

SUMMER 2022

BRYN ATHYN

ALUMNI MAGAZINE

CAMPUS OF CHAMPIONS

Women's soccer and lacrosse teams make history by winning the first conference championships in Bryn Athyn history.



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



I am pleased to share with you another collection of stories that celebrate our community. This issue of the Bryn Athyn Alumni Magazine features the successes of our health sciences programs and graduates, the achievements of our athletes this year, and spotlights on students and administration.

After many disruptions from the pandemic, we were fortunate to return to a more normal Bryn Athyn experience during portions of this academic year. Thanks to everyone's hard work to mitigate the effects of COVID-19 on campus, we were able to gather together and see each other's smiling faces once again, which is crucial for our relationship-designed school. This return to normal, paired with recent re-branding efforts have contributed to encouraging enrollment growth for incoming classes and stronger retention of current students.

Bryn Athyn College remains grateful for the opportunity to connect with students as they embark on their unique and useful lives. Each faculty and staff member is dedicated to providing an educational experience that challenges students "to develop spiritual purpose,

to think broadly and critically from a variety of perspectives, and to build intellectual and practical skills," as stated in our mission. We see how our students not only respond positively to this charge but also fulfill the call to better the world in their careers and lives after graduation.

Finally, as many of you know, I've announced my retirement in the upcoming spring. The search process is underway, led by our Board of Trustees and Chancellor, and I will be assisting in an orderly transition to the next president once he or she has been identified. My time here over the past eight years has been both an honor and a privilege, and I am sure my successor will receive the same level of support that I have benefitted from as Bryn Athyn College's president.

Please enjoy,

President Brian Blair

BRYN ATHYN ALUMNI MAGAZINE

MANAGING EDITOR & CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Serena (Silverman) Sutton **FEATURES WRITER:** Michelle Chapin (BA '10)

We would love to hear from you! Reach us at: alumni@brynathyn.edu | 267-502-4876
Office of Alumni Relations & Advancement, P.O. Box 717, Bryn Athyn, PA 19009

contents

SUMMER 2022 | ISSUE NO. 10


04 History Made: Two Championship Teams

With their minds set on victory, women's soccer and women's lacrosse became the first teams at Bryn Athyn College to win conference championships.

12 Helping Others: The Impact of Health Sciences

Graduates of Bryn Athyn's biology and pre-nursing programs have been earning advanced degrees, establishing themselves in medical and science careers, and making differences in people's lives every day.

- 02 Message from the President
- 10 Sports, Conference, & Social Events at BAC
- 11 Partnership Agreement with Duquesne
- 18 Student Spotlight: Forever Friends
- 22 Faculty Spotlight: Artfully Academic
- 26 Alumni Spotlight: Kindred Podcast
- 29 The Lion's Pride Grant
- 30 Alumni Spotlight: Oskar Simons
- 32 Our History: Grant Hall
- 34 New Church Career Network
- 36 Alumni Milestones
- 39 Distinguished Alumni: Marilyn Stroh



James Cole (BA '22) is one of the first students to take advantage of our articulation agreement with Duquesne's Palumbo-Donahue School of Business. Story on page 11.

HISTORY MADE TWO CHAMPION TEAMS

WOMEN'S SOCCER won the first conference championship in College history, then **WOMEN'S LACROSSE** capped an eleven-game winning streak with their own championship victory.



By Michelle Chapin

Bryn Athyn Lions show their ferocity through their dedication as well as their skill. The College is a member of the Colonial States Athletic Conference (CSAC), within the broader National College Athletics Association, Division III (NCAA D-III), so the majority of Bryn Athyn teams play against other Mid-Atlantic colleges and universities. And after two years of altered or limited athletic seasons due to the pandemic, the Lions came roaring back to regular competition with a couple of shiny new trophies. Women's soccer and women's lacrosse went above and beyond this year, and their focus and fortitude earned them the title of champions.

WOMEN'S SOCCER

The women's soccer team lived up to their chosen mantra this year, "Make History," by winning the very first conference championship in Bryn Athyn College history. The Lions won 2-0 against the Cairn University Highlanders, hosting the final match on

November 6, 2021. Much about that game will remain unforgettable for the team and their fans: the enthusiastic support, the chill in the air, and the historic achievement the team worked so hard for all season.

Head coach Bill O'Neill says of the team's attitude, "The demeanor of the group in general was very calm throughout the year. We were never really too high, never really too low. We were just even keeled. So when things went wrong, our leaders knew how to keep people in the right spot. It's very relaxed." Since the inception of Bryn Athyn's D-III soccer program in 2015, Bill has worked hard to infuse the athletic experience with life lessons. "We have characteristic things we fall back on," he says. "Being trustworthy, being honest, being reliable, being responsible, and being accountable. Not only being accountable to yourself, but to your teammates too. That makes you successful in life. I approach this game as that character developer. It's my job to get them to wherever they want to go, whatever they want to do. As long as they allow me in to help them, I will help them. Overall it happens in a fun and competitive environment."



Bill O'Neill coached three of the BAC's current soccer players (including Payton Gormley, above) when they were in elementary school.

Payton Gormley, Ashley Rivera, Victoria (Tori) Titano, and Paulina Storck all played on both of the history-making soccer and lacrosse teams.



All smiles, the women's soccer team celebrate the conference championship 2-0 win over Cairn University. Coach Bill O'Neill has been leading both the men's and women's teams since 2015.

The season began with a lot of anticipation and an exciting lineup of 18 players, the biggest roster the team had fielded to date. Bill and his assistant coach, Chelsea Czarnik, were thrilled with the immense talent that the team had on paper and couldn't wait to see them in action. One of the team captains, Ashley Rivera (BS '22), remembers feeling similarly: "I knew from the start that our team was special. From our first practice together, I saw that our team had an immense amount of grit. We talked about our team goals and how we wished to win a championship." Bill had insider information on the new team's ability. Three of the athletes had played on his daughter's team in elementary school—a team he had coached. He was thrilled to have the chance to work with Payton Gormley (class of 2023), Paulina Storck (BS '22), and Victoria (Tori) Titano (BS '22) again.

The team's path to the playoffs began in the semi-final against Wilson College, the only team that Bryn Athyn lost to during the regular season. Even though the game took place on a weekday two hours away, the Lions were blown away by the Bryn Athyn support they saw there. A number of their professors, family members, and classmates made the journey to cheer them on. The team channeled this energy into their win, earning a spot in the finals. Ashley describes returning

to campus later that night: "There were tons of students and teachers waiting for us to get off the bus. It was dark out so it was hard to see at first, but all we could hear was screaming and cheering. I remember being in complete shock and just feeling so thankful for everyone being there to wish us luck in the championship game. At that moment our team realized that this was it; we knew we had to make history and bring home a championship!" Knowing how key hometown advantage is—especially with Bryn Athyn fans—they were thrilled when they learned they would be hosting the championship game.

The cold November air didn't keep fans away when the night of the game arrived. "Before game time, the hill was filled with spectators." Ashley recalls. "Everyone was wearing red beanies to show their support. The energy of the crowd was unmatched. We were so excited to play in front of such a huge crowd. I had never felt so ready in my life. My whole family was in town from across the country, so I knew I had to make them proud. Having a home championship night game was such a blessing. Playing under the



“Hearing the crowd’s cheers and looking up to see my family and friends supporting me is a memory I will cherish forever. - Ashley Rivera”

Team captain Ashley Rivera concluded a stellar soccer career at Bryn Athyn by scoring what was ultimately the championship-winning goal, seen in action on the front cover.

lights, at our home field, with the Bryn Athyn community being there to support us was a total dream.”

“The game really went our way,” says Bill. “From the beginning, we had the sense we’re going to win.” Ashley scored the first goal early in the game. “I focused on keeping a positive and driven mindset,” she remembers. “I would think to myself no matter what the outcome is, I am going to try my hardest and fight for Every. Single. Ball. I also thought about how we needed to try to score early to set the tone. When I scored the first goal just under the 21st minute, I couldn’t help but tear up. Hearing the crowd’s cheers and looking up to see my family and friends supporting me is a core memory that I will cherish forever.” She assisted sophomore Allyson Paul for the second goal, still in the first half. The Cairn University Highlanders put up a good fight, challenging the Lions and taking some very threatening shots at the goal. But Bryn Athyn stayed firm, directing their energy to defending their lead through the second half.

Ashley remembers her first moments as a champion: “After the final whistle, when the game

ended, everyone that was watching the game ran onto the field. We all jumped and screamed together to celebrate our win. It was awesome to see everyone’s pure excitement. This moment was hands down, one of the best moments of my life. We all came together to take pictures and thank everyone that came out to show their support. The support of Bryn Athyn College’s community is like none other.” When she was named the CSAC Championship MVP, her elation was overwhelming. “I broke down in tears. Since we did not have a season in 2020 due to COVID, I felt blessed that I had the opportunity to even play this season because it resulted in achieving so many accomplishments.”

The next week, the Lions traveled to Misericordia University for the first round of the NCAA D-III tournament, which they knew was going to be a tough matchup. “We fought hard and didn’t give up.” says Ashley. “Although we didn’t reach our desired outcome, we did not put our heads down. I am proud of the Lions for positively representing Bryn Athyn, one of the smallest colleges, in the NCAA tournament!” The team was grateful for the experience to play at that level and now know what to expect the next time they compete divisionally. After the post-game press conference that featured the team captains, Bill received a message from Misericordia’s coach, congratulating Bryn Athyn on the school’s first tournament game. “He wrote me this great letter,” Bill recalls, “saying how professionally we handled ourselves and how he was proud to call us a colleague in Division III soccer.”

These history-making events, a tournament appearance and championship win, have left their mark on Ashley’s time here. “I’m proud of my teammates for stepping up to the plate and taking our athletics to another level. We accomplished something that had never been done before because of our dedication. Winning the championship has been the biggest highlight of my time here at Bryn Athyn College. It felt really good to make history in a new and exciting way. I am so unbelievably proud of our team and all that we accomplished.”



After rainy gameplay, the women's lacrosse team is all sunshine as they celebrate their 15-7 championship win over Notre Dame College of Maryland.



While the athletes consider the team to be a sisterhood, there are actual sisters on the roster: Left to right: Maria and Paulina Storck, and Shea and Payton Gormley.

WOMEN'S LACROSSE

The athletes of the women's lacrosse team were as determined as they come. Many of the athletes had also played on the championship soccer team in the fall, and the taste of that victory was still fresh. So when they began the season, they made their intentions as a team very clear: they were there to win. Period. Their conference championship win 15-7 over the defending champion Notre Dame College of Maryland on May 7 also marked the team's eleventh consecutive win.

