

Westminster School

FULL STEAM AHEAD

Opening Minds in a New Makerspace

INSPIRING LIFE-LONG
COMMUNITY SERVICE

SWEET MUSIC EVERYWHERE:
ORCHESTRAL TRIUMPH

WALTZ INTO

Westminster's
DANCE PROGRAM

ALUMNI
UPDATES

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

60 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION





Westminster School empowers students with skills and attitudes crucial to personal success and outstanding contributions to workplace and community. Westminster's classical education teaches students to think critically and act creatively, to work hard, to develop strong organizational skills, attention to detail, and a keen sense of personal responsibility, and to treat others with respect, courtesy, and kindness.

Westminster students gain a broad and deep understanding of the world through rigorous, well-rounded academic and enrichment programs. Westminster graduates are noted for their superior academic skills, good character, positive attitude toward life's challenges and opportunities, and confidence. Westminster graduates are not only well prepared for higher education, they are prepared for life—and leadership—in the 21st century.

Westminster students are empowered with 21st century skills:
Critical Thinking ~ Communication ~ Creativity
Respect ~ Integrity ~ Work Ethic ~ Leadership



Preschool - 8th Grade • Door-to-Door Bus Service • Extended Care • Camp Program

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A Message from the Head of School



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As I prepare to begin my second year as Head of Westminster School, I am deeply humbled by the honor to serve this beloved school in this capacity. I am also more determined than ever to ensure that the standards Mrs. Goll set and Mr. Glover maintained, continue on well into the future. This is no easy task, especially when it seems that standards in schools and society in general are sliding down a dangerously slippery slope.

As for most schools, the COVID-19 global pandemic was the greatest challenge Westminster School has ever faced. When I reflect on our school's response, I am moved to tears with a sense of pride in our students' perseverance, our teachers' determination, and our parents' support. When we were faced with the monumental task of "doing school" under these extraordinary circumstances, we didn't throw our hands up and say (as one administrator from another private school said on an early Zoom call), "Well, this is too hard. We can't expect the children to learn under these conditions." No, that is not how we operate at Westminster School, because at Westminster School, we do hard things every day. Our students are challenged to be independent, self-reliant, and resilient on a daily basis. So, when the greatest test came, they met it head-on and conquered it. Why? Because that's what they've been trained to do. They adapted to the new way of learning, and they figured it out. We challenged them, we believed in them, and they rose to the challenge and proved what we already knew—they could do it.

For most other schools, it took weeks or months for them to pivot and adjust. Students floundered; frustrated parents panicked; and massive learning loss was the result. Now, post-pandemic, there is a new standard, one that is lower than ever before. The thinking is that the lost time simply can't be made up. The students can't recover. Therefore, let's lower the standards. For instance, the Fairfax County Public Schools system has implemented a new "No Zero Policy," which states that the lowest grade a student can get on an assignment or assessment is a 50%, even if he turns in nothing.

When I heard of this new policy, I couldn't believe it. I remembered Mrs. Goll's words to me when I was a teacher. She reminded the staff that if a student got a 70%, it meant that he/she grasped 70% of the material, and that is a significant portion. Seventy percent meant 70%. Shouldn't fifty percent also mean 50%? There are students who study, put in the work, yet end up with a failing grade, but at least they tried, and they get some credit for that effort. Now, FCPS students literally can do nothing and be awarded a 50%-half credit. I wonder how they will manage when they get to college and their professors don't have the same mindset. Or how their boss will feel when they do no work but expect half credit.

The proponents of this policy argue that a zero is too demoralizing to the student and has too big an impact on his overall grade. Yes, that's true. Perhaps there will be situations where there are extenuating circumstances and a teacher can make the autonomous decision to allow for a make-up or extension. But to make it a blanket policy? What message does this send? How is this preparing him for the real world?

At Westminster School, we are preparing our students not just for high school, but for life. It is the work habits that are instilled in them, the standards that are set for them, the high expectations for their effort and personal conduct that set them apart from their peers. It is our belief in them and our support of them that make reaching and exceeding these lofty goals possible.

So, we will continue to have homework, a grading scale, a dress code, an honor code, and expectations of the highest personal conduct, integrity, kindness, tolerance, and respect for oneself and others. We will keep fighting the fight to make the world a better place. If we stopped doing those things, we would no longer be Westminster School. And the world needs Westminster School.

With warm regard,

Nancy G. Schuler

Head of School



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Cover: The Diamond Jubilee Festival celebrated 60 years of excellence in education.

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The members of the Class of 2022 now embark on their next journey, representing the Westminster community as stand-out students in Northern Virginia public high schools, private high schools throughout the D.C. area, and east coast boarding and preparatory schools.



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The 2021-2022 theater season was one for the books. Congratulations to our Griffin thespians, who all grew in poise, skill, teamwork, and their love of drama!



Whether considering race, religion, country of origin, economic status or learning style, the Westminster School community is one of the most diverse in Northern Virginia.



For the past several years, Westminster School has adopted a guiding theme for each academic year.

Past themes have included:

• The Golden Mean • Words • The Five Senses • Breakthroughs • Animals

With this spirit of invention and advancement in mind, the Westminster faculty and administration seized upon the idea of “Changemakers” as the school’s guiding theme in the 2021-2022 school year. Every two weeks, the school community researched two people who had implemented change in a given field such as human rights, music, scientific research, philosophy, mathematics, or poetry, among others. For each field, the students were introduced to one historic innovator for the first week and then in the second week, one more modern figure who brought about change in that realm. Some of the changemakers were adults who had devoted their careers to that field, but in other cases the changemakers were young people, children and teenagers who cared enough about other people and their world to work hard to make a difference in their communities and beyond. In this way, Westminster students were inspired, not just to strive to make an impact in their professional lives, but also to recognize that they had the capacity and the power to bring about change now through the kindness, compassion, work ethic, and creativity that already exist inside them.

Throughout the year, students watched video clips and absorbed short readings about each changemaker. During library classes or lower-school writing classes, the children wrote reflections in their changemaker journals, contemplating how each changemaker’s life circumstances and personal choices led him or her to innovate. The students considered what personal characteristics a successful changemaker possessed and what efforts and actions were necessary to implement change. As a culminating event, the whole school celebrated Changemakers Day on May 16, and each grade spent the entire day studying one changemaker from the perspective of every academic subject as they moved from class to class, seeing that these individuals can be appreciated from a wide variety of angles. For example, first graders came to appreciate how much Victorian-era mathematician, Ada Lovelace, meant to the advancement

of not only computing, but also of women in academia, while seventh graders demonstrated the way in which artist Michelangelo applied mathematical ratios to his design of the David sculpture.



Motivated by last year’s stimulating discussion, the school community was excited to launch into the 2022-2023 theme:

Collaboration is Key!

This year, teachers and students are exploring the success that comes from working together for a common cause. They are learning that often what is impossible alone is actually surmountable through group effort. Additionally, they are reflecting on the qualities that lead to effective teamwork and the way in which the strengths of each individual group member can be melded into one powerful whole.



With even more vitality than ever in its sixtieth year, Westminster School entered the 2021-2022 school year with a renewed focus on innovation and growth.

FULL STEAM AHEAD

The last school year saw significant expansion of Westminster's technology classes into a full-fledged STEAM program. The school hired a STEAM and Technology Program Coordinator who oversaw this development. Though the acronym STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics, Westminster seeks to integrate the instruction in these topics by creating interdisciplinary opportunities for the students to see how these subjects link to each other and how they connect to the humanities, athletics, and many other arenas as well.

To manifest this goal, Westminster created a makerspace, located in the arts wing of the school. It is a bright, flexible environment in which students can tinker, explore, and learn how and why things work or do not work. Tables can be reconfigured for group work or removed to allow a large open space. Students have access to a variety of materials, including plastic saws and screws to construct cardboard structures, circuit pieces and alligator clips to connect a specialized circuit board, and Chromebooks to explore Computer Aided Design (CAD), block coding, programming,

and robotics. Additionally, Westminster added to its hardware with the purchase of a class set of iPads for use in the makerspace or other classrooms.

The makerspace encourages students to work efficiently with their materials, but also introduces projects promoting the use of recycled materials and upcycling. For example, the Class of 2022 was introduced to the Engineering Design Process by constructing hydroponic systems out of recycled items. The students kept their plants alive through pH readings and administering appropriate nutrients.



Raising the Roof

Westminster School, this bastion of classical education, needed a new roof, and in the autumn of 2021, our fearless maintenance duo, Mr. Dasek and Mr. Shipman, made it happen. Through months of research and close observation of other roofing projects in Annandale, Mr. Shipman uncovered LPS Exteriors, which dispatched an efficient, skilled team to study the school's roof. After negotiation with the insurance company, LPS collaborated with Westminster's maintenance staff to develop and execute the re-roofing project at a very affordable cost for the school. As the school community enjoyed an extended four-day weekend in mid-October, LPS Exterior's crew of sixty carried out the project with diligence, care, and organization reminiscent of the "Westminster Way." The Westminster family is always proud of the beauty of our facilities and grounds, and we are very grateful for the sturdy new roof that now shelters the busy minds working under it.



Farewell, Shiver House! Hello, Field of Dreams!



