

OAKHILL ROOTS

WINTER 2012

annual alumni newsletter



Alumni Coordinator

Brooke Van Lear-Jones '97- '02



Dear Oakhill Alumni,

As an alum of Oakhill I am thrilled to be celebrating the first production of ROOTS with you. It has been a joy to hear your stories, accomplishments, and dreams. For many of us, Oakhill is a very significant part of our past and has shaped who we are today. It is my hope that, through this newsletter, each of us can reconnect with schoolmates, cultivate new relationships, and remember the excellent education we received from Early Childhood through Eighth Grade.

I attended Oakhill Day School from 1997-2002. I absolutely cherish my time spent at Oakhill. I vividly recall my teachers, classrooms, projects, and recess time. It wasn't until I left Oakhill that I realized how special the Oakhill community truly is. Teachers were warm and invested in my education and development; they knew me. Students were kind and respectful; anything less was not tolerated. Lessons were engaging and inspiring; concepts were taught in a variety of ways. I am the person I am today because of the education I received at Oakhill. I am confident, curious, and dedicated to learning.

From 2009-2012 I attended Park University where I earned a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and received Early Childhood Teaching certification from Montessori Teacher Preparation of Kansas City. Oakhill taught me to work hard to achieve my personal best.

In addition to being the Alumni Coordinator at Oakhill, I am the Spanish and Music Specialist for the Toddler through Prekindergarten classes. Being able to experience Oakhill as a student and now as a member of the faculty is an honor. I never cease to be impressed with the responsibility, the high expectations, and the sense of belonging that is fostered in Oakhill's learning environment.

The mission of Oakhill is to provide excellence in education. We aim at providing excellence in education through "child-centered learning in a supportive, challenging, and rewarding environment that provides students with self-confidence, values, knowledge, and the foundation for leadership through emotional, physical, and social development." Oakhill's mission is true of my educational experience. Oakhill strengthened my values and self-confidence, and taught me what it means to be a leader and live with integrity. Oakhill is not simply a memory of my past; Oakhill provided a strong foundation that I carry with me today. It is because of these deep "roots" that Oakhill will forever be a part of my future.

Welcome back,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brooke Van Lear-Jones".

Brooke Van Lear-Jones



A • B • O • V • E
E D U C A T O R
B • E • Y • O • N • D

"I think teachers are the focus of education. Great teachers make a great education. If teachers can have fun, be respected, enjoy what they do and be given freedom, then the students are actually going to benefit from that."

As Head of School, Suzanne McCanles empowers the Oakhill faculty through her collaborative approach to leadership. She truly believes that it takes a village to raise a child, and her desire to do what is best for each student is evident in her communication and leadership. This school year is Suzanne's sixth year at Oakhill. Upon graduating from William Jewell College, Suzanne took her first position as a fourth grade teacher at The Barstow School. Suzanne was a part of the Barstow community for a total of fifteen years. During her time at Barstow she taught and, as she calls it, "dabbled in administration." Suzanne always wanted to be in administration. She states, "I knew what I could do for sixteen kids, but that was just in my classroom. I wanted the same kind of atmosphere for more children." Suzanne felt that administration was the best way for her to make a bigger difference in the lives of students.

At Barstow, Suzanne was entrusted with building and starting programs that would be considered profit centers for the school. Her specialty was summer programs, and she traveled around the country presenting at a variety

of conferences. Suzanne also did some consultation work, which allowed her to visit other schools, helping them to also develop profitable summer programming.

Suzanne enjoyed her time at Barstow and was very close to the school community. Suzanne says, "I was at a point in my career where I wasn't in the capacity to reach as many people as I wanted." It was Suzanne's co-worker Michelle McDaniel, now Director of Communications and Marketing at Oakhill, who told her about the opening for Head of School at Oakhill. In speaking about her transition from Barstow to Oakhill, Suzanne remarked, "I think everything happens for a reason and Oakhill happened to be the right fork in the road at the exact right time."



Suzanne McCanles reflects on her career as an educator and on her role as Head of School.

Q: What gives you the most joy in your school life?

A: Ultimately it is about the kids, but again, I think the vehicle to get to the child's education is through the teachers. For me, joy comes when I see teachers collaborating and their light bulbs are going on. To have a teacher come to me and say, "I've got an idea!" Those are the best moments for me because I know that teachers are thinking, and growing, and pushing the envelope, and that's what I want. In turn, that's what lights the fire for a teacher... when they see that happening among students. Teachers are kind of like my students.

Q: What is your biggest reward?

A: For me it's when I go into a classroom for observations and really see the kids in the learning environment. I think, "Wow, how they've grown." Children change so amazingly over time. Someone who may have struggled in Kindergarten, today has found their strength and they let their gift shine. I love to see the growth and maturity, and watch problem solving and social skills grow. You can only watch that over time.

Q: What is your biggest challenge?

A: I think if we make every decision based upon what's best for the child in a situation, or for the children overall, then we can go to sleep at night feeling good. I think the biggest challenge is when a particular decision affects somebody – a teacher or a parent – in a way they might perceive as negative. The biggest challenge is knowing that we've made the right decision, but not being able to get everyone to see that we've made the right decision at that time. Knowing that I can't make everybody happy is challenging. So long as I can do what is best for the kiddo, I am willing to take the heat from others.

