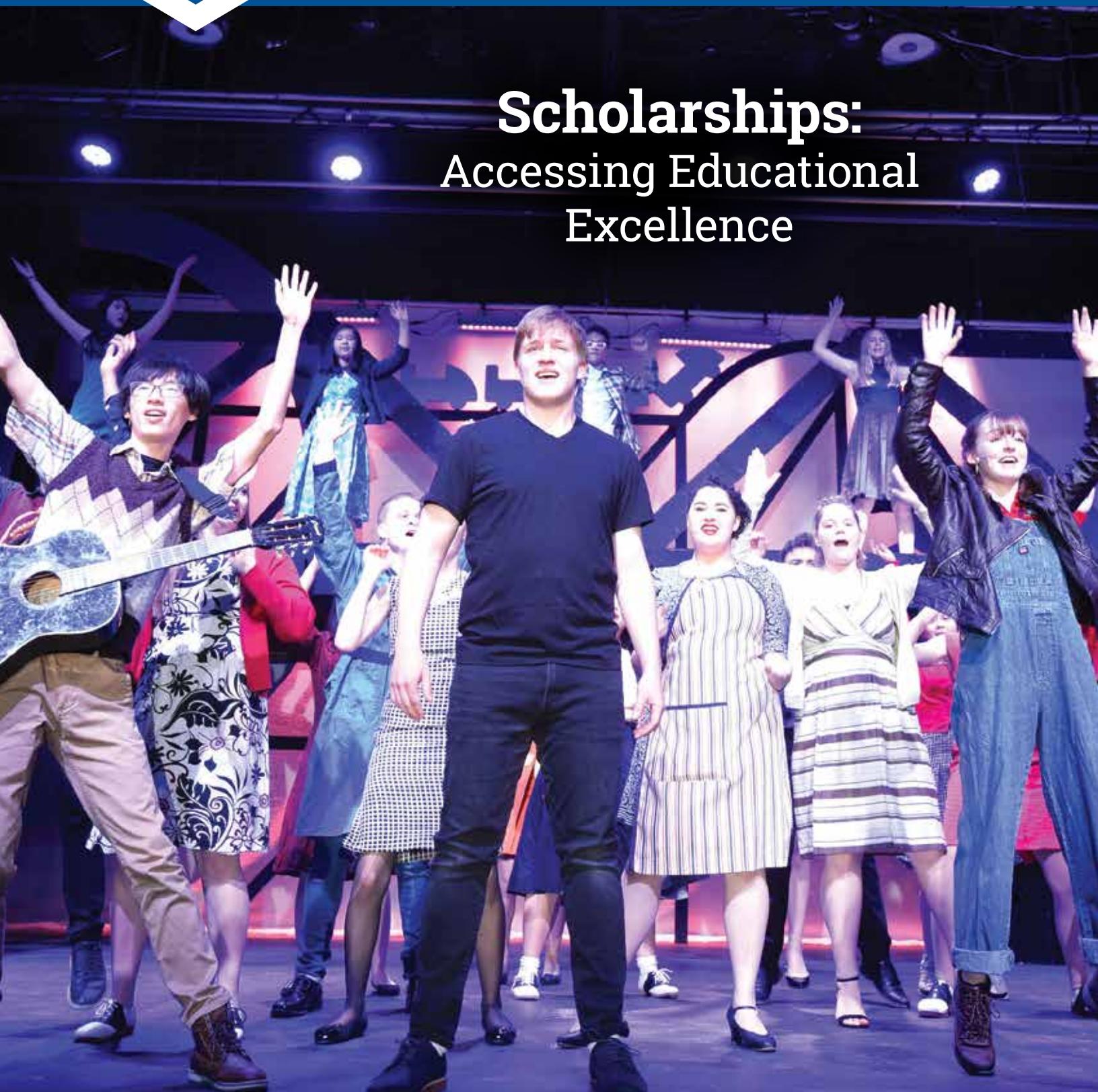




# The ByLine

SUMMER 2019

## Scholarships: Accessing Educational Excellence



# Academics ▶ Community ▶ Opportunity

## Mission

Our mission is to send into a changing world confident young people of integrity who think critically and creatively while embracing the joy of lifelong learning.

2018-2019

## Board Members

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 Joyesh Raj, MD, FACS '89  
 Michael J. Sherwin  
 Brian Shimko '04



First graders explored the west woods on an early spring day.

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Integrity, Respect, Scholarship and Personal Best

Editor: Susan Haas, Director of Marketing and Communications

On Cover: The School of Fine Arts and Thespian Troupe 7171 performed the Upper School musical, All Shook Up, in March.

A LETTER FROM  
OUR BOARD CHAIR

## Thomas Dresing, MD '83

Dear Lake Ridge Academy Friends:

It's hard to believe another school year has finished at Lake Ridge Academy. My first year serving as the Board Chair has been a very rewarding experience, as I am able to help lead the school that has been so pivotal to my life as a student, alumnus and parent. With a new Head of School and new additions to our leadership team, we are entering an exciting chapter in the history of Lake Ridge, and I am happy to be a part of it.

One of the most important initiatives this school year has been about building alumni relations. This year, the alumni relations department organized a series of events in cities across the country to bring Lake Ridge closer to where our alumni live. These well-attended events brought together graduates from a wide range of years to learn more about what is happening on our campus, meet our new Head of School, and build connections with each other in their new region. As an alumnus myself, I find these events to be an important step in building stronger alumni connections and, in turn, a stronger Lake Ridge Academy.

If you can gather at least five alumni in your area for an event in the coming year, contact Leanne McAllister at [mcallister@lakeridgeacademy.org](mailto:mcallister@lakeridgeacademy.org) to have your city added to the list. I look forward to joining a trip or two next year!

I wish you all a wonderful summer full of adventure and relaxation!

Sincerely,  
Thomas Dresing, MD '83

This past spring, Middle School students raised funds to build their own Gaga Ball pit on their playground.



# Highlights

Winter/Spring

## MOCK TRIAL REACHES STATES



The mock trial team reached the state trial competition again making it the fifth year in a row that a Lake Ridge team has made an appearance. The blue team earned its trip to Columbus after winning in the highly competitive Cuyahoga County regionals and earning all four individual awards - two best attorney awards and two best witness awards.

Members of the Blue Team are: PJ Yoo '20, Sunny Saini '21 (Best Attorney Award), Pablo Pineda '21, Adrienne Chan '21 (Best Attorney Award), Talon Basiewicz '20 (Best Witness Award), Addie Wisniewski '20, Cameron Kaderle '19 (Best Witness Award), Faisal Reza '19, Not Pictured: Maithili Patel '19, Alec Wostmann '19

## TWO STUDENTS EARN NATIONAL SCHOLASTIC ART AWARDS



Congratulations to our two Upper School artists who won National Scholastic Art Awards. Olivia Watling '19 received a National Gold Medal for her piece, Rose. Michelle Zhang '20 received a National Silver Medal for her painting, Self-Portrait. 153 Gold Key pieces were sent from the Lorain County competition to the National Scholastic Art Awards, which occur annually in New York City. Only five pieces from Lorain County were selected to receive National Awards, so it is quite a feat that two of them were from Lake Ridge Academy students!

## SIX JUNIORS ENTER THE 2020 NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

In April, six juniors were recognized as entrants in the 2020 National Merit Scholarship program as a result of their PSAT test scores. From approximately 1.6 million program entrants, these students are among the 50,000 highest-scoring participants who become eligible for further recognition as National Merit Program Commended Students or Semifinalists this fall. Congratulations to Carter English, Kira Fitzgerald, John Harrington, Ryan Rosu, Connie Tan and PJ Yoo!



## TWO JUNIORS INVITED TO THE COLLEGE BOARD NATIONAL HISPANIC RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Two Lake Ridge Academy juniors have been invited to join the National Hispanic Recognition Program, which is organized by the College Board. Mikey Sison and PJ Yoo were given the ability to apply for this honor because they scored in the top 2.5% on the PSAT among all the Hispanic and Latino test-takers in the region.



## MIDDLE SCHOOL SCIENCE FAIR



The annual Middle School Science Fair program began in January with all seventh and eighth graders presenting their experiments to our community and a panel of judges at the two-day fair held in the Bettcher Convocation Center. Of the 71 total entries, 20 were rated superior. Ten of those projects went on to compete in the Northeast Ohio Science and Engineering Fair (NEOSEF) in March where all ten of those students earned special recognition, including seven second place finishes and three honorable mentions. Sam Calcut '23 advanced to the Mohican District Science Day at Ashland University where he presented his experiment titled "Germination and Growth of Soybean Plants in Plastic-Contaminated Soil" and earned a special award from the Soybean Growers Association.

## COLLEGE SIGNING DAY

Four Lake Ridge Academy student athletes committed to continuing their athletic careers in college during an official signing ceremony hosted by the athletic department in April. Just 7% of high school athletes go on to play sports in college, so it is quite an accomplishment that 10% of our graduating seniors are advancing to the college level. The following seniors announced their future academic and athletic plans.



Grace Adams will play women's soccer and join the track & field team at Thiel College.

Annika Miller will join the women's swimming and diving team at Knox College.

Matthew Prill will join the men's cross country and track & field teams at the College of Wooster.

Neil Robertson will play baseball at Hiram College.