In 2007, with an eye toward utilizing the land to build a new athletic field, Westminster School purchased the neighboring two-acre property that held the Shiver House, a unique yet deteriorating 1950s-era Annandale home. As a major step toward progress in that project, the Shiver House was demolished in Fall 2021, clearing the space to make way for athletic field construction to begin in the near future. The addition of this sports facility ultimately will include a regulation soccer field for use in both daily P.E. activities and to host games for the Griffin travel teams. The project also features a new playground and gathering space for students and spectators. The removal of the mid-twentieth century house marks a key milestone in the journey toward bringing the field to fruition. In the coming months, watch for more information regarding the advancement of this project and the initiation of the capital campaign, Field of Dreams!



Diamond Jubilee Festival

Saturday, June 11, 2022 was a glorious commemoration of the development of Westminster School and a celebration of Griffin pride as the school community, past and present, gathered for a Jubilee Festival at 3819 Gallows Road.

The day started off rainy as volunteers set-up the activities, but the skies cleared by the start time, allowing for merry-makers to take full advantage of the day. Children challenged themselves on the rock-climbing wall, took a seat at the wheel of a visiting fire engine, and absorbed the festival vista while riding the train around the driveway. Others rode one of the adorable ponies on the P.E. field or were enthralled by fair performers twirling batons or balancing on stilts. A few brave souls from the upper-school and faculty sat as the target in the dunking booth as strong arms tried to knock them into the water. The gym was a hive of activity with guests reveling in the enormous bouncy houses and playing carnival games. Throughout the building, fair-goers had their faces painted, got henna tattoos, and squealed with delight as balloon animals magically appeared. Culinary treats abounded with

hamburgers and hot dogs fresh from the grill, manned by Westminster alumni parents, Mr. and Mrs. Cannon, followed by refreshing ice cream from a Scoops truck.

The Ellis Glover Theater boasted a full schedule of awesome performances ranging from members of the Class of 2022 reprising songs from their spring musical, *The Sound of Music*, to the graduating class doing an impressive demonstration of their waltz and jitterbug moves accompanied by Ms. Glazier's narration. Ms. Crespo led the Westminster Orchestra in a performance of three beautiful pieces, inspired by their award-winning repertoire from the Kings Dominion Festival of Music and the school's Spring Program. Later in the day, the stage was awash in gorgeous textiles as parents and their children treated the audience to an international fashion show,

allowing Westminster families to share some of the traditions of the very diverse cultures represented in our community, a source of great pride for the school.

The greatest gift of the day was seeing so many people come together to recognize their shared commitment to Westminster's mission. Current students and families were present in full force, and young alumni not only came to the daytime festival, but also enjoyed a happy hour gathering in Mosaic District later in the evening. Retired and former faculty and staff came back to visit, and alumni and their parents returned to say hello. The day was a joyful gathering of so many who love the school and recognize what a difference their experience at Westminster has made in their lives. Their smiling faces, stories of success, and words of praise were the ideal tribute to Westminster School on its sixtieth birthday.



A Dream Realized and Surpassed:

60 Years of Excellence in Classical Education



Westminster's founder, Jane Goll, had a dream. Recognizing that mid-twentieth century American schools did not challenge or enrich students as much as they deserved, she conceived of a school that merged the best of her international experience with education. She envisioned melding together:

- The visits to cultural sites, including museums and the opera, that defined her childhood under her father's guidance in New York City;
- The sense of excellence, attention to detail, and academic rigor of the schools she observed in Germany;
- The focus on the Western Canon and

classical learning characteristic of the curriculum in English schools;

- The French "joie de vivre," interest in philosophical inquiry, and passion for the arts in all forms;
- The caring, friendly approach of American faculty toward their students.

Because of Mrs. Goll's vision, Westminster School became the ideal blend of those elements, combined to perfection over sixty years.

In 1962, Jane Goll planted the seed for Westminster School by opening a private kindergarten class in rented facilities at St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Annandale, Virginia. Each year, the parents of the

students in that first class, recognizing the growth and progress of their children, asked her to add the next grade level to her school so that they could continue to attend, and in that way, Westminster expanded.

The existing facilities at 3819 Gallows Road were built in six construction phases between 1970 and 2003, ranging from the initial establishment of the main building with its original classrooms in what is today the back hallway of the school, to the addition of the Jane Goll Center for the Arts and Athletics at the turn of the century, featuring a modern gymnasium, library, art studio, music room, orchestra room, and state-of-the-art theater.



As Head of School, Mrs. Goll earned the love and respect of generations of families and colleagues for her vitality, charm, strength of character, and life-long commitment to education. Her perspectives on teaching and life shaped the minds and spirits of the many young people who were lucky enough to know her and receive her instruction and affection. Her death on September 5, 1992 was a sorrowful shock to the Westminster community.

At that time, Ellis Glover, the second head of school, took the helm, beginning a tenure that would last thirty years. Having been mentored by Mrs. Goll since the 1970s, Mr. Glover was steeped in her pedagogy and life outlook, but also brought his own unique interests and energy to the school. While continuing to uphold an emphasis on excellence, pride in work, and classical learning, he was instrumental in developing the

Westminster P.E. and athletic programs, including helping to found the Capital Athletic Conference with parity for male and female students. Mr. Glover also believed in the transformative power of the arts, and he worked to expand those at Westminster, especially by establishing an inspiring drama department to help students develop confidence, poise, and a sense of possibility.

The school continued to look to the future, in 2009 purchasing two acres of neighboring lands with an eye toward constructing a new athletic field, as well as setting up The Griffin Academy in 2010, a preschool first opened in rented space at St Alban's Church, the same location where Mrs. Goll taught that first kindergarten class. By 2018, the preschool moved to the main school building, once again consolidating all things Westminster under one roof.

When Mr. Glover retired in June 2021, Nancy Schuler, with over thirty years as a teacher and administrator at Westminster, became only the third head of school in the school's six decades of existence. Successfully overseeing Westminster's response to the COVID pandemic, Mrs. Schuler has already earned the trust and gratitude of the school community.

The horizon looks bright for Westminster, with a diverse and tolerant community committed to growth while holding true to its classical roots. We are united in our mission to raise young scholars, exposed to a wide range of academic disciplines and devoted to giving back to humanity and the world. By "presenting challenge, building character, and instilling confidence," Westminster will continue to provide a superior classical education for the 21st century, fulfilling and exceeding Mrs. Goll's dream from sixty years ago.



Class of 2022 Takes Flight



On June 16, 2022, all signs pointed to success as the twenty-two members of the Westminster Class of '22 made their dignified entrance into the Ellis Glover Theater to celebrate their graduation. Their families and friends were bursting with pride, as were the Westminster faculty and staff who were in awe of the achievements of this group of scholars.

Fourteen out of twenty-two of them had been at Westminster since preschool or kindergarten. Eighteen of them achieved honor roll status every quarter of an eighth-grade year defined by the most challenging academics. They were active leaders of athletic teams, academic and service clubs, and of school spirit in general. Their gifts are numerous, ranging from award-winning artists, dedicated student athletes both in and out of school, stunning talent-show singers, and recognized poets, including the 2022 Westminster poet laureate. As a group, they had proven the depth of their bond and the power of collaboration through the triumph that was their eighth-grade musical, *The Sound of Music*. These students represented the best of Westminster School and of Griffin pride, and the community relished the opportunity to applaud their diligence, enthusiasm, and glorious achievements.

As is Westminster tradition, each graduate delivered a farewell address to the audience, and as is also customary, teachers and family alike teared up at the students' heartfelt words of gratitude for relatives who have stood by them and reflections on the difference a Westminster education has made in their lives. The audience and the graduates enjoyed a touching slideshow featuring images from their nine plus years at Westminster School, followed by inspirational words shared by Ms. Glazier and Mrs. Schuler. After receiving their diplomas to the cheers of the crowd, the graduates and their families and guests enjoyed an evening supper in the arts wing to cap off the occasion.

The members of the Class of 2022 now embark on their next journey, representing the Westminster community as stand-out students in Northern Virginia public high schools, private high schools throughout the D.C. area, and east coast boarding and preparatory schools. Their outstanding character, academic drive, and commitment to serve will be their calling card, a testament to what they learned here at Westminster. Their Westminster family sends them off with love and good wishes for all they will give to and all they will receive from that great big world that awaits them.



Words of Wisdom from the Class of 2022

I remember listening to Mrs. Schuler...telling us that once we leave Westminster School, we will finally be old enough to understand what has been given to us. And as I stand here today...I feel that I am old enough to understand. Old enough to understand how much love and time my parents have given me....I am old enough to understand why my teachers can be strict, and why they pay careful attention to details....Old enough to understand why everyone's life has meaning and how Westminster helped draw pieces of that out of us, whether we know it or not."

– Nabeera

"The values and mottos of Westminster strongly resonate with me. The mottos, 'Neatly, completely, and with pride,' 'Attitude, gratitude, and enthusiasm,' and 'the golden rule' will always stay with me. Westminster has shaped me into a better person, instilling those values and mottos. I have developed a strong work ethic,...I have learned good manners and respect,...and I have learned to forgive and not hold grudges."

– Gavin

"Every teacher that I have had the privilege of knowing has left an everlasting mark on me,... Everyone is welcoming, kind, extremely devoted, and the most hardworking people I have ever met. They are the reason why we have received amazing opportunities and experiences at this school."

