
God's Call





## Reaching Higher: Engaging Hearts and Minds

DR. BARRETT MOSBACKER

**OUR SCHOOL THEME THIS YEAR** is Reaching Higher: Engaging Hearts and Minds. This theme focuses our school community on elevating the hearts and minds of our students through a vibrant, biblically-based, world-class college preparatory program that informs their minds, nurtures their souls, and shapes their character.

A Westminster education is rooted in the understanding that God created everything good and has called us to cultivate His creation. The education we provide prepares students for this high calling by providing a rich, broad, and deep liberal arts education, which includes our sophisticated science and engineering programs.

Steve Jobs, the late founder of Apple, famously declared that Apple was committed to designing its products at the intersection of technology and the liberal arts. His statement has always intrigued me because it reflects what I believe is a

biblical perspective of education—though I doubt Steve Jobs understood this. A good education is well-rounded, holistic, and provides equal opportunities for students to learn and develop skills in the sciences and the humanities.

This issue of the Chimes focuses on how we help our students reach higher through our science and engineering programs and more. As students learn to reach higher by cultivating their God-given gifts, they are being equipped to serve Christ in their callings to cultivate and steward God's world in college and in their careers.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barrett Mosbacher". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Dr. Barrett Mosbacher  
Head of School

# chimes

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Leah Gruneisen '11



# Academics

## OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT

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### THREE SENIOR WILDCATS SPEND INSPIRING WEEK AT MISSOURI BOYS STATE

**This past summer**, the American Legion hosted approximately 950 rising senior boys at the 80th Assembly of Missouri Boys State. Among them were Westminster seniors Matthew George, Dylan Elias, and Ethan Rush. As part of this selective program, they learned their rights, privileges, and responsibilities as citizens and participated in legislative sessions, court proceedings, and law-enforcement presentations. “Boys State truly is a week to shape a lifetime,” Dylan said. “It has changed my outlook permanently on how to lead a group of people and how to effectively communicate.”

---

### BRIGHT FUTURE FOR YOUNG DEBATE TEAM

**Westminster’s debate team returned** four varsity debaters this year and welcomed nine novice debaters, five of whom are freshmen. The group participated in the Parkway West Fall Classic in October and two of the freshmen, Crawford Hall and Byron Moser, broke to quarterfinals in the novice division. The team is currently debating in Public Forum, which is a partner debate format that requires significant research on a monthly topic of international or national relevance. The team will also study, and plans to compete in, Lincoln-Douglas debate, which is an individual debate style that defends a value rather than a plan.

### THE WESTMINSTER READING INITIATIVE

**The beloved Westminster 100** has been updated to promote more widespread participation from students and to include the larger Westminster community. Students, faculty, staff, parents, and all Westminster community members are now invited to create digital bookshelves on Goodreads to share with the community. In 2015, the Westminster 100 was created to promote the value of reading and to enhance the community by providing opportunities for both faculty members and students to explore and discuss ideas found in great works of writing. Faculty look forward to seeing how these updates to the program will continue to help the school achieve its goals.



### PRIZED TEACHERS

**Westminster teachers** Dan Burke '01 and John Sarra received the Arlen R. Dykstra Teaching Prize last spring. Mr. Burke is the English Department chair and Mr. Sarra is the Fine Arts Department chair. The award, named in honor of former head of school Arlen R. Dykstra, is a \$1,000 prize presented annually at commencement. It recognizes the recipient’s outstanding expression of the Christian worldview in his or her teaching and lifestyle. It also honors the recipient for his or her mastery of teaching matter, involvement in the life of the school, and creative and innovative presentation of curricula.

## DEPARTMENT UPDATE: COLLEGE & CAREER COUNSELING

The College & Career Department has undergone several enhancements over the past few months. Prior to the 2019-20 school year, the department instituted the Individualized Four-Year Academic Plan (I4AP) for all ninth-grade students, which provides a comprehensive, individualized review of a student's academic assessment and achievement. Moving forward, parents of all freshmen and juniors will be required to meet with a member of the counseling department to discuss their student's academic progress and college/career plan. The department also added a new counselor to the team this year, Max Pott. Mr. Pott brings 12 years of experience and an NCAA counseling specialization to the department.



## STARS STUDENTS SHINE

**Senior science-enthusiasts** Annie Davidson, Katelyn Jeong, and Molly Li were selected to participate in the 2019 Students and Teachers as Research Scientists (STARS) program at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Nearly 90 high school students were selected to study under scientists in the fields of biology, chemistry, computer science, earth science, engineering, environmental science, medicine, psychology, and public health. Annie explored surgical procedures to regenerate amounts of bone too large for the body to regenerate, while Molly studied cereal crops that all of civilization depends on. Katelyn focused on child traumatic stress and trauma-focused interventions and received special recognition for her research.



## CLASSROOM CONNECTION

**Students** in Tim Hall's new environmental science course are investigating and designing solutions for real-world challenges related to clean drinking water, renewable energy, and food supply. Earlier this semester, students isolated the DNA of strawberries and learned first-hand how biological engineers are able to genetically modify plants and animals (GMO's) to address issues related to food production around the world.

## ARE YOU GETTING YOUR 800 NEWS UPDATES?

**800 News** is under the direction of two extremely talented seniors this school year. Journee Henry heads up the broadcast division as executive producer and Isabella Francois serves as managing editor-in-chief of the school paper, The Wildcat Roar. Catch the 800 News monthly morning show on Westminster's livestream ([livestream.com/westminster](http://livestream.com/westminster)) and subscribe to receive the Wildcat Roar at [thewildcatroar.com](http://thewildcatroar.com).