## CULTURE FEST

The 18th annual Culture Fest, hosted by the Upper School Humanitarian Aid Society, was well attended and enjoyed by our local community. Attendees enjoyed food and performances by various cultures from around the world. Over \$2,700 was raised for Lions Club International.



## PLEASE JOIN US FOR ONE OF THESE UPCOMING EVENTS

**AUGUST 14, 2019**

Parents Association Welcome Reception

**AUGUST 20, 2019**

New Family Orientation

**AUGUST 21, 2019**

Opening Day

**AUGUST 24, 2019**

Back to School Night  
at the Crushers

**SEPTEMBER 18, 2019**

Year of Service Kick-Off Day

**SEPTEMBER 21, 2019**

Velosano Kids Trike and Bike Homecoming

**OCTOBER 5, 2019**

Fall Family Day, Camp Out & Soccer Under the Lights

**OCTOBER 18-19, 2019**

Upper School Fall Play - All My Sons

**NOVEMBER 6, 2019**

Mini College Fair

**NOVEMBER 23, 2019**

Auction Gala



# Congratulations to the Class of 2019

**These 39 seniors were awarded \$3 million in scholarships during their college searches.**

## FIRST ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT)

Marta Roshkowski - University College Dublin  
Xiaojing "Jodie" Deng - Johns Hopkins University  
Bunsi Chapadia - Miami University-Honors College  
Laila Haidar - Oberlin College  
Collette Gordon - Lehigh University  
Taylor Bhajji - University of Pittsburgh

## SECOND ROW:

Ally Cui - Purdue University  
Grade Adams - Thiel College  
Taha Akbar - The Ohio State University  
Zack Tomshack - Bucknell University  
Annika Miller - Knox College  
Rose Nandwa - The Ohio State University  
Carly "iZel" Van Epps - Manhattanville College

## THIRD ROW:

Yingtong "Sarah" Zhou - Loyola University Chicago  
Robert Amsdell - Allegheny College  
Cameron Kaderle - Xavier University  
Alec Wostmann - University of Washington  
Danielle Odle - University of Cincinnati  
Kayleen Kaatz - The George Washington University  
Raziel Bobgan - Allegheny College  
Maithili Patel - Rutgers University-Honors College  
Gina Lough - Virginia Military Institute

## FOURTH ROW:

Brayden Snezek - The Ohio State University  
Zihan "Emily" Wang - Babson College  
Faisal Reza - University of Rochester  
Sparsh Balabadrapatruni - The Ohio State University

Xinyi "Cecily" He - Lancaster University  
Matthew Prill - The College of Wooster

## FIFTH ROW:

Liqiang "Calvin" Zhang - University of Connecticut  
Tianze "Elijah" Wang - Stony Brook University  
Jihong "Phillip" Yan - University of Massachusetts - Lowell  
Vishwas Patel - The Ohio State University  
Nathaniel Waters - The Ohio State University  
William Cunningham - Ohio University-Honors College  
Neil Robertson - Hiram College  
Chengfei "William" Wu - Purdue University  
Zihan "Garen" Hu - University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

## NOT PICTURED:

Yamin "Lely" Liu - School of Visual Arts  
Olivia Watling - The College of Wooster

## Our graduates were also accepted at these notable schools:

American University  
Boston College  
Case Western Reserve University  
The Citadel  
University of California, San Diego  
University of Colorado, Boulder  
University of Dayton  
University of Denver

Denison University  
Fordham University  
University of Florida  
Indiana University at Bloomington  
University of Iowa  
Ithaca College  
Loyola University – Maryland  
Michigan State University

Oberlin College  
Pennsylvania State University  
Rochester Institute of Technology  
Savannah College of Art Design  
School of the Art Institute of Chicago  
Villanova University  
Virginia Tech  
University of Wisconsin, Madison

# Meet the New Leadership Team Members

## PETE SRSEN, CPA

### Chief Financial Officer

Pete Srseen joined the Lake Ridge Academy staff in January as Chief Financial Officer. Pete was already familiar with the financial operations of Lake Ridge, as he previously worked as a senior manager at Maloney + Novotny, the school's audit firm. He joined Maloney + Novotny in 2007 where he oversaw and managed annual audits for several non-profit organizations, including ten schools. He also worked as a senior accountant at American Express Tax and Business Services. In addition to his work experience, Pete serves as the Treasurer of the Parish Finance Council at St. Luke the Evangelist.

Moving to the new position has been a welcome change. He reflected, "In my past experience as an auditor for a public accounting firm, I was always looking backwards at prior results. I like the strategic planning that is involved with my new position at Lake Ridge Academy, along with working with all members of the community to set the school on the best path forward."

He graduated from the University of Dayton with bachelor of science degrees in accounting and entrepreneurship. His interest in accounting grew while attending college. He recalled, "I started as an entrepreneurship major. Through the experience of business plan preparation and running student-led businesses, I found myself drawn most to the financial aspects of the process, specifically accounting. I then added accounting as a second major and was excited to choose a career path that would expose me to a diverse client base and learn what drives a business."

Pete and his wife, Erin, live in Lakewood with their two young children, Sadie (2) and Ben (5), who will join the Lower School as a first grader this fall. He added, "Lake Ridge Academy has an excellent reputation for the education it provides its students. As a father, I was very attracted to this school community that would also welcome my children."



## **MEGAN ZAHLER, ED.D.**

### **Director of Enrollment Management**

In November, Lake Ridge Academy welcomed Dr. Megan Zahler as the new Director of Enrollment Management. She previously served as the Assistant Dean for Strategic Enrollment Planning at Bowling Green State University-Firelands campus and brings a wealth of experience in successful, data-driven enrollment management. Megan's career experience also includes serving as the Associate Director of the Undergraduate Division at The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania.

Megan originally pursued a career in higher education academic affairs, but eventually realized that she was best suited to work in enrollment management and engage with prospective students and their families. However, the nature of higher education made it challenging to

build authentic relationships with prospective students. She stated, "In higher education enrollment management, it is rare that you truly get to know families. The volume of applicants, their broad geographic location, and the nature of the work prevented me from continuing to work closely with students. At Lake Ridge, I knew that I could continue to work in enrollment management while getting back the relationships with families and students. The close-knit community, the commitment of the faculty, and the families themselves are what made me want to work here."

Several months in to her new position, Megan's favorite part of her day is when she interacts with our students. She said, "Most of my enjoyable moments at work involve our students. From reading to



kindergarteners to watching the Upper School students compete in Iron Chef, I love watching the students learn and grow." Megan lives in Norwalk with her husband, Dr. Jonathan Zahler, and her son, Jack, a rising third grader.

## **KEEON GREGORY**

### **Director of College Counseling and Strategic Engagement**



Although not new to the Lake Ridge community, Keeon Gregory, Director of College Counseling and Strategic Engagement, recently joined the Leadership Team. Keeon has successfully led the college counseling program for over 16 years, providing a tailored college search approach for each student that helps our students find a "best fit" school, whether that be an Ivy League, state, or liberal arts college or university.

His role has also expanded beyond college counseling. He will be more directly involved in the admission process to highlight college counseling to prospective families, particularly high school age students. He will also work more closely with alumni relations to enhance our engagement with younger alumni. Finally, Keeon will oversee the international student program and placement, allowing him to leverage our college counseling process to this community of prospective and current students who often seek such services from outside agencies. This will help assure positive integration of international students into our school community.

# Happy Retirements

Several esteemed members of our faculty and staff retired at the end of the 2018-2019 school year.

We thank them for their dedication and wish them the best in their future endeavors!

## DR. BETSY GLOR

Dr. Betsy Glor joined the Lake Ridge Academy faculty in 1993 and has made a lasting impact on the curriculum and community life of our school. During her 22 years, she has elevated the science department through her tireless work as the department chair which included launching the Institute for Scientific Research.



## CYNTHIA SEIDEL



For 25 years, Mrs. Cynthia (Cindi) Seidel has served Lake Ridge Academy as Controller and later as Chief Financial Officer. Cindi has worked tirelessly over the years, strengthening the school's financial position through strict budgeting, successful audit reviews, ongoing financial reporting, contract management, financial aid determinations, financial investments and 403(b) planning. In recent years, she also took on human resources and transportation management responsibilities on top of her already large workload.

Cindi's love for Lake Ridge has always been apparent, and the school has benefited from her out-of-the-box thinking and remarkable financial skills. We will all miss her kind and giving spirit, which has made Lake Ridge an enjoyable workplace for so many.

Betsy is an exceptionally gifted chemistry teacher, as evidenced by our AP chemistry students who typically earn an average score of 4.5/5. She is effective at teaching students with a wide variety of interests and learning styles, and she is universally respected by students, parents, and colleagues alike. Betsy's reach has extended far beyond the traditional classroom, as she helped lead time-honored, school-wide traditions like the Culture Fest and Holiday Project.

She is also an enthusiastic advisor and leader of Locke House, a role she has fulfilled since the Upper School House system was introduced in 2004, in addition to serving as a mock trial team advisor. Her exceptional commitment to Lake Ridge Academy is inspiring and will be missed!

## SHARON MIER AND ROBIN MOODLEY



School Health Specialists Sharon Mier and Robin Moodley have brought much warmth, care, and gentle humor to their roles serving the health needs of our school community. Sharon joined Lake Ridge in 2007 and Robin in 2016, fulfilling the full-time position that they jointly shared over the last few years. They will be greatly missed by every K-12 student, family and faculty member.