– Emina

"The thing that I have probably taken away the most from Westminster School is that truly, all you need is love, and I know that no matter where I end up in the future, I will always have love, and I will always have a part of Westminster with me. William Shakespeare said in *Hamlet*, 'What a piece of work is man!' But I say, 'What a piece of work is a Westminster Griffin!'"

– Sabrina

Senior Class Gift

The Class of 2022 was cognizant of the many challenges that they lived through as a result of the pandemic that punctuated their sixth- through eighth-grade years. However, one aspect of that time that they cherished was the increased outdoor visits they enjoyed with their classmates and teachers. They looked back fondly on class meetings under the colonnade or on the “island” on the driveway, lunches on the lawn picnic tables, or the afternoon mask breaks outside the Stone House. Because those outdoor moments meant so much to them, the senior class decided to bestow a gift that would allow future students to embrace similar experiences.

“In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous.”
– Aristotle

Thanks to the amazing fundraising efforts of the parents and students of the Class of 2022, Westminster School will have a gorgeous new outdoor classroom installed in the back of the school behind the arts wing. The space will feature a permanent outdoor whiteboard, along with umbrella tables with benches for student seating, lovely plantings to color and enliven the space, and a commemorative plaque so that the school community will always remember this generous class. This surely will be one of the most sought-after areas on campus, and the teachers and students will cherish the meaningful exchanges and moments of enlightenment that will occur there.



High School Matriculation Class of 2022

Bishop Ireton High School
Bishop O'Connell High School
Episcopal High School
Falls Church High School
Flint Hill School
St. John's College High School
St. Stephen's and St. Agnes School
The Masters School
(Dobbs Ferry, New York)
Trinity Preparatory School
(Orlando, Florida)
W.T. Woodson High School
Yorktown High School

College Matriculation Class of 2018

(as reported to Westminster School)

Barnard College
Case Western Reserve University
Christopher Newport University
Dickinson College
Duke University
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
George Mason University
George Washington University
James Madison University
Middle Tennessee State University
New York University
Northeastern University
Smith College
Syracuse University
University of Alabama
Virginia Commonwealth University
Virginia Tech
Washington and Lee University

College Matriculation Class of 2017

(as reported to Westminster School)

Boston College
College of William and Mary
Cornell University
George Mason University
George Washington University
James Madison University
Indiana University
Kenyon College
New York University
University of California Los Angeles
University of Chicago
University of Maryland
University of Virginia

Westminster's Dance Program

"May I have the pleasure of this dance?"

"Why, yes, I'd be delighted."



Westminster's K-8 dance program culminates in the upper school, when 7th and 8th graders receive instruction in traditional social dances, such as the waltz, jitterbug, and fox trot. Classes lead to three dance parties spread over the year, each one with a flavor of its own. In October, the Fall Ball brings Halloween costumes and lots of spooky fun. This includes the 8th-graders' traditional appearance in a skit and dance performance during the morning Halloween Parade. At the dance, students practice what they've learned in class, including several popular line dances.

Next comes the Spring Fling, which celebrates the 8th graders, highlighting their individual interests and accomplishments, along with announcements of high-school destinations. Students dress up in their finery, including tuxedos for the 8th-grade boys! The last dance party of the year revs up once the students sign off on their final exams. Everyone dresses in rock'n'roll style and the entire group parties down in an exuberant end-of-the-school-year celebration. The big events are the dance contests to crown the Jitterbug King and Queen and the

Waltz King and Queen. Winners are recognized with trophies and their names are engraved on a dedicated plaque in the school lobby. Overall, the upper-school dance program is a vital tool for teaching students important life skills, and helping them feel greater comfort dancing and socializing with their peers. And best of all, it's fun! One of the goals of a Westminster education is to "take joy in the possibilities of life." Anyone who has ever attended an upper-school dance at Westminster School can attest: mission accomplished!



2022 Dance Contest Winners

Waltz

King: Arleigh Womack, Jr.

Queen: Camdyn Parker

Jitterbug

King: McKinley Cronin

William Townsend

Queen: Emelie Edwards

Sasha Guerra



AWARDS



AN OVERVIEW OF THE YEAR'S ACADEMIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2021-2022

*"WE ARE WHAT WE REPEATEDLY DO.
EXCELLENCE, THEN, IS NOT AN ACT, BUT A HABIT."
-ARISTOTLE*



Art Contest

Kindergarten

Honorable Mention

Malik Hashmi

Overall Winner

Mila Deetz

1st Grade

Honorable Mention

Ryan Kennedy

Maria Magiafas

Overall Winner

Alex Fulk

2nd Grade

Honorable Mention

Ryan Lonkeng

Luna Taylor

Overall Winner

Ruth Alemu

3rd Grade

Honorable Mention

Noah Kauffman

William Browning

Overall Winner

Kathleen Rodriguez

4th Grade

Honorable Mention

Nadia Yacobucci

Tinbete Daniel

Overall Winner

Anayah Guerra

5th Grade

Honorable Mention

Selene White-Holcomb

Joanne Ma

Overall Winner

Namara Kamuntu

6th Grade

Honorable Mention

Ece Su Ergul

Eliezer Tefera

Bethel Alemu

Overall Winner

Nicolas Guerra

7th Grade

Honorable Mention

Ajwah Jahangir

Elijah Anteneh

Overall Winner

Sophie Le

8th Grade

Honorable Mention

Asha Lavu

Mehad Abdi

Overall Winner

Nabeera Yasir

Overall Winners Grades K-8

Alex Fulk

Nicolas Guerra

Sophie Le

Dimes for Drama

1st place

Anna Russo

2nd place

John Tashkhanov

3rd place

Erik Hammer

Penmanship Award

2nd Grade

Leah Aram

Jameela Hashmi



The Merchant of Venice
Sophie Le



The Sound of Music
Emelie Edwards



Alex Fulk

Bruno Mamani

Alaia Nguyen

Sophia Tran

3rd Grade

Ruth Alemu

Padraig Hannaway

Michael Papadouris

Abigail Samuel

4th Grade

Yonael Chere

Courtland Silva

5th Grade

Ramzy Boudad

Elena Hannaway

Selene White-Holcomb

6th Grade

Nadwa Abdi

Elijah Guerra

Hannah Jakupovic

Isabella Mamani-Duran

Abigail Riverson

Mira Sears

7th Grade

Onat Ergul

Ajwah Jahangir

Karina Khanna

Sophie Le

8th Grade

Emina Jakupovic

Camdyn Parker

Arleigh Womack, Jr.

Nabeera Yasir

Master Penman

Arleigh Womack, Jr.

Perfect Attendance

Kindergarten

Leila Burnett

Hans Imer

Lleyton LaBeau

1st Grade

Alex Fulk

Tamilore Ogunlewe

Gabrielle Pinder

Anna Russo

Claire Wallis

2nd Grade

Noah Aymar

Malia Burnett

Brielle Lamprey-Nanda

Bruno Mamani

Joseph Stevens

Sophia Tran

3rd Grade

Tyler Duong

Raymond Ma

Abigail Samuel

Biruk Samuel

4th Grade

Arielle Lamprey-Nanda

Timileyin Ogunlewe

Jonathan Pinder

Eleanor Pomerance

Nadia Yacobucci

5th Grade

Isabelle Augustine

Luke Foster

Ryleigh Hegens

Joanne Ma

Selene White-Holcomb

6th Grade

Bethel Alemu

Nathaniel Anteneh

Nathaniel Bohlen

Nicolas Guerra

Priya Perakam

Nolawe Sebsbe

Eliezer Tefera

7th Grade

Ajwah Jahangir

Karina Khanna

Elyse Oppong

8th Grade

McKinley Cronin

Emelie Edwards

Madeleine Foster

Gavin Goldstein

Sasha Guerra

Sabrina Khanna

Asha Lavu

Arleigh Womack, Jr.

Cal Ripken Award

Gavin Goldstein

Sabrina Khanna



Arleigh, the Master Penman

3rd Grade

Academic Awards

English

Most Improved

Biruk Samuel

Highest Achievement

May Edmonds

Math

Most Improved

Clara Schrier

Highest Achievement

May Edmonds

History

Most Improved

Noah Kauffman

Highest Achievement

May Edmonds

Science

Most Improved

Areen Abbas

Highest Achievement

Abigail Samuel & May Edmonds

French

Most Improved

Grace Kamuntu

Noah Kauffman

Highest Achievement

May Edmonds

Art

Most Improved

Kathleen Rodriguez

All- Around Proficiency

Abigail Samuel

Music

Most Improved

Caden Needy

All-Around Proficiency

Abigail Samuel

P.E.

Most Improved

May Edmonds

Raymond Ma

Most Outstanding

Abigail Samuel

Caden Needy

Thomas Sanchez

4th Grade

Academic Awards

English

Most Improved

Eva Oppong

Highest Achievement

Nadia Yacobucci

Math

Most Improved

Liliane Karayilan

Highest Achievement

Nadia Yacobucci

History

Most Improved

Victoria Fahouri

Highest Achievement

Nadia Yacobucci

Science

Most Improved

Pedro Teran-Gross

Highest Achievement

Nadia Yacobucci

French

Most Improved

Pedro Teran-Gross

Highest Achievement

Nadia Yacobucci

Art

Most Improved

Cortland Silva

All-Around Proficiency

Eleanor Pomerance

Music

Most Improved

Timileyin Ogunlewe

All-Around Proficiency

Anayah Guerra

Eleanor Pomerance

P.E.

