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STONY BROOK

SUMMER 2020

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MISSION STATEMENT
The Stony Brook School is an independent college preparatory school (grades 7-12) that exists to challenge young men and women to know Jesus Christ as Lord, to love others as themselves, and to grow in knowledge and skill, in order that they may serve the world through their character and leadership.
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FROM THE HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear friends of The Stony Brook School,

On my desk sits a gift from a dear friend. It is a blueish gray porcelain bowl about five inches in diameter. Running through the bowl from side to side is a conspicuously raised gold stripe. At first, you would think it is purely decorative, but on closer inspection you realize that the gold lacquer is part of the repair process and is covering over sizable former cracks in the piece. It’s not hard to imagine that this bowl was at one point dropped on the floor, broken in two, and repaired in such a way as to not hide the cracks but actually highlight them through the conspicuous use of gold paint. The bowl is an example of the Japanese art form Kintsugi which states that breaks and repairs are part of the history of an object and must be shown and not hidden. Manifesting its transformation, the scars embellish the object.

On June 8th The Stony Brook School experienced such breakage. In the wake of the unjust deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor, SBS held a Town Hall meeting for Black alumni to share their experiences while at The Brook. We listened for four hours as alumni of color, recent and distant, recounted experiences of prejudicial treatment and, in some cases, worse. As an institution who claims Christ as its exemplar and Lord, we were broken to learn about these incidents. And, as I apologized in my June 12th letter to our alumni community, I do so again to ensure that all have heard. The Stony Brook School apologizes to our alumni of color for any and all instances where you were treated with less dignity than your status as Image Bearers of God requires.

Since the Town Hall meeting, The Stony Brook School has earnestly pursued the work of repair. I would put this work in three categories: education, policy, and relationship.

EDUCATION: This summer, under the guidance of our Equity and Inclusion Director Chris Burton, all faculty and staff have participated in Biblically-based antiracism training, which is the first time in our institution’s history that we have undergone this kind of sustained, multi-week training on the topic of race. This training equips us to move past the shibboleths regarding race that we have held onto, towards the deeper work of seeing the systems of thought and action that contribute to injustice in our country and our world. Antiracism training imparts to us the knowledge and understanding to fulfill Jesus’ great commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves. Our training has sparked fulsome conversations and thoughts about how we can best lead all of our students into a greater love and appreciation for one another.

POLICY: While The Stony Brook School ultimately believes that a supernaturally changed heart is the best way to deal with the sin of racism, alumna Erva Cockfield ’01 reminded me that policies keep people safe while we are waiting for people’s hearts to change. We have made several adjustments to our policies in order to ensure a more equitable environment. We have provided in our handbooks more clarity and definition regarding what constitutes discrimination. We have developed processes for reporting incidents of discrimination so that students may report without fear or embarrassment. We have instituted a review process to ensure that any public-facing events are screened for cultural sensitivity. Our previously mentioned goal to pursue twenty percent student-facing faculty and staff of color reflects the kind of structural change we believe will bring about a better Stony Brook.

RELATIONSHIPS: As all Brookers know, in the DNA of The Stony Brook School is a commitment to fostering close relationships between faculty and students. In his inaugural address in 1922, Frank E. Gaebelien set out five tenets that were to define The Stony Brook School’s next hundred years. The first tenet spoke of the need for a low student to teacher ratio to enable deep relationships to form for maximum benefit to the students. Herein lies the principle that I believe will unlock the flourishing of all past, current, and future Brookers. Please allow me to speak personally for a bit.
As many of you know, a petition was circulated by a group of alumni that demanded change at Stony Brook. Calling themselves the DRC (Diversity Reform Committee) they circulated a petition and then revised the petition ultimately settling on 14 points that they felt were important for the future of The Brook. My training and temperament lead me to be suspicious of petitions; therefore, candidly, my first reaction to the petition was one of indignance and resistance. And then something happened: *I actually spent time with the petitioners.* I listened to their hearts and why they were seeking the changes they proposed. I experienced first-hand the passion and love they had for their School and the desire for it to be better for all people, even in spite of some of the injustices and slights they themselves experienced here on campus. As a result of spending time together, I have come to appreciate the time and energy they have been willing to give for the betterment of our School. Many of the aforementioned policy changes have come from the petition and while we haven't agreed on everything, we have been able to continue working together in a constructive, pro-Brook manner. They have extended civility and reasonableness and I pray I have done the same in return.

In addition to the DRC, we are also working with another intergenerational alumni group to help ideate towards how to enhance the student experience for all Brookers. This group is starting with our mission statement and working to develop a plan that will be presented to the Board of Trustees in January. While the DRC has been focused on some of the more technical policy changes, this group will be focused on the adaptive changes that the School needs to make to better reflect the heart of Christ to all students. The fruit of their work will be a plan submitted to the Board of Trustees at the January meeting.

At the heart of our faith is the belief in Redemption – that no matter how bad things look in the moment, God can redeem even the difficult things of our lives and turn them into something beautiful. In the cauldron of pain two months ago, it was very difficult to see how good could come. However, two months on, life-giving relationships are forming, dialogue is opening, people with enormous talent who have been estranged are reconnecting with SBS and our School is improving unto the end that all students will feel like they have an equal place on Chapman Parkway. I wish I could say this level of engagement would have happened were it not for the pain that was experienced, but sadly I am not sure. Sometimes we have to be broken before we are truly repaired.

In one week, we will be starting our 99th School Year. As we look forward to the next 100 years, a more robust vision of what those years should look like is beginning to take shape. In Revelation 7, John gives us a glimpse of the end of time when he talks about people from every tribe, tongue, and people group worshiping around Christ's throne. It is the completed picture of the great project God has been working on since the beginning of time: creating one family out of the Nations. The Stony Brook School has a role to play in this great project. Not only do we want to be a prolific conduit to this great future celebration, we also want to reflect that future reality in miniature on our campus in the here and now. Welcoming others as Christ would welcome them will be the key to our success.

As we move forward together in the weeks and months to come, what if the challenges we have faced are the catalysts towards an even more healthy and vibrant school where all students flourish? What if God really can take our scars and paint them with gold so that instead of hiding them in shame, they have enhanced our overall beauty? This would be a great story. This would be our story. May it be so.