Head coach Ramona Walters was inspired by the team's dedication. "They recognized the potential and the opportunity that was in front of them," she notes. "They were focused. They knew there was a job to do, and they came into practice ready to go. Their mindset was, 'One more day to get a practice in, get better, and get closer to the CSAC championship.'" The team also modeled leadership, one of the core goals of Bryn Athyn's athletic programs. While the team was made up of many veteran lacrosse players, they also welcomed athletes new to the sport. At first, the variety of experience felt like a challenge, but it turned into an exercise in teamwork. Experienced upperclassmen inspired their teammates to push themselves. "If they were working, everyone else was working," Ramona observed in practices. The team worked hard to build a family, though some of it was already built in: teammates and sisters Payton and Shea Gormley just so

happened to be cousins with another set of sisters, Maria and Paulina Storck (BS '22). It was one of the many highlights for senior and team captain Payton this year. She says, "Playing and competing with them has brought me so much happiness and excitement."

The Lions started the season just as they concluded it: winning. They quickly amassed win after win, and as their excitement grew with each victory, so did the pressure. "The goal didn't change. It became more believable," Ramona recalls. "You want to celebrate [the winning streak]. You want to recognize it. But at the same time, that can get heavy. We always had another game ahead. So we really kept our focus on one game at a time." Their strategy paid off, and Bryn Athyn was set to host the final game on their home turf at the General R. K. Nelson field.

The team was inundated with encouraging messages in the days leading up to the penultimate game. All the support from the Bryn Athyn



Payton Gormley was named Championship MVP and scored her 150th career goal during the championship game.

College community galvanized Ramona and the team. “When we were getting all of those messages, it really made us feel that we were playing for more than ourselves,” she remembers. “We were playing for the entire Bryn Athyn community. So it was a lot of responsibility, but also really exciting and fun to

know that we were making our community proud.” That same week, Payton was named CSAC Player of the Year for her second year, the news bolstering the already-buzzing excitement. “Before the championship everyone was congratulating us. Even though there was still more work to be done, it felt good to get recognition for all the hard work we’d put in that far. I felt a little famous if I’m honest.”

When the day of the game finally arrived, so did an unseasonable cold front and heavy rainstorms. Torrential downpours and wind speeds over 20 miles per hour did not dissuade the athletes from giving the game their all. “Even with the ‘monsoon’ it was great,” Ramona reflects. “It wasn’t all sunshine and rainbows, but it was such a fun game to play.” Despite the weather, there was Bryn Athyn support present at the game. While some fans didn’t mind getting a little wet on the sidelines, many spectators opted to stay in their cars to watch from the parking lots. The first half brought energy and excitement, and the Lions led 12-4 thanks to Leah Antwi, Kalie Soulsby, Maria Storck, and the Gormley sisters scoring while Victoria Titano blocked many goal attempts from Notre Dame. “Then halftime happened, and all that cold and wetness really set in for both teams,” says Ramona, “because both teams had a terrible third quarter. No goals were scored. It was just a wash. So when that fourth quarter came around, the seconds started ticking away, and we recognized this is happening—we’re doing it.”

As the game wrapped up and the reality for Bryn Athyn set in, the team and fans erupted with

joy. That is a moment Ramona will cherish: “Watching the women once that clock hit zero just throw their sticks, scream, and celebrate with one another—it was awesome.” She’s grateful to her assistant, coach Alison Fisher, for all her help, and is especially inspired by each player on the team, “I’m proud that this team set a goal and were able to achieve it. They didn’t waver. They didn’t complain. They knew the work that needed to go into it. And then beyond that, they did it while also keeping up their academics—while working and having to pay bills at home. One of our players ended up finishing student teaching and started working mid-season. So she had a full-time job and remained committed. Their goals go beyond lacrosse, and that is admirable.”

Payton also saw individual successes during the game. She was named Championship MVP and reaching her 150th career goal. “All I wanted was the win with my team, so everything else was just added bonuses,” she says. “Reaching 150 goals was emotional for me. I had a goal of just reaching 100 this season, coming off a serious injury and then being shut down from COVID. When I reached 150, I was in shock.” As a true leader, she shares her successes with her teammates. “This year who I am the proudest of is the girls who just picked up the sport. We are very diverse in our team, some girls have played for years, some girls never played before college, some never before this year.” She adds, “I can’t pick one teammate to brag about. They all honestly deserve the recognition. I love them all and am so proud to have been their captain this year.”

For the women’s lacrosse team’s debut in the NCAA D-III tournament the following weekend, they traveled to Gettysburg, PA to face Roanoke College. “At our last practice, up in Gettysburg, I asked the team to take a minute and enjoy the moment,” Ramona recalls. “Making it to the first round of the NCAA tournament is an amazing accomplishment, with only 46 out of roughly 293 teams getting to have that experience. It’s important to recognize the work and sacrifices that have been made, not only for this season and its current members, but acknowledging all of the players and staff who have been a part of this program since its inception. While the 2022 team brought home the CSAC Championship and earned the program’s first ever NCAA tournament appearance, this journey started well before any of us stepped onto Bryn Athyn’s campus.” Though their winning streak may have ended in that tournament



game, that experience only whetted their appetite for more. “You want it back. You want it again. So that’s what we’re going for next year.”

“My time with the women’s lacrosse team at BAC has been inspiring,” she says. “Bryn Athyn made me fall in love with lacrosse again. I have had many highlights this season, but my favorite obviously must be going undefeated in conference play, winning eleven straight games, and winning my second BAC championship in one year. The Lions are so special because they care about you as a person first, not just a student or athlete.”

Future So Bright

So what can future Lions expect? What is next for the teams and incoming athletes? “More of the same, to be honest,” Bill assures of the soccer program. “We’re going to grow. This recruiting class we have coming in this fall is the biggest we’ve ever had.” And he doesn’t see the momentum stopping any time soon. “Since the program is so young, there’s always that opportunity to do something that somebody else has not done. You’re either going to be the first person to do it, or you’re going to beat the last person to do it. There’s always that chance of leaving your imprint.”

“Our sights are already set on 2023,” says Ramona on behalf of the lacrosse team. “This year our goal was to win our conference championship. Next year, the goal is to make it past the first round. One of the coaches in our conference described us as being an incredibly disciplined team, and I think that’s one of the best compliments a coach can give to you. So that is what I would say: come in, be ready to work, be committed, and be disciplined. And let’s have fun doing it.”

The entire Bryn Athyn community is proud of the women’s soccer and women’s lacrosse teams for these amazing accomplishments this year and is excited to see what comes next. ■

OTHER NOTABLE ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE 21/22 SEASON



← Freshman **Rafe Williams** won the Individual Colonial State Athletic Conference Cross Country Championship in a photo finish.



↑ Men’s ice hockey captain **Zach Pamaylaon** earned the conference MVP and he also had the most points, goals, and assists in the conference, placing second nationwide in ACHA D-II out of 186 teams across the country.



← Freshman **Jamal Cannady, Jr.** earned second Team All-CSAC with his stellar season on the men’s basketball team.



Sports, Corporate, & Social Events at Bryn Athyn College

By Chandra Hoffman, Director of Events and Development

The Sports, Corporate, and Social Events program (SCS) evolved out of Bryn Athyn College’s desire to utilize unused time in facilities around campus to generate revenue and create exposure to the College for potential families. Started by Matt Kennedy in 2017, the vision was initially to expand our student population through athletics. In 2019, BAC faculty member Chandra Hoffman became the director of SCS Events. With over twenty years in corporate and social event management, she has expanded beyond sports and youth camps to include robust programming for area organizations to host corporate trainings, fundraisers, and retreats as well as social events like community wedding and memorial receptions.

Sports

The backbone of the program remains the year-round sporting events on Nelson Field, Jungé Pavilion in both ice and turf, and the trails of North Campus for 5K runs, benefit walks, and bike races.

Over 750 teams have visited Bryn Athyn College’s campus in the past four years for practices, games, tournaments, and invitationals. SCS Events works closely with admissions, marketing, and BAC athletics staff to showcase the unique opportunities of an academically rigorous, faith-based, D-III college experience.

Additionally, our summer program has expanded beyond our teen residential soccer and lacrosse camps to include our newest partner, Future Stars. With campers as young as four, this summer-long day program offers up to 200 local campers exposure to a wide range of sports, academic and creative classes, and excursions throughout North Campus and the Bryn Athyn community.

Throughout the school year, BAC coaches and their teams partner with SCS Events to host weekly trainings to create positive exposure to sports for the Bryn Athyn Church Elementary School and surrounding youth community.

Corporate & Social

SCS Events works with area organizations to facilitate trainings, retreats, as well as remote and in-person gatherings that bring visitors to our stunning facilities. Depending on the time of year, SCS hosts both overnight and day events, including academic competitions for young scholars, faith-based teen conferences, and adult team-building corporate retreats and trainings.

The Cottages on the Green have been redesigned with luxury capacity for up to 40 guests on campus for conferences as well as lodging for family gatherings and community/Cairnwood weddings year round. In summer months, the eighteen five-person suites on campus transition to event housing.

The Future

While the program generates healthy revenue for the school, its most important objective is to serve the college’s admissions goals in a growth-through-exposure model. Guests coming to our campus for all occasions rave about Bryn Athyn’s natural beauty, our unique, state-of-the-art facilities, and the attention to detail from the SCS Events team. Mapping out a campus race route for Redeemer Health’s fall 6K NICU benefit run, the planning team remarked on the magic. “With the castles, Cathedral, gardens, and greenspace, it feels like we’re somewhere in Disneyland.”

The future of the SCS Events program includes expanded youth and adult programming, academic and recreational offerings, and an increased social event roster to benefit the College, alumni, and surrounding community. ■

Contact chandra.hoffman@brynathyn.edu to inquire about rental needs.

Partnership Agreement with Duquesne University

& JAMES COLE

Bryn Athyn students and recent graduates have new opportunities with Duquesne's Palumbo-Donahue School of Business. James is taking advantage of the articulation agreement.

James Cole (BA '22) is one of the first students to take advantage of Bryn Athyn College's articulation agreement with Duquesne's Palumbo-Donahue School of Business. He's excited to start his Masters' in Analytics and Information Management in the fall after graduating from Bryn Athyn with a business degree and a data science minor. He will be balancing his graduate education with a full-time job in marketing and database management.

James transferred from a school in Maryland to Bryn Athyn in March of 2020. Pandemic restrictions changed the experience he'd envisioned, but James was not deterred. He says, "I got a sense for what makes BAC an exceptional place to study, live, and socialize. Whether asking about coursework or for general advice, faculty and classmates are happy to discuss what's on my mind. That personal connection undoubtedly carries over to the classroom and has helped me feel comfortable asking questions and seeking extra help, if I need it."

With the help of his internship coordinator, he found a local not-for-profit with a particular interest in media. He worked as a production assistant. "I was organizing the

studio, setting up cameras and lights and microphones, sitting in on production meetings," he says. Won over by his professionalism, the company offered him a part-time job as digital marketing assistant as he finished his courses.

He was offered full-time position upon graduation. "It's a job that I could not have gotten without my internship coordinator and the community at Bryn Athyn College that really wants to see the students succeed." He'll take the summer to transition to full-time before beginning Duquesne's masters program in the fall.