Most Improved

Anayah Guerra

Jonathan Pinder

Most Outstanding

Nadia Yacobucci

Cortland Silva

5th Grade

Academic Awards

English

Most Improved

Joanne Ma

Highest Achievement

Isabelle Augustine

Math

Most Improved

Jaxx Williams

Highest Achievement

Jonah Kauffman

History

Most Improved

Jaxx Williams

Highest Achievement

Isabelle Augustine

Science

Most Improved

Sofia Cespedes

Highest Achievement

Isabelle Augustine

French

Most Improved

Namara Kamuntu

Highest Achievement

Ryleigh Hegens

Isabelle Augustine

Art

Most Improved

Elena Hannaway

All- Around Proficiency

Selene White Holcomb

Music

Most Improved

Sofia Cespedes

Christian Sahl

All- Around Proficiency

Selene White Holcomb

P.E.

Most Improved

Lea Spriggs

Christian Sahl

Most Outstanding

Elena Diaz

Ramzy Boudad

6th Grade Academic Awards English

Most Improved
Malika Amison-Agboloso

Highest Achievement
Nadwa Abdi

Math (Pre-Algebra)

Most Improved
Nathaniel Bohlen
Knox Coffron

Highest Achievement
Nicolas Guerra
Abigail Riverson

History

Most Improved
Nathanael Anteneh

Highest Achievement
Nadwa Abdi

Science

Most Improved
Mayron Zelalem

Highest Achievement
Nadwa Abdi

French

Most Improved
Nathaniel Bohlen

Highest Achievement
Nadwa Abdi
Abigail Riverson

Art

Most Improved
Nadwa Abdi
Nicolas Guerra

All-Around Proficiency
Elijah Guerra

Music

Most Improved
Nathaniel Bohlen
Nadwa Abdi

All-Around Proficiency
Nicolas Guerra
Makda Nana

P.E.

Most Improved
Makda Nana
Nathaniel Anteneh

Most Outstanding
Malika Agboloso-Amison
Nicolas Guerra

7th Grade Academic Awards English

Most Improved
Reem El Bazouni

Highest Achievement
Devin Boakye
Ajwah Jahangir

Math (Alg.1,Pt.1)

Most Improved
Dylan Cespedes

Highest Achievement
Onat Ergul

Math (Alg)

Most Improved
Reem El Bazouni
Sophie Le

Highest Achievement
John Tashkhanov

History

Most Improved
Reem El Bazouni
Karina Khanna

Highest Achievement
Devin Boakye

Science

Most Improved
Onat Ergul

Highest Achievement
Devin Boakye

French

Most Improved
Benjamin Hiu

Highest Achievement
Ajwah Jahangir

Latin

Most Improved
Onat Ergul

Highest Achievement
Devin Boakye
Ajwah Jahangir

Art

Most Improved
Ajwah Jahangir
Karina Khanna

All-Around Proficiency
Sophie Le

Music

Most Improved
Karina Khanna

All-Around Proficiency
John Tashkhanov

P.E.

Most Outstanding
Reem El Bazouni
Benjamin Hiu



8th Grade Academic Awards English

Most Improved
Brian Mock

Highest Achievement
Madeleine Foster

Math (Alg.1,Pt.2)

Most Improved
Nyla Damiani

Highest Achievement
Emina Jakupovic

Math (Geometry)

Most Improved
Madeleine Foster
Arleigh Womack, Jr.

Highest Achievement
Gavin Goldstein

History

Most Improved
Nakayla Nava-Kercy

Highest Achievement
Emina Jakupovic

Camdyn Parker
Madeleine Foster

Science

Most Improved
Mehad Abdi

Highest Achievement
Gavin Goldstein

French

Most Improved
Nyla Damiani
Asha Lavu

Highest Achievement
Gavin Goldstein

Latin

Most Improved
Beza Alemu

Highest Achievement
Camdyn Parker

Art

Most Improved
Madeleine Foster
Emina Jakupovic

All- Around Proficiency
Emelie Edwards

Music

Most Improved
Sasha Guerra
Arleigh Womack, Jr.

All- Around Proficiency
Madeleine Foster
William Townsend

Special Music Recognition
Camdyn Parker
Sabrina Khanna

P.E.

Most Improved
Sasha Guerra
Adam Abdelkefi

Most Outstanding
Sabrina Khanna
Kaveh Chism

Orchestra Participants

Grade 2:
Leah Aram
Oliver Kharbanda
Soliana Lohman
Ryan Lonkeng
Sebastian Pomerance
Truy Truong
Madison White-Holcomb

Grade 3:
William Browning
Daniel Cooper
Aarna Damle
Padraig Hannaway
Grace Kamuntu
Noah Kauffman
Aleph Mekete
Caden Needy
Abigail Samuel
Biruk Samuel

Grade 4:
William Burke
Arielle Lamprey-Nanda
Eva Oppong
Eleanor Pomerance
Pedro Teran-Gross

Grade 5:
Sami Abdelkefi
Luke Foster

Ryleigh Hegens
Namara Kamuntu
Jonah Kauffman

Grade 6:
Nathaniel Bohlen
Knox Coffron
Zachary Duvalsaint
Ece Su Ergul
Mira Sears

Grade 7:
Onat Ergul
Tyler Hegens

Grade 8:
Brian Mock
Arleigh Womack, Jr
Nabeera Yasir

Math Club Participants

6th Grade:
Bethel Alemu
Haniya Khan
Isabella Mamani
Priya Perakam
Shreya Vadlamani

7th Grade:
Elijah Anteneh
Karina Khanna
Elyse Oppong
John Tashkhanov

8th Grade:
Mehad Abdi
Beza Alemu
Emelie Edwards
Gavin Goldstein
Sasha Guerra
Sabrinna Khanna
Asha Lavu
Camdyn Parker
William Townsend
Arleigh Womack
Nabeera Yasir

MathCounts Participants

6th Grade:
Nicolas Guerra

7th Grade:
John Tashkhanov

8th Grade:
Mehad Abdi
Beza Alemu
Emelie Edwards
Gavin Goldstein (gold medal)
Sabrina Khanna
Asha Lavu (silver medal)
Arleigh Womack, Jr.
Nabeera Yasir

Continental Math

League:

3rd Grade:
Runner(s) up:
Daniel Cooper
Winner:
May Edmonds

4th Grade:
Winner:
William Burke
Jonathan Pinder
Eleanore Pomerance
Nadia Yacobucci

5th Grade:
Winner:
Sami Abdelkefi
Isabelle Augustine

6th Grade:
Winner:
Nicolas Guerra
Zachary Duvalsaint

Science Olympiad Participants

6th Grade:
Priya Perakam
Hannah Jakupovic

7th Grade:
Elijah Anteneh
Devin Boakye
Karina Khanna

8th Grade:
Adam Abdelkefi
McKinley Cronin
Gavin Goldstein
Emina Jakupovic
Sabrina Khanna
Baran Karayilan
Asha Lavu
Josemaria Meister
Arleigh Womack
Nabeera Yasir

Science Fair Awards:

1st place:
Mira Sears

2nd place:
Elijah Guerra

3rd place:
Onat Ergul

National Mythology Exam

**4th Grade
Cum Laude**
Jonathan Pinder

Maxima Cum Laude
Christopher Akishev
Yonael Chere
Tinbete Daniel
Anayah Guerra
Eva Oppong
Nadia Yacobucci

Summa cum laude
William Burke
Timileyin Ogunlewe

Perfect Score
Arielle Lamprey-Nanda
Eleanor Pomerance
Pedro Teran-Gross

5th Grade



Cum Laude

Sami Abdelkefi
Ramzy Boudad
Nathan Lonkeng
Magna cum laude
Namara Kamuntu
Jonah Kauffman
Christian Sahlu
Ronel Tefera
Sydney Wallis
Selene White-Holcomb
Maxima cum laude
Elijah Guerra
Hannah Jakupovic
Abigail Riverson
Eliezer Tefera

National French Exam

7th Grade

Honorable Mention

Ajwah Jahangir
Karina Khanna
Elyse Oppong

8th Grade

Honorable Mention

Gavin Goldstein
Emina Jakupovic

Silver Medal

Adam Abdelkefi
(67/70) 4th in national rank
Josemaria Meister
(68/70) 3rd in national rank

French-Junior National

Honor Society

McKinley Cronin
Madeleine Foster
Gavin Goldstein
Emina Jakupovic
Sabrina Khanna
William Townsend
Nabeera Yasir

Latin Awards

National Honor Society

Mehad Abdi
Beza Alemu
Kaveh Chism
McKinley Cronin
Nyla Damiani
Emelie Edwards
Gavin Goldstein
Madeleine Foster
Sasha Guerra
Emina Jakupovic
Sabrina Khanna
Josemaria Meister
Camdyn Parker
William Townsend
Arleigh Womack, Jr.
Nabeera Yasir

Latin National Exam

7th Grade:

Cum Laude

Karina Khanna
Reem Elbazouni
Sophie Le

Magna Cum Laude:

Elijah Anteneh
Beza Abel

Benjamin Hiu
David Faguada-Accinelli

Maxima Cum Laude:

Raphael Chere
Elyse Oppong
Ajwah Jahangir

Summa Cum Laude:

Devin Boakye
John Tashkhanov

8th Grade:

Cum Laude

Emelie Edwards
Nabeera Yasir
Beza Alemu

Magna Cum Laude

Emina Jakupovic
McKinley Cronin
Asha Lavu
Nyla Damiani

Maxima Cum Laude

Camdyn Parker
Kaveh Chism
Josemaria Meister
Madeleine Foster
Sabrina Khanna

Summa Cum Laude

Gavin Goldstein
William Townsend

Honor Roll Award

(grades 3-8)

Year-Round Honor Roll

3rd Grade

Ruth Alemu
Cyrus Clark
Daniel Cooper
Aarna Damle
Tyler Duong
May Edmonds
Padraig Hannaway
Skyler Hiu
Grace Kamuntu
Aleph Mekete
Caden Needy
Kathleen Rodriguez
Ash Sahlu
Abigail Samuel
Biruk Samuel
Thomas Sanchez
Naomi Pinero Vasquez

4th Grade

William Burke
Yonael Chere
Tinbete Daniel
Anayah Guerra
Arielle Lamptey-Nanda
Timileyin Ogunlewe
Eleanor Pomerance
Nadia Yacobucci

5th Grade

Isabelle Augustine
Ramzy Boudad
Sofia Cespedes
Elena Diaz
Luke Foster
Elena Hannaway
Ryleigh Hegens
William Hughes
Namara Kamuntu
Jonah Kauffman
Nathan Lonkeng

Joanne Ma
Christian Sahlu
Lea Spriggs
Ronel Tefera
Sydney Wallis
Selene White-Holcomb
Jaxx Williams
6th Grade
Nadwa Abdi
Bethel Alemu
Nathaniel Bohlen
Knox Coffron
Zara Damiani
Elijah Guerra
Nicolas Guerra
Hannah Jakupovic
Haniya Khan
Isabella Mamnai-Duran

Makda Nana
Priya Perakam
Abigail Riverson
Mira Sears
Nolawe Sebsbe
Eliezer Tefera
Shreya Vadlamani

7th Grade

Beza Alemu
Elijah Anteneh
Devin Boakye
Raphael Chere
Reem El Bazouni
Ajwah Jahangir
Karina Khanna
Sophie Le
John Tashkhanov
8th Grade
Mehad Abdi

Beza Alemu
Matthew Bredbrenner
Kaveh Chism
McKinley Cronin
Nyla Damiani
Emelie Edwards
Madeleine Foster
Gavin Goldstein
Sasha Guerra
Emina Jakupovic
Sabrina Khanna
Asha Lavu
Josemaria Meister
Camdyn Parker
William Townsend
Arleigh Womack, Jr.
Nabeera Yasir

Honor Roll – 24

Quarters

Beza Alemu
Matthew Bredbenner
McKinley Cronin
Madeleine Foster
Gavin Goldstein
Sabrina Khanna
Asha Lavu
William Townsend
Nabeera Yasir

Poet Laureate

William Townsend

Play Poster Contest

7th Grade:

Sophie Le

8th Grade:

Emelie Edwards

Pinnacle Award

Emina Jakupovic

Kenneth Hatch Award

Elijah Anteneh
McKinley Cronin
Gavin Goldstein
Tyler Hegens

President's

Education Award

McKinley Cronin
Emelie Edwards
Madeleine Foster
Gavin Goldstein
Emina Jakupovic
Sabrina Khanna
Asha Lavu
William Townsend
Nabeera Yasir

Griffin/Citizenship

Award

Madeleine Foster
Gavin Goldstein
Emina Jakupovic
Brian Mock
William Townsend

Sope Peters Heart

Award

Gavin Goldstein



Pictured: Mrs. Foster, Madeleine, Mrs. Schuler, and Mr. Foster

The Golden Gryphon

Madeleine Foster earned the highest honor at Westminster School, the Golden Gryphon Award. Deeply invested in the Westminster community, Maddie demonstrated consistent devotion to her school and her class as a diligent scholar across a range of subjects, a profound thinker, writer and poet, a gifted singer and actor, and a skilled and perseverant sportswoman. She proved herself a kind and caring friend to her peers and a respectful and affectionate student to her beloved teachers. Maddie gave the best of herself in every realm from preschool through eighth grade and excelled in academics, athletics, and the arts, showing herself to be a true Renaissance woman. Her classmates, teachers, and family rejoiced in her achievements as she received this well-deserved award.



Griffins Take the Stage

For most of the school year, COVID precautions meant that the grade-level plays were more like movies than in-person performances in the Ellis Glover Theater. The students learned the patience and perseverance it took to memorize lines, the endurance and good attitude required for successful play rehearsals, and the courage and creativity needed to perform their scenes. Westminster's multi-media wizard, Mr. Crook, filmed each grade's play, edited the video, added special visual and audio effects, and then the show was shared via Zoom on play day with the audience tuning in from all of the classrooms and family homes.

Exciting progress was made with regard to the pandemic during second semester, and some grades were able to be with their family members in the theater to watch their play on the big screen. By the spring, the last two plays were able to be performed in front of a live audience in the theater. The eighth graders brought down the house with their two-night performance of *The Sound of Music* in April, and in May, the kindergarten drew a crowd for their charming show, *The Reluctant Dragon*.

The 2021-2022 theater season was one for the books. Congratulations to our Griffin thespians, who all grew in poise, skill, teamwork, and their love of drama!

Subscribe to our YouTube channel and watch any of these performances by scanning this QR code.



Class of 2022 - *The Sound of Music*



Kindergarten - *The Reluctant Dragon*



Fourth Grade - *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*



First Grade - *A Sick Day for Amos McGee*



Fifth Grade - *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*



Second Grade - *Stuart Little*



Sixth Grade - *Beauty and the Beast*



Third Grade - *Snow White*



Seventh Grade - *The Merchant of Venice*





A BUSTLING HOME OF LEARNING, LOVE, AND JOY THE GRIFFIN ACADEMY

A typical preschool day in The Griffin Academy (TGA) is packed with activities. The busy preschoolers play in the gym, participate in circle time, learn sight words, complete ‘must do’ work at center time, and do experiments in science. These young scholars are being introduced to the French language, creating masterpieces in art, and learning all parts of a storybook such as the author, the illustrator, and all of the beautiful words inside. They are mastering the swing or seesaw at recess, gaining independence, and building friendships.

To supplement the amazing daily strides they are making, the students at TGA took part in many special events and

occasions throughout the last school year. In autumn 2021, the preschoolers enjoyed a warm fall day on the annual trip to Green Meadows Farm. The teachers and students were fortunate and happy to have many parents willing to spend this day with them. The TGA community loved the animals, picnic lunch, hayride, pig races, playground, and picking out the most perfect pumpkin. The teachers knew it was a successful trip when most of the little Griffins were fast asleep on the bus ride back to school!

In honor of the biggest football game of the NFL season, the preschool threw their own Super Bowl Party! The children were encouraged to arrive at school wearing a sports jersey and to

be ready for a morning full of football/sports-themed activities! They played “Pin the Football on the Field,” enjoyed football coloring sheets, and watched video clips of championship playoff games. To develop their motor skills, the children took part in agility challenges such as throwing a football to knock down cups, walking on a balance beam, and completing agility ladders.

A new themed day during Spirit Week was a huge success in the preschool - Decades Day! The preschoolers and their teachers loved this blast into the past and represented the decades from 1950s - 2000s. Some of the children and Mr. Locke channeled the 1980s fitness style - complete with the head



sweatband. Other children represented the 1980s with their bright, fluorescent colors. The most memorable moment of this day was Mrs. Guerra and a few of the boys who styled a throwback to the beginning of hip-hop. For the traditional end-of-week Pep Rally, the preschoolers were so excited to have the school's mascot, Grizzly, join them for their cheer.

As the year progressed and COVID restrictions lifted, TGA was thrilled to have the parents in-person to cheer the students on during the Trike-a-Thon in Spring 2022, since all events are more fun when there is a live audience. The

smiles, giggles, cheering, and applauding from the parents and guests really set the stage for a lively and spirited morning! The audience was quite impressed with the children's cycling and scooter skills.

Preschool parents, grandparents, and friends were an excited and proud in-person audience for the end-of-year Art & Music Show in the Ellis Glover Theater. The children charmed their guests with their encore performance of "Loco-Motion" from the Spring Music Program. Emerging from a long period of pandemic challenges, the teachers framed the show around the theme of overcoming obstacles and exhibiting

resilience. Songs included "Three Little Birds" performed by the Unicorn class, "I Can See Clearly Now" from the Pixie class, the Elves' rendition of "Lean on Me," and a rousing finale of "Don't Stop Believing" delivered by all three classes.

The preschool community recognized what a special anniversary it was for Westminster School, and many TGA families partied at the Diamond Jubilee festival to wrap up the year. Their teachers loved seeing the preschoolers enjoying the activities and food. It was a truly great day – and a great year - to be one of the littlest Griffins!



1. An excited fan celebrates at the Super Bowl Party. Students wear their favorite team jersey and participate in football related games.
2. The annual butterfly release is full of curiosity and amazement.
3. Students utilize their green thumbs on Earth Day by planting seeds and enjoying nature.
4. The back-to-school picnic brings together the Westminster community and features fun activities, games, and happy students.
5. Little Griffins practice their fine motor skills by learning to write their names.
6. Celebrating the end of the year in style with "Fun in the Sun," consisting of water games and outdoor activities.