## PAWPRINT COFFEE IS BACK!

**Entrepreneurship students** reopened Pawprint Coffee this fall under the direction of business teacher Brian Maloy. The class started with the basics but hopes to add new drinks and food items—and maybe even try out some specialty drinks. Once operations are stable, students plan to focus on making the Pawprint purchasing experience great for students, staff, and parents and find creative ways to positively impact the Westminster culture. “The class is a really cool trial of running a business. We’ve divided into work teams for daily shifts, but students are also part of teams for marketing, operations, and finance to help dig into students’ gifts and interests,” Mr. Maloy said. “I’m impressed with the hard work they’ve done so far!”

# Arts

CREATIVE EXCELLENCE



## Student Art Curators Select Piece for Westminster Collection

A group of Westminster students took on the role of art curator at this year's St. Louis Art Festival as part of the Centene Charitable Foundation's Art Aficionados program. The program focuses on engaging students in the world of art curation and gives them the opportunity to purchase art for Centene and for their school. Westminster students negotiated the purchase of "Booklist" by Cali Hobgood for the school. "We thought it would be a good addition to the academic atmosphere at Westminster, and we were drawn to the way the artist painted the books since she is a sensory artist and she could communicate smell, touch, and sound through her piece," said Moorea Atkins (junior). The painting currently hangs in Westminster's Grand Entry.



## Peter and the Starcatcher

Performances sold out early for *Peter and the Starcatcher*, and for good reason. The story of how a miserable orphan boy became the legendary Peter Pan came to life under the direction of upper school theatre teacher Jim Butz. Bravo to the cast and crew for putting on a spectacular production!

## Don't Miss This Year's Musical

Mark your calendar for the weekends of February 20–22 and 28–29—you don't want to miss Westminster's production of *Godspell!* Tickets will go on sale in February. Make sure you grab yours early. They're sure to sell out fast!

## 11 Students Inducted Into International Thespian Society

Eleven upper school students were recently inducted into the International Thespian Society. To receive honors, students had to complete more than 100 hours of quality work in the theatre arts. Seniors Michael Lee and Ella Polski earned the distinction of "Honor Thespian" for completing more than 600 hours of work in the theatre arts.



## 41 Wildcats Inducted into Musical Honor Society

Westminster recently inducted 41 choir, band, and strings students into its first class of Tri-M Music Honor Society members. Tri-M is the only national honors society for student musicians in the country and currently operates more than 2,100 chapters in all 50 states. Through performance and community service, members develop leadership skills, including confidence, creativity, critical thinking, and compassion.

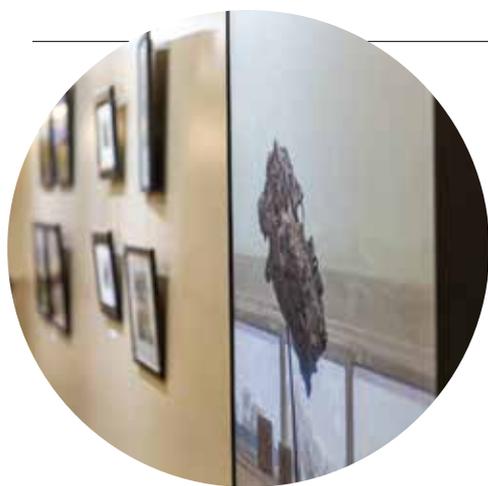


## Cars and Guitars

Adeline Jowdy (junior) earned 2nd place in the Kirkwood Arts Commission's "Art at the Station" photography exhibition. The theme was "cars and guitars".

## Classroom Connection: Theatre Arts Production and Design

**Westminster's award-winning theatre program** has grown and matured rapidly over the past several years. In an effort to make the program more robust and well-rounded, Jim Butz, Jay Yousef, and resident set designer Carrie Gillen decided it would be beneficial for students to learn about what goes on behind the scenes. Through Theatre Arts Production and Design, students receive first-hand instruction and experience in set design and set building, light design and operation, and sound design and operation.



## Faculty Art Show

**Faculty and staff** were invited to share their artistic side with students and the greater Westminster community in the school's first-ever faculty and staff art show. Employees brought paintings, photographs, pottery, and more for display in the Westminster Gallery. The show ran through the fall and is one the art department hopes to host again next year.



## Honors Orchestra

**Anna Enger (eighth grade), Mallory Pfuetze (eighth grade), Amie Do (seventh grade), and Jonathan Lee (freshman)** were all selected to participate in the St. Louis Metro District 8 Honors Orchestra. These musicians played alongside some of the best student performers in the area as part of the audition process.

*\*Honors Band results were not available at time of publication.*



## Honors Choir

**Seven Westminster choir students** auditioned for and were selected to participate in the St. Louis Metro District 8 Honors Choir. Selected students included: Ajé Jones (junior), Elizabeth Nolting (junior), Sam Parker Stillman (junior), Michael Lee (senior), Stewert Geisz (sophomore), Hannah Carter (senior), and Caroline Porterfield (sophomore). Sam also earned an audition for the All-State Choir after placing in the top 20 for bass singers. Westminster also had a great showing in the Metro District 8 Middle School Choir with seven seventh graders selected: Charlotte Atkinson, Lauren Buchanan, Millie Farris, Arianna Henderson, Grace Rush, Roman Ryker, and Stephen Thompson.

## Meet Me in St. Louis Wins Outstanding Musical

**If you missed the buzz** last summer, Westminster is excited to share with you that the spring musical, *Meet Me In St. Louis*, was nominated for nine awards at the St. Louis High School Musical Theatre Awards (SLHSMTA). The cast and crew were awarded the Outstanding Musical, Outstanding Ensemble, and Extra Mile awards. This is the second time Westminster has received the Outstanding Musical award in the SLHSMTA's short history.