# Providing **ACCESS** and **AFFORDABILITY**

In this first of a two-part series, several families offer their personal stories about accessing a Lake Ridge Academy education. Each of their individual experiences is part of a larger story about the entire student body. The students' names have been changed to maintain their privacy, and the second part of the series will appear in the fall Byline issue.



## SERVING THOSE WHO SERVE OTHERS

Shortly after his arrival (seriously, 11 days after his arrival), Head of School Mitch White implemented a new scholarship program to support public servants. He offered deeply discounted tuition rates to the high school children of police officers, firefighters, paramedics and active military personnel because he had several open spots in the Upper School and liked the idea of supporting the community.

When pressed, Mitch will tell you that he wasn't sure the idea would work. He knew that he was offering admission for the school year that started on August 17 and it was mid-July. He figured that it was a long shot at best, but still worth a try.

Five eligible students applied, and four were admitted. Fantastic! Now, he wanted more, but he couldn't scale the program at those tuition levels without help. He needed donors to fund a portion of the scholarships each year for three or four years so that he could guarantee the opportunities to entering students would continue through their full high school experience.

Nancy and Joe Scarpitti, always first to lend a hand and generous in every way, immediately funded the first Public Service Scholarship. Nancy teaches Middle School Technology at Lake Ridge, and their daughter, Maria '16, was a strong leader when she was a student. Joe and Nancy's gift was announced to the Board of Directors, and other donors quickly followed their example to fund additional Public Service Scholarships.

Eric Sutherland '80 has good memories of his days at Lake Ridge, but life has been busy, and he hasn't returned to campus since he graduated. Eric is a successful managing director at PIMCO in New York, and he and his wife, Celia, have consistently supported educational organizations throughout their married life. Just as they have taught their own four children, they want to enable other students to make the most out of life's opportunities that are presented to them and hope that they will be cognizant of where those experiences may lead. So, Eric and Celia funded a Public Service Scholarship for the next four years.

Ann Fauver, whose late husband, Scrib, was one of Lake Ridge Academy's three co-founders in 1963, also funded a Public Service Scholarship for four years. Knowing that small classes and excellent teachers set Lake Ridge apart from many other schools, she was eager to help a student.

Don and Chrissy Wostmann funded a four-year PSS scholarship in honor of their graduating son, Alec '19, who they said benefited tremendously from Lake Ridge's extensive and diverse course offerings. "We liked the idea of encouraging more members of the local community [to consider Lake Ridge] who typically wouldn't be looking at private school as an option for their children." Chrissy's father was a Colonel in the Air Force, so helping active military and other public servants has always been important to them.

**"We liked the idea of encouraging more members of the local community [to consider Lake Ridge] who typically wouldn't be looking at private school as an option for their children."**

Several friends of Mitch White from Atlanta funded a three-year Public Service Scholarship. None of them had ever set foot on Lake Ridge's campus, but they wanted to support and honor Mitch during his first year.

Four other donors have also expressed interest in the program. In all, the program could be responsible for bringing as many as ten new students to Lake Ridge in just the first year. That's quite a success story from an idea that was once just a long shot. Overall, donors have found the program to be a meaningful way to support some of the families who give so much to each of us through their public service.

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Maddie and Ann are both accomplished Girl Scouts who have earned their Silver and Bronze Awards (respectively) in scouting. Maddie is a gifted student who is also a musician and an artist. Ann is a competitive gymnast with a rigorous practice schedule who also devotes an extraordinary amount of time to community service.

Both girls were well qualified and eligible for the Carol Klimas Scholarship and the John W. Kemper Scholarship. They will bring their community service experience, academic dedication and extracurricular talents to Lake Ridge next fall.



## ATTRACTING EXCELLENCE WITH EXCELLENCE

Sam is one of those extremely bright students whom you hear about from time to time. He is a history buff from one of Cleveland's premier charter schools and has participated in National Geography Bees. He finished his school's math program last year; in other words, his school ran out of math courses to offer him. Since then, his parents have been searching for a new school that would better exercise his extraordinary gifts.

The catch for his parents was that Sam was only eleven when they began their search last year.

For lots of reasons, Sam's parents assumed that their options would be limited. In fact, they never thought that they could consider Lake Ridge Academy – and didn't – even though they realized that it might just be the best place for him. But then, Sam applied for a scholarship opportunity that changed everything for him and his family.

Amelia and Clara Harding believed strongly in community. They spent their lives supporting and nurturing the community of Olmsted Falls and the surrounding area through philanthropic giving on many levels, and formed The Harding Family Charitable Trust. Education was a passion of the Harding sisters, and though the Hardings are now deceased, their trust funds many scholarships at the secondary and collegiate level to help members of their beloved community pursue educational opportunities that may have otherwise been out of reach. Sam is a proud recipient of one of those scholarships.

Sam and two other strong students earned the Harding Family Charitable Trust's need-sensitive, competitive scholarship to help fund their high school experiences. Sam earned the highest level award offered, and next year, he

will enroll as a Royal where his parents know that he will be welcomed, supported and challenged in ninth grade...as a twelve-year-old.

Matthew is a talent in math and science and is proud that soon, he will be the first member of his family to attend a four-year college. His mother cannot work outside the home because his sibling requires her constant care and is home-schooled. His father works hard to support the family by himself.

Matthew enjoys being challenged, and his parents wanted him to have an opportunity to learn in an environment that would be a better match for him. But again, Lake Ridge Academy was never on their radar...until now.

The J.A.G. Scholarship has been in place for several years and was funded by a former Lake Ridge mom in honor of her own mother and son. The scholarship supports one or more students who have the highest level of financial need because, as the donor once explained, "I want to change a child's life by giving someone a Lake Ridge Academy experience."

Next year, Matthew will be the recipient of the J.A.G. Scholarship. He will have opportunities to excel in the Center for Scientific Exploration and Research. And, because Lake Ridge Academy students earn an average of \$80,000 in college scholarships, he'll be better positioned to succeed beyond Lake Ridge too.

**"I want to change a child's life by giving someone a Lake Ridge Academy experience."**



The Middle School Chamber Orchestra performs with Cleveland Orchestra bassist and Cleveland State University faculty member cellist.

**As enrollment has grown because of scholarships, student life has changed in a positive way too. Extracurricular activities have increased and become more robust as more and more students participate.**



Enrollment growth helps build extracurricular and athletic programs.

## THROUGH ONE, MANY BENEFIT

These and many other scholarships at Lake Ridge Academy help to ensure that there is a “good mix of students at the school,” as Ann Fauver so aptly said. Some scholarships have been in place for decades and have given dozens of high-performing students access to a stronger academic program than they could receive otherwise. Scholarship recipients come from different backgrounds, nationalities, communities, and life experiences. Their varied perspectives add value in classroom discussions, on the soccer field, in mock trial courtrooms, and on Year of Service Kick-Off Day when the entire campus supports area non-profits.

Scholarships and financial aid directly benefit individual students. It is also true that scholarships and other forms of financial aid have a direct impact on all students.

As enrollment has grown because of scholarships, student life has changed in a positive way too. Extracurricular activities have increased and become more robust as more

and more students participate. Athletic teams have become larger and more competitive, and sports programs have been added at the Middle School level.

Consider, in just one example, that our Upper School cross country program, led by Director of College Counseling and Strategic Engagement Keeon Gregory, could not even score for many years because Lake Ridge did not have the required number of participants (five are needed to score). Last year though, Keeon fielded men’s and women’s teams (18 athletes in all or 10% of the Upper School student body for a single sport), and the girls team won their conference title. Baseball has won three straight conference titles, and three other sports made district appearances in the last year.



## SCHOLARSHIP ECONOMICS 101

**Donor-funded scholarships have had a tremendous impact on individual families and the school's overall enrollment growth over the last decade.**

Consider that at Lake Ridge Academy, a majority of students receive financial aid – both as need-based grants and through earned scholarship opportunities like the examples described here. Without this scholarship support, many students simply could not attend Lake Ridge Academy. And, without those students, enrollment and every student experience would be quite different.

In 2008, there were just 320 students on campus, and now, there are 431. All of those students – even those who have high levels of financial need – contribute a share of tuition. Without their tuition, Lake Ridge

simply would not – could not – exist. And without scholarships, those student recipients would not – could not – attend Lake Ridge Academy.

Donor-funded scholarships have had a tremendous impact on individual families and the school's overall enrollment growth over the last decade. Enrollment can continue to grow within our current physical footprint and without adding any additional staff or teachers. In fact, the school could grow to 508 students and still sustain teacher-determined age-appropriate class sizes. In other words, Lake Ridge would remain “small.”

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE FOR A LIFETIME

Scholarship funding typically supports students during their high school years, and some scholarships, like the Chloe Geiselman Scholarship, support younger students. Students often feel the impact of their scholarship support for much, much longer.

Many scholarship recipients or their families are deeply grateful for the opportunities given to them, and they sometimes ask to “pay it forward” by funding scholarships of their own. Other students who benefited from donors’ generosity often want very much to give something back to their communities during and long after their Lake Ridge years.