Builders Club and K-Kids Club

Cultivating Life-Long Community Service

Part of what is so special about Westminster School is the integral role that character building plays in the education of a Griffin. Through the years before an eighth grader walks across the stage at graduation, he is taught to see himself as a member of communities – at home, at school, and in the larger world. Westminster students recognize that they have a solemn obligation to serve the whole. Westminster has developed a decades-long relationship with the local chapter of the Kiwanis Club, which sponsors a Builders Club for the upper-school students, and this past year, the school added the organization's K-Kids Club for the third through fifth graders to become involved.

The K-Kids Club was mentored by middle-school science teacher, Miss Ellison, who inspired the younger students to open their minds to the needs of others. In their busy inaugural year, club members spent their late-autumn days making holiday cards for citizens in nursing homes and children in area hospitals. Winter found them collecting cardboard boxes and old t-shirts as material for making cat scratchers and dog tie toys for a local animal shelter, the Animal Welfare League of Arlington, followed by a virtual field trip to the shelter a few weeks later. Then these middle-school book-lovers designed a Little Free Library, which they hand-painted with the help of art teacher, Mrs. Ahn. In May 2022, they oversaw the installation of the library at the foot of the school driveway next to Gallows Road and held a book drive to collect works to fill the cabinet with exciting titles from which Westminster and neighborhood children can partake.

These activities in the third through fifth grades prepare the students for the responsibilities of membership in the Builders Club during their upper-school years. Under the leadership of club sponsor, Mrs. Lee, and club president, McKinley Cronin of the Class of 2022, last year's Builders Club made a significant impact in Fairfax County. It was the first year that the club welcomed sixth-grade students in addition to the seventh and eighth graders, and projects benefitted from that increased strength and energy. Members carried out a toddler clothing drive for Northern Virginia Family Services (NVFS) and participated in a collection of goods for the Fairfax County Animal Shelter, which yielded twenty-seven bags and boxes of peanut butter, newspaper, Ziploc bags and pet food. In response, the animal shelter's Administrative Assistant, Christine Mead, shared, "We'd like you to know that your thoughtfulness is truly making a difference in the lives of so many animals!"

The Builders Club echoed the K-Kids Club's efforts to encourage a love of books with a donation to Children's Literacy Adds Potential (C.L.A.P.), a non-profit organization started in 2019 to increase literacy among underserved children in the Greater Washington Metropolitan area, placing donated books in the hands of young people in order to put them on a life-changing path to a better future. Westminster's Builders Club added 859 books to C.L.A.P.'s collection.

In order to help those less fortunate, members of the Builders Club collected 1,456 pounds of food for the ACCACares Food Pantry Drive, and about 1,300 pounds of food for the Multicultural Center Food Drive through long-time Westminster partner in service, NVFS, which responded in a "big appreciation note to the people from Westminster School," stating, "Our pantry at the Multicultural Center is currently a reflection of the love and care for our community in need. It makes me so happy to be able to offer immediate help through these kinds of donations. Thank you SO MUCH!"



The upper-school students' service culminated with two successful trash pick-up days along Gallows Road, Columbia Pike, and Annandale Road. Students and parent volunteers gathered after school, donned bright vests, and ventured out to make sure that those roadways, which the school sponsors through the Virginia Department of Transportation, were free of refuse, thus protecting the environment.

Through these two service clubs, Westminster students are learning that they are key parts of a larger community of human beings to whom they owe respect and support, and that they have a responsibility to care for the earth and its wildlife. As they grow into young adults, they will carry this service-minded outlook with them into the greater world.

Sweet Music Everywhere:

Westminster's Orchestral Triumph



Under the leadership of director, Ms. Crespo, Westminster's Orchestra has grown into a vibrant program. The 2021-2022 school year was marked by many successes for these young musicians.

The year opened with the full ensemble performing *The Star Spangled Banner* and *Blue Fire Fiddler* by S.H. Newbold at the opening assembly and entertaining the community with an eerie rendition of *The Mandalorian* for the Halloween celebration.

Several grade-level plays were enhanced by orchestra members providing part of the score. Seventh graders, Onat and Tyler, teamed up on a duet of *Kirchen Arie* by A. Stradella for their Shakespeare play, *The Merchant of Venice*, while Knox accompanied on *Beauty and the Beast* for his sixth-grade musical. A fourth-grade group, including Eleanor, Eva, Pedro, William, and Arielle, shared their version of *Pure Imagination* for *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Even the youngest orchestra members expressed themselves through their instruments in the second-grade performance of *Stuart Little* when Sebastian, Truy, Soliana, Ryan, Madison, Leah, and Oliver played *The Prayer* from *Hansel and Gretel*.

The orchestra was well-represented in each Head's Talent Show this year, including sixth grader Ece

Su's folk song, *The Last Leaf*, and third grader Grace's *Long, Long Ago* by T.H. Bayly. Later in the year, fourth grader Eleanor and sixth grader Knox treated the talent show audience to *Kiss' Theme* by H. Wake and *Concerto in A Minor* by J.B. Accolay, respectively.

Both the Winter and Spring Music Programs were augmented by the sweet tunes of the combined orchestra, and certain pieces were also utilized for the group's May 2022 appearance at the Kings Dominion Festival of Music. The students

performed *Bells!* by D. Gazda as well as *Silver Moon* by Y. Nishimura, and the Westminster Orchestra earned an "excellent" rating from the judges. In addition to reprising this performance back at school in the end-of-year music program, the orchestra treated the audience to a special performance of *Bolero* by M. Ravel, accompanied by the dramatic moves of the flamenco dancer known as "La Magdalena."

With such a stellar foundation to stand on, Ms. Crespo and her 2022-2023 orchestra will participate in the Fairfax County Solo and Ensemble Festival, and seventh- and eighth-grade members will compete to place at the prestigious District 10 Junior Honors Orchestra. The orchestra is surely a gem in the crown of the Westminster arts program.





SUMMER CAMP

Experience - Explore - Create

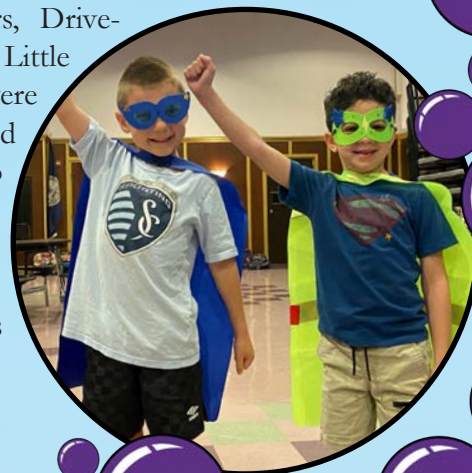


Each summer, Westminster's camp program brings a vitality and excitement to the building. Led by director Kari Mock, Camp Griffin was once again recognized as Best Summer Camp 2022 by *Northern Virginia Magazine*, the fifth year earning that honor.

Filled with Westminster students and children from other area schools, Camp Griffin took its members on a thrilling journey between June and August 2022. Senior Griffins in the upper grades had lessons in economics with Mr. Heinlein's "The Price Is Right" camp and cooled off from

the summer swelter with "Water Works" trips to area pools and parks.

The Junior Griffins explored their creative side through a week of "Myths, Legends, and Fairy Tales," a STEAM camp that merged a morning of art in nature with an afternoon of building projects, and a culinary camp with vendor Tiny Chefs called "Diners, Drive-Ins, and Delights." Little imaginations were stretched up, up, and away with "Superhero University," and scholars jumped into the time machine for "History 101" trips





to the DMV's rich supply of destinations and museums.

The Ellis Glover Theater was pumping with drama camp students collaborating on writing a short play, designing props, costumes, and set pieces, and, of course, acting out the roles. Mme Peev transported her campers across the ocean, opening and closing the camp season by taking part in French-themed games, crafts, recipes, and songs, providing every opportunity to fall in love with the language and culture of her home country.

All Griffin campers enjoyed at least one weekly visit to Broyhill Crest Pool to splash and play. Ms. Mock and the camp teachers and counselors kept the children active and happy all summer long, and Camp Griffin parents were thrilled with the fun and fulfilling break that their children had at Westminster School and area sites.

CAMP TESTIMONIALS

"Camp Griffin is the PERFECT way for a child to enjoy the summer! From the exciting STEM-focused activities, the field trips, daily water play and weekly pool days...Camp Griffin is your child's favorite 9-week-long playdate!"

- Clarence and Sharon Watson

"Having the right staff for summer camp is key! Ms. Mock and her staff are A+. From drop-off to pick up, they are energetic, passionate, and fun, which I believe promotes the same attitudes in campers. Overall, our daughter has had the time of her life at Camp Griffin."

- Tamara and Eric Scrivens

"Our son has been coming to Camp Griffin for years. We think of it as our second school home and so appreciate the wonderful care and attention he receives from the counselors and teachers! I challenge anyone to find another camp in the area that has the breadth of enriching activities, efficient organization, strong leadership, and a warm environment where every child is so well known!"