Bryn Athyn College entered this educational partnership with Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA in December of 2020. This partnership involves preferred conditional admission of current Bryn Athyn students and recent alumni into four selected master's degree programs at Duquesne's Palumbo-Donahue School of Business.

Bryn Athyn business majors and data science minors with at least a 3.25 GPA will receive a GRE/GMAT waiver. In addition, all Bryn Athyn students or recent graduates accepted into the MBA-SBP will receive a

scholarship of at least \$5000.

To be eligible, among other requirements, Bryn Athyn students must have at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA, and have at least a B- in certain relevant coursework. Eligible alumni who graduated from Bryn Athyn College within the past four years will also have access to these benefits.

Duquesne University's approach to business education aligns with that of Bryn Athyn College, focusing on responsible, ethical practices, with programs such as boardroom leadership, and workplace integrity and community action. This approach has earned Duquesne's School of Business numerous recognitions from highly respected, independent bodies. In fact, Duquesne was the first in the region to receive accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), an elite ranking given to less than five percent of the more than 16,000 schools worldwide granting business degrees.

Bryn Athyn College is proud to partner with this renowned university in providing our students with exceptional education, plus the training and opportunities to shine as ethical leaders and entrepreneurs in this rapidly changing world. ■

For more information and details, visit brynathyn.edu/grad-business

Bryn Athyn's biology and pre-nursing programs are setting alumni up for success. Graduates have been earning advanced degrees, establishing themselves in medical and science careers and making differences in people's lives every day.

Senior biology student Priscilla Gyimah works with professor Ed Higgins, M.D.

HELPING OTHERS

The Impact of Health Science Programs

By Grace McMackin (BS '12), Lecturer in Science, with Michelle Chapin

When visitors walk into the Doering Center today, like I do on my way to my office in the morning, they are greeted by the “Big Board,” as it has been affectionately nicknamed. This display has become a source of inspiration and motivation for myself, my colleagues, and current and future health science majors because it is filled with success stories. Fredrik “Figge” Bryntesson, Ph.D. (BA '96), head of the biology major, has been collecting photos and career updates of former students who went on to pursue additional or advanced degrees in a variety of fields. Bryn Athyn Col-

lege graduates now work as nurses at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Nazareth Hospital, Doylestown Hospital, as well as local clinics. Alumni are also current and soon-to-be doctors of optometry, dentistry, and osteopathic medicine—not to mention those who have become physical therapists, physicians’ assistants, biomedical researchers, science educators, and more since their time at Bryn Athyn. All these professionals laid the foundation of their career at the College and are now inspiring others to follow in their footsteps.

For current students like senior Priscilla Gyimah

who plans to pursue a career as an OB-GYN, the Big Board showcases the variety of doors a biology or pre-nursing degree can open. Priscilla recalls how inspired she felt seeing the Big Board for the first time: “Everyone is in a different aspect of science. Some are nurses. Some went on to do therapy. Some went on to become doctors or are doing environmental research. I thought that was so cool, to see each year and what they’re doing now. It made me happy because, being in biology, sometimes you doubt yourself a lot. But having [the Big Board] as an encouragement, I know I can still get there. And it proves I’m on the right track for the career I want to do in the future.”

The earliest graduates on the Big Board attended BAC back when the program was called the biological and chemical sciences major. It officially became the biology major in 2000, and it has grown tremendously since, including the addition of the pre-nursing option in 2015. So far 126 biology majors have graduated in the past four years. For many, their bachelor’s degree opened doors directly into the workforce, but for some additional schooling is needed, and Bryn Athyn College is preparing those students for the next steps of their education. More than 40% of BAC graduates have been accepted into nursing school, graduate school, or medical school. That is a fantastic achievement by the numbers, but the true success of the program can be gauged by the connections we have with our alumni. I am always thrilled to see former students around campus when they return to guest lecture for particular classes in their field, or just visit. With our small class sizes, we professors can connect with students academically and as people. “When I graduate, I’m going to remember these teachers for life,” Priscilla anticipates. “I’m excited because of the knowledge I get here, and I have a special bond to these teachers. They *know* me.”

One of the big reasons students choose BAC is the one-on-one attention they can get from faculty that cares about them. To complete an undergraduate degree in biology, students take some challenging courses, and even the most talented struggle at times.



Wendy Closterman, Ph.D. (BA '91), explains the "Big Board" to prospective students at an admissions event. An incoming student was overheard remarking: "I want to be on that board one day."

The biology faculty dedicate a significant amount of time on their courses and work with students to enable their success. Indeed, the classroom experience and interactions with



students to facilitate their learning are hallmarks of academic institutions. Another, and essential, key feature is teamwork amongst faculty members of academic departments. Each faculty member brings her or his specific skills to the team, thereby ensuring that the programs run smoothly. The colleagues of the science department at Bryn Athyn have worked together for many years and this provides strength and stability to the programs.

-Fredrik "Figge" Bryntesson, Ph.D. (BA '96)
Head of the Biology Major

Chemistry, especially organic chemistry, has the scariest reputation, no matter the school. A good teacher makes those daunting courses feel manageable, and Ed Higgins, M.D., is adored by his students for helping them through it. A medical doctor with a degree in chemistry, he is a valuable resource for aspiring nurses and doctors. Priscilla appreciates his approach. “The way he explains things, it’s easy for you to understand,” she says. “I’m currently taking microbiology, and it’s a broad topic. You have to learn all these infections, bacteria names, and sometimes it’s overwhelming. But he breaks it down in a way that

you’re able to understand.”

Often students will come into college not entirely sure of what they want to do, but being open to experiences at BAC can help them find their passion. This was true of alumnus Travis McCurdy (BS ’16), who was drawn toward his career in physical therapy through an internship with the College’s athletic trainer. Now working at Total Performance Physical Therapy in North Wales, PA, he recalls how the hard work he put into coursework and athletics prepared him for the challenges of life after college. He now spends his days helping orthopedic patients get

Sierra McCurdy, R.N. (BS Biology '19)

**BSN from Jefferson College of Nursing, '20
Nurse at Fox Chase Cancer Center**



Sierra McCurdy is a nurse on a medical-surgical oncology floor at Fox Chase Cancer Center, giving care to patients who have undergone chemotherapy. “I feel like I struck gold. I love it here so much,” she beams. “It’s the patients, the staff, the coworkers—it just makes me happy working here. I don’t want to move. I feel like it’s going to be my career for the rest of the time.”

With a penchant for science, Sierra assumed her interests would translate to becoming a doctor. “I actually had all my pre-reqs for med school at Bryn Athyn. But as I kept getting closer and closer to it, it just felt like something I didn’t really want to do, until I heard about this 4+1 nursing program, which is a really good program.” With the 4+1 nursing program, she received a four-year bachelor’s in biology from Bryn Athyn, then attended an accelerated program at Jefferson College of Nursing for her bachelor’s in nursing.

Even with all the ups and downs of transition to online schooling and hands-on clinical experience during the pandemic, she took the challenges in stride. She ended up working in Abington-Jefferson’s medical-surgical strokes and seizure floor in her last semester, an experience she values.

Finding her perfect-fit career was a bit of a surprise for her. Upon becoming a certified nurse, she initially worked in a psychiatric facility. While she welcomed the experience, Sierra knew there was a job better suited to her. A connection at Fox Chase helped Sierra find work on the oncology floor. She’d assumed this transition would be a step in her journey, but she enjoyed her new position more than she’d anticipated. She is now furthering her career by working towards her chemo certification so she can administer chemotherapy to patients herself.

Sierra appreciates her professors at Bryn Athyn and the attention they gave her that has enabled her to care for her patients. “I think I was in all my teachers’ offices after school all the time, or in between classes, because it helped me a lot,” she notes. As she works on obtaining her chemo certification, Sierra remains utterly determined, “I still have a lot of education and schooling for this part. But I’m willing to do it.”



An internship at Bryn Athyn inspired Travis McCurdy (BS '16) to pursue a career in physical therapy.

back to the activities they care about rather than being held back by pain. Alumna Jessica Philipp (BS '19) also found her path during her undergrad years. She already knew she wanted a



Alumna Jessica Philipp (BS '19)

career in the medical field so she could help people through some of their darkest days, and as a registered nurse at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, she is doing just that.

She recalls a time a 2-year-old transplant patient was struggling with complications; she gave him the care he needed all through the night, and she took pride in being someone on which this very young patient and his family could rely. As he continues to improve, she feels joy in and amazement at his progress. Caring about patients and their outcomes is part of the reputation BAC has built with its graduates.

In a competitive academic world, the opportunity to engage in research at the undergraduate level is

Joel Borketey-Kwaku (BS Biology '16)

**MA from West Chester University
(class of '23)
Laboratory Supervisor**



Joel Borketey-Kwaku serves as a supervisor at a testing laboratory. He explains, "We test products from different clients. It could be anything from paper towels to drinks. We even tested a pair of jeans the other day. We make sure that the amount of bacteria in there is not going to make you sick. Everything on the shelf has certain properties in them, we just make sure that the properties in there can hold out for as long as the expiration date says they can. So we just make sure that everything is within the specifications." Prior to this, he designed pharmaceuticals as a formulation scientist. Currently, he is also enrolled in a master's program at West Chester University, studying management in public health with a minor in molecular and cancer genetics. He finds his behind-the-scenes work gratifying. "It is exciting and rewarding work. You don't always get to see it immediately with like other people. If you're a physical therapist you would see it within weeks. This takes a while."

"I love it. I never thought I would say that," he admits about his profession. "I'm just curious about everything. I love finding something I'm not supposed to find because it's just like new information for me. And I like it more so too because of some of the teachers here that helped me. That's why I come back here. Dr. Higgins and Dr. Figge are some of my favorite teachers here. It's the way they imbued me with curiosity to follow things that are of interest to me. That's what propelled me into the field of what I do now. I'm very, very lucky to have been led by teachers who have that ability and work with me and have a lot of resources to help me succeed."

Joel's curiosity for how the world works extends to life's bigger questions, "Religion will slowly work itself into how you shape your mental models and how you go about the world. So that was key, that was fundamental for me." Bryn Athyn College helped feed that hunger to learn and shape the scientist he is today. "Sometimes I've questioned myself about my religion, but that's because science would make you question yourself," he says. "Science is mostly trying to deduce meaningful information from noise. With religion, science can quickly disentangle that. Not all the time, but most of the time they can. There are times that they both work together, and it's very beautiful to see that."



Brielle Williams, R.N. (AA Pre-Nursing '19)

BSN from Jefferson College of Nursing, '20
Nurse at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia

Brielle Williams is currently a resident nurse at Children's

Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), working with patients on a pulmonary general pediatrics and complex care floor as she finalizes requirements to become a clinical nurse. "I see kids with lots of different disease processes. They're either acutely sick or chronically sick," she says. While the work she does is very rewarding, it also can be difficult. "I love talking to the kids, and I love helping the parents, but it's always really hard. When you see a kid who's really sick, and you know there's nothing you can really do to help, that's always hard."