Q: Who are your mentors?

A: I keep in touch with my professors from college. Going

to a small school like William Jewell College was my first step in knowing that I would enjoy a small community like Oakhill. My professors really knew me and I knew them, and they knew my strengths and challenges. Some of my teachers from college have come to our school and have been judges at our spelling bee. You know, I started at Barstow when I was 21. Some of the "master teachers" working at Barstow when I first started have now retired, but I keep in touch. They are a great sounding board and bring in the traditional wisdom that sometimes gets clouded today.

Q: What was your relationship with Wanda Lee Kalsu and your predecessors?

A: I am a big believer that history is important but I didn't want to know too much about everything when I first started. I think that knowing all of the details can sometimes cloud your vision. When I began at Oakhill I wanted to get to know, or at least talk to, people who had been previous Heads of School here. I reached out to Wanda Lee Kalsu, founder of the school, and we had a great relationship. It was fun to sit with her at Tommy's and ask her why she created the school and learn about her mission and vision. Hearing the very reasons that we exist today is why she founded Little Folks was extraordinary. It was nice to see that even over time, 65 years, the mission of Oakhill remains the same.

I also met with Jeannie Carlile and Nancy Downey. We met for lunch and I got to know them and thank them for their time served at Oakhill. Of course, I knew Jeanette Hoy and Judy Beer. I thanked both of them for serving our school and know it would have been difficult to be an interim Head of School. I didn't ask questions about people or about details – I just wanted to know the overall picture of what my predecessors greatly remembered about Oakhill, not the complaints or the issues. By meeting with my predecessors, I felt like I got to know a little bit about Oakhill and who the school was, including some of its ups and downs.

Q: What are some of the biggest changes that you have

seen in education over the years?

A: Technology! When I started, technology involved one computer per classroom, and it was on a cart that you rolled between rooms. No one really knew what to do with it – it was just kind of there. Students were not really intrigued with computers at that point in time. Today, students come to us with all different technological backgrounds. Our responsibility is to teach them how to be responsible and appropriate tech users and to teach them how to protect themselves and protect others.

The teacher-student relationship has also changed in some regard. I've seen it go from being focused on just the academic piece of the student to today, where there is so much more to school. Really the student is coming for an education, but honestly the whole family is on this journey. The new dynamic is a lot more intimate, and parental expectations have increased far beyond just the academics. Oakhill is kind of a “one stop shop” for many things and it helps make our school even more of a community.

Academically, I think curriculum is curriculum. Innovative ways of teaching curriculum is how one differs from another. There are so many new and different ways to teach the same concepts. I think great teachers, whether it was twenty years ago or today, are doing a great job no matter what – with or without technology.

Q: Where do you see the school in five years?

A: Oakhill is on the brink of “oh my goodness.” We are growing tremendously. Right now we are at 300 children. In five years from now we will be at 325-340 children. The hope is that major fundraising plans are well underway. Possibly, we will be preparing to break ground if it isn't already broken. We will have a full middle school in five years and the hope is to then focus on the next aspect. We might have the student body that could potentially be interested in a traditional independent high school. So that's exciting. Our development office is growing, so having the funds and fundraising to do all of the programmatic things we need to do aside from facilities will be important. Hopefully we will add Division Head Assistants so that teachers and parents have even more people to talk to about their child's experience. I would love to expand that piece of our school life.

Q: Is there anything specific that you would like for the alumni community to know?

A: I think it's important to know that every school goes through peaks and valleys. People often think that schools are either on top or having problems. I speak for independent schools because I don't know much about public. I think every school is going to have its ups and downs and challenges. When you look back at the history of Oakhill for 65 years, Wanda Lee talks about how she needed \$19,000 and she had an interest free loan from the Wurst family. Someone took a risk for her; she founded the school and got the best teachers. She, too, was all about great teachers. She believed in finding the best people and she rewarded those great people. That was the good old days, but that was a climb. Wanda Lee talked about the struggles with finances and enrollment. Then a school goes through times of change, and times of change are hard on any school community – good or bad. And everyone sees new opportunities differently.

A school is constantly going to go through change. If we didn't, we would become a stagnant place. Challenges and growth make people better. Right now, I feel like Oakhill is in a situation where we are changing. Growth and additions are coming – it's here and we have to embrace it. Becoming big or having stronger enrollment brings more tuition money to do more things and be innovative. As I tell the faculty, it can be viewed as scary or exciting because everyone views developments differently. But, this is exciting.

It's important to remember that 65 years ago and today, the mission of the school is exactly the same. The foundation of the school has not changed at all. Just the looks, the façade, and the programs that are growing, depending on the students, faculty, enrollment, demand, space, and constrains.

There is never going to be a time when a school is like “Phew! We're exactly where we want to be.” Never. Oakhill's goal is to be 420 students. Even when we get there, though, we're not done. Because that mountain our school will have climbed to get to 420 students is going to be bring about new dreams and goals. I will always be asking, “How can

Continued from Page 5

we be better? How are we going to be stronger...show our value?"

