

News from
GREEN ACRES
Alumni Newsletter

December 2023

A Message from the Head of School
Whitney Samuel Drennan '94



Whitney Drennan and Head of School for a Day Lillian Markey '31

Dear Alumni,

We just wrapped up an amazing semester at our alma mater. I hope you are enjoying reading the monthly newsletter and hearing about the wonderful things happening on our campus. Our students continue to impress with victories on the field, accomplishments in the classroom, and heartfelt performances in the chapel and theater. We have been blessed with many opportunities to gather as a community at events throughout the Fall semester. Especially at this time of year, feelings of joy and happiness prevail as you walk our beautiful 18-acre campus.

As I interact with students and faculty, it's hard not to reminisce about the experiences I enjoyed as a student during my time at St. Martin's. The Dining Hall's hot breakfast during break time, hanging with friends in the library, and lunch-leave for seniors continue to be student favorites to this day. Clubs, athletics, extra-curricular activities, and top-notch academics continue to be at the forefront of the student experience, intertwined with traditions like ringing the bell, St. Martin's Day, pep rallies, and Christmas programs. I have always enjoyed those events that bring students together from multiple divisions because they allow us to experience our strong sense of community, and you can truly feel the love and pride our students have in their school.

Please keep us updated on where you are living and what you have been up to these days! Email our alumni coordinator, Meri Monsour '02, at alumni@stmsaints.com with these updates so we can celebrate your achievements. (We also want to hear about your favorite traditions at StM, so please email them to Meri as well.) Don't forget to save the date for our Alumni Spirits Weekend, May 10-11, 2024.

I am so grateful for the opportunity to lead our alma mater, and I look forward to having more alumni back on campus in the new year. Come see what's new, and come experience once again that sense of family which continues to feel the same.

I hope you and your family had a joyous Christmas, and we'll see you in 2024!

Sincerely,
Whitney S. Drennan

Saints Making Headlines



Student Athletes Honored at Fall Athletic Awards

This month, the Athletic Department held the Fall Athletic Awards Ceremony to celebrate our fall sports student athletes. Congratulations, Saints!

[View Photo Gallery](#)

Saints Place Third at Local Math Tournament

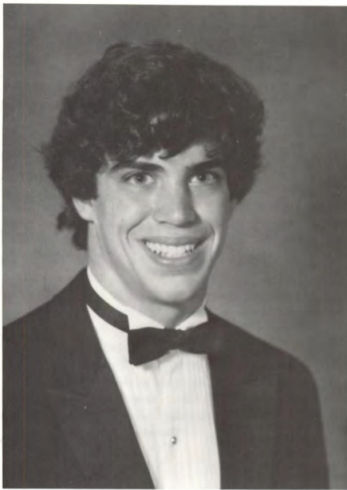
Several St. Martin's Upper School students were among the 600 local competitors in the Brother Martin Mu Alpha Theta High School Math Tournament this month. The freshman team included Grayson Lambert, Beibei Zhang, and Kayman Rice. The senior

team of Cole Angerer, BoFan Hua, Jeremy Hua, and Kaitlyn Tillery placed third in the All School competition. Great job, Saints!



Alumni Spotlight - The Rev. Dr. Fred D. Devall IV '87

A Foundation of Faith



Class of 1987 (attended 1980 - 1987)

Rector, St. Martin's Church

Doctor of Ministry in Preaching, The School of Theology, Sewanee, Tennessee, 2023

M. Div., Virginia Theological Seminary, Alexandria, Virginia, 1996

B.S. Natural Resources, The University of the South, Sewanee, Tennessee, 1991

At St. Martin's our Episcopal identity permeates every aspect of the school community, shaping our approach to education, spirituality, and service. The Rev. Dr. Fred Devall IV exemplifies our school mission as the rector of St. Martin's Church, a St. Martin's legacy family, and a member of the Board of Trustees. This month, during this season of reflection, we spoke with Father Devall about his time as a student and his continued connection to his alma mater.

At St. Martin's, we focus on our three founding pillars of Faith, Scholarship, and Service. Faith has obviously been a huge part of your life and your career journey. Talk about when that started for you and how StM helped to guide you along that path.

I was what you would call an 'early adopter.' My great grandfather was an Episcopal priest, and my grandfather actually had worked for O. E. Haring, so he was excited to see that there would be an Episcopal school. My grandparents truly believed in this school and its mission, and they sent my father here, who graduated in 1956. I had always wanted to come here because my dad went here, so I started in Middle School after attending Holy Name. After St. Martin's, I attended Sewanee and then went on to the Virginia Theological Seminary, so I have gone to religious schools my whole life!

What memories of your time here at St. Martin's stand out most strongly for you?

The service project that I completed for Dr. Rosenbaum's class my senior year had a huge impact on me. I chose to volunteer at the New Orleans Home for Adults and met some really wonderful people there. I even wrote my college application essay about how those relationships affected me.

Were you involved in Chapel services as a student?

I distinctly remember being an acolyte for the Baccalaureate my junior year, and looking ahead with great anticipation to being a senior. When I think back on the Chapel while I was a student, I have to think of those yellow chairs we had before the pews! I remember the booklets we were given with morning prayer each day and recall that the "General Thanksgivings" prayer always had the most profound impact on me.

Who are some faculty members who stand out in your memory?

Dr. Rex Mooney was influential in my decision to attend Sewanee. My father and grandfather had gone there, so I had built up a different view of the school in my mind, but he strongly encouraged me to visit. When I did, I knew within hours that I was going to go to college there. I remember standing in the breezeway during carpool and telling him, and he was just so thrilled for me.