As a pediatric nurse, her role oscillates between administering medical care and offering support and information for the child and their family. "I'll definitely say that a lot of my job

as a nurse is to be the in-between for the doctors and the parents—being that filter for the doctors and the parents that they can communicate well. And being the translator for any kind of medical terminology, anything that the parents don't always understand." Those relationships she builds between her patients and their family have been a highlight of her career and were the reason she wanted to become a nurse.

Bryn Athyn's 2+2 nursing program was the right fit for Brielle. She received her AA degree with a lot of pre-requisites before moving on to receive her bachelors from Jefferson College of Nursing. Bryn Athyn's small classes and emphasis on critical thinking helped Brielle succeed at Jefferson and in the professional world. She appreciates her spiritual and ethical foundation in the New Church. "I think it's very useful to learn

about spirituality and then go into the health field," she says. "Because you do constantly have that in the back of your mind: the greater good. What's best for this person? It's more difficult to be selfish and not ethical about the decisions that you make when you have that strong moral grounding."

For those entering a career in healthcare, she offers some advice: "Don't burn yourself out too early. You always have resources. Always use them. It's not worth it. I've seen some new nurses who started on my floor get burnt out and leave after just a couple months because they took everything upon themselves and didn't always ask for help, thinking that it's all up to them. Nursing is not a one-person job. They may be your patients that day, but you have other people around who are always willing to help."

a way for students to stand out. Eugene Potapov, Ph.D., is a researcher who studies eagles in Siberia during his summers. He also leads the Deer Study project at BAC during the school year, a project in which white-tailed deer are collared and tracked so factors affecting their movement can be analyzed. Through this study, students have the opportunity to explore their own research questions and present their work at scientific conferences. Though understanding the movement of deer might not be par-

ticularly pertinent to their future careers as doctors or engineers, these students benefited from research opportunities that can be hard to find at the undergraduate level. BAC is dedicated to supporting these opportunities through the Grant Doering Research and Study Trust, which supports research projects with the Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust, and through the Sherri Rumer Cooper Research Fund, which supports student faculty research collaborations. Other research projects happening at

the college include molecular biology work with Stella Evans, Ph.D. (BA '99), or entomological work with myself, both of whom are alumnae of Bryn Athyn College.

Bryn Athyn is gaining a reputation with other institutions for students with a masterful understanding of complex ethics in the healthcare field. The educational focus on the bigger spiritual picture makes better healthcare workers and scientists. Graduates go into the next phase of life with a sense of how their skills in biology and chemistry can be used in pursuit of something greater. A nurse who cares about their patients will see better outcomes. A researcher who sees the beauty of creation will fo-

cus on questions that can improve the world. Professors at BAC model this every day by caring for their students and connecting with them, so when I go into a doctor's office and see a former student working there, I feel confident in the care I will receive. When I look at the Big Board every morning, I am encouraged by thinking of those alumni out there making a difference and I look forward to seeing who will be next to go up on that wall as a success story. ■

Derek Buss, D.O. (BS Bio, '17)

**DO from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine, '22
Resident at Jefferson Northeast for Family Medicine**

Derek Buss recently added "Dr." to his name when he graduated with his doctorate in osteopathic medicine from Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in May. He's currently a resident at Jefferson Northeast of Family Medicine, putting all his practice and education into action.

Medical school offered Derek the unexpected chance to learn about himself: "It's one of those things where you don't know your limitations until you're pushed to the edge. For me, [medical school] was figuring out how to grow in a high stress environment and how to ask questions, how to act with confidence and learn to be confident in my abilities but also be straightforward about my limitations about what I don't know." He discovered how much he values the people-oriented

side of healthcare and was able to bridge two areas of medicine he's passionate about: family medicine and holistic approaches.

His undergraduate experience gave him more than a strong understanding of biology. He says, "At Bryn Athyn, having the chance to focus on values and on spiritual things and develop them for myself was really valuable. Having that solid foundation throughout medical school was one thing that helped carry me through. I knew I wanted to serve people to make a difference in the world by helping people find wellness. Having that time that was focused on thinking about spiritual and ethical matters is very relevant to medicine, because ethics come up a lot. And being able to stay focused on



what really matters, which is people's well-being, is really important." After graduating from Bryn Athyn, Derek spent a year as a medical scribe and certified EMT, volunteering at the Bryn Athyn Fire Company. He's grateful he took this time to gain these experiences and strengthen his application to medical school.

Derek is excited about his new career as a doctor, "It's been cool to see how the process has shaped me and gotten me to this point where I feel like I can start to be a health care provider and provide real, meaningful care to people. That is what it's all about to me, helping people have better lives."



FOREVER FRIEND

Students Nasir Mosley, Haybert Louchie, and Mike Jones embraced the opportunity to make new friends while fostering their longstanding friendship by attending Bryn Athyn College together.

By Michelle Chapin

Best friends since childhood, Nasir Mosley (BA '22), Haybert Louchie (BA '22), and Michael "Mike" Jones (BA '22) all fell in love with the same college. Bryn Athyn checked all their boxes: robust academic programs that supported their interests, internship opportunities to get a head start on their careers, a stunning campus, and the chance to play on the basketball team with each other.

Coming to college together was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity they didn't want to miss, especially given how long they've been friends. "We grew up together," Haybert explains. "We went to elementary

school, middle school, junior high, high school, and now we're in college together. We've known each other about 16 years. To be at school with your best friends is something I would never, ever give up." They all nod enthusiastically as he adds, "This is the best feeling ever."

Hailing from the Poconos, they're no strangers to beautiful scenery. They felt at ease when they set foot on campus, with its spacious greenery and sunny vaulted ceilings. But they felt at home when they witnessed the hidden beauty of campus, and the warm friendliness of everyone they met. "Not only is it a small school and everybody is so kind and nice, but the environment

“To be at school with your best friends ... is the best feeling ever.”
—Haybert Louchie '22

LEFT TO RIGHT:

Nasir Mosley

Mathematics major
with finance and
data science minor

Haybert Louchie

Mathematics and
computer science major
with data science and
psychology minor

Mike Jones

Mathematics major
with business minor

ND S

is just so lovely,” notes Haybert. “It’s always good vibes. Great vibes, actually. Even when it’s raining I still see people running to class, smiling.”

The “Pocono Bros,” as they call themselves, think back to freshman orientation fondly, four years ago. They remember the contrast of the warm weather with the cooler climate they were used to, and the bustling events. It was exciting, though not without a bit of first-day jitters. Meeting new people and finding how you fit in a new place away from home is an intimidating adventure. But Nasir remembers it only took a few hours for his nervous feelings to subside. Now he

feels Bryn Athyn is his community. Fist-bumps and high-fives with passing classmates are a part of his daily routine.

Beyond the Game

These friends were elated when they discovered they had the opportunity to play on the same basketball team. They expected it would be fun and competitive, but they didn’t anticipate just how close a community the team would be. “Seniors and freshmen, even new recruits—we’re all so connected,” says Nasir. Haybert agrees, “We all have this type of unity, this type of bond that is beyond basketball. It goes off the court.”

This close bond extends to the coaching staff as well. Head Coach Sean Westerlund means so much more to these men than just being their team leader. “He’s a great impact on my life,” Haybert beams. “We talk a lot. He’s just someone I can always go to whenever I’m going through any type of problem, not even just school or basketball-related, but life-related. He’ll talk to me and help me out.” Michael attributes his confidence to Coach Sean, saying “Freshmen year I was more in my shell, and then the past two years I’ve really opened up a lot more to the student body. And that’s mostly because of our coach. He really helped me build my confidence and really be able to talk to people.”

Though their basketball career with the Bryn Athyn Lions saw shortened seasons due to the pan-

demic, they are still proud of the team’s accomplishments. Their senior season earned Bryn Athyn’s men’s basketball the division’s 3-D Award in 2022, which stands for “Discover, Develop, Dedicate” and celebrates the team’s demonstration of these sportsmanship ideals.

Stock Market Savants

All three of these men study mathematics but explore different applications. “What I like most about it is I can connect math with the business aspect because of my interest in the stock market. They co-exist together,” Michael says. “I got into the stock market my sophomore year. I was doing a lot of research on YouTube.” When a virtual visitor to a senior capstone class mentioned his specialty as a stock market analyst, Michael and Nasir eagerly reached out to make a networking connection. That class visitor, Charles Ebert, Ph.D., a former mathematics professor of Bryn Athyn College, was all too happy to take these young professionals under his wing. They built an internship to gain hands-on experience in the field. As Michael puts it, they were “learning basically how to build algorithms for the stock market. Not predicting it exactly, but trying to in a way.” Nasir adds, “We used different code and math equations to put it in the system to project the stock market.”

The work of the internship involved a heavy amount of com-

puter coding and programming. As their mentor, Charles got to put on both his professor and engineer hats. "We spent a lot of time figuring out how to write software in the context of financial trading," he says. "They were writing the software with me, taking massive amounts of market data which is generally price and volume for each minute of the day. There are hundreds of thousands of people doing online trading, and we try to outsmart them where we can. So we used real data and tried to invent methodologies that would do better than just flipping a coin deciding whether to trade or not."

Learning programming languages like C# and Python was a challenge, Nasir admits. "I would say the main thing that this has been teaching me is patience. Because with coding and computer science, you have to be patient with your code so that you don't mess things up." After immersing themselves in programming, they were able to begin analyzing the information the code was producing. Charles shared how to use the data to make trading decisions. "They came up with some ideas, and on paper they work reasonably well!" They also honed a very transferable skill: time management. Between classes and athletic practices, they had to balance three virtual meetings a week with Charles, plus the actual coding and analytical work of the project.

Now with some experience analyzing the stock market, Michael and Nasir have an advantage in their budding careers. "I've been looking into stock firms and investment firms that I could possibly get myself into after college," says Michael. "So if I have that as a background, that I know how to analyze stocks and the marketing, they'll actually love that."

Belonging to a Community

Outside classes, the trio has been able to step outside their comfort zones. Dancing in a routine with the Pride Dance Team was something Haybert wouldn't have pictured for himself. "That was something I never, ever saw myself doing," he admits. "It was a great experience though. I was very nervous. I went out there and did something. It was a great time."

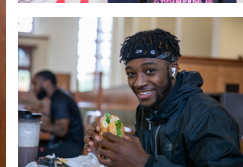
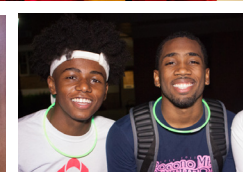
The video game room in the new College Center has been another highlight on campus for the Pocono Bros. As a self-proclaimed computer geek, Haybert was excited when he first saw the room's PCs, TVs, and gaming chairs. The friends find it a fun place to relax between classes or blow off some steam after homework, especially playing Smash Brothers.