Best regards,
Joshua Crane, Head of School
While finishing the year online at home, our students still sought ways to serve their communities through the crisis.

Senior Emmy Specht ran a food drive for families in need due to circumstances prompted by COVID-19. She encouraged people in the surrounding community to drop off non-perishables on her porch and, with the help of the Family Outreach Coordinator at the Boys and Girls Club to identify families in need, Emmy delivered boxes every Sunday for months to homes across Suffolk County. For her efforts, she was featured as an “Extraordinary Senior” in Newsday and was described as having truly “made a difference on Long Island.”

SBS junior Lilly Jette began “The Water Lilly Project” during the pandemic after hearing local hospital workers had been getting rapidly dehydrated from wearing extensive personal protective equipment (PPE) during their shifts. Lilly created a GoFundMe page and raised $750 in two days. With the funds, and donations from local drink suppliers, Lilly and her sister Alysa ’19 delivered drinks to Good Samaritan and Southside Hospitals.

SBS students William Maglione ’23 and Caroline Maglione ’21 began cooking and delivering meals weekly to homebound veterans in April when the pandemic created an increased need for these services. They were able to help their community by volunteering through the organization “Feeding Long Island Vets.”

*We are so proud of our students for exhibiting the lifestyle of service that we seek to cultivate at SBS, especially during this global crisis.*
The Stony Brook School

2020-2021 Annual Fund

The primary purpose of the Annual Fund is to bridge the gap between tuition revenue and the total cost of educating our students. It completes our annual operating budget.

Your gift today continues the Stony Brook experience for the next generation of leaders who will exhibit Character Before Career.

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Prior to the outbreak of COVID-19, I met with the Board of Trustees to pitch a vision for Stony Brook’s academics as we enter our second century. The main thrust of that vision was to find a way to make a Stony Brook education — an education devoted to Christ and grounded in Christian convictions, focused on whole student growth and character formation, and committed to the pursuit of truth, beauty, and goodness in a culture that exalts fame, wealth, lust, and power — accessible to more students. I outlined a strategy that accomplished that vision by providing an online program accessible anytime, anywhere.

The pandemic has accelerated all of our plans. Rather than see the virus as merely a challenge to overcome — and it is indeed a challenge — we are seeing this as an opportunity to renew our commitment to our mission and accelerate our strategic planning. For us, seeing a challenge as an opportunity is not a vague business mantra. It is grounded in our faith in God’s goodness and providence and in Christ’s example, which teaches that suffering is meaningful, redemptive, and transformative. We believe God is doing a great work, work that will allow The Stony Brook School to serve more students, support the work of the church around the globe, and transform families, businesses, and communities through the leaders of Character we cultivate.

The process of transforming our school and conforming it more to the vision we believe God has for us is already underway. This past spring, when we were forced to close campus operations and send our boarding students home, our teachers took one day off before transitioning immediately into teaching through Zoom meetings and posting assignments, assessments, and teaching videos on our learning management system (LMS). We modified the academic day to accommodate students spread across time zones from California to Korea. While many students at other schools now find themselves months behind, Stony Brook students met all of their original learning objectives and are well prepared for their next level classes this fall.

**Summer Intensives**

With the prospect of summer camps and programs being canceled, we created a summer school offering to meet the needs of our students and their families. Within two weeks of the last day of the school year, we were up and running with a new intensive course program, with 63 students taking two-week/1 credit courses or six-week/3 credit courses. The courses have been a huge success, and we will continue to expand our summer school offerings, both online and on-campus in future summers.

**Re-Opening Campus**

This coming fall, we are ready to open on September 2 whether students can be physically present on campus or not. Our faculty have been working tirelessly to build out their courses in our learning management system so that students can access all of the assignments, assessments, screencast videos, and lectures they need to make progress towards their academic goals. We have integrated learning technologies like Turnitin, Formative, VoiceThread, Quizlet, NoRedInk, and other programs into our LMS to make it a powerful learning platform that is accessible all the time, everywhere. Additionally, to keep the content fresh, relevant, and responsive to current events and current student needs, our teachers will livestream once a week to students across the globe. Students who can come to campus will meet with their teachers three times a week, including two meetings that will be focused exclusively on hands-on activities, group projects, small group discussions, and instruction tailored to the needs of the
students in the section. When students and teachers are in the same room together, they will be actively engaged in pursuits that take full advantage of physical presence and the specialized equipment and learning resources we have available in our classrooms. Students who cannot attend campus will videoconference with their teachers and their peers using Zoom, and they will complete alternative hands-on projects and labs that can be done remotely.

**Stony Brook Global**

The future is now for The Stony Brook School. While our on-campus teachers prepare for a new normal, we are simultaneously launching Stony Brook Global, a completely online program for students around the world. The courses will be the same in content and rigor as our on-campus courses, but they will be taught by off-campus teachers. SB Global students will be able to access the content, assignments, and assessments in our LMS, and they will tune in to livestreams and receive feedback, support, and tutoring from our SB Global instructors. In time, we hope to serve thousands of qualified students through this model. Stony Brook’s first hundred years have been marked by students from around the world coming to our campus. Now we are taking Stony Brook to the world.
The 98th spring season of Stony Brook Athletics arrived with great promise and anticipation. The badminton team and boys’ and girls’ track squads all looked to defend their 2019 PSAA Championships, the baseball team was set to embark on their first independent season against some of the best teams in the country, and numerous Bears set their sights on defending league and state championships.

But those hopes faded as quickly as the magnolia blossoms surrounding Memorial Hall with the encroachment of a global pandemic, resulting in the first canceled season in 293 seasons of Blue & White history. Despite the loss, our student-athletes, most notably our seniors, remained positive and resilient, thanks in large part to Coach Vanessa Windsor who kept many Bears involved with weekly fitness challenges and Zoom workout sessions.

Though the 2020 spring season lasted just a handful of days, there was still much to celebrate. In March, Joe Wozny and TJ Wachter were named Pre-Season All-Long Island by Axcess Baseball. The pair, along with teammates Jack Carr and Tyler Smith, were named to the Rawlings Pre-Season All-America Team in April.