# Athletics

## FALL HIGHLIGHTS AND GENERAL NEWS

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### FIELD HOCKEY

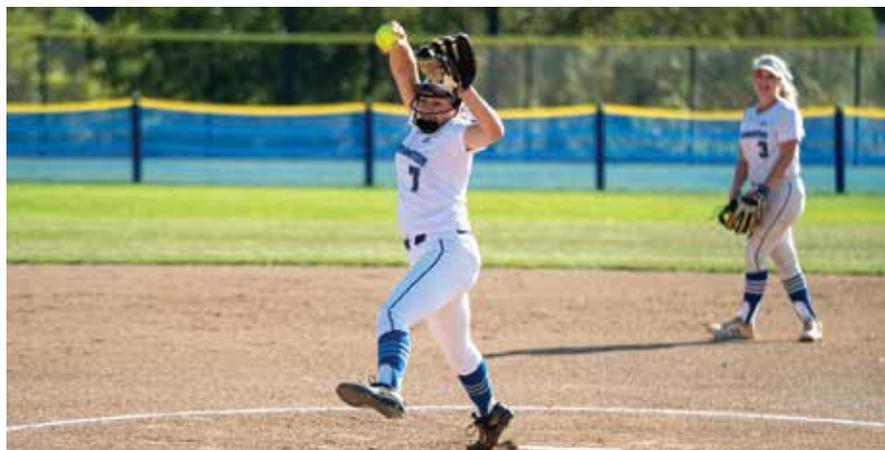
**The Westminster field hockey team** had another history-making season. After playing a tough schedule and earning a #20 seed, the Wildcats rallied to upset the #13 seed and made it to the midwest tournament's "Sweet 16" for the second time in program history. The season motto was to "Play as ONE." The Cats stood behind their motto and, together, they gave their all until the last buzzer.

---



### BOYS SOCCER

**The soccer team finished the season** with their best record in seven years, 14-7. As part of the team's success, the Wildcats beat Metro League rival and state-ranked MICDS as well as Ladue, Parkway Central, and Parkway West. The Cats entered the postseason strong, but fell to Parkway Central in the district semifinal.



### SOFTBALL

**The softball team played** a full varsity and JV schedule this season because the number of girls interested in the program continues to increase. The varsity team finished the regular season with a 10-10 record, playing a difficult schedule, and improved dramatically throughout the season. The team was led by seniors Lauren Gates, Reese Earleywine, Katie Hobaugh, and Carsyn Beachy, with Lauren and Reese continuing their softball careers in college next year. These girls made an impact with their time in the Wildcat softball program and have laid the foundation for years to come.

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### GIRLS TENNIS

**This year's varsity tennis team** was a small unit consisting of eight players. The girls worked hard and pulled out some great victories over tough opponents. Charis Thompson (senior) had a stellar post-season performance, pulling off an upset over Parkway West's number three singles player in the district tournament. We will miss our five seniors next year, but can't wait to see what lies ahead!



### FOOTBALL

**The Wildcat football season** started off with three close losses. Then, in week five the Cats beat an undefeated Priory team 42-28. The team followed up with a big win over Lutheran South for Westminster's first Homecoming game. The Cats finished their season with a 5-6 record and fell to state-ranked Ladue in the district semifinal.



## GIRLS GOLF

**This year's golf team featured** 21 players, twelve of whom were freshmen. The young Wildcats started the season with a second-place finish in the Lutheran South Tournament and won a quad meet in Franklin County a week later. The team hosted the second annual Cat Scratch Scramble and placed second. Before the season ended for the team, the Cats posted a third-place finish in districts where Ellie Johnson (sophomore), Morgan McKee (junior), and Kyleigh Peer (senior) advanced to sectionals. Ellie advanced to the state tournament and placed 20th.

## GIRLS CROSS COUNTRY

**It was a rebuilding year** for the team. After going to the state meet as a team for the last three years and winning the district meet two of those years, the team suffered from injuries and lower numbers this season. But, the 10 girls on the team each contributed significantly. "Now on my fourth year on the team, I've experienced very different dynamics each year," said Ava Hollmann (senior). "This season, though, has been especially unique because of how much of the team is composed of new girls. We dealt with some injuries early on, but going into districts, it's plain to see that these girls have grown so much in their maturity and love for the sport. I'm so proud of them and excited to see what they do in the future." Ava finished second in the district meet and earned a ninth-place finish at the state meet.



## BOYS SWIM & DIVE

**The swim team** had several great meets this season. A tie for first at the eight-team Lions Relay helped all three Wildcat relays notch their best state consideration times for the year. Even though the Cats lost to powerhouse MICDS, there were a number of PR's. The team also earned a second-place finish at the John Burroughs Last Chance Invitational. Members of the 200 Medley, 200-Free Relay, and 400-Free Relay qualified for the state meet.



## BOYS CROSS COUNTRY

**The boys cross country team** finished the regular season with four wins, two runner-up placings, and one sixth-place finish. Juniors Colin Ring and Hunter Freiner earned spots on the Westminster 5k record board—Colin with a time of 16:45.06 and Hunter with a time of 16:56.17. The Wildcats won the Metro League Championships, secured the district title, and came in fifth place at the state meet. As a team, they leaned on the strength of Christ and strived to proclaim the message of Christ in their lives and as student-athletes. (2 Timothy 4:17)



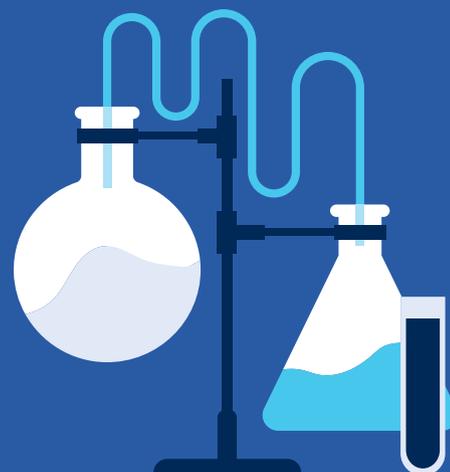
## GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

**The Wildcats finished** the regular season with a record of 12-13-4. The girls earned the #4 seed in the district tournament but fell to Francis Howell Central in the semifinals. The team included 10 seniors, who were a blessing both on and off the court. The seniors shared what the 10 Pillars meant to them during team devotionals, prayed for and with their younger teammates during "big sister/little sister" time, and encouraged their opponents to pray with them after every match. The team not only competed well on the court, but they also reflected the light of Christ throughout the season.