- Elena Schlickemaier



2021-2022 DONATIONS



THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO "WHAT IF...?" ANNUAL GIVING TOTAL: \$116,066.62

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The **Annual Giving Fund** comprises all donations to Westminster School. This fund is a vital component of the school's income and continued success as an independent school. While tuition pays for the basic program and operation of Westminster, The Annual Giving Fund helps lift school offerings above "basic," and directly benefits the students during the school year in a number of important ways:

- To enhance technology, learning materials, curriculum expansions, and field trips/activities that support our teachers' efforts and our students' experience inside and outside the classroom;
- To further develop capital projects.
- To help fund scholarships for outstanding students from the surrounding community who would not otherwise receive the life-changing gift of a classical education.

www.WestminsterSchool.com/give



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The Annual Giving theme for the 2022-2023 School year is
"Come Together"



Poetry Contest

The school community gathered in the theater on Tuesday, May 31, 2022 to celebrate our students' creative expression through the written word with the Head's Poetry Contest Assembly. First, the audience enjoyed a presentation on the meaning and significance of poetry and a slideshow of striking lines and impactful language from a wide range of Westminster students' poems. Then, writers from grades 3 through 8 were honored with awards of Special Merit, recognizing poems of profundity with a certificate and a long-stemmed red rose. A select group were chosen for Best Poem and also accepted a special book of poetry as a prize. Additionally, eighth grader, William, received the highest honor, the title of Poet Laureate of Westminster School, for which he received an engraved medal.

Many thanks to Mrs. Foster, the chair of the English Department and upper-school English teacher, and Mrs. Smith, the middle school English instructor, for instilling a love of poetry in the students and guiding them toward their most sensitive and fulfilling work as writers. Appreciation also goes to Ms. Glazier for her support of the Poetry Contest for over two decades, helping Westminster students to realize the value and importance of this art form. Thank you to all of the middle- and upper-school students who trusted the school community by sharing their personal reflections through the over two hundred poems they entered in the contest. The Westminster family was touched by your words.



Poet Laureate

Each spring, a poetry contest elicits poems from every 3rd-8th-grade student. Outstanding poets are recognized from each grade. From among these, a "Poet Laureate" is selected. In spring 2022, 8th-grader William Townsend took this honor, not only for a single outstanding poem, but for a body of memorable work over several years. William's name has joined those of prior Poet Laureates on a plaque in the school lobby.

Late Night

A lonesome window
For a person to look out
Into the inky, starry night
Gazing, wondering
What lies beyond the panes of glass
Could it be a voyage of blindness
Stumbling along broken tree branches?
Luminous moonlight, glowing
With constellations as companions
As a guide
But that person is not alone in thought
Countless others filled with amazement
Intrigued by the possibilities and capabilities
Of this dark time of sleep
But how can they fall asleep?
Especially this late at night
When everything beautiful happens
Unnoticed.
Smothered by the opaque rest
Of this world.
The late night thinkers
Finally turn out the light
Trudge up the creaking stairs
And drift off to dreamland
Being lonely together.



The Journey

Deep breaths
A naive beginning, a jubilee of commencement
A jovial start to the hardest part
The hardest part that rips apart
One's sleep, one's time, one's energy
The effort to secure a sustainable
Life. For you.
You are the thing, the purpose, the reason
That mud, sweat, and tears are shed
Yet those drops of pain and sorrow
Like final sips of coffee
(For beyond - exhausted eyes and bodies)
Do not fall to the dirt
They seep into you,
You, the very existence of previous
Generations, whose process and celebration
Of their own came and went
Joy and Guilt and Beauty and
Horror and
Rain. Think of misty clouds of rain
When you feel the teardrops on your back
Please, though, do not crack under pressure
Because it's you. You are the Journey.

In Memoriam

Peggy Erwin

Peggy Erwin passed away on January 15, 2022, and even if you never had the honor to meet this Westminster legend in person, you have encountered her spirit, especially in the main office, where she reigned over the front desk for 37 years, helping to “open the doors” in 1962 until 1999, when a family health emergency took her home to stay.

To say that Mrs. Erwin worked at Westminster School is to minimize her impact on the school and its community. Mrs. Erwin not only saw to it that office operations ran smoothly but she also was the guardian at the gate. She loved the school and all it stood for. She protected the time, dignity, and authority of Mrs. Goll and then Mr. Glover. Mrs. Erwin was fun-loving; those who knew her remember her ready smile and infectious laughter. And, she was adventurous, rarely turning down an invitation to try something new. She accompanied many student trips locally, out of state, and even overseas. She was a keen judge of character; it didn't take long for Mrs. Erwin to spot a “phony” or someone with a hidden agenda. And while she was invariably friendly and cheerful, you didn't cross Mrs. Erwin; she didn't tolerate hypocrisy, nor did she forget a betrayal. But, if you were a true griffin, or striving to become one, she had your back and was always ready with an encouraging word.



In the fall after her sudden departure from Westminster School, Mr. Glover hosted “Mrs. Erwin Day” so that she and the school community could share a heart-felt good-bye. When Mrs. Erwin arrived, chauffeured by a school driver, the entire student body and faculty stood together lining the driveway and school front. Signs and balloons brightened the welcome. An assembly featured heartfelt speeches and student performances, followed by a special luncheon with her friends. Her service plaque now hangs in Westminster's skylight corridor. It reads:

**Peggy L. Erwin
School Secretary
1962 - 1999**

**Sentinel of all that is Westminster,
Surrogate mother to a thousand pupils,
Friend to anyone in need . . .**

Peggy Erwin was an extraordinarily conscientious worker, some might say “old school.” If she said she would be somewhere, there she was. If she hadn't finished a task by day's end, she took it home with her and brought it back completed. In her nearly four decades of service, Mrs. Erwin may have missed five days of work. If she had a cold, she came to school; if she broke her ankle, she came to school; if there were sorrows at home, she came to school. And when you asked, “How are you, Mrs. Erwin?,” you never received a list of complaints. She always gave the same answer: “I'm wonderful!” She was, and we will never forget.

Safeerah Ullah

Our hearts were shrouded in sorrow last August by the loss of one of our dear graduates. Safeerah Ullah, aged 18, Class of 2018, succumbed to stage four cancer on August 27, 2022, following two years of illness. She left her parents, Elias and Nazia Ullah, sister Aarifah Ullah (Class of 2017), and many family members and friends to mourn her passing.

Safeerah's memorial notice expressed the essence of who she was:

“Safeerah had faith and wisdom beyond her years: she was a believer first and foremost and filled every role she had in life positively and with an energy unique to herself: to her family, friends, educators, loved ones, and her Creator. Safeerah left this Dunya with a smile on her face.”

As is evident in the accompanying photos, Safeerah will always be remembered by her Westminster family for her warm heart, loyal friendship, fun-loving enthusiasm, and, of course, for her glowing smile. Our hearts continue to be with her parents, Aarifah, and her entire family.



*“Death lies on her like an untimely frost
Upon the sweetest flower of all the field.”*

-Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act IV, Sc 5

ALUMNI NEWS

Class of 2018

The members of this group were a busy bunch as they wrapped up their high school careers and prepared to launch themselves into their college studies in the Fall of 2022.

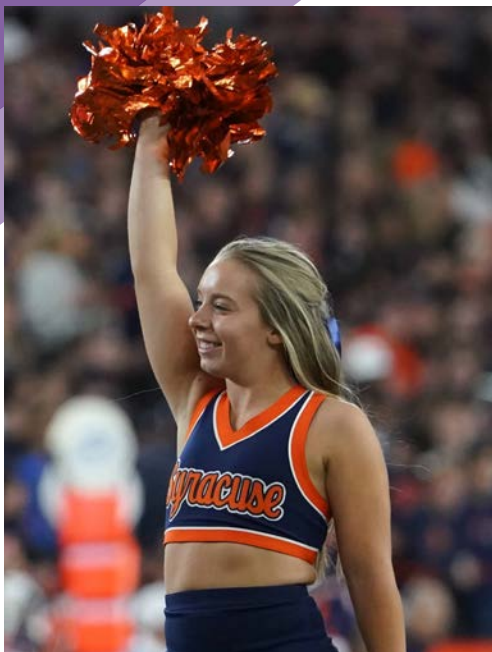


Nora Jacobson and **Devin Nemirow** were both back at their old stomping grounds during the summer of 2022 when they served as academic tutors for Westminster students, helping them brush up on math and French skills and introducing some brand new students to the Westminster way. Then they both went on to be the new kids at college a few weeks later.

Nora is a student at Washington and Lee University where she dove right into theater as a pirate in a steampunk version of *Treasure Island*, is focusing her studies on English and environmental science, and was just initiated into Chi Omega.

Devin is attending Syracuse University where she is a psychology and health humanities major, has loved her first year as a cheerleader, and was recently initiated into Gamma Phi Beta Sorority. She is also an active member of the Syracuse University Ambulance, a student-run organization that offers free medical transportation.

Alex Rose was named a Blount Scholar and was awarded an academic scholarship at the University of Alabama where he entered as a sophomore in Fall 2022, due to the many Advanced Placement credits he earned during his high school years at Highland School. He plans to double major in history and economics with a minor in liberal arts. Alex sends many thanks to Westminster's Mrs. O'Drudy, whose most excellent instruction in Latin allowed him to place into Latin III as a high school freshman, continue on to Honors Latin V and AP Latin, and ultimately receive the Classical Languages Award as a Highland School senior.



Samira Abbasi had the opportunity to intern with Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia in Summer 2022 immediately following graduation from The Potomac School. She is attending Barnard College at Columbia University where she plans to study political science and surely, with her confidence and poise, she will achieve that goal.