Morgan Ruggieri and Ava McCormick were honored on Long Island Lacrosse Journal’s 2022 and 2023 Watch Lists in May, becoming the only PSAA players to be featured. In addition, MileSplit USA ranked Colin Scanlon as the 11th fastest junior in America and 2nd fastest in New York in the 400m hurdles, courtesy of his school-record 55.68 run at last year’s State Federation Championships.

Our seniors were honored in several ways in their final weeks on our campus. We designated May 15th as our Senior Day, celebrated with video messages from coaches and teammates in each program, replacing the pre-game Senior Day celebrations we traditionally enjoy. The PSAA also recognized every senior in the league with All-PSAA recognition, acknowledging the impact our seniors made in our programs as well as their sacrifice in giving up their final seasons.

Our sights now turn to the fall season. Schedules have been created and contingency plans have been developed around the guidelines given by the National Federation of High School Sports. We will continue to monitor guidance given by our state associations and our league and will adapt accordingly. We believe that fitness will be essential for the physical and emotional well-being of our students in the coming year, so we are committed to running our program while being in lockstep with whatever safety protocols are required for keeping our athletes healthy. This year will be a unique one in many ways, but we serve a God who was not surprised by this crisis and trust in His strength and wisdom to guide us through.
In this season’s pursuit of justice, I think often of Matthew 20 and the parable of the workers in the vineyard. In this parable, a landowner hires laborers early in the morning to work in his vineyard. Throughout the day, the landowner continued to find others being idle in the marketplace. By the end of the day, without regard to what time they began to work, the laborers receive the same wage.

I’ve mentioned to the participants in SBS’ employee-wide antiracism training that I was doing the work of antiracism before it became trendy. When I was 17, a servant leader intern for Children’s Defense Fund’s Freedom School program, I heard Ella Baker’s words repurposed into a song by Sweet Honey on the Rock. “We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes.” That summer reinforced my conviction that education is a force for good in the world. As servant leaders we were not just teaching children, we were giving them the tools to dismantle the cradle to prison pipeline. At age 20, as a first-year seminarian at Union Presbyterian Seminary, Dr. Katie Cannon showed me that education could do the Lord’s work of setting captives free. As a Covenant Member of Trinity Grace Church Crown Heights, I worked with Dr. Jennifer Chen to create and co-facilitate A Seat At The Table, the antiracism training we developed to guide our multicultural church in the rapidly gentrifying neighborhood of Crown Heights. Now a year into my time at The Stony Brook School, I am continuing this work—and am pleased to see more people labor in the vineyard.

In the last issue of The Bulletin, I had the opportunity to share with our community the importance of civil discourse, and how programs like “Meet Me Halfway” prepares Brokers to model the sort of civility our world desperately needs. Being able to actively listen without wanting to immediately stifle opposing views or marginalize another’s dignity are fundamental skills for leadership, and the pursuit of justice is necessary for doing the work of antiracism.

The unrest we have witnessed both globally and within our own community is evidence of deep pain. It may be communicated in new ways but is connected to sinful oppression that made its way to this nation’s shores in 1619. Every slight, micro-aggression, and blatant act of racism, no matter how well-intended they may be, can make spaces inhospitable, and worthy of escape.

None of us want our beloved school community to be one worthy of escape. We want a place where all of us feel at home, and commitment to antiracism work affords us the
opportunity to exist in that place.

As aforementioned, we are in the midst of employee-wide antiracism training. This training uses the biblical examples of Daniel and Esther to model the courage and faith we all need to live justly. It is our hope that this work lays a firm foundation for our community’s antiracism work. It is upon this foundation that we will do the curricular review to ensure all of our students see themselves and one another’s language, culture, and heritage. We are committed to having 20 percent faculty and staff of color by the 2024-2025 school year and are excited to introduce new members of our community to a place where this good, sacred work is already happening.

Undoubtedly, learning of this pain can be painful for members of our community who are newly aware of the injustice, and shameful for those who chose to ignore it. But much like the laborers hired later in the day, there is still work to do and the wages we earn in Christ for participating in this work are the same. It is full time that we as a community put to rest outdated world views that exalt colorblindness as virtuous. It is full time for us to arrive at a collective understanding that it is not enough to refrain from racist behavior. We all have a part to play in undoing racism. This is good, sacred work that allows us to deepen our love for one another in a manner that glorifies God. We all have space to participate together. I have sympathy for brothers and sisters in whom the thought of antiracism initiatives inspires fear. I want to reassure you that this is not a work born of hate but one born in a Christian understanding. Here at The Stony Brook School, we endeavor to, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” As Christ models, we couple this commandment with the holy mandate to “love your neighbor as yourself.” (Mark 12:30-31) Let us remain prayerful and optimistic, trusting in God’s faithfulness to complete this good work.
Despite how COVID-19 has turned our world upside down, our School was determined to make 2020 a year to remember for our graduating seniors.

On May 23 we held a graduation car-processional for the class of 2020. Seniors and their families were invited to decorate their cars and process through campus. Once in the front of the line of graduates, each student was announced and cheered on by members of the school community. Because a large amount of the senior class were boarding students who were unable to make the celebration, the school ordered large cardboard cutouts of the students’ faces to use during the procession. When each name was announced, the student’s faces were paraded up the street by their faculty or staff advisor. Afterward, cars of students and their families were directed to the athletics field, where they were addressed by Head of School, Joshua Crane.

Once restrictions were lifted further, we were also able to hold an in-person graduation following recommended state guidelines. On August 9th, donned in their caps, gowns, and “SBS Class of 2020” masks, students processed up Chapman Parkway and gathered in front of Frank E. Gaebelien Hall. Joshua Crane addressed the graduates, and then each student in attendance was called by name up to the stage to receive their diploma. Both events were live-streamed, and those who were unable to attend were dearly missed. Below is Mr. Crane’s address to the class of 2020.

“The advice I am going to give you has probably never been aggregated and given in a graduation speech in recent times,” said Mr. Crane, “but know that I am giving it to you out of love and as someone who has had to wrestle with wanting to be happy all the time and running smack into the realities of 2020 on such a frequent basis that my outlook has changed. I don’t want you to be out of sync with the times and run into perpetual frustration.