The Yanna Voutsiotis '05 Endowed Scholarship was created by George, Vivy and Alexia '07 Voutsiotis in 2011 in honor of Alexia's sister, Yanna, who passed away in a tragic car accident after she had graduated from Lake Ridge. Yanna was an extraordinary young woman who embodied the school's core values and excelled in athletics, academics, community service and extracurricular activities. Her family established the scholarship to honor her, and scholarship recipients are often deeply honored to receive the scholarship that is announced at the Upper School awards ceremony each year.

As one former recipient of the Yanna Voutsiotis Scholarship once said, “Earning the Yanna Voutsiotis Scholarship was one of the most humbling moments in my life, and I am so grateful for the impact the scholarship had [on me]. Aside from the monetary aid it provided, this scholarship served

as the starting point for my desire to make a difference in the world, and I strive to embody the core characteristics of it in my everyday life.” Imagine how many people will benefit from that single scholarship, which is endowed and in place in perpetuity.



Addie Wisniewski '20 received the Yanna Voutsiotis Scholarship this past spring.

This summer, Mitch White, Director of Enrollment Management Megan Zahler, CFO Pete Srsen, Head of Academics Michael Shaulis, and Board member Brian Shimko '04 will recommend policy changes to the Board of Directors. Their work will result in a new transparent, equitable, and easy-to-understand tuition structure. Watch for the full story in the Fall issue.

# OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

It is well known that our faculty make Lake Ridge Academy a special place. But, did you know that many of them also pursue leadership opportunities outside of our campus? Some use their expertise as educators to make a difference in the lives of children outside of our community. Several are well-known artists in Cleveland, and others use their free time to expand their knowledge base to further excel in their educational roles. Through a wide range of experiences our faculty gain new perspectives that they bring back to their classrooms and use to inspire their Lake Ridge students.



## CREATIVITY NEVER STOPS

**The Fine Arts Department has many working artists who are well-known in the Northeast Ohio art community.**

### **VALERIE GROSSMAN** **Founder, BRICK Ceramic + Design Studio**

Valerie Grossman joined the Lake Ridge Academy faculty this year as a Middle and Upper School art teacher and has been teaching for years as the founder and owner of BRICK Ceramic + Design Studio in the Waterloo Arts District. She opened the full working ceramics studio in 2015 and offers weekly classes for beginners and open studio memberships for experienced artists looking to use the wide range of equipment.

Blending her experiences as a professional artist, studio owner and teacher gives Valerie many tools to encourage young artists. She commented, "My experience as a working artist and entrepreneur brings a wealth of knowledge that I share with my students and include in my curriculum. In my ceramics classes, I teach production techniques that lend to making multiples with molds or templates. We live in an exciting time when anyone can build their own business, sell online, or go viral. I believe creatives do have the opportunity to become entrepreneurs or freelancers and support themselves by doing something they love. My passion for teaching is showing these talented students that they can dream big. If I could start my own ceramics studio and gallery at age 25, they can do anything they put their minds to."



## TIM CALLAGHAN

### Fine Art Painter

Tim Callaghan, Middle and Upper School art teacher, is a well-known Cleveland artist and often uses the city as his muse. He completed his most recent collection of paintings last October as part of a virtual residency at The Madison, a building on East 105th Street in Cleveland's Glenville neighborhood that served as one of several unofficial homes to FRONT International, the new Northeast Ohio art celebration. There, he developed 15 to 20 pieces reflecting on his temporary Glenville neighborhood, and a portion of his collection will be exhibited at the Cleveland Foundation this fall.

He also partnered with fellow Lake Ridge ceramics teacher, Valerie Grossman, to create a collaborative exhibition at River Gallery in Rocky River. It's no doubt that Tim is dedicated to both his craft and his students. He stated, "I believe my work as an artist helps shape my teaching methods because I am constantly engaged with the principles that I teach when creating my own work. In addition, the students are exposed to the intangibles of passion, persistence and the work ethic that it takes to be a professional artist."

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## JENNIFER SHAW

### Founder, Underground Classical

Jennifer Shaw, Lower School music teacher and fine arts department chair, is also the founder and director of the nonprofit, Underground Classical, a popular summer concert series that takes place in the Waterloo Arts District in Cleveland. The series features classically trained musicians who perform repertoire that is completely out-of-the-box.

"I love Beethoven and Brahms, but I also really enjoy when classically-trained musicians experiment and perform arrangements in an array of unusual instrumental combinations," Jennifer said.

Weaving art with music, the series takes place at Praxis Fiber Workshop. The industrial space is perfect for casual chamber music concerts. The other half of the space is a workshop full of 17 giant looms and dyeing equipment used during weekly community classes in fiber art.

"I really want people to give this genre of music another listen. We believe that one of the first ways to encourage that is to make the events free. And, it's extremely casual! People show up in shorts and t-shirts, and we serve a variety of beverages and often have a food truck parked out front," Jennifer explained.

Planning the Underground Classical season is quite a change from the school year for Jennifer, and gives her a chance to recharge her creativity. "Underground Classical offers me a new musical outlet working with adults in a completely new environment. It has connected me more to the greater Cleveland arts scene and sharpens another skill set: writing! Writing grants is a year-round process."

The series has featured artists from Cleveland and across the country. In May, Underground Classical began its fourth summer season. Music lovers are encouraged to visit [www.undergroundclassical.org](http://www.undergroundclassical.org) or Facebook for upcoming concert details.



## CHARISE ZABLOTSKY

### Cleveland Philharmonic Violinist

Charis Zablotsky, grades 4-12 strings teacher, moved to Cleveland two years ago to work at Lake Ridge Academy. Since then, she has quickly engrained herself in the local orchestral community. She is a violinist (and Associate Assistant Concertmaster) with the Cleveland Philharmonic, conducted by Dr. Victor Liva. The group performs two concerts during the fall and three concerts over the winter and spring months. Her involvement with the philharmonic helps her educate her Lake Ridge students. She mentioned, "Performing in the Cleveland Philharmonic keeps my own performance at a high level which always translates over to the students I'm teaching."

Charise's expertise and talented network has benefitted her students directly as well. Some of her most passionate students volunteer additional rehearsal time to participate in a chamber ensemble, and those students had the opportunity to perform with a musician from The Cleveland Orchestra this past year.



## CAROLYN BALLOU

### Recognized Fine Art Photographer

Carolyn Ballou, Upper School art teacher and Director of the School of Fine Arts, is also a fine art photographer who has exhibited in the greater Cleveland area galleries for several years and continues to engage the local fine arts community. Last year, she was one of 48 artists to exhibit at the Woman Made Midwest Open in Chicago.

Carolyn's artistic focus is on documenting the transformation of Cleveland, from industrial to impoverished, and to where we are today. She stated, "As I explored Cleveland's abandoned industrial sites, my interest piqued and there began the dialogue of what was to what is now. After spending time in these incredible and beautiful structures, I began to view the growth among the decaying spaces as an act of Nature, 'reclaiming' her land. Trees and flowers grow inside these structures that once held the guts of bustling industries."

During Carolyn's extensive teaching experience, she has been asked to curate a student gallery at the Beck Center for the Arts, teach a Curating for Cleveland class through the Cleveland Print Room, and present at educator conferences about the incorporation of STEAM learning in the classroom. She has also presented at the "Creativity in the Classroom" summit hosted by the Oberlin Center for the Arts for the last two years. She explained, "As a working artist, I have found that I am far more effective at teaching all of the soft skills it takes to be successful. There is so much more to being a professional artist than producing great work. You have to be able to articulate your ideas to a wide audience. You have to be tolerant of feedback that may contradict your opinions, and you must have the ability to approach others to market yourself. Lastly, in order to be recognized in the art community, you absolutely MUST show up to events, art openings, artist talks, and participate in the dialogue."

Her work can be viewed on her personal website <https://www.CarolynBallou.com>.

## TIM UNGER

### Artistic Director of the Oberlin Choristers

Directing is a central role of Tim Unger's life, as he serves as both the Director of the Middle School and, in his spare time, as a conductor and the artistic director of the Oberlin Choristers. The Oberlin Choristers is a nonprofit music education organization that provides choral opportunities for children in Kindergarten through 12th grade and serves over 130 area singers. Since its beginning in 1990, Choristers has become a premier children's choir organization in Northeast Ohio; one of the ensembles travels the world.

Tim was first introduced to the Oberlin Choristers when he brought Lake Ridge Academy singers to the Chorister's Honor Choir in 2010. The following year, he was selected as the conductor of what is now called una voce musica, the SATB (soprano, alto, tenor, bass) high school-aged ensemble, which he still conducts. For the last two years, he has also served as Artistic Director of the entire organization. He oversaw the musical direction of the organization and worked with the conductors of all five of the choirs to plan the concert season and corresponding repertoire, implemented enrollment initiatives and promoted the Choristers in musical community of Northeast Ohio.

Tim has a deep love for choir and choral singing. Prior to being the Middle School Director at Lake Ridge Academy, Tim was the fine arts department chair, School of Fine Arts director and Middle and Upper School choir teacher. The Choristers organization gives him an artistic outlet where he can still share that love with singers and audiences.

His experience with the Choristers helps him in his administrative role at Lake Ridge. He stated, "Anytime I can work with young people, in any capacity, it helps me remain relevant and gives me the opportunity to engage in the process of helping students put their best selves forward. In my choir, we focus a lot on the health and strength of our community and the connections each singer develops with one another, themselves, and the music. This community-minded approach translates very well to what we want for our Middle School students – an educational experience/environment where students are known, connected, cared for, and encouraged to strive for growth." >



# INSPIRING CHILDREN IN OUR COMMUNITY

Several of our teachers use their teaching skills beyond our campus to help children in other communities, often which are disadvantaged, or to inspire a student to seek a career path.