Another unanticipated benefit of their time at Bryn Athyn was how life-changing the spiritual tone of campus turned out to be. Raised in a Christian family, Michael found many of the concepts familiar, and he also appreciated the different approach to religion to really help make it his own. Haybert had a similar experience having grown up in a Christian home. "You actually start to embrace the spirituality a little bit more. Especially going to Friday morning chapel, I think that's a big aspect of why I'm into it now. Because at first I was a little hesitant. But after going for the first year, I was like 'I really like this.' So now when it came back after COVID, I was just so thankful that this is back." Nasir had a slightly different upbringing, "I don't come from a religious background, but coming here has helped me get more in tune with my spiritual side. Especially with learning new things in the classes and also the Friday morning chapel. It's just very helpful with understanding the religion that's here." He formed an unlikely friendship with Rev. Chuck Blair (M.Div. '07), one of the leaders of the Friday service, bonding over their shared love of the Poconos.

Best Friends Forever

These three young men are grateful they could maintain their friendships with one another while also investing in their education and upcoming careers. Being together as they've crammed for exams, celebrated basketball wins, and collaborated on homework has cemented their already strong relationships. "We feed off of each other with our ideas with different assignments," Nasir says. "It helps us all in the long run, honestly."

As they move to the next stage of their lives, careers, and friendship, they each remark on what they're taking with them after graduation. For Haybert, it's the religious and spiritual aspects of his experience. "I came here to find myself, and I don't want to lose that when I leave here," he says. Michael is grateful for the tools to aid him in "becoming or better person every single day. I definitely think I've changed to a more productive and open and generous person." And Nasir has acquired a lifelong passion: "The hunger to learn. I've learned so many things from so many people. Hearing different things, I'll always cherish that." ■



Artfully Academic

From art historian to administration, Dean of Academics Jonathan Kline, Ph.D., discusses his care for students, Bryn Athyn College's religious identity, and the current challenges (and opportunities) of the institution.

By Michelle Chapin

Jonathan Kline, Ph.D., has an energy and affection for art history that is difficult to miss. His first role at Bryn Athyn College as an art history professor and department chair for the arts program allowed him to share this deep passion for his field with his students. To him, painters and sculptors aren't just individuals to admire, they're also comrades. "When you spend time with Michaelangelo and Raphael and Botticelli and my other friends, they become friends," Jonathan says. "And I have enjoyed their company for decades. I spend time with them every chance I get."

In his new role as Dean of Academics, Jonathan now splits his attention from beloved Italian Renaissance artwork to include another passion of his: helping shape a new era of New Church higher education. Overseeing the student academic experience is a responsibility he feels honored to take on. "My hope is that I can be good for the job here. I would like to be humble about that. There

are reasons for this college that are beyond me."

For the Love of Art

It's no wonder Jonathan holds his love and expertise of art's beauty and history at such a core level. As a teenager, he spent summers working at Glencairn Museum, surrounded by stunning artwork that had been illustrating stories and evoking emotions for centuries. As an undergrad at Temple University, his curiosity accelerated with professors who could enliven art by sharing social and historical contexts, and ways in which these works still matter today. "The thing about art history," he posits, "is that you immerse yourself in works of the most exquisite beauty, and you get to play with ideas that are profound. You see the interaction of so many different disciplines. I look for the historical significance of how a work of art participates in history—doesn't just reflect history but actively participates in how events unfold—and how a work of art can show us

and show people hundreds of years ago the most complicated religious doctrines. When you stand in front of certain paintings by Botticelli or Raphael, or stand under Michaelangelo's ceiling, you really see Christian doctrine in pure form."

Studying in Rome, first as an undergraduate and again as a grad student, Jonathan to his expertise in art of the Italian Renaissance. His career has taken him to teach at the University of Hartford and Temple University, where he simultaneously earned his doctoral degree. When a position became available in his hometown at Bryn Athyn College, he couldn't help feeling it was meant to be. He says, "We humbly look back at the workings of Providence in awe. It is comforting to know that I was supposed to be here."

Seeing Students as Potential Angels

Jonathan's approach to education is simple yet profoundly beautiful. "At the heart of it, where I really like

"College is a complex thing,
full of subtlety and nuance."





With a phenomenal faculty and a distinct New Church perspective, Jonathan recognizes Bryn Athyn College as a place of unique intellectual discovery for its students.

to come from, is a belief that each and every one of our students, from Swedenborgian doctrine, is a potential angel, and our duty to them is to help them think on a spiritual level. Inasmuch as we do that, we help them on an eternal path.” He has seen this philosophy reflected in how deeply and genuinely his fellow faculty members care for students both in and out of the classroom. The kindness and dedication professors share is inspiring. “Those things go a long way in fostering a sense of support and a sense of belonging,” he says.

This belief in his students’ heavenly potential grew from Jonathan’s upbringing in the New Church, which he was able to expand when he first came to Bryn Athyn College. The Swedenborgian influence within the institution allowed him to interact differently with his own faith, and explore those convictions alongside his students as they did the same. While career preparation is a very important goal of a college education, he appreciates that Bryn Athyn tends to this goal and extends it to help students focus on their spiritual lives as well.

The Role of Religion

Jonathan reflects on the ways other faith-based colleges have used art on their campuses to express aspects of their religious foundations. He sees opportunity for Bryn Athyn College to signal its own distinctive religious identity. “I actually would like our college to appear more overtly religious,” he explains. “We are about an intellectual approach to the Divine and seeing a relationship between faith and charity. We are about a distinct religion. We are about the New Church. We also are fundamentally about an intellectual approach to one Divine and conjunction of faith and charity. I would love to see that represented on campus, artistically. I don’t know yet what that art would look like.”

Jonathan equates this vision for Bryn Athyn College to some of the awe-inspiring experiences he’s had as an art historian, recalling, “I once walked across the piazza of St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome and I was amazed. It’s monumental. The building is huge. The architecture is beyond human scale. And I was in awe of this place dedicated to Catholicism. You can feel it when you’re

there. And I remember thinking at the time, wondering to myself, will we be this?” He gives credit to the Bryn Athyn Cathedral and the Historic District, which offer breathtakingly stunning interpretations of New Church doctrine and community. The College has a unique opportunity to celebrate that gathering of ideas, which Jonathan envisions can happen on a grand scale. “It wouldn’t be St. Peter’s Basilica,” he admits. “It wouldn’t be a piazza. But somewhere down the line we can be a place where people from all over the world come because of this religion, on that kind of scale. And that’s the kind of vision we can have for the College.”

That is not to say that embracing a religious identity should in any way be exclusionary. “We have an obligation to our student body to welcome and celebrate diversity, and I mean diversity on so many levels,” to which he adds, “including religious diversity. I think we need to celebrate our students for who they are and where they come from, and we need to welcome and value them for who they are and who they might become as themselves.” Jonathan believes curriculum is an opportunity to do this, that the College can help highlight similarities between New Church doctrinal ideas and other Christian or non-Christian faiths. Drawing on *True Christian Religion* 571, he says, “If we have students from any different religion and we help them to begin to think on a spiritual level, then we’re making an impact that can be eternal. And that to me is the essence of New Church education. For students who come from other religions, I think what we’re doing here certainly applies to them and can help them in their paths.”

He continues, “We have stu-

dents that come from any number of diverse backgrounds. I am so pleased that they want to study at our institution. We need to provide them a space that is safe and welcoming. I feel very passionate about that.”

A New Era

The quality and care of a Bryn Athyn education has remained steady, though the world and its students have changed significantly over the decades. Today’s students are concerned about finances, social life, and their contributions to the world. Jonathan recognizes his role as Dean of Academics is to ensure that curricula stays both rigorous and relevant, while meeting students where they are and helping them get to where they need to be by graduation. He notes, “College is a complex thing, a place of subtlety and nuance. We are a place where people can gather and think, and we’re a place where we can discuss complicated issues. And the issues that we face in the world are complicated.”

Faculty involvement is essential in complicated discussions, and the new Dean of Faculty, Marcy Latta, Ph.D., has been instrumental in ensuring smooth collaboration. “I could not do this without Marcy,” says Jonathan. “We work closely together. My obligation to the faculty is to work with the faculty.” As a faculty member himself, he understands the weight of this role, advocating for the needs of the academic program while balancing his administrative responsibilities.

Jonathan feels the need to show students and prospective students the value of a religious, liberal arts education in today’s world. As the rising cost of a college education continues to appear in national news cycles, the return on investment is in question now more than

ever. Yet Jonathan remains unwavering in his confidence in the value of this investment. “I am dedicated to both of those things, to the idea that college should be a good investment of your money and you should be able to get a job afterwards, but also that you should develop your way of thinking.”

Challenges Ahead

While he recognizes the challenges facing the College, Jonathan does not think the institution is doomed to failure. “Financial sustainability and enrollment growth are among the immediate priorities,” he says. “And I play a part in helping solve those. “I need to work on retention of students from an academic side, I need to be sure that our academic programs are meeting students where they need to be met, and feed so that they will be welcomed and encouraged and want to continue at Bryn Athyn College. And our teachers are wonderful. I’m not implying that we don’t do that already. The question is, how can we take something that we’re doing well and do it better?”

“The next couple years are going to be tough,” Jonathan admits. “I don’t think there’s any point in sugarcoating that. We need to get on firm financial footing. We need to increase enrollment.” But as aware as he is of the present issues, he is also sure Bryn Athyn can overcome them. And while he admits he overuses the word “exquisite,” he cannot help but interject, “There really is potential for this college to be exquisite.”

His confidence in Bryn Athyn College’s ability to be a center of New Church education on a grand scale shows in his face, similar to the way he looks when recalling the feeling of crossing the piazza of St. Peter’s



“I deeply appreciate the special value of the work carried out by Bryn Athyn College faculty. Our faculty assume the significant task of educating the whole student as to both the natural and spiritual facets of their minds and lives. Moreover, I love that our educational program is designed with an eye towards useful service as a vital element of a life of flourishing.”

— Marcy Latta, Ph.D., Dean of Faculty

Basilica. He smiles, “When you stand in Doering Center and you see the diversity of students—students from so many different backgrounds. They’re milling about before classes or going to class. You can see it there. When you see the students gathered and talking in Brickman over lunch, you can see it. There are little bits of that, absolutely. You see that here on our campus. It’s a little bit of that huge thing. If we have little bits of that here, why can’t we grow it? Foster that. Make it bigger and bigger.”

And amid all these efforts helping Bryn Athyn be all it can be, he still finds moments to revel with his companions, though lately his time in the classroom has been less than he’d like. He can’t stay away from his closest confidantes, “I do get to spend a little bit of time with my friends. With Botticelli. Raphael.” ■



KINDRED PODCAST

Alumnae Kate Coffin, Jenn Asplundh (BA '89), and Kat Gatti (BA '13) work together to create a podcast that highlights our human relationship with animals and nature. Sisters Kate and Jenn host a variety of guests, including a marine biologist, a musician, an archeologist, and a photographer. Together with producer Kat, these three women offer a platform to create awareness to heal our planet.

Why a podcast?