# Exploring Stewardship through Science

How the Science & Engineering Department  
Equips Students to Reach Higher



**A**s Christians, we are given an incredibly rich and daunting mandate to care for the creation of our Creator. Through the sciences, we are able to investigate God's creation, educate ourselves on the works of our all-knowing God, and learn how to be more responsible in the care, use, and application of His works.

"Science is not only the study of the design and beauty of God's creation—an act of praise—it's an opportunity to address the challenges we face in a broken world by applying our discoveries—a redemptive activity," says Andrew Shaw, science and engineering department chair.

### **A Different Approach**

At Westminster, our science and engineering faculty work alongside students as they explore the work of the Creator—encouraging them to reach higher in their faith and in their understanding of God's creation.

We are blessed with "passionate, godly, gifted, experienced teachers who care deeply about their students, who care deeply about their discipline, and who care most deeply about their faith," says Tim Hall, science teacher. "Our teachers want their students to see, through the study of God's creation, more of who He is and how He works in the world. They want to lead them to a greater sense of awe, wonder, and deeper worship of God."

Helping students understand their role as caretakers of creation plays out in a variety of ways. "We're studying what God has created so we can understand Him better," says Laura Berry, chemistry teacher.

"Creation reflects the Creator and we want to explore with our students what it means to take care of this world God has given to us."

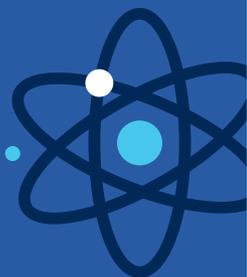
As part of a chemistry unit on metals, Dr. Berry leads students through discussions of different mining practices and their merits and drawbacks. "There's a large focus on stewardship in my courses," she says. "We explore what it means to take care of this world God has given us and how to do so without destroying it. How do we use but not abuse all He's given us?"

Bryndyn Crutcher, director of STEM, reminds his students that STEM careers are about more than making money. "STEM is about solving problems and serving people," Dr. Crutcher says. "I like to make my students think about what our response, as Christians, should be to different problems currently being solved by professionals in the STEM fields."

Mr. Hall's environmental science students began the year with discussions about a healthy biblical worldview as it relates to the environment and their role as stewards of creation. "There are so many different philosophies and perspectives pertaining to environmental issues," Mr. Hall says. "I'm helping my students see how God's truth can help them understand and respond to relevant issues."

### **A History of Innovation**

Westminster's science and engineering department has always shown an eagerness to innovate and create a more relevant and engaging learning experience for students. "There's stability in the department because we have teachers who



have worked here for a long time,” Mr. Hall says. “But, rather than being ‘stuck’ there is a healthy desire to keep getting better and keep improving. It’s why we’re always adding new programs and courses.”

The decision to expand the science department to include an engineering program in 2011 is one such example of this desire to constantly seek out ways to innovate, improve, and better engage students.

The incorporation of Project Lead The Way engineering courses allowed the department to expand its offerings into the STEM field, which benefited students in a countless number of ways—one being the addition of a STEM major/specialization to the curriculum. Within the major, students choose between four different tracks: math and science; biology; math, science, and engineering; and computer science and engineering.

This degree of specialization provides interested students with valuable engineering experience before making the transition to college. Students have the opportunity to gain experience with professional-grade software (like Siemens NX) not typically available to high school students.



But this level of exposure and innovation isn’t limited to students majoring in STEM. Westminster’s FIRST Robotics team, led by several community volunteers from Boeing this year, is an opportunity for students to not only apply what they’re learning in the classroom but to discover new skills and ideas, solve problems, and apply what they’re learning to impact the world.

Westminster’s robotics team typically catches the interest of 70-plus students who spread out across a variety of positions, including programmers, robot builders, and a business team responsible for soliciting sponsorships, marketing, and more. “Robotics provides students with an opportunity to practice leadership in a real-world application,” Dr. Berry says. A former team sponsor and parent of a former member, she adds “my daughter was Westminster’s first female CEO. She learned how to work with people, how to listen and respond lovingly, and she’s no longer afraid of conflict. She also received robotics scholarships for college.”

The department continues to add innovative courses and programs to improve the student learning experience and ensure students are well prepared when they leave Westminster. The middle school STEM curriculum was revamped prior to the start of the school year with this very goal in mind. The previous program was replaced with Quest for Space, a project-based curriculum that involves students running their final project on the International Space Station.

“The curriculum associated with this program offers students much more comprehensive learning opportunities,” Dr. Crutcher says. “Students are learning how to start a project by working on small pieces and then putting them together over time.”

Currently, students are working toward sending the computer code for a radiation heat experiment to the International Space Station to determine if the results change in a microgravity environment. “This program gives them a lot of freedom to be creative,” Dr. Crutcher says. “For the kids interested in STEM, it’s great to be able to offer them a creative project that is something they’re interested in and can be proud of.”

The department is also looking to add a project-based service component to its Civil Engineering and Architecture course and a Project Lead The Way programming course to the curriculum, both at the Upper School level.