I of course thank Dr. Bill Rosenbaum for the profound effect his life skills course had on me and the perspective I was able to gain while completing those service hours. We remained friends, and he was so happy when my kids came back. One of the great privileges of knowing him and being a priest was the opportunity to participate in his memorial service in the Chapel.

Also, Fr. Ralph M. Byrd, Jr. built a lot of the traditions that we use here, such as Senior Chapel and the passing of the light from the senior to junior class on Awards Day. He was a huge proponent of honoring rites of passage and finding ways to use Episcopal language to inform and acknowledge those experiences. He was also a good friend who helped me as I was a new priest. I have many of his stoles and think of him whenever I wear them.

After graduating from St. Martin's, you studied natural resources at Sewanee. How does that part of your education tie into your role now as the leader of a congregation?

Aside from my regular trips to hunt and fish, I often wondered about that myself. Then I returned to Sewanee to enter the Doctor of Ministry program there, and what emerged was a dissertation entitled "Preaching Through Prolonged Climate Crisis." It was a true merger of past and present studies. That was immediately followed by an invitation by Bishop Shannon Duckworth to lead the **Environmental Commission of the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana**.

We are focused on four main areas: worship, policy, education, and field experiences. Additionally, we are hoping this environmental work can be

intergenerational. We intend to populate some of the field trips sponsored by [Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana](#) as well as offering some of our own, including an urban wildlife adventure in February to view bald eagles and other birds that are regularly seen along the river batture in River Ridge. ([Click here](#) to learn more about this experience.)

Both of your sons graduated from St. Martin's (2018 and 2021) and were 14-year club members. What experiences did you share as students?

Certainly the school's continued dedication to its pillars of Faith, Scholarship, and Service stands out. Faith has been an integral component of the school since it was founded, so I am thankful that my sons and I shared that faith aspect throughout our time as students.

My friend group is still populated by classmates, thanks to those relationships that were established here on campus. I know the school still offers that tightly-knit community and sense of family that we all love. My sons had similar experiences. Lisa and I love when the boys are home for the holidays and their St. Martin's friends come to the house.

I also feel strongly that the school continues to offer preparedness and academic readiness for college. Our students are able to build strong academic skills that set them apart from the rest. When our students are formed and shaped by faith and scholarship, that gives them a certain responsibility, so it's a natural extension that they are going to go into the world and serve in a variety of ways.

What do you feel has changed the most?

One of the biggest differences is the campus itself. I'm thankful my boys had the benefit of so many improvements. The completion of the Solomon Theater and Saints Hall allowed the Chapel to become a dedicated space in 2010. I was part of that renovation process, in which the reredos, altar, pews, and baptismal font were added and new flooring was installed. We purposely made the space look very traditional because school Chapel services are the normative experience for many students who may not go to church with their families.

Lastly, what does Faith mean to you?

Trust that the promises of scripture and our traditions are true and will be proven so in the resurrection.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, March 16, 2024

StM Annual Gala, "Havana Nights" on the Van Slate Lawn

Thursday, March 21 - Saturday, March 23, 2024

StM Fine Arts presents "The Music Man, Jr." in the Solomon Theater

Saturday, March 23, 2024

Alumni Easter Egg Hunt on the Lower School Playground

Friday, May 10 - Saturday, May 11, 2024

Alumni Spirits Weekend

Alumni Resources

- Contribute to our Scattered Saints section in [*The Bell*](#).
- Please submit your nominations for our [Alumni and Community Awards](#).
- Can't get to campus? [View photos from StM events on our Flickr site](#).



Treasured Traditions

What are some of your favorite memories from your time at St. Martin's?
[Email our Alumni Office](#) to share your memories and photos!

This month, we're looking back on...
Christmas Cheer around Campus



2016
Lower School Christmas Concert

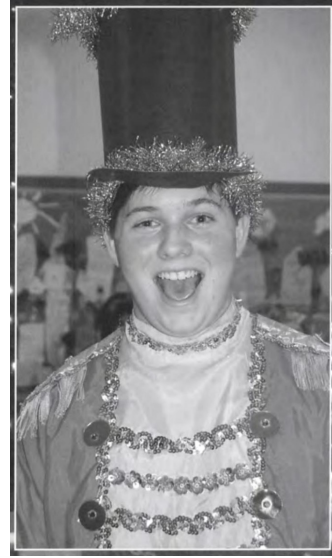


1986
Lower School Christmas Concert





2012
Supper with Santa



2007
Supper with Santa

1992
Christmas Performance



1997 Lower School Christmas Performance



1994 Lower School Christmas Performance



1996 Lower School Christmas Performance



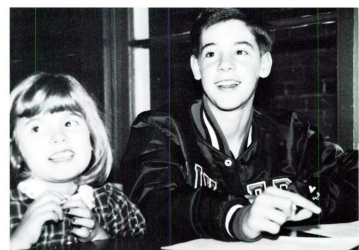
2009
Middle School "Cajun Night Before Christmas"



2012
Seventh Grade Helps First Grade Write Letters to Santa



1999
Lower School Christmas Performance





1992
Lower School Performance



Christmas in the Oaks with the 4th grade

1989
Fourth Grade Decorates Trees at City Park



1980
Santa and His Helpers



Alumni, we need your help! Does anyone know who created this festive illustration from the 1992 yearbook? Email alumni@stmsaints.com if you have any information. Thank you!

*“Long live our dear
St. Martin’s that we
cherish and we love.”*

ALUMNI



ST. MARTIN'S
EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

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St. Martin's Episcopal School | 225 Green Acres Road, Metairie, LA 70003

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