Kate In 2020, I was compelled to join the bigger voice working to support animals and nature in what I see as a crisis of disconnect between humans and the natural world. When the pandemic hit, I wanted to create another platform for the voices of animals and their ecosystems that need to be heard. I was a longtime listener of podcasts, and it just came to me one day sitting in my kitchen that a podcast could be that platform.

How did you come up with the name "Kindred"?

Jenn When Kate and I began the process of naming the podcast, it became clear pretty quickly how challenging it was going to be. Finding just the right name was not easy, and at first, we just threw out a bunch of silly things and had some laughs about our ideas. Pretty quickly, I zeroed in on Kindred Spirits, but my little sister wasn't sold. I think she suggested Kindred Species, which I was not as fond of. Then, almost at the same time, we both asked what about just calling it Kindred? The thing I loved about this was that not only did it convey the idea that all of us beings on planet earth are interconnected, but also because Kate and I are sisters it seemed to really be a fitting name.

What does the process of creating a podcast episode look like?

Kat It's a lot of moving parts, not always happening in chronological order. Usually, it begins with a brainstorming session between Kate and myself. We create a map for each season which includes defining specific themes and the main mission we want to focus on. Next, we'll look at our rolling dream list of possible scientists, animal advocates, et cetera to interview. Then I get to work researching and contacting potential guests. This usually gets the ball rolling pretty quickly and we start scheduling interviews, editing time, and finalizing the season's publishing layout.

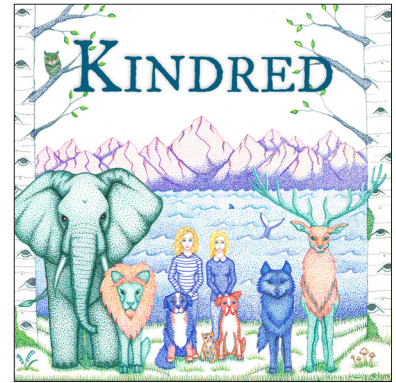
Have there been challenges in the podcast process?

Kat We are a small but mighty team. We all balance many different job roles in the project. It's all about remaining organized and having good communication with one another. None of us has ever done a podcast before, so there are some steep learning curves but nothing we can't conquer together. Kate and I often say flexibility and consistency are very useful when coming up against a wall.

What has been the most surprising part of the process?

Jenn For me, as mostly an on-looker to the technical process of creating a podcast, it's the amount of time that it takes to put an episode together. I've been listening to podcasts for years, and I always hear hosts talk about this but didn't fully grasp the extent of the work that goes into just one episode. From researching different people, to interview, to recording the episode, and finally the editing process, it's a whole lot more hours of work to put together than the under 60-minute final version that people hear.

As far as the most surprising thing about the actual interview process, I think I've been most surprised (and delighted!) by how knowledgeable and yet accessible and willing to share their knowledge all of our guests have been. We have been very fortunate to be able to talk to quite a wide variety of people in a broad spectrum of fields, and every time we listen to what they have to say, I'm awed and amazed as well as so grateful for their offerings. It's been a real privilege to be able to see things through the lens of an expert, and something that I really value.



For more information and to listen, visit www.kindredpodcast.com

How did your time at BAC contribute to this podcast?

Kate For me, Bryn Athyn College solidified a lifetime of teachings rooted in the natural and spiritual world. I was raised with the idea that everything that exists on this earth has a deeply spiritual meaning, and BAC helped bring that all into focus. It was there that I began to understand the impact I have on the natural world and what it could mean to me on a spiritual level. There are real working interconnections between us as humans and animals and nature. And this inspired me ultimately to start my business, Otis & Roo Dog Collars, where I could give back to animals in need, and to start Kindred.

Jenn I think it helped me learn how to articulate my thoughts, and how to listen and ask questions. I think it gave me an interest in learning and helped shape me into a curious person. My role at Kindred is really to represent the audience, and the way I approach our interviews is simply to listen and react as I do when I listen to podcasts on my own. So I think that through the courses I took at BAC, I learned how to be curious and to feel capable of asking questions if I wanted more clarification on a topic.

Kat My time at BAC shaped much of my strong work ethic and creative thinking. I was really lucky to spend four years working with Andy Sullivan and Serena Sutton and the team in the Marketing Office while studying at BAC. My time with the marketing team was foundational in the development of so many skills. I was given a lot of freedom to explore and ask questions. Andy and Serena also made sure I was exposed to every area in the marketing office. I always felt part of the team, and my opinion was always appreciated. They have also been invaluable contacts after graduation. I worked with Andy as script supervisor on his 2017 film, *Bokeh*, and he was actually the person who introduced me to Kate Coffin.

What's your favorite episode?

Kat I have so many! Which to choose? Our first season was a huge experiment for us. We had some failures and successes. Above all, we learned a lot, quickly. We figured out what worked and what didn't, and I believe it led to us being much more mission-focused and organized in our second season. For this reason, I love the episode we did with Shawn Heinrichs (S2 E1). It was a brilliant interview and touched on so many critical issues that are going on in the world. But rather than just discussing these issues, Kate and Shawn really dove deep into ways we can help resolve them. Shawn talks a lot about how humans are wired to be fearful of scarcity and how if we could realize the "enoughness" in our lives, it would help us be more balanced and connected to the world around us. I'm so proud of the whole second season and really can't pick a favorite. Each one is close to my heart!

Kate Honestly, I struggle to answer that question. What I can say is that in the first episode we interviewed the lovely Charlotte Frearson, archeologist and momma to Indiana Jones (S1 E1), her beloved companion who also happens to be a Whippet dog. That was my first interview ever, and it set an unexpected precedent that has remained, unprompted, in all of our conversations with our guests who end up saying the same thing: we need to get reconnected to the deep beauty and knowledge that animals and nature hold, and that without this connection, we are missing out on a world of magic, and wonder, and awe, and inspiration. When we lose our understanding that we are critically intertwined into the ecosystem that is Mother Nature, we lose a part of what it means to be human.

Jenn I actually have to pick two episodes: The Blue Mind episode with Jay Nichols (S1 E4) and the Trap King episode with Stirling Davis (S1 E5).

The Blue Mind episode was so powerful to me because hearing a scientist explain the scientific reasons that I have the intense emotional response to being by water was profound for me! Knowing there is a "why" from the scientific perspective struck me as nothing short of amazing! I am not scientifically inclined by nature, but when I heard Jay talk, it made me want to learn more about the science of water. This episode still comes back to mind frequently, and its impact on me is lasting.

Our episode with Stirling delighted and surprised me in many ways. I know people who are involved in the TNR (Trap, Neuter, Release) world, but I loved hearing Stirling's back story and why he was

led to get involved to help cats in this way. But mostly I was struck by the human being that Stirling is, and the energy he shares with the world through his work. I could have talked to him for hours. I found him to be a pure joy to interact with, and he is as lighthearted and funny as he is committed to this work, intent on changing stereotypes and working to involve Black and Brown communities in a field that has been predominantly run by middle-aged white women.

I feel very fortunate to have been introduced to people like Jay and Stirling through working on this podcast, and it's been an unexpected joy to have been exposed to these and many other wonderful people who have dedicated their lives to the work of conservation, healing the planet and studying many of the wonders in our natural world.

How does Kindred contribute to the global community?

Kate Through Kindred we give voice to the people in the bigger global community who have made it their life's work to understand the natural world so that we better understand ourselves and the ecosystems we live in. The conversations we have with our guests are a catalyst to a connection to animals and nature that I for one would not otherwise have.. The scientists, conservationists, and activists we talk to offer our community—your community—knowledge and real inspiration through their work, which then can create space for empathy, healing, and change for the better of our world. ■



THE LION'S PRIDE GRANT

“As our student community continues to grow, our mission remains the same.”



The success of a Bryn Athyn education starts with ensuring that the students and the institution are a good fit for each other. Bryn Athyn works hard to ensure those who come here are set up to thrive. When financial barriers impede any individual who wants to study here from doing so, it's heartbreaking for all involved. The new Lion's Pride Grant, established in 2022, aims to break down those barriers so that more students can realize their dream of attaining a degree from Bryn Athyn College.

From the many one-on-one conversations with prospective students during the application process, the Enrollment Management team has identified areas where additional assistance would help families overcome financial hurdles. Many alumni who have received similar scholarship funds in the past say the support they received was a key component in their college experience and allowed them to focus on their studies. Recently the College was also able to increase institutional aid and enhanced merit scholarships for resident students choosing to enhance their experience by living on campus.

The Lion's Pride Grant had an exciting kickoff at the annual "Show Your Love" Day of Giving on February 14, 2022. All donations made during the giving event were matched, thanks to the generosity of a caring donor. "We're both inspired and grateful to the donors who have made this Lion's Pride Grant possible," says President Blair. "The benefit they see for the Bryn Athyn College students has prompted this kindness. We're excited for all the good that will come from their generosity."

As our student community continues to grow, our mission remains the same: to serve as an intellectual center for all who desire to engage in higher education enriched, guided, and structured by the study of the Old Testament, New Testament, and theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. Financial contributions from Bryn Athyn College alumni and friends make everything we do here possible. As Bryn Athyn's new Advancement Director and Coordinator of Alumni Relations & Career Services, I'm encouraged by all the generous support and active participation I've already witnessed from alumni and friends—Bryn Athyn would not be where we are today without you.

If you have any questions about the donation process, or would like to donate directly to the Lions Pride Grant, please contact the Office of Advancement at 267-502-4864 or advancement@brynathyn.edu.



Colleen Prendergast
Advancement Director
and Coordinator of
Alumni Relations & Career
Services
267-502-4864
colleen.prendergast@brynathyn.edu



BUILDING A CAREER IN THE BUILDING ARTS

After graduating with a degree in the building arts, professional metalworker Oskar Simons creates artistic and practical pieces.

By Michelle Chapin

OSKAR SIMONS

To the untrained eye, a collection of strewn metal shards and haphazard hammers may look like a random assortment of debris. But to artisans like Oskar Simons (BFA '21), these seemingly disjointed items are puzzle pieces yet to be assembled into an intricate door frame, an artistic sculpture—the possibilities are endless.

These scenes are common at Holzman Iron Studio, a metalwork shop in Philadelphia whose work can be seen in locations as local as Bryn Athyn Historic District and as famous as the Empire State

Building. The studio's craftsmen create and install custom metalwork projects that are beautiful and often functional, such as architectural elements, retail materials, and public artwork. Oskar has been working here since graduating from Bryn Athyn's building arts program, where he was taught by the studio's founder, Warren Holzman.

Oskar's passion for the craft has been a steadily growing flame since childhood. "I loved to go out into the shed and work on stuff. I used to steal brooms from the house," he laughs, "the metal ones with hol-

low tubes, and beat them flat into swords.” In high school, he was a regular viewer of online blacksmithing videos. But it wasn’t until he learned about Bryn Athyn’s building arts program that Oskar realized his interest could become a career. And his positive experience in his first freshman forging class proved he was making the right decision.