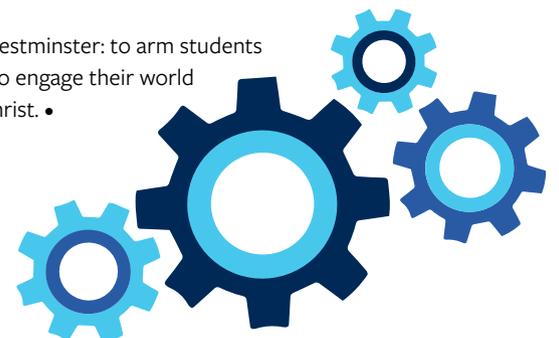
### Reaching Higher

Instructors note that working to help students reach their highest level of academic achievement is a department priority. At the collegiate level, many of their AP science students test out of their freshman science courses and labs based on the work they completed at Westminster. However, the department views equipping students to fulfill the mission of the school and to engage the world as God’s agents of renewal and redemption as its most important charge.

“We have an increasingly wide array of courses for students to discover their interests and passions within a context, and goal, of helping them understand their role and responsibility as God’s agents of shalom, redemption, and renewal in a world that desperately needs them,” Mr. Hall says.

By exploring science and engineering through the lens of “How can we best steward God’s creation?” the department reinforces the school’s mission to help students integrate a biblical worldview into every area of their lives. “The Christian worldview we impart on our graduates is an invaluable asset,” Dr. Berry says. “Our students are able to carry this with them to college and beyond, which allows them to better discern and filter what’s true and what’s not.”

And this is the vision of Westminster: to arm students with the tools necessary to engage their world and change it for Jesus Christ. •



# Meet Westminster's New DIRECTOR OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

David Ottolini '04



**WESTMINSTER'S NEW** director of spiritual life, David Ottolini '04, has a heart for walking alongside adolescents in their relationship with the Lord.

"I try to help students understand who they are in Christ," Mr. Ottolini says. "Or, if they don't know the Lord, I want to help them understand their identity in Him first and then to pursue Jesus instead of the false things the world tells them their identity lies in."

Involved in youth ministry since before graduating from Covenant College in 2008, Mr. Ottolini has worked with the next generation for almost 12 years now. His career in ministry began at Lookout Mountain Presbyterian Church in Tennessee. Today, Mr. Ottolini oversees the youth ministry at New Covenant Church where he serves as an associate pastor and elder—in addition to his role at Westminster.

While overseeing the youth ministry at New Covenant and the spiritual life of Westminster may seem like similar work, walking the halls of Westminster and having the ability to interact with students on a daily basis makes this role quite different. "Being here [at school] with the students gives me the opportunity to

walk alongside them in what they're doing," he says. "I have more opportunities to talk with them about the joys and greatness of the Lord, who He is, and how He impacts their lives."

An alumnus familiar with Westminster's culture and armed with a desire to see the school grow and thrive, Mr. Ottolini has a strong vision for the school.

"If the Lord will use me, I want to cultivate further transformation here," he says. "My vision for Westminster at this moment is joy, life, and to change students' apathetic indifference into motivation to do something for the Lord. I want to talk to students about who the Lord is, get them excited for it, have them show it, and shake up the culture."

Mr. Ottolini oversees Chapel and the peer counselors program, teaches a freshman Bible class, works alongside the student life department to disciple, empower, and encourage students, and so much more.

He and his wife, Kathy, have three children: Zion (6), Stone (4), and Giavanna "Gigi" (2). •

# LAUNCHING OUR 2019–2024 Strategic Plan

BY DR. BARRETT MOSBACKER

One of my great joys in serving the Westminster community is working with our visionary leaders—our school board and staff. Their visionary leadership is reflected in the development and approval of our new 2019–2024 strategic plan: Reaching Higher: Engaging Hearts and Minds.

The strategic plan reflects our commitment to our biblical foundation, mission, and innovative practices to ensure that we are faithful in preparing and equipping the next generation of students to serve Christ in college and career.

The strategic plan is organized around three visionary themes with corresponding goals. They are as follows:

## **Create exceptional and unique world-class programs to develop our young men and women to reflect the intellectual and spiritual virtues of Daniel**

- Reinforce the school’s theological commitments, mission, and core values
- Enhance and expand board, staff, and student leadership programs and opportunities
- Provide world-class programs and opportunities in academics, athletics, and the arts

## **Provide an exceptional value, be financially obtainable, and be financially secure**

- Increase enrollment
- Secure our future through increased annual and capital giving
- Reduce the debt
- Build a Planned Giving program
- Create additional revenue streams

## **Nurture a vibrant and healthy Christian school community**

- Strengthen our partnership with parents/families
- Increase the number of minority students and staff to better reflect the demographics of the school’s local community
- Enhance the ability of our community to engage in respectful, intellectually sound, and biblically informed dialogue

As you can see, our students have an exciting future at Westminster! We have a lot to do but it is energizing work as we prepare and equip young men and women to engage the world and change it for Jesus Christ. I invite you to join us in praying that the Lord will “establish the work of our hands” (Psalm 90:17) because “unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.” (Psalm 127:1). •





# Working Together to Help Your Child Reach Higher

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BY PEGGY JOHNSON

**W**hat will it take for my child to experience success in this increasingly competitive and challenging world?

This is a question we, as parents, ask ourselves regularly because we love our children and aspire to provide them with every opportunity. Empowering our children to achieve their dreams often translates into providing them with experiences to explore their interests and develop their gifts and talents, so that they are equipped to make the best use of their God-graced potential. We want our children to “reach higher”!