THE CLASS OF 2020
You can take it or leave it, but I would hate to fill you with unrealistic notions just to make you feel good in the moment.

The first is we have to acknowledge that we are ultimately not in control and this is actually rather freeing. Whether you are a monotheist or an atheist, how many times has what you thought was going to happen not materialized over the past 6 months? How many of you thought that you would be graduating in August? How many of you thought you would be going to college online? Natural disasters, pandemics, and bombs exploding show us that control was an illusion when everything was going our way. This is the trap of ease and plenty. One of my favorite songwriters, David Wilcox, has a song called *All the Roots Grow Deeper When It is Dry* that says:

*It looked so easy, we change the weather
We would turn this world ourselves, our world so small
But slower rhythms – still unheard of
Said that every blessed summer someday has to fall*

*Prosperity will have its seasons
Even when it’s here, it’s going by
When it’s gone we pretend we know the reasons
And all the roots grow deeper when it’s dry*

When we are in the midst of prosperity we have the tendency to think, "this will always continue." But the universe does indeed have slower rhythms built into it, and we have to recognize that and accept it when they manifest themselves and disrupt the equilibrium. Once we let go of the belief that we can be in control of everything, we find that we actually have the capacity to weather these storms much better as we accept our finiteness in the face of them.

The second thing we need to do is learn to be comfortable in our discomfort. One of the things that trainers of endurance athletes, or any kind of serious athlete, will tell you is that in order to excel at a sport, you are going to have to befriend the pain and challenge that you feel.
during competition. The wheat gets separated from the chaff in the sports world through people's willingness or unwillingness to embrace the discomfort they feel while engaging in a sport. Matt Wilpers, who is a triathlon coach and instructor for Peloton, gave me a tip: when you are running or biking up hills and it hurts, smile. People will think you are weird, but do it anyway. And you know what? It works. When I run up or bike up a hill, you will usually see me smiling because it is me training myself to be comfortable in my discomfort. Athletes who say to themselves, “This is horrible. I feel like I am going to die, I just have to quit,” don’t last very long. The non-sport equivalent of this is being thankful. A way to handle the discomfort of unmet expectations, hardships, disappointments is to be grateful for the things that you do have even if they are seemingly small things. I know you have probably heard about being thankful since you were in kindergarten, but there’s actually strong science behind it. In 2008, scientists measured brain activity of participants experiencing different emotions, and found that gratitude causes synchronized activation in multiple brain regions, and lights up parts of the brain’s reward pathways and the hypothalamus. In short, just like Prozac, gratitude can boost neurotransmitter serotonin and activate the brain stem to produce dopamine. Start out by identifying 10 things you can be thankful for, make it a habit of giving thanks for each one, grow your list and watch what happens. The Bible is not ignoring science when it says in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, *Give thanks in all circumstances.*

Third, **paint your cracks gold.** What do I mean by this? The ancient Japanese art form Kintsugi is when the cracks that ceramic or porcelain bowls and cups inevitably receive over time are filled in and painted over with gold, silver or platinum—not as a way to hide them, but as a way to use them to enhance the piece’s beauty. In other words, it treats breakage and repair as part of the history of an object rather than something to disguise. In times of prosperity, we can get into the very unhealthy pattern of trying to pretend like weakness and failure don’t exist. No one wants to look bad; no one wants to be slowing down the victory parade, so we pretend we are perfect in the competition to keep up with all the other prosperous, seemingly perfect people all around us. But in reality, times of adversity and challenge are the golden invitation we have all been waiting for to acknowledge our weakness and brokenness and the need for interdependence and humility. In 2007 I hurt my back trying to lift a piano. Yes, it was stupid but I was a Head of School who was trying to prove he could do everything. I heard a pop in my back that day and it has never been the same since. I went through 4.5 years of
The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness; He will quiet you by His love; He will exult over you with loud singing.

~Zephaniah 3:17

daily intense pain that therapy, medicine, and doctor visits could not fix. But as I slowly began to improve, in part by not obsessing over it daily, I began to realize the profound changes that happened in my person. I was way more empathetic and sympathetic with people, more patient because I had to slow down so much, more dependent on other people rather than thinking I could do everything myself. These were profound changes that I don’t know would have happened without hardship. This is why the apostle Paul says in 2 Corinthians 12, “Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses; so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

Lastly, don’t let complaining obscure your longings. When you look around and you see that we’re all wearing masks, that there are only a certain number of people who are allowed to be at the ceremony, and that you have to leave right after the service, and you say to yourself, “This stinks!” Guess what? You’re right. But acknowledging that something stinks goes awry when it becomes about deserving something better, and devolves into self-pity. When you say “this stinks”, “I deserve better”, or “why is this happening to me” you are missing important cosmic signposts. When you are living in times of adversity, you are more in touch than ever with the fact that things are not as they ought to be; that there is something fundamentally wrong with the universe. When you experience disease and, worst case, lose a loved one or, best case, have to socially distance for a year and you long for the time when you will be able to gather freely again without worry or fear, you are acknowledging this is not the way it’s supposed to be. When you see races denigrating each other you long for the time when people will be judged by the contents of their character, and not by the color of their skin, you are recognizing this is not the way it is supposed to be. When a bomb goes off in a major city because of administrative incompetence and people lose their lives, you long for better leaders who will care for the people and region they serve because you know this is not the way it is supposed to be. When pollution is so concentrated in a city that some days you can’t even go outside for more than 5 minutes, you long for clean air that you don’t have to think twice about breathing, you know this is not the way it’s supposed to be. Prosperity allows us to shrug these kinds of things off as problems for others to solve, adversity makes us feel it more acutely; it makes us linger longer. And if you are in touch with the brokenness of the world and you long to see it become better you are now in touch with how God feels on a daily basis. But God did something about it.
When God sent His Son to the earth over 2000 years ago, he ushered in the greatest restoration project of all time. Through the birth, life, death, resurrection, and now active reign of Jesus Christ, He is making all things new. Sometimes there is a lot of tearing down before something can be restored to the way it should be, but God is committed, and He will complete the good work that He has started. And He invites you into a personal relationship with Him; to be part of His family working together with Him on the great restoration project that is nothing less than a new heaven and a new Earth, where there will be no more sorrow and no more tears — no more pain and no more suffering. It will be the place where your deepest longings will be fulfilled in the best of ways. Before you dismiss this as a fairy tale or idealistic gas, know this: in the Bible, God told us He would send His Son and He did. He told us He would die unjustly and He did. He told us He would rise again from the dead on the third day and He did. He has told us He is coming again to restore all things and He will. Put your trust in Him and walk out into the adversity with the confidence that even as the creation groans this is not the way it is supposed to be, there is tremendous hope. There is a new creation coming and you, class of 2020, because of your proximity to loss and pain, have the chance to be some of its most zealous advocates and inspired workers.”