## WADE ZWINGLER

### STEM Camp for Lorain City Schools

For the last three summers, Wade Zwingler, Upper School math teacher, organized a free week-long STEM Camp at Lake Ridge Academy for sixth and seventh grade students in the Lorain City School district.

Wade's motivation to design this STEM Camp was driven from his heart. He stated, "I felt that we need to give back to the community and make an effort to help students in Lorain County who don't have the advantages which our students have at LRA. Our hope is that these students will return to their own schools in the fall with more motivation to do well in their classes and maybe consider a STEM field for their career."

Conducting the camp requires support from many people. Lake Ridge provides the use of its facilities and equipment free of charge. Wade coordinates the camp curriculum, often using lesson plans from his own classes. He is supported by other Lake Ridge teachers and Upper School students who donate their time as camp instructors. Even the cleaning crews help out by taking pictures and cleaning the rooms each night. The camp



is funded by the Nord Foundation, to cover the cost of the food, supplies and busing.

Possibly the biggest takeaway from this camp has been what our own students gain from volunteering at the camp. Wade mentioned, "Every year now, I have students asking when the camp is and if they can help. They are actively involved with the planning and implementation of the different sessions. Each year, we provide over 300 volunteer hours."

## JOSH BENDIK

### Lorain County Boys and Girls Club

Not only do Lake Ridge Academy first graders look-up to their teacher, Josh Bendik, but so do other children in Lorain. During the school year, Josh volunteers with the Lorain County Boys and Girls Club. Two to three times a week, he visits Washington Elementary in Lorain where he mentors and tutors eight third and fourth graders in math.

Playing a role in the lives of young students who are often facing many challenges has been a rewarding experience for Josh. He reflected, "Volunteering with the Boys and Girls Club has given me a greater sense of empathy for students and families. I have a stronger understanding that the circumstances surrounding a student's life can have a significant impact on them in many ways."

## **REGAN PORE**

### **Mission Trip Leader**

First grader teacher Regan Pore uses her summer break to lead a youth volunteer mission trip. Regan is a senior high youth volunteer at her church, Avon Lake United Church of Christ, and started leading annual summer youth mission trips in 2012. The week-long trips include over 70 high school students and have taken her all across the country. On the trips, the groups are either performing home improvement projects for low income families, or helping to restore an area after a natural disaster. This summer, the group is returning to New Orleans to continue to support Hurricane Katrina relief. She has also been to Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Oklahoma, West Virginia, and Maine.

The change she sees in the teens who participate on the mission trip is what motivates Regan to lead the trips year after year. She said, "I choose to get involved because I think it is so important that we give back to others and teach youth to do the same. So many of our kids who go on the trips are changed for the better just by getting out of their comfort zone for a week. They realize how privileged they are and become more grateful for where they live and what they have." She continued, "I also think growing up in this digital age, teens don't put enough time into developing relationships with other people. We need to provide students more opportunities to care about others in impactful ways. We hear it every year when we get back from the trip, 'I loved not having my phone with me 24/7. It was a nice break from the everyday drama of life."

In addition to the week-long service trip, Regan spends another week of her summer acting as a camp counselor at Sportscamp, a sports and religiously affiliated camp where she has worked for the last 13 years. She instructs a wide range of ages, from high school to first grade, and several of her campers have been Lake Ridge students. She feels the experience of being a camp counselor supports her mission to help students as a teacher.



She explained, "Being a counselor reminds me that we are helping ALL students to grow into productive, caring, empathetic people. It doesn't matter if they are 6 or 16, it is our job to help our students care about others, and to know that when you care and help others, you are making the world a better place."

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## **TODD MORRISON**

### **Engineering Camp Mentor**

Engineering teacher Todd Morrison ventured to the US Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs last summer to mentor a week-long STEM camp hosted by the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME). Even without a formal military affiliation, Todd's civil engineering and teaching experience makes him a great fit to lead one of the eight flights (teams) of school juniors and seniors from around the country.

The flights were busy from wake up to lights out, competing against each other in concrete beam design, cardboard boat construction, dog house design and construction (which were later donated to the local animal rescue), infected site layout, and sprinkler system design and construction. Todd's flight won the

entire competition last year, and his hammer award now hangs in his classroom.

The camp's location at the Air Force Academy was of interest to Todd. He said, "The experience included talks by former and current officers about the importance of work ethic, desire, and of course, country. I participated on an 'ask an engineer' panel and appreciated being given the chance to talk about non-military career paths at a military focused camp."

Todd found himself applying elements of the camp to his own engineering curriculum at Lake Ridge. He is planning on returning as a camp mentor again this summer.



# ENRICHING FACULTY EXPERIENCES

**Our faculty members often seek new experiences that impact their viewpoints as teachers or provide new classroom strategies.**

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## KRISTY RODRIGUEZ

### Ohio Department of Education, Drama Standards Revision Team Member

Kristy Rodriguez has used her experience teaching drama at Lake Ridge Academy to help influence how it is taught in the entire state of Ohio. She is a member of a group of subject experts selected by the Ohio Department of Education's Office of Learning and Instructional Strategies to revise the current state educational standards for drama. Their recommendations will be sent for review and then voted on in the Ohio Congress for implementation in 2020.

The Ohio Department of Education reviews all curricular areas in a 5- to 7-year cycle. The lengthy process begins with a public response session to the current standards. Then, a separate group reviews and summarizes the comments and feedback, and those revisions are then sent to the standards review team who comb through the K-12 standards to ensure proper alignment.

Kristy is a member of the Board of Directors for the Ohio Educational Theatre Association and has done graduate research work in curriculum. She said, "It's always meaningful and informative to think through the exact goals and standards for a curriculum. Often, the arts are considered subjective curriculum areas, but I think that when we can clearly articulate what our students are going to be able to do when they reach a certain age



or benchmark, we are able to legitimize assessment and move out of subjectivity." She continued, "To be in a room with other theatre educators is invaluable. It's given me the opportunity to collaborate with teachers in my field and to evaluate my own teaching philosophy. I hope to be able to further hone my educational goals in my classroom so that my students clearly understand how they are being assessed and can point to skills that they gain as a result."

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## ERIN GEORGE

### West District Director of the Greater Cleveland Council of Teachers of Mathematics

Middle and Upper School math teacher Erin George recently became the West District Director of the Greater Cleveland Council of Teachers of Mathematics (GCCTM). This position has strong history with Lake Ridge teachers, as it was filled in prior years by Wade Zwingler and Margot Calcut. Erin first joined the GCCTM in college. She has since attended many workshops and even received an outstanding educator award in 2014.

The GCCTM leadership team is made up of five district directors, who organize five conferences/workshops that occur throughout the school year for area math teachers. Erin planned the March conference that featured Lake Ridge Middle School language arts teacher Ms. Lisa McElwain who held a session on accommodations in mathematics instruction. "GCCTM conferences give me insight to new classroom strategies to try in my own classes," Erin stated. As a District Director, Erin also reviews nominator and nominee essays to determine who best deserves an award.

# WHAT MY TEACHER DID ON THEIR SUMMER VACATION

## JENNIFER SHAW

Visiting Teacher at the  
American School of The Hague,  
Netherlands

Lower School music teacher Jennifer Shaw was invited to demonstrate the Orff Schulwerk methodology to teachers at the American School of The Hague over spring break. The approach was developed by Carl Orff and Gunild Keetman and approaches music education for every learner through the integration of music, movement, speech, and drama. Essentially, Orff Schulwerk classrooms engage children in learning instinctively through play as they imitate, experiment and express themselves with growing levels of confidence.

Jennifer Shaw is an expert in this teaching methodology and demonstrated the approach to educators at the American School who wanted to add new elements to their music instruction. There, approximately 1,500 K-12 students are divided into four divisions, and Jennifer worked with students in second and fourth grades. She led them through activities and routines exactly as she does with her Lake Ridge students, and they played musical instruments, created their own compositions, sang and folk danced.

Visiting a school overseas left a significant impression on Jennifer. She explained that, "In The Hague, as it happens whenever I visit another school, gaining a different perspective is hugely beneficial to my own teaching. With ASH, I realized that though our curricula are different, we end at the same destination. I also learned that I would like to shift in my use of technology while doing self-assessment in the classroom."

Jennifer also noted the school's environmentally conscious school culture. She recalls that the faculty and students were always thinking about how much paper and plastic they were using. "There were no straws," she said, and "students used metal silverware, cups and mugs that they brought in themselves to use for the whole year."

**Summer break isn't just a time for rest and relaxation! Many of our teachers use their free-time to hone their teaching skills to prepare for the school year ahead.**

## JOSH BENDIK

Attending Klingenstein Summer Institute

First grade teacher Josh Bendik was accepted to attend the prestigious Klingenstein Summer Institute, which is part of the Teachers College at Columbia University. The opportunity will allow him work beside and learn from a diverse group of talented individuals from all over the world who have an independent school background. Josh looks forward to the challenge of reflecting, deconstructing, and reestablishing his vision for himself as an educator, along with sharing his findings and experiences with staff members prior to the start of next school year.