As he progressed through the program, Oskar noticed metalworking involves a delicate balance of his physical and mental skills. “It was interesting to realize I was going into a field that required a lot more physical strength than I had. I had to build up muscle and endurance to actually do the work,” he recalls. Luckily his part-time job helped him build that muscle: moving large stones and assisting the carving of headstones.

Among the lessons of welding and hammering techniques, his classes emphasized cost estimation and design theory. “It’s not to say that forging doesn’t require any brain power at all,” he says. “Designing was a big part of it that I hadn’t done much of before. Being in the building arts program meant that I was in a bunch of classes that weren’t at all related to forgery, but did have some fairly heavy design elements to them. [Like] art history classes, which informed what designs looked good and where they come from. It makes you able to reference other works of art when you know about them and see what looks good and why.” Courses also challenged Oskar and his classmates to consider resource constraints of materials, time, and pricing when creating from scratch. “The balance of making a cool design, but making it achievable with my current skill-set, was interesting.”

Now, Oskar’s skills are being put into action on a variety of unique projects. He’s helped create works like brass doors, windows, and steel stairs. “These have mostly been tests of my precision, because all pieces have to be cut to an exact length, and all holes have to be drilled in exactly the right spot for it to look professional. It’s been fascinating. It’s learning new stuff every day, and working with other materials—not just iron, but brass as well.”

He also enjoys the fresh, collaborative environment of the studio, which he finds essential for the unique projects with which his team is tasked. “It’s not like in a foundry, or on an assembly line. It’s always a new job,” he explains. “There’s never instructions for how our projects are to be made. We have to make them up as we go, which is one of the strong points of our shop. We’re a custom metalwork fabrications place, we can give you pretty much whatever you need, and that’s something not all shops offer.” He smiles as he adds the caveat, “As long as there’s enough time and money.”

A career in metalwork means long hours at the forge, so a visit to a job site for installation provides a welcome change of



Oskar (far right) enjoyed college life at Bryn Athyn, but especially loved spending time in the forge.



FORGING: Reshaping metal by means of heat and force (ex: heating and hammering)
FABRICATION: Altering and combining existing pieces of metal (ex: cutting, welding)



This replication of a piece in the Cathedral’s small chapel helped Oskar practice creating spiral shapes in metalwork. Projects like these in College helped him gain hands-on experience he now uses in his profession.

scenery. Though the majority of Oskar’s time is spent fabricating in the studio, he does have some welcome opportunities for forging projects. “Knowing what you can do with a hammer and an anvil—you can do a lot. But you have to do it in very specific ways and it takes experience to know how to do those things.” ■

GRANT HALL



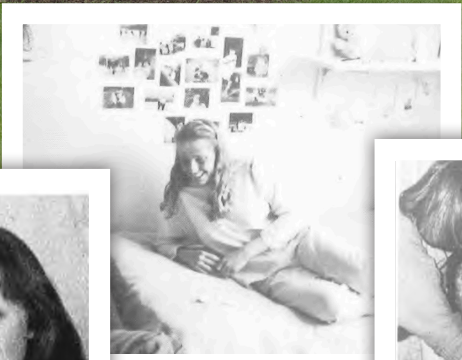
Meghan (Friesen) McCorkindale



Nora (Alden) Cooper, Kate (Booth) Morgan (AA '88), Tracy Campbell



Gay (Hodgell) Elphick (AA '88) and Lisa (Bruell) Synnestvedt (BA '88)



Pam (Klein) Odhner



Martha Gyllenhaal and Sarah Moore (AA '87)



Judi (Elphick) Pafford (BA '85), Sharon Cooper (AA '84), and Jim Pafford (BA '85)

Students hang out at the bench outside Grant Hall's entrance

THEN & NOW

A number of upgrades and enhancements have been made to women's residence hall Grant Hall since it was built in the late 1960's. The entrance has been updated, rooms now have air conditioning, and lounges and kitchens have gone through a few facelifts.

The daily lives of students have also changed over time. Landlines have been replaced by smartphones. Entertainment depends on the internet rather than a television antenna. But many aspects remain the same: friendships are forged on hallways, classmates offer welcomed invitations to take a homework break together, and young women have a cozy place to call home on campus amid the busyness of college life.

Excerpts from the 1985 Yearbook



From the outside, Grant Hall seems like a nice, quiet, little building. However, don't judge a book by its cover, or in this case, building by its bricks! Actually, Grant Hall is a lively, be-bopping, and noisy (thanks to the newly installed alarm system!) place to be.

Sure, it has its problems, like the combination lock on the front door not operating correctly and some of the rooms having sub-Arctic temperatures, and the lounge stereo that loves to munch out on cassette tapes, but for the most part, Grant Hall is a great place! The Pendletons and the Sullivan's make the dorm seem like home, and the assistant housemothers are always around to help. Hayley's ever-present threats to get to dorm meetings on time, Val's zoo-face. Judy's hair twirling, and Ann's sweet scent of tea rose are always there to remind us of super "house-mums."



At 1:00 p.m., every afternoon, the regular soap opera "junkies" gather around the television in the lounge to watch "All My Children." A variety of foot apparel wanders about the dorm, such as Cara's Killer tomatoes, Natalie's rabbits, and Kirsten's elephants. Who could ever forget the wars that Gay and Marion had with Jenn and Tracy, or the tortilla-chips-and-hot-taco-sauce parties in Blake's room, or Leah's grin, or the battles between Rebekah and Hayley, or the newly-initiated tea parties with the guys from Childs Hall?

These are the things that Grant Hall is made of! Although the building itself may deteriorate over the years, the memories of Grant Hall will long remain in our hearts and in our minds.



Clockwise from top left: Jessica (Fuller) Holston (AA '86), Amy (Grubb) Childs (AA '87), Gay (Hodgell) Elphick (AA '88), Bonnie Hodgell (AA '87), Sheila (Parker) Daum (BS '87), Valerie (Jorgensen) Younan (BA '87)

New Church Career Network

Facilitating meaningful connections between young adults and New Church professionals.

By Michelle Chapin

Setting out on a new career can be daunting, especially for fresh graduates or those pursuing a change in profession. A new initiative started in 2020 called the New Church Career Network (NCCN) aims to ease the process of entering the job market by connecting young adults with people willing to offer networking and mentorship.

The network focuses on inter-generational connections. Those with field expertise can become a member to offer career support in whatever ways they're willing to give. Members have helped NCCN seekers with their resumes or given advice or guidance in their shared

field of interest. Some have chosen more longstanding rapport like mentorships and internships. These members represent a wide range of professions and trades in areas such as journalism, construction, business, law, education, politics and so much more. The list is constantly growing.

Helping young adults build up their networks and networking skills is another invaluable way NCCN supports budding careers. Program Coordinator Aaliya Gunther (BA '20, MS '21) notes one of many recent introductions NCCN has helped facilitate: "We had a young adult contact us who wanted to explore business. He was very intimidated to contact anybody and didn't feel comfortable or know where to start. We were able to give him support and be that middleman to get things going. We took on that initial awkwardness, and he ended up scoring a job and a really great relationship with someone who he now considers a mentor."



New Church Career Network program Coordinator Aaliya Gunther (BA '20, MS '21) at the *Majors, Careers, & More Day* in Fall 2021.

Because young adults are the key demographic NCCN works to support, Bryn Athyn College students and alumni have a unique opportunity to partner because of the shared New Church affiliation. Many students took advantage of NCCN's presence at the *Majors, Careers, & More Day* this past fall. Freshmen were excited to have an opportunity to connect early in their career journey, and seniors appreciated being able to inquire about post-graduation jobs and networking opportunities.

The alliance demonstrates Bryn Athyn's dedication to helping prepare students for the work force. Academic programs emphasize experiential learning by way of internships and hands-on programs. Freshman orientation now includes an introduction to *Navigating a Useful Life*, a program

"I was able to connect with someone who specialized in a field that I am interested in. I would not have known to reach out to this person otherwise."

Allaina Brock, '21

"Shout out to the NCCN for connecting me with a new mentor. Had a great call this afternoon to discuss the dynamic world of communication and how a young professional like myself can start making their way in the world ... my network grows alongside my confidence."

Spencer Cowley,
Copywriter & Marketing Consultant

“Charity itself is acting justly and faithfully in our position and our work.”
 -True Christian Religion 422



helping students reflect on their own spiritual purpose as they explore major, career, and life pathways. NCCN is now another tool students and graduates have in their toolbelt.

The NCCN is constantly growing as it connects people. Already, members have helped facilitate job opportunities, mentorships, grad school applications and advice, internship opportunities, resume support, and employment. If you'd like to give support or need help with your own career path, consider signing up for the New Church Career Network. ■

check out the website here →



New Church Career Network



The New Church Career Network aims to provide **career support** and opportunities for New Church young adults by **connecting** them with professionals in their field of interest. We are working to **build community** through professional connections, mentorship, and career development.



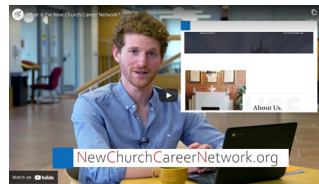
Networking



Mentorship



Building Community



"Charity itself is acting justly and faithfully in our position and our work."
 -True Christian Religion 422



Find Us
 @newchurchcareernetwork

www.newchurchcareernetwork.com | @newchurchcareernetwork | NCCN

WANT TO CHANGE THE FUTURE?

WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY.

Consider making a gift through your will.

Bryn Athyn College can expand its reach with your help. You can help many students for years to come using your will.

It's an easy and flexible way to give a transformational gift to the College.

All it takes is a simple addition to your existing documents.



Eve M. Miller
 (BA '22) class
 valedictorian

To discuss your plans for support of Bryn Athyn College, contact Mark Wyncoll, Office of Advancement: 267-502-2423 or mark.wyncoll@newchurch.org

Alumni Milestones



Congratulations to the Class of 2022!