Co-Valedictorians

Ziming Gao entered The Stony Brook School in 9th grade. During his time at SBS, he was the Chief Technology Officer of the School Robotics Team (which is now ranked #10 worldwide), the head of the Workjob program, and the president of the Math Club. He also was the volunteering programmer of the BranchOut! Innovator program, a member of the Yearbook Staff, and a rescue diver for the Professional Association of Diving Instructors. Ziming will be attending the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor to pursue computer science. “We can’t deny that 2020 was a hard year,” Ziming said. “Yet, at the same time, I can’t help but be proud of us all. We made our voices heard, made a difference, and stayed connected to one another from different states and time zones. 2020 gave us lemons, and we sure made lemonade. Go Bears!”

Annaelle Roc entered SBS in 7th grade. During her time at SBS she was captain of the Varsity Keelboat Sailing Team, President of the Women in STEM Club, a member of the Theatre Arts Society, and a member of the Academic Council. She was also the Chapel Prefect on The Stony Brook School Prefect Board, and was very involved in Driven, SBS’ on-campus youth ministry. She will be attending Pomona College, Claremont, to continue her education.

“No matter what your summer has looked like, as you go forwards, please keep that signature Class of 2020 fire within your hearts,” said Annaelle. “Remember what has shaped you, and use this time to reflect on the world in which you live, to figure out how you might continue changing it for the better. But also know that it is okay to just breathe, to just be. You deserve it. I miss you all, and stay safe, Stony Brook!”
TRANSITIONING STYLES

This year in AP art, students worked hard to produce 13 complete works throughout the year. Students used varied media—photography, 3D modeling, 2D drawing, digital drawing—but all held the same attitude and devotion towards creating art, expressing their ideas, and bringing a mode of visual conversation to the table.

Art student and recent graduate Lisa Li, who had developed a solid foundation through classical studies and spent years practicing a more realistic style, spent the year transitioning from classical to fantastical. Her theme for the year revolved around the journey of life. In Lisa's words, the journey of life "encompasses the physical development, the various mental and emotional stages, moments of realization and of spiritual growth." Each piece she created depicted an aspect of that journey in light of external-vs-internal development and gradual-vs-instantaneous change.

How did the transition from classical paintings and realism to this style of work feel? Did it stretch you as an artist? It was smooth and challenging at the same time. Practicing a more classical style enabled me to grow essential skills such as perspectives, lighting and figure, and helped me gain confident control of my brush-stroke when trying other styles. The challenging part was that I was accustomed to heavily relying on photo references. The new fantastical style definitely challenged me to plan more thoroughly in my mind. There were a lot more decisions to be made about composition, texture, and most importantly, the ideas and messages behind each work.

Where did you draw your inspiration from these pieces from? Poetry, mythology and other literature were my source of inspiration. Many of my works that emphasize inner human emotion were inspired by particular verses in various Chinese poems, composed either by ancient poets or by my friends.

In your artist’s statement, you said these pieces are meant to show your growth and development during your time at SBS. Can you further explain that? Although all the characters in my works are fictional and do not physically resemble anyone in real life, each piece does capture a significant moment or a collection of precious memories during these four years, such as a good chat during family style dinner, a heartfelt conversation with a roommate at night, a golden piece of advice from my advisor, teachers, or counselor…

Of all of your works from this year, which are you most proud of? Two of my favorites are the labyrinth and the fall from the horse. Each of them was a bold attempt to experiment and play with new styles and techniques such as the psychedelic architectural structure and the combination of sketchy lines with thick blocks of color.

Is art a part of your dreams for the future? Art will definitely continue to play a big role in my life beyond SBS. I want to explore more forms of art, as well as dig into the historical and analytical side of it. I intend to major in art history, and I have started to take painting and design commissions during this summer.

What is one lesson from SBS that you will take with you wherever you go in life? Be sincere, open-minded, and courageous, or as the Bible commands, “be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger...but be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” (James 1:19-22) SBS has introduced me to a wonderful and wide spectrum of perspectives and has embraced and supported my own vision.
David Holmes ’82 is a family physician and faculty member at SUNY Buffalo where he’s been for 25 years. During the pandemic he volunteered his medical skills at Woodhull Hospital, a designated COVID-19 hospital, in Brooklyn for nearly two weeks.

Tell us a little about your journey from student to professional.

I grew up at Stony Brook as a “fac brat” (son of John and Paula Holmes) and didn’t really know any other kind of life. I thought the teachers, coaches, and staff at Stony Brook were all caring and really good at what they did. However, I didn’t have much experience outside of Stony Brook to compare them to. It wasn’t till I got to college that I was awakened and realized just how truly remarkable they all were.

I attended Stanford University and majored in Human Biology with a concentration in education, but ended up getting a job as an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) after graduation.

I don’t remember my exact prayers to God at that time, but they went something like, “God, if You want me to be a doctor, then You need to work a miracle and get me into medical school.” I applied to many medical schools and only got into one, the University of Vermont (UVM). Ever since then, if I had a difficult day as a medical student or as a physician, I would just remind myself of that miracle.

Now, I’m a family physician and faculty member at SUNY at Buffalo. I spend about half my time seeing patients in outpatient clinics and a hospital. The other half of my time is spent teaching, mentoring, and doing research and administration.