## LISA McELWAIN

Participating in Nerd Camp Conference

This summer, sixth grade language arts teacher Lisa McElwain will be attending Nerd Camp, an annual two-day educational conference run by very enthusiastic educators that focuses on teaching reading and writing in the classroom. The event is held in Michigan and includes sessions by children and young adult authors and illustrators with other educators. Lisa hopes to be introduced to new books and authors to share with her students, and take the opportunity to network with other teachers.

# 2018 Auction Gala and Reunion Highlights

Lake Ridge Academy's Auction Gala is a longstanding event that goes back to the school's earliest days. At this year's November 2018 Auction Gala & Reunion, parents, alumni, former teachers, current teachers, and devoted friends of the school gathered to welcome new Head of School Mitch White. Many alumni attended to celebrate milestone reunions with classmates.

Four new members were inducted into the Hall of Fame. **Ann Bort** was honored for her excellence in teaching art over her 28 years at Lake Ridge, extensive community work, and receipt of many art teaching honors. **Bob and Susan Smith** were recognized for their tremendous influence in the Lake Ridge community and in Northeast Ohio as philanthropists, volunteers, advocates, and business leaders. **Meghan Flannery Hayes '98** was inducted for her career success, volunteerism and alumni advocacy.



Auction Co-Chairs Kate Dake, Clare Navratil and Sheri Terens planned an amazing evening for guests who purchased once-in-a-lifetime experiences, vacations, unique gifts, and items that were handmade by people in the Lake Ridge community – including our students and teachers. Overall, the event raised more than \$378,000 for Lake Ridge. Like the Annual Fund, Gifts from the Heart and other auction gifts enhance our academic program and care for our 93-acre campus in ways that tuition alone cannot do.



During the live auction portion of the event, Tom and Kale Dake kicked-off more than \$150,000 in bids for Gift from the Heart to fund a series of projects across campus. Gifts will refresh all three division lobbies and common areas, finish the Lower School roof, add high resolution security cameras to key areas of campus, and add wildflower and vegetable gardens to the outdoor areas behind Kemper Science and Engineering.



These auction gifts combined other special grants and gifts from The Norton Family Foundation, the Amsdell Family, and the Lakeland Community Foundation Endowment Fund funded new equipment, seeds, a butterfly observation station, fencing for the gardens, maintenance of our cross country loop, and more. Extensive work across campus and in the gardens will continue throughout the summer as the community looks forward to next year's auction on November 23, 2019.

## HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES



Ann Bort



Meghan Flannery Hayes '98



Bob and Susan Smith

**50th Reunion  
SAVE THE DATE!  
Members of the classes  
of 1970 and 1971  
will celebrate the school's  
first 50th reunion on  
**SATURDAY,  
NOVEMBER 21,  
2020.****



# Alumni Outreach Events

Mitch White will tell you that one of the most enjoyable experiences that he has had in his first year is meeting people who have been significant to Lake Ridge Academy's history. As he has traveled around the country, his encounters with alumni have ranged from Board of Directors members to the youngest of alumni who are just beginning their college careers. Each person has their own Lake Ridge story to share, and their testimonials have helped him to get to know the school and build a network of people all working together in support of our current students.

In New York, host Eric Sutherland '80 gathered alumni and other Lake Ridge friends at the University Club. Jeff Knapp '83, Annette (Wasem) Knapp '84, and Ryan Flannery '00 gathered alumni in San Francisco, and Drew Sykes '07 and Ed Aldrich '07 gathered a crowd in Los Angeles.

Many more alumni in Ohio gathered multiple times with Teresa Jenkins. Hosts Joe Raj '90, Jennifer Zinn Lagasse '86, Jessica Goleski '04, Greg Norton '06, and Chris Pfeil '70 rallied alumni in Cleveland and inspired the largest alumni gathering in history!

**Beginning in August, the Alumni Relations Office will fly Teresa Jenkins to any city in the continental United States if five or more alumni make a commitment to congregate for an evening of reminiscing. So, get on your social media, alumni, and get her on a plane!**



## CAREER DAY

On March 8, Upper School students gathered in the Bettcher Convocation Center for Career Day. The students had the unique opportunity to meet with and learn from five Lake Ridge Academy alumni in very different professions. The day began with alumni interacting with students of all ages in classrooms. Our speakers enjoyed lunch with faculty and Alumni Council members before participating on a panel discussion where they shared personal stories from their college and career paths with Upper School students. Students then interacted individually with the panelists to discuss specific college and career paths, job shadowing opportunities, internships, and future job options.



## 2019 Career Day Speakers

### Donald Butchko '01

**Director of Marketing, Richard L. Bowen + Associates Inc.**



Donald is a 2001 graduate of Lake Ridge Academy where he was heavily involved in theater and singing, with interests in English, history, and languages. He went on to Skidmore College where he majored in theater with a concentration in directing. He spent eight years in New York City working for off- and off-off Broadway theater companies in a variety of creative and administrative capacities and as an equity stage manager. He supported his theater habit working in media libraries, medical research data entry, finance, hotels, catering, construction, and architecture.

After returning to #Believeland in 2013, Donald began working in the print room at Richard L. Bowen + Associates Inc., a leading architecture, engineering, and construction firm. He eventually started working in the marketing department as a marketing coordinator before assuming the role of director of marketing. He serves on the membership committees for the Northeast Ohio chapter of the Society for Marketing Professional Services and the North Coast Men's Chorus.

### Charly Louise Culberson '11

**Documentary Producer and Director**



Charly is a creative documentary producer and director with an emphasis on storytelling that connects, educates and empowers humanity to become closer to self, to one another and to our earth. Although originally hailing from Cleveland, Ohio, she ventured south to earn her B.F.A in film & television at the Savannah College of Art & Design.

Her most recent work, *In Tune*, a documentary chronicling the life of Georgia jazz legend Ben Tucker, premiered on PBS in 2018. Her short films have appeared in film festivals worldwide, and in 2017, she received a Red Dot Award for her short narrative, *Little Elegy*.

Currently, she is an executive producer for an international feature documentary called *Yatra: the Documentary* that follows a group of retired Indian-American physicians from Cleveland, Ohio to the tribal lands of India as they embark on their 18th annual medical aid mission. Several current students have been involved in the film as transcriptionists and will be included in the film's credits.

## **Emily Moreno '12**

### **Account Executive at DCI Group**



Emily has worked in Washington, D.C. at the public affairs firm DCI Group since the November 2016 elections. In her role at the DCI Group, Emily advises clients on how to effectively manage campaigns through proper messaging, targeted advertising and identification of independent allies to steward the goal on the clients' behalf. Emily works on issues related to criminal justice, education, traditional energy and sovereign and municipal debt.

Prior to working at the DCI Group, she worked on Senator Johnson's successful senatorial race in Wisconsin and Senator Rubio's presidential campaign. While working for Senator Rubio's presidential campaign, Emily oversaw the national deployment effort and led targeted surrogate events across the country. For Senator Johnson, Emily worked on the finance team hosting fundraising events, developing a finance council and later overseeing the end of the trail campaign bus tour.

Emily graduated from Elon University with a degree in international business and concentrations in communications and Spanish. Emily also recently formed her own LLC where she approaches, retains and consults for her own clients.

## **Terra Soto-Bouschard '11**

### **Occupational Therapist at Sunshine Institute**



Terra graduated from Lake Ridge Academy in 2011 and began her undergraduate studies at The University of Findlay. In 2014, Terra was accepted to the dual bachelor of science and master of science in occupational therapy program at the University of Findlay. Terra worked as an undergraduate and graduate teaching assistant for the master of occupational therapy program and she was chosen as one of four students to present graduate assistant research at the Centennial American Occupational Therapy Associate conference in Philadelphia in 2017.

As a graduate teaching assistant, Terra aided in the development of the Skills2Care programming for the palliative care team with Blanchard Valley Health System in Findlay. She ultimately graduated with her bachelor of science degree with dual minors in gerontology and psychology in 2016 and her master of occupational therapy in December 2017. Terra became a state licensed and nationally registered occupational therapist in March 2018 when she immediately began her career at the Sunshine Institute in Findlay. Terra was hired to be the first full time

occupational therapist to establish and develop the occupational therapy department at the Sunshine Institute. Terra has a special interest in behavioral and mental health and helps individuals across the lifespan develop the appropriate skills needed to participate in meaningful "occupations," or life activities. Terra primarily works with individuals across the lifespan who have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and/or other developmental disabilities. Terra also works part-time in pediatrics at Gold Leaf Behavioral Services in Lima and in skilled nursing rehabilitation at Fox Run Skilled Nursing Facility in Findlay.

## **Zachary Sweebe '08**

### **Attorney at Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP**



Zack graduated from Lake Ridge Academy in 2008. He majored in management & business at Skidmore College during which time he co-founded a global web development company, directed Skidmore's management consulting firm, and completed MBA-level coursework at SDA Bocconi, Italy's top business school.

After Skidmore, Zack worked as a consultant at Hewlett-Packard, developing big data apps for the world's largest private health insurance group. He left HP to attend the University of Pennsylvania Law School, during which time he developed and submitted a patent for a dog leash accessory, created the first headphone jack + lightning port dongle for the iPhone, served as online editor for the Journal of International Law, obtained his management certificate from the Wharton School, and practiced maritime and international law in South Korea.