Conor Dillon has taken his skills to New York University where he will be a star in the classroom and as a goalkeeper for the school's soccer team. When he ventures home to visit his family, he will be making his way to his parents' new abode in Havre de Grace, Maryland on the Chesapeake Bay.

Class of 2020



Kai Wang, a junior at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology (TJ), was recently recognized for his musical talent. Kai is a member of the symphonic orchestra at TJ and approached his director the week before Chinese New Year 2022 to ask if the orchestra could play a piece he had written. The work Kai composed was for the string ensemble and incorporated Chinese folk elements in tribute to his culture and the holiday. Kai humbly described the piece as “pretty simple” and explained, “it only took a few days to write.” The TJ musicians began rehearsing the work, and Kai agreed to the addition of percussion. In the second week of the New Year, Kai and his fellow musicians performed the piece to entertain their classmates during the midday break at school, and TJ featured the performance on their website.

The Westminster community has always been aware of Kai’s immense musical talent from his days in the orchestra, performances in talent shows, and, most memorably, his role in the epic rendition of the Queen classic, “Bohemian Rhapsody” with Griffin classmate, Abbie Lee, delivered in the Glover Theater in their eighth-grade year here. A gifted, energetic, positive and bright young man, Kai also earned a coveted seat in the All-Virginia orchestra in 2022. Of the forty-nine cellists who auditioned, fourteen were selected, and Kai ranked #2 among them. Somehow, Kai also finds time to swim competitively and was the Virginia high school Class 6 swimming champion.

Kai’s Griffin family is so proud of his achievements – not only his impressive talent and work ethic, but the fact that he wants to share those gifts to make the world a more beautiful, joyous place.

Class of 2017

Just as they did when they were here as Griffins, the Class of 2017 continues to reach for the greatest of heights.

Due to her stellar performance on the PSAT while attending Flint Hill, **Joy Alemu** was named an African American Scholar by the College Board National Recognition Programs. She is a sophomore at Cornell University.

Nitara DeLaHaye, in her second year at the College of William and Mary, is pursuing a neuroscience major with a possible biochemistry minor.

Michael Pandula is thriving at the University of Virginia where he is majoring in biomedical engineering. The work habits he developed at Westminster have served him well in this rigorous academic program.

Aarifah Ullah is lighting up Washington, D.C. with her presence as a student at George Washington University. Majoring in computer science, she is considering law school and has joined the Women’s Pre-Law Student Association. Aarifah remembers fondly all the “good times” of her Westminster years.

Class of 2013



Cries of joy rang out in the Westminster family when a Griffin became engaged to a Griffin in October 2022. **Griffin Buising** proposed to **Emily Park** on a picturesque bridge during a beautiful walk in Lake Fairfax Park. Their friendship began back when both of these members of Westminster’s Class of 2013 were in the upper school. The first two people they informed of their engagement were classmates Mojdeh Nourbaksh and Alex Malikyar. Griffin and Emily are planning the wedding for autumn 2023. Their engagement photo shown here was taken among the gorgeous fall foliage of the Shenandoah Valley. We send love and congratulations to these two, and we are so happy that the bond they formed here has blossomed into a life-long commitment to each other!

Class of 2009



The Westminster community was thrilled to receive an update from **Brett Williams**, alumnus from the Class of 2009. From October 2018 through January 2022, Brett was blessed to live his lifelong dream of being a sports broadcaster by serving as the radio and television voice of women's sports at Western Kentucky University. This job took him around the country and gave him a chance to capture many memorable moments and tell meaningful stories about some remarkable student-athletes and coaches.

While this opportunity proved everything he wanted it to be and then some, Brett started feeling a call to something more. This led him to pursue and land a job back at his college alma mater, the University of South Carolina, where he currently serves on the staff that provides an enhanced university experience through special programs and holistic advising to the roughly 200 students who have received one of the university's top five academic scholarships. This is the same community of which he was a part during his undergraduate years, so it has been extremely rewarding for him to return to help the next generation of scholars achieve their dreams.

Brett still has not set aside the microphone, however! At his new home, he calls various

Gamecocks games for SEC Network and ESPN+ on a freelance basis, in addition to some in-venue public-address announcing. He is in the process of completing an online master's degree in Organizational Leadership through Western Kentucky University. Brett is thrilled with this new chapter in his life and remains eternally grateful to Westminster for the many ways the school and its community prepared him for everything that followed.

Here at Westminster, Brett's legacy of talent, enthusiasm, intelligence, and work ethic continue to live on, so we are very proud to hear that he has taken those gifts and shared them with the greater world. We will continue to watch his burgeoning career with great interest and pride!

Class of 2001



In a recent update from Westminster alumna, **Abrah Shapiro** of the Class of 2001, it became apparent that California has become quite a gathering place for fellow Griffins. Abrah considers herself an honorary native of Los Angeles after having lived there for fourteen years. She has discovered the unexpected treat of reconnecting with members of the Westminster family when they come to town or developing closer friendships with a few who have chosen to make the West Coast move as well. In late March 2022, Abrah's Westminster classmate, Amanda Fulk, and her mom, Carolann Fulk, as well as fellow California resident, Mojan Nourbakhsh (Class of 2006), reunited with Abrah over dinner in Marina del Rey. Amanda and her mom were in town for one of the final tapings of the *Ellen DeGeneres Show*, and the group enjoyed catching up with each other.

Abrah is busy growing her career in the television industry, and she was recently on location in Atlanta, Georgia, working as a

supervising producer on the second season of ABC's *Judge Steve Harvey*, which premiered in 2022. In a freelance role, Abrah has the opportunity to jump around to all sorts of fun and fascinating projects, and over the past year, she has also enjoyed her time on *Supermarket Sweep* (ABC), *Don't Forget the Lyrics* (FOX), and *Bake Squad* (Netflix).

Congratulations to Abrah for her professional achievements, adventurous spirit, and loyalty to her Westminster family. We are so proud of her and send her our love!



Class of 1999



Yohannes Abraham, a member of Westminster School's Class of 1999, was sworn in as U.S. Ambassador to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on September 19, 2022.

As described on the U.S. Mission to ASEAN website, prior to assuming this position, Yohannes served as Chief of Staff and Executive Secretary of the National Security Council (NSC). In this role, he oversaw NSC operations, the facilitation of the interagency national security policy process, the White House Situation Room, and planning for President Biden's diplomatic engagements at home and abroad.

Before joining the NSC, Yohannes was the Executive Director of the Biden-Harris Transition. He was responsible for all aspects of transition planning and execution for the incoming administration, managing the national security, economic, and domestic policy planning teams, as well the personnel process, including Cabinet selection.

Yohannes served in several White House roles during the Obama-Biden Administration, including as Senior Advisor to the National Economic Council and as Deputy Assistant to the President for Intergovernmental Affairs and Public Engagement. He has also worked in the Vanguard Group's global investment unit and taught at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Besides his Westminster School diploma, Yohannes holds a BA from Yale College and an MBA with High Distinction from Harvard Business School, all of which have led him to a stellar professional career. His Griffin family is so proud of his service to his country.

Griffin Siblings



The Class of 2017's **Ryan Mai** spent 2021-2022 living in France and loved the full immersion in the language and culture. He spent most of that time in Lyon, but had the chance to spend two months in Paris, a dream come true. He is currently studying at New York University in the Gallatin School of Individualized Study, which allows him to design his own concentration, merging technology, fashion, politics, and business perhaps. Ryan and his older sister, **Madeleine Mai**, Class of 2015, still combine forces on their charitable organization, DURIAN, which has traditionally provided assistance to those in need in Vietnam, where they recently completed construction of bathrooms in the school communities they partner with there. However, during the pandemic when Vietnam was in lockdown, Ryan and Maddie redirected their efforts by supplying masks (from Vietnam actually!) to residents of New York City during the time when obtaining them was expensive, or in certain cases, impossible. Very admirable work, you two!

Alex and Daphne Vouras of the Classes of 2016 and 2018, respectively, are staying true to their Westminster roots with their pursuit of higher education. Alex is a sophomore at Quinnipiac University in Connecticut where he is majoring in mechanical engineering, and his sister, Daphne, is in her first year at James Madison University where she will study health sciences. Congratulations to them both!



The Sikri sisters, **Samira** in the Class of 2017 and **Karina** in the Class of 2019, are another busy duo. Karina is a senior at Lake Braddock Secondary School where she says her love of the French language, born of the Westminster curriculum, has led her to French Honor Society. As secretary of Bruin Buddies, she plans and carries out activities for students with special needs so that they are a vital part of the school community. She also volunteers at a senior living center, socializing and participating in activities with residents in order to improve their quality of life. Her older sister, Samira, is a student at the University of Virginia, majoring in biology on the premed track with a minor in French, again with a nod to Westminster's outstanding language department. A year ago, she began volunteering for Literacy Volunteers of Charlottesville/Albemarle, a non-profit that aims to help non-English speaking adults learn the language. Last summer, she worked with a biscuit company at area farmers' markets and took an online course to become certified as a medical transcriptionist. These two young women are the ideal example of Westminster's values of high-quality scholarship combined with a sense of *noblesse oblige*. Well done, ladies!

Feel free to share any
alumni news by emailing
KJacobson@westminsterschool.com

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