Sometimes, these endeavors are costly and require us to make significant sacrifices. The relatively short window we are afforded to “make it happen” for our legacy creates a sense of urgency and we find ourselves sampling a veritable smorgasbord of choices:

dance classes, club sports, horseback riding, private lessons for athletics, music, the stage, and international travel to name a few.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, “If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!” (Matthew 7:11) We’re reminded of the good gifts our Father in Heaven provides for us, His deeply loved children. He lavished the greatest gift of all, His Son, on the children He loves and in so doing, became the magnificent model of parenting for us.

Perhaps, the greatest gift we can give our children is a Christ-centered education that is academically challenging. Westminster offers precisely those deeply meaningful dual benefits—an atmosphere and community that lifts up Jesus Christ, a faculty and staff who reinforce those values daily, and a challenging academic program that is second to none.

In today’s ever-changing landscape of opportunity, a challenging Christ-centered education, along with encouragement by a loving heavenly Father and devoted parents like you, provides your child with his or her best chance to achieve dreams and aspirations just now blossoming in his or her heart. Let’s reach higher together! •

# Community News

UPDATES FROM AROUND CAMPUS



## FAITH IN ACTION PROGRAM

**At the beginning** of the 2019–20 school year, Westminster announced the expansion of its Faith in Action service program. Previously, Faith in Action included only the senior class and was a “senior service” program. The revamped program now includes all students grades 7–12, and each grade level has partnered with a local agency serving children and families to work with throughout the school year. This year’s partners include African Vision of Hope, Little Bit Foundation, Sunshine Ministries, the Pujols Family Foundation, and BWorks. Throughout the fall semester, students served at a number of events, including the Pujols Foundation’s Say Yes to the Dress and Homerun Derby.

## ARE YOU ON INSTAGRAM?

**Are you following** Westminster on Instagram? You should be! Follow your Wildcats at [@wcastl](#) for snapshots of daily life at Westminster, announcements about upcoming community events, and more.

## CHRISTIAN COLLEGE FAIR

Westminster hosted more than 800 guests at the National Christian College Fair in St. Louis this past October. Students and their families had the opportunity to speak with representatives from more than 60 Christian colleges and attend break out sessions led by Dr. Jim Drexler and Rev. Dr. Bret Widman.

## COUNSELING DEPARTMENT LAUNCHES NEW RESOURCE FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENTS

The Guidance and Counseling Department launched a new resource for middle school parents this year, Parent Resource Sessions. The department plans to offer two sessions a year focusing on relevant topics for parents and students. The fall session presented by Darr Tutoring centered on test-taking strategies and organization skills. The topic planned for the spring session is vaping.

## IN THE SPIRIT OF GIVING

**Students collected** more than 35,000 items to benefit their Faith in Action partner agencies this year. Students also made trips to their respective partner agencies to deliver and help sort the items for distribution. “It is such a blessing to see how the community comes together to help our students learn to give generously,” said Susie Brown, director of student life.



## AFRICAN VISION OF HOPE VISITS WESTMINSTER

This past fall, Westminster was blessed with visitors from African Vision of Hope who shared their stories in Chapel and students’ classrooms. Visitors included African Vision of Hope alumna and employee Haward Shawa who serves on the organization’s child rescue team and alumni David and Brandina who are both currently pursuing careers in medicine.

African Vision of Hope is a Christian organization committed to bringing immediate and lasting solutions to children and families living in extreme poverty. Currently, the organization operates five schools in Zambia for more than 3,000 children. As part of Westminster’s Faith in Action program, the 7th grade class is partnering with African Vision of Hope to help raise awareness.



## GET READY FOR SPIRIT WEEK 2020

**Spirit Week is just one** short month away. Make sure to mark your calendar for January 27–31. Community Night is Thursday, January 30 and Big Night is Friday, January 31. Don’t miss this beloved Wildcat tradition!

# The Shepherd's Shepherd

BY KAT MARTIN

**B**efore I was called to Westminster, the Lord called me away from NCAA Division I coaching. Unsure of my next step, I leaned on the Lord for direction and guidance, and he led me to Westminster. Through my advancement work here and as head girls basketball coach, the Spirit began impressing upon me and calling me to be the Shepherd's shepherd.

During this time, I realized the impact of speaking into and over our community and my team. I also realized my responsibility as a gatekeeper and protector of the flock He has given me charge of here. I began praying for various roles in our school and the ways our teachers, administrators, faculty, staff, pastors, parents, and mentors shepherd the flock around us.

In 1 Peter 5:2-3, we are called to “shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.”

We must first look to the Shepherd to understand how to shepherd the flock among us. What better than the reminders of Psalm 23? “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.” Some versions read, “I lack nothing.” At Westminster, we stand firm in the knowledge that the Lord will bestow His goodness upon us and lead our flock to His pasture.

As the Lord provides for our every need, our desire is to provide for our students' needs. The difference between tuition and the cost of a Westminster education is approximately \$1,800 a year. Confident that the one who blesses others is abundantly blessed, our desire is to continue to bless our students and our community with exceptional resources and experiences. Would you prayerfully consider helping us meet Westminster's financial needs and join me as the Shepherd's shepherd by tending to our flock and caring for our herd? •





Variety Show winner and jazz pianist Daniel Herrera (senior) wowed the audience with his performance of “Autumn Leaves”.



Students dusted off their hats and boots for Homecoming Weekend 2019—Welcome to **Westminster**: This is Wildcat Country.



# WESTMINSTER HOMECOMING WEEKEND

BY ISABELLA FRANCOIS, SENIOR  
MANAGING EDITOR IN CHIEF OF THE WILDCAT ROAR

For the first time in Westminster history, Student Council (STUCO) hosted a bustling homecoming weekend, complete with carnival games and rides, a football game, a banquet, and more. While a lot of hard work and preparation went into the event, seeing the community come together made it all worth it.