Zack is now an attorney at Arnold & Porter Kaye Scholer LLP, where he represents pharmaceutical companies in national lawsuits and investigations, advises companies on website compliance matters, drafts Supreme Court amicus briefs, and supports the Department of Justice's national anti-gang task force.

If you are interested in returning to campus for Career Day 2020, or can offer a career experience, please contact Leannie McAllister in alumni relations ([alumni@lakeridgeacademy.org](mailto:alumni@lakeridgeacademy.org)).

Next year's event will be held on March 6, 2020.

## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



**Lauren Groh-Wargo '98** is a top political strategist, executive, and fighter for economic justice. Lauren holds a degree in economics from American University and began her career by organizing against slumlords in Brooklyn, New York. That work led her into the labor movement and campaign work. An organizer at heart, Lauren has led or advised campaigns, progressive organizations and leaders over the past sixteen years in nine different states. Throughout her career, Lauren has raised money door-to-door and advised high net worth donors. Her work has increased her recognition of the importance of grassroots funding, as well as growing the infrastructure of funding for progressive values.

In her political work, Lauren has helped to pass ballot initiatives to raise the minimum wage and supported emerging political

leaders across the South and around the country to build their organizations and leadership influence. She has been instrumental in shaping the Democratic wave of the South. In 2010, Lauren built an unprecedented \$15 million Ohio campaign effort, and in 2014, she launched the New Georgia Project and served as its first Executive Director.

Most recently, Lauren served as the Campaign Manager for Stacey Abrams during her run for Governor of Georgia. Stacey and Lauren have worked together in small and big ways since 2012. Lauren said, "building and working with the phenom that was #TeamAbrams, a team of staff and supporters that was able to change history and come so close to victory, was an enormous challenge and privilege. Leading that team through a difficult 'overtime' period when we fought for every vote to be counted, with the race too close to call for ten days, and tens of thousands of voters were telling us about their problems voting — which led to the creation of a new organization Fair Fight to take voter suppression head-on was a challenge of another dimension. I think a lot about what it takes to lead through difficult times and what it takes to make change. Last year's experience has changed me."

Lauren added, "It is clear to me that the education I received from Lake Ridge gave me the necessary foundational skills I rely on every day: math, strong writing, critical thinking, and teamwork. I am grateful for the teachers at Lake Ridge, from Mrs. Bell who taught me in third grade and sensed I would challenge authority as I aged; to Ms. McGee whose eighth grade social studies class opened my eyes to cultures around the world and social movements; and to Dr. Zinn who led me through chemistry in high school, which I did not like, but taught about leadership, tenacity, and fairness."

"I am grateful to my parents who sacrificed to pay tuition and long car rides; to the parents of other kids who transported us often ungrateful children each day; to the bus drivers who put up with my antics; to the janitors that cleaned up the messes of makeup and tears we left in the seventh grade bathroom; and to my classmates and all that exploring we did together across greater Cleveland, in school plays and on the rooftops (just once on Bettcher, sorry!); and to the visionary leadership who led the school. Always though, I come back again to the teachers. Thank you for permitting us to dream, to test boundaries, to organize controversial clubs and debates, and to not be afraid of our questions or rebellions - big and small. My mission in life has been one to fight for economic and social justice and to leverage the privilege from which I come to do good. As an LRA alumna, I carry with me all the complexity and skills such a place of educational excellence and privilege brings, and I am so grateful for this community that prepared me to take on big fights and to keep working when the outcome isn't what I dreamed." Lauren resides in Atlanta, Georgia with her partner and four-year-old son.

# Alumni News



1970



**Cathy Weiss Thompson** became a proud grandmother. Cathy's daughter, Leah, welcomed Jack in February. Pictured are Jane Mercer Ramsay '70, Chris Weiss Pfeil '70, Betty Weiss with her first great-grandson, Jack, and Cathy, with her daughters Leah and Suzanne!

1972



**Steve Gregory** and his mom, Nan, recently visited Lake Ridge, met new Head of School, Mitch White, and toured the school. Steve fondly remembers his math teacher who introduced him to the world of computers.

1987



**Kelly Tooman** and her mother, Lynn Tooman-Cser, are thrilled to launch a crowdfunding campaign for their children's characters and book, *The Birthday Triplets*. The magical dancing triplets - Candi, Cookie and Coco celebrate kindness, bravery, empathy, ballet and birthdays. Already *The Birthday Triplets* have a social media following of 19,000 Facebook fans and growing. 'It has been our lifelong dream and passion that these girls impact the world for generations to come,' says Kelly. Visit [www.pdpproductions.com](http://www.pdpproductions.com) to donate to their campaign and learn more about the book.

1991



Over the summer **Jason Hamilton** of Newton, Massachusetts, **Mary Delia Allen** of Chicago, Illinois, **Steve Jurkovich** of New York City, New York and **Trevor Lawrence** of Rocky River, OH got together for their annual summer vacation with their families in the Adirondacks.

1995



**Priti Patel Khanijou**, **Reena Jethva**, and **Ashwin Rao** recently got together in Seattle for a mini LRA 24-year reunion.

2001



Proud parents, **Rishi Khosla** and his wife, Sonal, are happy to announce the birth of their second daughter, Zara Swarn Khosla.

Born on April 19, 2019 in San Francisco, CA, Zara weighed 8lb 2oz and stood 21" tall. Big sister Aviana is in love with her new sister and the family has quickly adjusted to being a family of four!

2002



**Eugenia Chahda** and her husband, Michael, welcomed their son, Nicolas Michael Celi, on August 1st, 2018. Their daughter, Juliana, loves being a big sister!

2003



**Katrina Escuro** and her husband, Djuro Karanovic, welcomed their son, Nikolas Petar, on August 4, 2018. The happy family resides in Maryland.



**Shaud Tavakoli** and his wife, Nida, welcomed their daughter, Isla, on September 23, 2018.

## Alumni News

2005



**Sarah Vandevender** is engaged to Timothy Jerew. Sarah graduated from The University of Findlay with her Doctorate of Pharmacy and met Timothy who graduated from The University of Toledo. A May 2020 wedding is planned.

2006



Norton '06, and Katie Gardner '07. The couple met in Seattle, WA where Brett worked for Amazon while Jacki pursued her Ph.D. at the University of Washington. Along with their two dogs, Bruce and Cameron, the couple now resides in Tallahassee, FL where Jacki works as an Assistant Professor of English at Florida State University and Brett works remotely for Amazon. Brett and Jacki look forward to forever together.



LAKE RIDGE  
ACADEMY  
REUNION  
WEEK  
11.23.19 -  
11.29.19

Follow #LRAProud  
for more details.

Are you or your company looking for an intern, have a job opening, or would be willing to host a student or young alumnus for a shadow day?

Are you looking an internship or job?

The Alumni Relations Office works closely with Upper School students and alumni who have an interest in job shadowing, internship or summer job opportunities with Lake Ridge Academy alumni, current parents, and friends.

If you have an opportunity to offer a student or alumni, or are looking for an internship or job, please contact Leanne McAllister in the Alumni Relations Office at 440.387.5381 or [alumni@lakeridgeacademy.org](mailto:alumni@lakeridgeacademy.org).



**Erik Escuro** is happy to announce his engagement to Makayla Zutaut of Beckley, WV. The couple met at West Virginia University where Makayla is a bone marrow transplant nurse and Erik is finishing his internal medicine residency. They

will be moving to Hershey, PA where Erik will be starting his rheumatology fellowship at the Penn State College of Medicine. They plan on getting married in March 2020.

2007



**Katarina Gardner** was engaged to Christopher Sams in Washington, D.C. during the city's beautiful Cherry Blossom season. Katie and Chris met while she pursued her master's in public health and he pursued his J.D. at Case Western Reserve University. The couple enjoys traveling, tasting menus, and Cleveland sports. They are planning a wedding for fall of 2020.

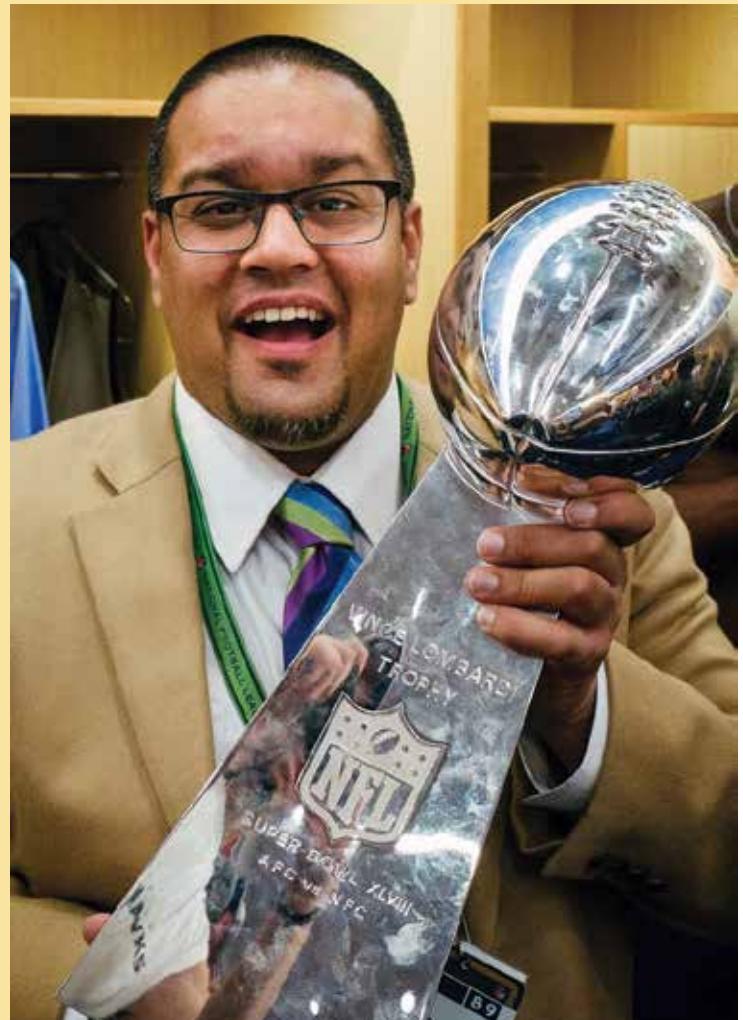
## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