At the Jacobs School of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, I teach in several courses and direct the global health program where many students and residents learn about global health and have opportunities to serve overseas, under supervision, and provide much needed medical care in low-income countries. One of the elective courses that I direct is called, “Faith, Medicine and End-of-Life Care”. These courses help students learn about the valuable role that faith plays in the health and well-being of many patients. I also am a faculty advisor for the Christian Medical and Dental Associations, which is a national ministry for healthcare professionals and students in healthcare. I’m the faculty advisor for the student chapter at the medical school in Buffalo which is a lot of fun and a great way to get to know students and dig deeper together in faith.

How has Character before Career taken shape in your professional life?

Stony Brook was challenging and taught me that life is not always easy. I learned that the way to overcome challenges was to work hard, persevere, ask for help, pray, and trust God to get me through. In college, med school, and beyond, I experienced course failures, disappointments, and other obstacles. At times, I felt like giving up, but by doing the things I learned at Stony Brook, I got through. Thanks be to God! Now as a physician, I talk with a lot of patients who are going through hard times and, whenever the opportunity presents itself, point them towards the Lord.

You recently volunteered your medical skills at Woodhull Hospital in the midst of this pandemic. How did that happen? What was that experience like?

We had planned a school medical mission in April to Sierra Leone, but because of COVID-19 it obviously was canceled. I had the time off work and I received an email requesting help at a COVID-19 hospital in Brooklyn, so I went. I spent 12 days there and am so thankful to have been able to serve in that capacity.

“In this world you will have trouble, but take heart, for I have overcome the world.”

~John 16:33

This pandemic has turned the world upside down for many, but even in hardship, we know that doesn’t change the ever-nearness of God.
The hospital I was assigned to had 240 beds, and about 200 of them were filled with COVID patients. During the peak, about two weeks before I got there, about 70 patients were on ventilators and about 40 patients were dying every day. During my time there, about 10 patients were dying each day. Things were beginning to improve, but still had a long way to go. They thankfully had enough personal protection equipment (PPE) but kept running out of certain medications, oxygen tubing, central line kits, and other supplies that were vital for the intensive care units. The environment was totally different than other medical mission trips I’d been on, but one thing was similar—not enough resources were available, and too many people dying prematurely.

While there, I met two other volunteer physicians who I soon realized also were Christians. Daily, we reminded each other that we were on a medical mission trip, encouraged one another, and prayed together, which was such a blessing in such a dark time.

I learned a lot about COVID management, and how incredible the doctors and staff at the hospital were – the ones who were there full time and were working so hard for so long to keep patients alive. They are amazing people and it was a privilege to be able to work with them and learn from them.

Finally, I learned to thank God for my inadequacy. I wished I knew more so I could do more to help, like manage ventilators. The needs were so great and I felt that anything I did was just a drop in the bucket—but God taught me to be content, knowing that we may have different types of training and skillsets, but we all had a part to play. He reminded me that if everyone puts their drop in the bucket, then by God’s grace it soon will be full, and the needs will be met. I ultimately thanked God for my inadequacy because it forces me to depend on Him more, which leads me to wells of His strength and peace that I would never experience otherwise.

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”
~2. Cor. 12:9a, 10b

At SBS, we seek to teach our students that it is more blessed to give than receive and that humility and service are the pathways to greatness. 2020 has been a year of unexpected difficulties for many, but with those difficulties, seemingly exponential ways to serve the world around us. What is one piece of advice you’d give current SBS students, and our 2020 graduates, in regards to those ideas?

Remain in Christ. Don’t drift away. God doesn’t move—we do. So, if we feel distant from Him, it’s because we drifted away from Him, and it’s our responsibility to turn back to Him.

“I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” ~John 15:5

When people feel “withered” despite doing a lot of good things, it may be because they have not remained fully connected to the vine. Service is huge and should be a part of the Christian’s life, according to the Bible. However, over time, service, without remaining close to Christ, often leads to burn-out, fatigue, discontent, and fruitlessness. But, if service flows out of a close and vibrant relationship with Christ, then it will be more fruitful.

I’m still trying to learn to slow down and just listen and walk with God. Too often, I rush and try running ahead of God by doing what I think would be good to do. Then I wonder why things aren’t working out like I wanted or why I’m feeling worn out or discouraged. It’s often because God took a turn without me realizing it and I got on the wrong path. The way to know if I’m on the right path is by reconnecting with God and getting involved with what He’s doing (rather than asking Him to bless what I’ve already decided to do). ■
One night, about five years after my son Matt had been diagnosed with Autoimmune polyglandular syndrome (APS, known in Europe as APECED) Type 1, I couldn't sleep. Around 3:00 am, I began pacing around the house. I started thinking about what had happened to my son over the previous few years, and about God. This led me to begin to think through each of the awful events that had happened. I realized that very quickly after as these different situations had occurred and then passed, I had wrapped them up and put them far away in order to deal with the next crisis. That night, I took all of the painful memories out and examined each one. One experience that particularly stood out occurred the day before Christmas a few years earlier. My son Matt had woken up unable to form words. Over the next four weeks, we received possible diagnoses of: viral encephalitis, epilepsy, MS, brain cancer, and acute demyelinating encephalitis (ADEM). The common expression “going weak in the knees” hit me in those moments; I felt my strength leave me, and felt like I was going to drop to the ground.

After thirty minutes of ripping off these psychological bandaids and exploring each newly opened wound in exquisite detail, I paced the house furiously, asking God why all of this had happened, and what it could mean. In the midst of my despair, a light shone forth, and I began to see clearly how God had been with me through it all, and prepared me for this task.

I thought of my wife, and how well we work together, and how well she was prepared in her life for this hardship. I think next of my parents, and how each of them contributed to different parts of who I am. And then my thoughts lead me to my teachers at Stony Brook: Goldberg, Soderstrom, Brownworth, Hostetter, Johnson, Marshall, Simmons, Holmes, and Dodd. I think about the skills they taught me which have allowed me to effectively communicate with many doctors and specialists, to successfully navigate health insurance companies (not an easy task), to raise tens of thousands of dollars to fund research, and to start a nonprofit foundation called APS Type 1 Foundation Inc.