“I loved seeing all of our hard work being enjoyed by the community. The atmosphere was so cool! It was just rewarding having put in so much thought and time to this new event to see it mean something to other people as well,” said Nicki Mabry, junior class president.

The wide variety of events were targeted to all ages, which allowed students to see that the Westminster community is much more than simply what takes place during the school day.

“My favorite part was seeing all of the community from little kids to adults enjoying each other and the booths and rides,” said Bricyn Johnson, a senior STUCO officer.

One of the surprises that wowed the community was a flyover of World War II planes before the football game, which was made possible by senior Heidi Hightower’s family.

“I’ve probably seen hundreds of formation flights, but I was especially honored to see my dad fly over my school. It was great to be able to allow others to see something so spectacular, too,” Heidi said.

After the football game, on Saturday night, students attended a homecoming banquet at the Hilton St. Louis Frontenac, which was an amazing conclusion to the weekend and allowed students to have fun and enjoy each other’s company.

“I got so many positive comments from parents, teachers, and students about the entire weekend. It is so cool to see the hard work and creativity of our STUCO group turn into a successful event for the community,” concluded Susie Brown, director of student life. •



This year's carnival offered everything from beautiful fall weather to games, tasty treats, and rides.

Students, faculty, and staff had a blast showing off their furry friends in the Westminster Dog Show.



The Wildcats defeated Lutheran South 35-0 in the varsity football game. Go Cats!



Fans kicked off the varsity football game with a surprise flyover during the national anthem.





## REFLECTIONS

### A Note from Your Alumni Relations Coordinator

It was wonderful to see so many of my fellow alumni during homecoming. We had beautiful weather and the return of carnival rides was a huge hit! Two reunions also took place that weekend: the 20th for the Class of '99 and the 30th for the Class of '89. Check out pictures from both celebrations on page 22! And save the date for Homecoming 2020: September 25–26.

In addition to homecoming, another way we keep alumni engaged is through our annual sports nights. We had a blast at the Alumni Football Game on November 27. Stay tuned for Alumni Basketball Game and Alumni Hockey Game information. There will be scrimmage games, food, and door prizes for both events later this month.

As we move forward into another year, we remain committed to keeping you connected and informed. If you are not receiving our monthly e-newsletter “Wildcat Tracks”, please send me your email address so I can add you to the list. It’s one of the best ways to learn about the different alumni events happening each month. And as always, if you move, get a new job, get married, have a baby, write a book, or anything else exciting, I want to know about it!

Blessings,  
Hannah Wallace Murray '93

# CLASS NOTES

## ALUMNI NEWS

### '78

**Dr. Rob Maddox** passed away on October 1, 2019. We offer our prayers for his family and praise the Lord for a life well-lived.



### '01

**Kyle Ingram** and **Teresa Ingram '00** recently moved to the Manchester, Mo. area where they are raising their three kids, Landon (13), Addison (11), and Avery (9). Kyle is the general manager at Billikens Sports Properties where he oversees multi-media rights and all corporate sponsorships for Saint Louis University Athletics. In his spare time, he enjoys coaching both Landon’s and Avery’s Lou Fusz soccer teams. Teresa recently returned to the Westminster community as the new campus bookstore manager.



### '92

**Joy Fresquez Mynatt** graduated with her doctorate of nursing practice from New Mexico State University.



### '93

**Andrew Svolopoulos** and his wife, **Amy '95**, recently completed the adoption of their daughter, Lily. Lily joins big brothers Samuel and Nicholas.

### '97

**David Holtzman** was recognized as one of the Charlotte Business Journal’s “40 Under 40” for the impact he is making in his career and community.

### '07

**Christine (Yu) Thomson** and her husband, Colin, operate Kast Media, a production and representation company that works with podcasts focused on amplifying ideas through conversation. Christine also owns a clothing brand, Lace and Scotch, that was featured in People magazine. She and her husband met at Wheaton College, were married in St. Louis, and currently reside in Los Angeles.

**Christoph Sossou** graduated from Covenant College in 2011 and will complete his internal medicine residency at Rutgers-RWJ-Newark Beth Israel Medical Center this June. He plans to pursue a fellowship in cardiology. Christoph is also the founder and CEO of the Young Citizen Mentorship Program, a program providing impact-driven mentorship and health services to disadvantaged youth. He married Karolina Walasek on August 25, 2019, in Stirling, NJ. The couple currently resides in Elizabeth, NJ.

• ALUMNI NEWS •



'08

**Lisa Hoover Grove** and her husband welcomed their second child, Parker James, into the world last spring.

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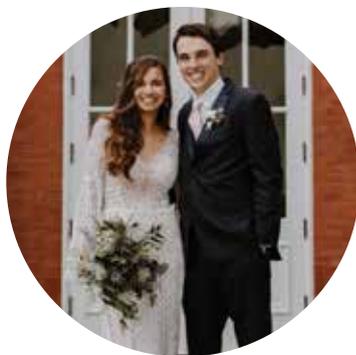


'09

**Travis Rupprecht** married Maria Dugo on August 31, 2019. Amber Terschak '13 was a bridesmaid. The couple resides in St. Louis where Travis works for Stifel.

**Justin Weststeyn** and his wife, Edith, welcomed their first child, Bennett Vernon Weststeyn, on September 10, 2019.

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'10

**John Bergman** married his wife, Becca, in St. Louis on August 17, 2019. His best man was Drew Wendt '09 and Becca's bridesmaid was John's sister, Anna '14. Haley Bergman Derks '11 was also in the wedding party.