**Ashwin Rao '95** credits Lake Ridge Academy for preparing him for a career in medicine, but little did he know back then that this journey would take him all the way to the Super Bowl. Following graduation, Dr. Rao majored in biochemistry at Swarthmore College and attended Case Western Reserve University's School of Medicine. During this time, his career goals began to crystalize. At first, he was drawn to cancer care and considered a career in radiation oncology, but after spending time with a family medicine physician practicing in his home town of Strongsville, the lure of family medicine took hold.

He traveled to Seattle, WA to begin his residency training at the University of Washington. During his family medicine training, he discovered the burgeoning career of sports medicine and experienced the joy and humility of taking care of athletes of all types from the weekend warrior to the Olympian. Upon completing his medical training, Dr. Rao accepted a position on the sports medicine faculty at the University of Washington where he immediately stepped into the role of team physician for UW Husky Athletics. A year later, he accepted an opportunity to provide medical care for the Seattle Seahawks.

Over the past decade, Dr. Rao has worked as a collegiate and professional team physician, served as a team physician for the five-time consecutive national champion UW Men's Rowing program (the famous Boys in the Boat), the 2019 College World Series entrant UW Husky Baseball team, and of course, the Super Bowl XLVIII champion Seattle Seahawks. Upon hoisting the Lombardi trophy in 2013, the painful memories of losses by the Browns and Cavs of his youth were expunged, and he is thrilled to continue to work with all of his teams while seeing patients in his daily practice.

Dr. Rao also serves as the program director of the same UW sports medicine fellowship training program in which he trained, teaches in the UW's School of Medicine, and also serves as a faculty member in the UW's Family Medicine Residency program. At the national level, Dr. Rao serves on the Board of Directors for the American Medical



**His advice to students considering goals and dreams for their own career – take the school's motto to heart: “To aspire is to be.”**

Society for Sports Medicine where he oversees the development of sports medicine education across the nation. Seattle is now his home, but Lake Ridge serves as the foundation for all that he has been able to achieve. His advice to students considering goals and dreams for their own career – take the school's motto to heart: “To aspire is to be.”

# Alumni News

## Have you nominated an alumni, a former teacher, or friend for the 2019 Lake Ridge Academy Hall of Fame?

Nominate someone for the Lake Ridge Academy Hall of Fame whose professional success or dedication to Lake Ridge Academy stands out. Visit [www.surveymonkey.com/r/2019LRAHOF](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2019LRAHOF) to nominate someone today!

Don Kaatz '70 Alumni Award - for dedicated alumni who continue to make a difference for Lake Ridge Academy.

Wilfred Hemmer Headmaster Award - for deserving teachers who are no longer working at Lake Ridge Academy.

Founders Award - for people in the Lake Ridge Academy community whose extraordinary professional, volunteer or philanthropic success has had a substantial impact on others in the school's community.



**Monica Mahajan (Fullerton)** will debut her twins, Mason and Madelyn's, first t-shirt line called M+M Kids in May. Monica started her clothing line, MoMo, in 2015. Monica's line, MoMo, is available on Etsy.

## 2009



**Ethan Glor** was engaged to Claire Gober, in July of 2018. Ethan and Claire met during graduate school at UPenn and have lived

in Philadelphia since graduation. When they get a chance, the couple enjoys exploring Philly's expanding restaurant scene and going to midweek theater performances. The wedding will take place in Philadelphia in August.



**Erica Lasky** married Sean Moran on August 11, 2018 in Cleveland, OH. Many Lake Ridge alumni attended including her aunt, Mrs. Bilz! Back row: Nick Marinik '08, Atit Shah '08, Rhett Cross '09, Rachelle Bilz, Stefana Rafiroi '08, Aja Jones, Diego Chahda '08, Mikey Jackson-Smith '12, Tommie Jackson-Smith '09.



**Kendall Szulewski-Francis** is engaged to Enrique Patino-Daly. Kendall and Enrique met through greek life at Seton Hall University in South Orange, NJ. After living and working in the New York City area for nearly ten years, the couple has recently relocated to San Francisco. Kendall is a partnership manager at Puls Technologies, and Enrique leads developer and e-commerce communications at Square, Inc. A November 2019 wedding has been planned in New Jersey.

## 2008



Front row: Erica Lasky (Moran) '08, Kayla Rokowski (Cross) '08, Ryan Cross '08

**Ryan Cross** married the catch of his life, **Kayla Rokowski**, on September 22nd, 2018 at his parents' home in Vermilion, OH surrounded by their friends and family! A confetti filled reception followed, and was hosted at the Vermilion Boat Club. Ryan is a captain on a fishing charter, and Kayla is an event planner in Key West, FL where they currently live.

## 2010

**Stacey Hauff** became a member of the Ohio Bar in November of 2018 after graduating from The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law. She is currently an education and healthcare attorney with Legal Aid of Western Ohio. Legal Aid offers low-income individuals the opportunity for free civil legal representation, ensuring equitable access to the justice system. She is also serving as the Pro Bono chair of the Allen County Bar Association. She recently had the pleasure of judging the State High School Mock Trial competition and had the opportunity to meet LRA's team and visit with her old coaches. She continues to credit her experience in the Mock Trial program with her success in the

law school's Moot Court program. Stacey intends to continue serving the public through civic engagement and community empowerment, values that were encouraged by her teachers and classmates at Lake Ridge. She hopes to return to the Cleveland area at some point in the future.



**Amanda Seidel** and William Barker got engaged on October 29 on Cape Flattery in Olympic National Park and have a wedding planned for April 2020 in Mexico. Amanda and William both work for Guinness Brewery.



**Sarah Ziska** got engaged to Kian Nejadfarid in December 2018. Sarah and Kian live in Cleveland and will be married in Chagrin Falls in September of 2019 with many Lake

Ridge alumni and their families in attendance.

## 2011



**Terra M. Soto** and Levi S. Bouschard were married on Saturday, October 20, 2018 at Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Lorain. Levi and Terra celebrated while surrounded by family, friends, and LRA alumni. Her sister, **Taylor Soto '14**, and several other class of 2011 alumni were part of the

wedding party, including Sara Bediako, Leah Bilski, Sarah Grossi, Steph Vukotic, and Spencer Scheeler. Terra is a graduate from the University of Findlay with a bachelor of science and master of occupational therapy degrees. Levi is a graduate from The University of Dayton. Terra is a full-time occupational therapist at the Sunshine Institute in Findlay and also works part-time in pediatrics at Gold Leaf Behavioral Services and in skilled nursing rehabilitation at Fox Run Skilled Nursing Facility. Levi works as a project manager for Marathon Petroleum Company. The couple lives in Findlay with their very spoiled dog and cat.

## 2012



**Emily Moreno** is starting on President Trump's 2020 re-election campaign serving as the right hand and deputy to the National Political Director for the re-election and the Republican National Committee.

## 2014



**Taylor Soto** graduated in May 2018 with her B.A. in psychology from Butler University. This fall, she will attend The Ohio State University to pursue a master of arts in speech-language pathology, as she is the proud recipient of the Graduate Enrichment Fellowship. During her studies so far, she has taken a special interest in aphasia resulting from traumatic brain injuries and strokes. Taylor plans to specialize in adult neurogenic communication disorders, working with adults who have suffered strokes and need help relearning how to speak and swallow again. Taylor is grateful for the LRA faculty who have instilled in her from a young age a love of learning.

## 2015



**Alexis Tellerd** graduated summa cum laude from High Point University on May 11th with a major in finance and minor in economics. Alexis moved to Washington, DC

this summer to work as a financial services legislative intern on Capitol Hill. In the fall, she will begin law school at George Mason University's Antonin Scalia Law School in Arlington, VA. Alexis will be focusing her studies and internship opportunities towards exploring the rising intersection between finance and technology and the potential impact it will have on our regulatory institutions.



**Carly Tellerd** is a senior at New York University and graduated in May with a degree in hospitality and tourism management and a minor in entertainment business. In September, Carly began an internship in the talent strategy department at CBS News where she helps to bring in new on-air talent as well as manages the current on-air talent employed by CBS News broadcasts worldwide. During her time at NYU, Carly also interned in talent management and casting and was the vice president for her sorority, Kappa Kappa Gamma.



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# SAVE THE DATE!

## NOVEMBER 23, 2019

Lake Ridge Academy's Auction Gala and  
Reunion Week Kick-Off

*Hilton Cleveland Downtown*