BUILDING ARTS

William T. Gartner
with a minor in Philosophy,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

BIOLOGY

Maylissa Donica Clarke
Mount Holly, Pennsylvania

Kiaaem Zaire Comegys
Allentown, Pennsylvania

Yuliya Hulyk
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Chloe Levan
Whitehall, Pennsylvania

Kailey E. MacDonald
with a minor in Psychology,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Danielle Marie News
Bensalem, Pennsylvania

Gretchen Amy Roscoe with a minor
in History, Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania

BUSINESS

James Butler Cole
Clarksville, Maryland

Joseph Howard Kees
with a minor in Data Science,
Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania

James Joseph Koneicki
with a minor in Data Science,
Southampton, Pennsylvania

Thomas David Kozlowski, Jr.
Olney, Maryland

Jettaka Rose McWilliams
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Eve M. Miller
with a minor in Data Science,
Millville, New Jersey [valedictorian]

Zachary Aaron Pamaylaon
Aiea, Hawaii

Aidan James Quaglino
Brewster, New York

EARLY CHILDHOOD & SPECIAL EDUCATION

Chelsea Marie Czarnik
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Dante Lanzetta
Howell, Pennsylvania

Jenessa Helen Lombardi
Whiting, New Jersey

Ashley Rivera
Southampton, Pennsylvania

Paulina Ilene Storck
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Victoria Titano Elkins Park,
Pennsylvania

John Connor Tracey
with a minor in Psychology,
Jenkintown, Pennsylvania

Savannah J. Zazulak
with a minor in Psychology,
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

ENGLISH & COMMUNICATIONS

Nora Beatrice Connelly
Huntingdon Valley, Pennsylvania

HUMAN SOCIETY

Elizabeth Parker Allen
with minors in Art History and
Education, Rydal, Pennsylvania

Tristan Banks
Perkasie, Pennsylvania

Stephanie Charles
with a minor in Biology,
Cheltenham, Pennsylvania

Derek Bruce Cronlund (Honors)
with a minor in Communications,
Abington, Pennsylvania

Danielle L. Hughes (Honors)
with a minor in English, New
Freedom, Pennsylvania

INTERDISCIPLINARY

Thomas McKinley Frazier
Philosophy/Computer Science with
minors in Business and Data Science,
Mitchellville, Maryland

Breca Orthwein Lawing
Philosophy/Computer Science
with a minor in Data Science,
Meadowbrook, Pennsylvania

Haybert Aidan Louchie
Math/Computer Science with
minors in Data Science and
Psychology, Long Pond, Pennsylvania

Maxwell Hyatt Nelson
Religion/Psychology,
Shillington, Pennsylvania

MATHEMATICS

Michael A. Jones
with a minor in Business,
Tobyhanna, Pennsylvania

Nasir Mosley
with minors in Finance and Data
Science, Tobyhanna, Pennsylvania

PSYCHOLOGY

Kailey N. Brower
with a minor in Biology,
Baldwin, New York

Jordan Raél Brunne
with a minor in Religion,
Queensland, Australia

Alexis J. Mitchem
Trenton, New Jersey

Simone A. Raso
Westbury, New York

Alisha Rose Reid
Ontario, Canada

Michael Donald William Varley
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

RELIGION

Douglas Daniel Calvo
with minors in History and English

Valysha Amar Durandisse
Tobyhanna, Pennsylvania

Thomas Jonathan Jackson
Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania



The commencement ceremony was held on May 28, 2022. The location changed at the last minute from the College Center to the Asplundh Field House due to the inclement weather forecast, but that didn't impede the joyful celebrations of the graduates by faculty, family, and friends.

MASTERS: SPECIAL EDUCATION

- Susan R. Barber**
Hatboro, Pennsylvania
- Gracelyn A. Bullard**
Boston, Massachusetts
- Colleen Dorothy Day**
Warminster, Pennsylvania
- Amber D. Gandy**
Cheltenham, Pennsylvania
- R. Aaliya Gunther**
Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania
- Eric Higgins**
Richboro, Pennsylvania
- Cartina Jarae Hogue**
Reading, Pennsylvania
- Elizabeth Ann Larcher**
Levittown, Pennsylvania
- Wendy Tepoz-Pacio**
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

MASTERS: DIVINITY

- Steven Paul Gunther**
Bryn Athyn, Pennsylvania [valedictorian]
- Calvin Bradley Heinrichs**
Ontario, Canada
- HyunJin Yang**
Seoul, South Korea



THE INSTITUTE FOR
SWEDENBORG STUDIES
AT BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE

Join the Institute for Swedenborg Studies at Bryn Athyn College!

Institute membership is open to anyone interested in the study of Emmanuel Swedenborg, Swedenborgian theology, and the impact of both.

The Institute's membership program exists to facilitate a community of those interested in delving into Swedenborg and Swedenborgian scholarship. Member benefits include:

- Access to the Institute member email communication forum
- Periodic newsletter on activities of the Institute and its members
- Invitation to seminars and other Institute events
- Easy access to resources for Swedenborg studies



For more information on the Institute and to join, please visit brynathyn.edu/academics/institute-for-swedenborg-studies

ALUMNI MILESTONES



In September 2021, Netflix released *On the Verge*, an original series in which actress **Jennifer Gardner** (AA '10) plays a morose and apathetic German au pair for Elisabeth Shue's character.

1980s

Nat Pendleton (BA '80) has retired from the Defense Language Institute in Monterey after 16 years of Federal Service. This is the Department of Defense's language school, which currently teaches 16 languages to all branches of our military. During his tenure, Nat taught linguistic subjects such as Grammar, Phonetics, and Morphology, and studied strategies such as Vocabulary Retention as well as Stress and Time Management.

2010s



Annalisa (Synnestvedt) (BA '11) and **Zach Franzen** (BA '17) with daughter Madeline Grace (age 2) welcomed Landon Robert on Oct. 12, 2021.

Becca (Uber) (BA '15) and **John Kunkle** (AA '12) were married on July 11, 2020 in a small, backyard wedding in Bryn Athyn, PA. They then had a larger blessing and celebration on July 17, 2021 at the Lord's New Church.

Kate (Weil) Gunther (BS '12) and husband TJ welcomed Maeve Riley into their family on October 15, 2021.

Terrence Marcus Johnson (BA '15) and **Cathleen Anne Curran** (BA '14) were married on October 23, 2021.

Katherine Morrill (BS '18) graduated from Jefferson College of Nursing on May 13, 2022.



Alison Cole (BA '11) and **Bennett Buick** (BA '21) were engaged on December 24, 2021. They were betrothed in Fort Jackson, SC, on March 10, 2022 and married in Kempton, PA on July 2, 2022.



Alair Brock (BS '19) completed the Doctor of Physical Therapy program at University of the Sciences on May 25, 2022.

Ariel Martin joined the faculty at the Washington New Church School in Mitchellville, MD, teaching music and 7th and 8th grade homeroom.

2020s

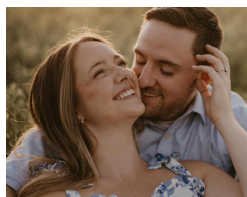
Shelby Puccio (BS '19) received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Holy Family University on June 30, 2022.



Aaliya (Mapp) (BA '20, MS '21) and **Steven Gunther** (M.Div '21) welcomed Kase Peyton Gunther on July 12, 2021. Both Aaliya and Steven graduated in May 2022, and Steven was valedictorian.



Janalene Phillips (BS '19) graduated from Frostburg State University with a Master of Medical Science in Physician Assistant Studies on May 24, 2022.



Hannah Dewees (BS '20) was engaged to Landon Elder on September 4, 2021. She received her Masters in Occupational Therapy from Salus University on May 26, 2022. After her wedding on July 30, 2022 she will take a position at a pediatric therapy clinic in Indiana.

Christine Daum (BS '21) graduated from Jefferson College of Nursing on May 13, 2022.

The Quaker School at Horsham created a new position for **Dante Lanzetta** (BS '22) in response to his time there student teaching. He joins the school this fall as an Adaptive Physical Education/Health Teacher.

Victoria (Tori) Titano (BS '22) joined The Quaker School at Horsham, PA in April 2022, following the end of her student teaching. She has been assigned to their Sassafras Program as a lead teacher, working with young children on the autism spectrum.

FACULTY & STAFF



Ashley McCarrie Naylor, Assistant Director of Financial Aid welcomed Nellie Marie on February 22, 2022, weighing 6 lbs 14 oz and measuring 20 inches long.

In Memoriam

Rev. Dan Pendleton (BA '50, B.Th. '52) passed into the spiritual world in the early morning hours of November 1, 2021. He was 94.

Pete Bostock passed into the spiritual world on July 5, 2020. He was 88 years old.

Lois Ann Klein Palmer (AA '51) passed into the spiritual world on August 22, 2021, at the age of 90. She was a member of the Lake Helen Society in Florida.

Beryl Howard Moorhead passed into the spiritual world on June 24, 2021. She is survived by her five children—John, Lee, Jane, Emily and Alan Christopher — who she raised after her husband, Donald, passed away in 1957. She was 95.

Professor Emeritus **Erland Brock** passed into the spiritual world on February 6, 2022. He was 89 years old. He worked at the college between 1964 and 2007. He was an intellectual giant and his contributions to our College and church are immense.



Please share your news!

www.brynathyn.edu/alumni or email an update to alumni@brynathyn.edu

Marilyn Stroh

WORLD CLASS VIOLA MAESTRO

Marilyn Stroh attended Bryn Athyn College from 1954-1956. She then went on to attend the prestigious Juilliard School of Music in New York City, NY and became their first student to graduate with majors in two instruments. In 1960 she was hired by the world-renowned Metropolitan Opera Orchestra for a lifetime appointment as a viola player, a position she still holds today.

Marilyn did not start playing the viola until she was at Juilliard. As a young child she lived in Kitchener, Ontario, Canada and grew up in a very musical family. She started learning the violin when she was just nine years old and continued her study of classical music on the instrument throughout her teens. However, when she attended Juilliard, there was a shortage of viola players. The school asked all violin students to take turns playing the viola to help fill out their musical ensembles. Marilyn's teachers recognized her hard work, talent, and dedication. When the orchestra contractor for the Met called her in the spring of 1960 to personally ask her to audition, her Juilliard advisor encouraged her to try it. She had always pictured playing in smaller groups, but she agreed to try out anyway. The experience would be useful. Her musicality made her audition stand out, and she was the second woman ever to be employed full time by the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra.

As a student at Juilliard, and later as a member of the Met Orchestra, Marilyn traveled the world. She performed on several tours of Europe. She played at the World's Fair in Seville, Spain, at the World's Fair in Brussels, and in Japan. In

the earlier years, the orchestra traveled mostly by train, later by airplane. Now the orchestra travels less frequently, but performances are broadcast in high definition to opera lovers in theaters all over the world.

Beyond her position with the Met, Marilyn has enjoyed playing both violin and viola for many other audiences. She performed with the National Festival Orchestra in Stratford, Ontario for six seasons. While still in school, she was Principal Viola for the Canadian National Ballet. During her free time on tours, she would sometimes join colleagues in playing free concerts for children with disabilities. Marilyn is still fond of playing in string quartets, her original vision for her career, and, when not rehearsing or performing, she frequently plays at weddings and funerals for her friends and extended family. For over 60 years she has played for both regular and festival services at the Carmel Church in Caryndale, Ontario and at the Bryn Athyn Cathedral. She has been a long-time supporter of New Church groups in northern New Jersey, New York, and Caryndale, Canada. So it is with pleasure that Bryn Athyn College honors her lifetime of achievements in the art of musical performance and her generous service to so many people in communities both here and abroad.



Marilyn, right, at a dance in Glencairn.



Marilyn is seated far right, taking notes in class during her time at Bryn Athyn College in the mid-50s.

BRYN ATHYN COLLEGE



FOUNDED IN 1877

2945 COLLEGE DRIVE, PO BOX 462
BRYN ATHYN, PENNSYLVANIA 19009



SAVE THE DATE

CHARTER DAY WEEKEND | OCTOBER 6-9, 2022