**Olivia Tran** enjoyed visiting her sister, Charlotte Atkinson (WCA 7th grader), and mom, Heather Atkinson, at Westminster this fall! After graduating from The University of Virginia in 2014, Olivia married Joshua Tran. The couple lives in Virginia with their two children, Ella (3) and Micah (1), and are also foster parents. Olivia has a master's degree in special education and elementary education. She is currently a Wilson Dyslexia Practitioner and an ESL tutor. Josh is a supervisory nuclear engineer at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard.

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'11

**Abbie (Clark) Peacock** recently graduated with her master's degree in secondary English from the University of North Carolina, Wilmington. She and her husband, Adam, also welcomed their first child, Ace Peacock, on June 12, 2019. Abbie and her family currently reside in North Carolina where her husband is stationed in the Marine Corps.



**Rachel (Yu) Spinuzza** received her doctorate in audiology this past August from Nova Southeastern University in Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. She completed her undergraduate degree in speech-language pathology from Purdue University. Rachel married her husband, James, in May of 2018, whom she met at Nova while he was pursuing his doctorate degree in optometry. The couple currently resides in Atlanta.

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'12

**Tate Matheny** spent last spring with the Boston Red Sox in spring training. After a record-setting career at Missouri State, Tate was drafted and progressed through the minor leagues—spending last season with the AA Portland Sea Dogs.

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'13

**Dr. Courtney McGhee** graduated from St. Louis College of Pharmacy in May with her doctorate degree. Courtney is excited to be working in a specialty pharmacy that handles high-touch medication therapy for patients with complex disease states.

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**Alumni:** If you would like to be included in the next issue of Chimes, please send your update and graduation year, as well as a recent photo, to [alumninews@wcastl.org](mailto:alumninews@wcastl.org)

• CLASS NOTES •



'14

**Scott Rupprecht** and his wife, Kayla, were married on May 25, 2019. Several alumni were in the wedding party, including Grant Kitchens '14, Matt Sheehan '14, Anna Cordray '14, and Katherine Hickman '11. The couple resides in Chesterfield where Scott is a business analyst for Save-A-Lot.



'16

Alumni from the class of 2016 enjoyed a trip to Banff National Park in Canada this summer. Pictured are **Andrew Murray, Nick Ebel, Connor Hafenrichter, Nathan Hall,** and **Mason Davitt.**

**Benjamin Sems** was named to the All-Big 12 Second Team as a shortstop last spring. In his junior season with the Kansas Jayhawks, Benjamin hit .306 with 12 doubles, four home runs, and 39 RBIs.

'17

**Madi Koetting** is a junior at Drake University studying magazine media and public relations. Since moving to Des Moines, she has served as editor-in-chief of Drake Mag and worked for Iowa Outdoors magazine and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Madi is currently an editorial apprentice at Better Homes & Gardens magazine.

'18

**Kevin Graham** was named a standout freshman on the Ole Miss baseball team last spring. Based on his performance, Collegiate Baseball selected Kevin to its freshman All-American team.

**Thomas Lauer**, sous chef at The Crossing Restaurant in St. Louis, was chosen to assist executive chef Thu Rein Oo during the "Taste of St Louis: Chef Battle Royale". The winning duo came in first place.



'19

**Andrew Kempen** was named "Athlete of the Year" by Mercy Sports Medicine. This award honors high school athletes based on their outstanding citizenship, academic performance, and athletic achievements. Andrew attends Mizzou as a pre-med major.

CLASS OF '89 REUNION



**Back Row:** Barry Kenimer, Allison Taylor Kenimer, Brett Shelton, Jim Phillips  
**Middle Row:** David Evans, Nancy Barter, Bob Burnett, Connie Caspari, Mary Stierholz, Steve Lauer, Ann McKinley Rothpletz, Eddie Andrus, Meredith Wiggers Heintz  
**Kneeling:** Drew Griffith, Aaron Belz

CLASS OF '99 REUNION



**Back Row:** Jon Hoffman, Nick Reed, Brian Beldner, Jason Wilkins, Faith Mina, Erin Essenburg, Emily Ulmer  
**Second Row:** Matt Darr, Tim Pitzer, Bethany Rye, Keresa Ericksen, Jessica Andrews, Catrin Rammelsberg

# Answering God's Call

## AN ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT ON LEAH GRUNEISEN '11

Leah Gruneisen graduated from Taylor University with a degree in elementary education and a license in TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages). Recognizing her passion for children and teaching—and God's not so subtle leading—she accepted a position at the International School of Tegucigalpa Honduras (IST) before joining Sparrow Missions. “God gave me a passion for kids and books, and now [through Sparrow Missions] He’s combined these two passions in the form of a library in the small town of Santiago, Honduras.”

### What led you to serve as a missionary with Sparrow Village?

I taught fourth grade at IST for two years and loved my time there. However, I felt called to the kids and the country as a whole rather than to teaching. During my second year, I began looking into ministry opportunities and God led me to Sparrow Missions. After leaving IST, I returned to St. Louis to raise support for a year and have since been a missionary with Sparrow Missions for almost a year and a half now.

### How are you serving through Sparrow Missions?

My original plan was to help foster families in our foster care community—I watched quite a few of the children as “Tia (Aunt) Leah”. Recently though, God has opened the doors, literally and figuratively, for me to become “Tia” to all of the kids in the community and has blessed us with space for a library/tutor center. I now help the kids with literacy and tutoring. I hope that through literacy and encouragement, resources like typing skills, and help with their homework the kids will be able to stay in school and find jobs that allow them to provide for their families and break the cycle of poverty.



### Any advice for current Westminster students?

Westminster gave me a love for the Spanish language. My biggest word of encouragement for students is to stick with Spanish or whatever language you are learning—or for that matter, whatever you are learning and find passion in. You never know how God is going to use your passion for His glory. It may take one year or, in my case, nine years, but I’m in the place God called me to and am using skills that were developed during my time at Westminster. •



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