While it had taken me 30 minutes to think through all the really painful things that had happened, it took about two minutes to think through the myriad of ways in which God's presence and love had been manifested in the before, during, and after of my son's diagnosis. I believe that calling Stony Brook a “college preparatory” is a gross understatement; it should be called a “life preparatory,” because that's really what it does.

APS Type 1 belongs to a small group of three autoimmune disorders that are monogenetic in nature, whereas 200+ other autoimmune disorders have multiple mutated genes. Because it is monogenetic, it is relatively simpler to understand. Researchers around the world now believe that the study of APS will lead to breakthroughs in the understanding of how autoimmunity works, which could lead to improved treatments for all autoimmune diseases and even cancer. My small nonprofit has already held three international symposiums and has initiated a worldwide natural history study of the disorder which will further research. My contribution and dedication to this effort is due in large part to the education and life lessons I learned at SBS. I will be forever grateful to my teachers and the things they taught me, academically and spiritually, about life. What they do forever impacts their students' lives in ways they may never see, but they are changing the world all the same.
Alex Edwards-Bourdrez ’72 retired on January 31, 2020, after finishing his wage-earning life with a 3-year gig in direct support of people with developmental disabilities at AHRC Nassau on Long Island. In his volunteer life he is co-manager of the Northport-East Northport Food Pantry, which serves 185 families each week, and Sunday school superintendent for his church, where he also coordinates external communication and publicity. Alex is active in the poetry community of Long Island, participating in workshops and readings (yay, Zoom!). His poems have appeared in various anthologies, and he has published two chapbook collections of his work.

Peter Szto ’73 was named the recipient of a Fulbright Distinguished Chair in the Social Sciences. This award will take him to China to develop a social work curriculum focused on indigenous-based mental health. While this work is on hold due to COVID-19, Szto will spend approximately 10 months in Zhengzhou, which is a city very much in need of mental health support. As a son of Chinese immigrants, he has spent much of his academic career focused on social welfare development in China, including mass internal migrations from rural to urban spaces and the stigma around mental illness.

“The central government understands that social work is a strategic solution to address citizens’ mental health needs,” he said. “What’s missing is a model of care and curriculum to train a mental health work force.”

Szto is honored to be chosen for this award and is hopeful to make a difference to China’s social work education and mental health.

Dave Seel ’98, a Baltimore publicist and hospitality advocate, started the Baltimore Area Restaurant Industry Relief Group at the beginning of the pandemic in March. The Facebook page was in support of the restaurant community knocked off their feet due to closures all over the country. Within a day of opening the page, it had over 600 members. Seel was featured in Baltimore Magazine for his efforts to help his local community. By July, the page had over 5,000 members.

Dan Hickey ’04 and Jami Hickey welcomed Avery Clare on April 14. She was 7 lbs, 11 oz and Jack and Reagan have been in love with her from day one. The Hickeys are grateful for the care they received from the Stony Brook University Hospital staff in the midst of the pandemic.

Rachael J. Murphy ’10 received her MD, cum laude, from St. George’s School of Medicine in April. Rachel is currently in her first year of a Neurology Residency at Lehigh Valley Hospital in Allentown, PA.

Linnea Peckham Geno ’10 and her husband Alec were named among Wheaton College’s 30 Under 30 earlier this year. After three years of renovations and restoration, the duo re-opened Sylvan Ridge Farm as an event venue early this summer. However, due to the pandemic, they will not be holding events until 2021.

Michael Webster ’10 and Natalie Istrati Webster ’11 (left with their children) will be traveling to the Dominican Republic in August. Michael will be teaching math at Santiago Christian School, and Natalie and Michael will be acting as missionaries to support Haitian refugees, poor communities in the DR, and non-Christian students at their school.

Kimberly Cataudella ’16 was named the recipient of the 2020 Rodger Streitmatter Journalism Award for Excellence for her “outstanding scholarship and dedication to the field of journalism.” Cataudella is the fourth recipient of the Streitmatter Award for Excellence, established in 2017 to recognize and encourage undergraduate students pursuing careers in journalism. She is planning to pursue a Masters at American’s School of Communication.

Joshua Martin ’16 captured some moving drone footage as hundreds marched peacefully through the streets of downtown Waco on June 6. He said that documenting the moment in time as Waco area residents joined hundreds of thousands of others around the world fighting for racial equality made him feel like he’s using his skillset to make a positive difference. “As a photographer, it’s been such a huge blessing to be able to use these gifts that the Lord has given me in order to elevate and document the fight for justice that’s going on right here in our city,” Martin said. “As an individual with a voice and even the smallest of platforms, I feel like it’s my responsibility to leverage what I’ve been blessed with in order to fight for change.”

Angelica Geneva Buscemi ’16 was awarded the Chauncey Lester and Elsie Stewart Benedict Memorial Prize for her original play Checkmate. This prize is awarded annually for the best play script or drama written by an undergraduate student of the College of Liberal Arts at Drew University. Her play was performed in early November 2019, and Angelica was described as “A consummate playwright, director and overall theatre practitioner. Her play Checkmate was masterfully written and has a bright future.”
OBITUARIES

Alumni

Warren Wigand ’37 on January 1, 2020 (Delray Beach, Florida) He passed away five months after celebrating his 100th birthday.

Warren credited his teachers at SBS, and Dr. Frank E. Gabelein, with profoundly influencing his Christian faith and helping develop his character. He went on to attend Wheaton College in Illinois, where he met his wife Merrette. His career in sales and accounting took the family to Chicago to New York to Detroit. In each place they lived, they joined and volunteered in Bible based churches. In 1981, after Merrette was diagnosed with Lou Gehrig’s disease, Warren cared for her at home until her death in 1983. He later married family friend Agnes Fleming Rehnquist. In 1986 they retired to Delray Beach, FL, and Warren found a new calling in prison ministry at the Palm Beach County Jail, where he volunteered until he was 95. Weekly, he brought materials he’d compiled to help answer the prisoners’ spiritual and theological questions, and to aid them in their search for faith. A lifelong prayer warrior, he daily prayed over his long list of family, neighbors, missionaries, leaders, Christian organizations, and strangers he encountered. He is survived by his son Merritt, daughter Priscilla (Larry) Thompson, and granddaughter Jackie (Thompson) Rockeman.

Harry H. Rainey ’44 on July 11, 2017 (Fern Park, FL) Harry arrived at SBS from Brooklyn, NY. During his six years at The Brook, Harry played baseball, and served his class as their vice-president and also as a council representative. During his senior year Harry assisted as photographer and circulation manager for Res Gestae. Following graduation Harry entered the U.S. Navy. He served on the USS Columbus during World War II; his duty station was the crow’s nest. When his two years were up, Harry passed up Officer Candidate School. He and his wife settled in Florida, they built a home and raised their family there. Harry became a citrus fruit buyer and worked for several companies, including the Emerald Packing Company. During his 65 year career he was a top buyer for 55 years.

Harry is survived by his daughters Ruth Ellen and Mary Lou and his son Harry as well as his brother Ross Rainey ’46. His wife Effie passed away on April 2, 2020. Harry and Effie were predeceased by their daughter Wendy Ann.

William S. Strong ’54 on March 29, 2020 (Gahanna, OH) Bill arrived at SBS from Connecticut and attended for 5 years. Bill became involved in numerous activities on campus including the Outing Club, the Christian Association, and the Blue and White. He was also vice-president of the senior class. Bill made his mark on the football and wrestling teams too; he led the football team as captain and the wrestling team as co-caption during his senior year.

After graduating from The Stony Brook School, Bill received degrees at Wheaton and Michigan State. He pursued a career in education and served in the Three Village School District (Stony Brook, Setauket and Old Field) for many years. Bill was a longtime supporter of The Stony Brook School. He served as an alumni class rep and supported the Senior Bible Project with five other alumni.

Bill is survived by his wife Joan, sons William ’80 and Scott ’79, his brother Peter Strong and sister Tony Hoey.

Charles P. Underwood Jr. ’54 on October 14, 2019 (Bay Ridge, NY) Charlie was raised in Babylon, NY with his sister Caroline. He attended The Stony Brook School for his senior year and then continued his education at Wesleyan University. Charlie served in the Korean War and was honorably discharged in 1960.

Charlie is survived by daughters Martha Underwood and Claire Bonde (Toni), his grandsons Collin and Charlie Bonde, his beloved companion Maryellen West, and his sister, Caroline Miccio and family.

Allan Malachuk ’58 on April 19, 2020 (Glen Cove, NY) Al spent three years at SBS; editing for Res Gestae, singing with the King’s Men and serving as the senior class president. Al also made his mark on SBS sports: football, basketball and baseball, but especially basketball. Ken Cascone ’58 said that Al had a “jump shot that couldn’t be stopped.” When Al arrived on the team, SBS started to win games, and in 1957 the team won the Ivy League Championship.

Al graduated from Wheaton College after SBS and served in the U.S. Army. He was employed in the printing business for 40 years and was president of KBA North America Inc. – the Sheetfed Division for the last eleven years of his career. In 1997 Al was inducted into the SBS Athletic Hall of Fame, and Al was also honored at the SBS 90 in Ninety Celebration. He was a faithful supporter of The Stony Brook School. Al is survived by his daughter Elizabeth Bove.

James R. McDonough ’64 on May 27, 2020 (Frederick, MD) James, known by his friends as Rich attended The Stony Brook School for five years and will be remembered most for his “endless” guitar playing in addition to his contributions to track and cross country and his philosophizing. After his SBS graduation, Rich attended Muhlenberg College, University of MD, (College Park), McDaniel College and The Catholic University; he became an educator focusing on philosophy, English and world religions. In addition, the Debate and Forensics Teams he coached achieved successes at the local, state and national levels.

Rich’s music remained an integral part of his life; he played many instruments, collected music and enjoyed jam sessions throughout his life. Rich was a faithful supporter of The Stony Brook School for many years, and the family asked that memorial gifts in his name be made to The Stony Brook School.

Rich is survived by his wife, Beth Molesworth; daughter, Anne McDonough; his stepson, Dr. Jesse Molesworth and family.
Orrin Piazza ’15 on May 18, 2020 (Sag Harbor, NY) Orrin attended The Stony Brook School for three years. Orrin sailed on the keelboats and dinghys at The Brook, and he was a member of the Robotics Team. He also served on the Class Council and the Community Activities Council. Orrin is survived by his brother Wyatt ’12 and sisters Linnea ’17 and Emma ’10 and his parents Anthony Piazza and Nancy Mone.

Sondra Redfield on March 17, 2020 (Phoenix, AZ) Sandy is survived by her husband, Scott and her sons Scott Redfield IV ’86, Robert Cain and her daughter Mary Miner.

Matthew Pokalsky on March 24, 2020 Matthew was the husband of Susan Trenkle-Pokalsky ’93.

William H. Price on March 30, 2020 (Key Largo, FL). William is survived by his daughter Raven Price ’98, and Raven’s mother, Iona Price-Feinstein. He is also survived by one sister, two brothers and their families.

Louise Hall on April 19, 2020 (Setauket, NY) Louise Hall is survived by Fred Hall, and Lisa Hall Reed ’75. Louise was predeceased by her husband Gordon and sons Bruce Hall ’75, and Winthrop Hall ’74.

Douglas Hostetter on April 26, 2020 (Great Neck, NY) Doug is survived by his parents, Barbara and Milton Hostetter and his brother Michael Hostetter ’80. He is also survived by a niece Erica and husband Dillon Wood, nephew Clayton Hostetter and wife Nicole, as well as many other relatives.

Tiann Buker on March 4, 2020 (Whitefish, MT) Tiann was the wife of the late Gerald Buker ’56. They were members of the Curtis Circle.

June Weaver on April 13, 2020. June was the mother of Mathew Weaver ’86.

Effie Rainey on April 2, 2020 (Fern Park, FL) Effie was the wife of Harry Rainey ’44.

“Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”

—Isaiah 41:10
In order to prioritize the health and safety of our students, we will be postponing and rescheduling Homecoming 2020.

We will be determining a new date for Homecoming weekend to be held in the spring and will share the updated information with you as soon as it is solidified.

Until then, we will continue to pray for a safe and healthy 99th year of school at The Brook, and invite you to do the same!

Contact advancement@sbs.org or call 631-941-1550 with any questions you may have.