For me, personally, I love tradition, and I am very sentimental about traditions. But I do love change. I think change brings about the best in everybody and keeps people from becoming bored and complacent. I personally need and love new opportunities or challenges, and experiencing the growth and development of our school.

Everybody on the faculty has contributed so much. Without any of these people, Oakhill would have looked different along the way. Every year, somebody new comes on board with fresh ideas, and they spark motivation in someone else, and it becomes a chain reaction. I think we need change all the time, including new ideas and new directions. Oakhill is always going toward the same horizon, but just new ways to get there. I know that the view at the end of this journey

toward the horizon will be spectacular.

Want more from Mrs. McCandles? Follow her "In a Nutshell" blog at www.mrsMcCandlesInANutshell.blogspot.com.

in remembrance:

wanda lee kalsu: original visionary



1917-2012

Wanda Lee Kalsu was the founder of Oakhill Day School. She opened a small school sixty-six years ago in 1947 named Little Folks. The school was renamed Oakhill Day School at a later date as the grade levels of the school grew beyond the early childhood years. She began the school with her very own blood, sweat, and tears, hiring the best teachers, providing the necessary resources, and sharing her passion and vision with the entire community. The school, as it stands today, has been built on this solid foundation of the school Wanda Lee envisioned! She was a Kindergarten teacher, a proud parent, a skillful leader, and a compassionate human being. She had a special place in her heart for art and positive parenting, two topics she loved to talk about!

We will remember her passion for education, her strong belief in all children, and her support of all things Oakhill.



Photos: (L) Current Oakhill Library (R) Current Oakhill Art Room



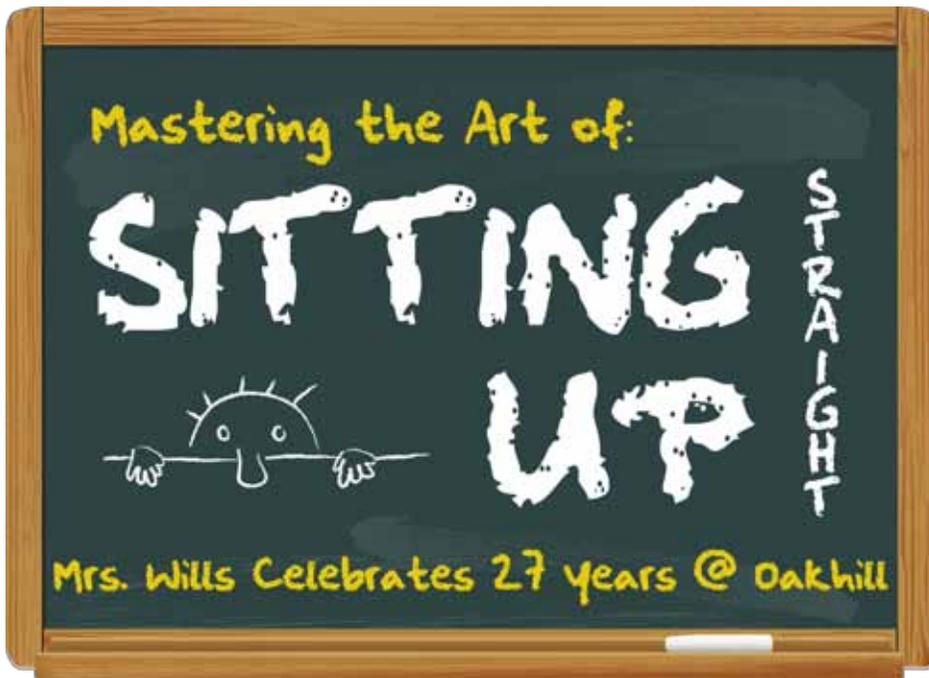
The New Face of Oakhill Day School

In the early morning hours of May 2, 2008, an EF2 Tornado ripped its way through the campus of Oakhill Day School. At first glance, the damage seemed to be nothing more than displaced roofing materials and broken limbs. But once inside, it was evident that the school suffered major damage and would need to relocate for the remainder of the 2007-2008 school year. A total of 10 classrooms and offices, including the Library and Computer Lab, were damaged and the Early Childhood playground was destroyed.

Under the leadership of Suzanne McCanles and her administrative team, as well as the Board of Trustees and the countless volunteers, including many Oakhill Alumni, the school was able to turn tragedy into opportunity in only 106 days.

The changes to the existing building extend far beyond carpet and lights. The school underwent a multi-million dollar renovation that resulted in a modernized commons space, updated classrooms, upgraded HVAC, and a new Early Childhood playground. The tornado also paved the way for what is now the Library and Media Center, the new Art room, and two additional classrooms.

With the growth that Oakhill has undergone over the past few years, these improvements are just the beginning of what's to come!



Wills speaks highly about the building of the Oakhill school library just four years ago. Each of her students has a book on their desk and is encouraged to read during every spare moment. Mrs. Wills' reading motto is this: "First thing from morning until night."

Her favorite subject to teach is Social Studies. Mrs. Wills comes alive when she talks about social studies; she absolutely loves facts, biographies, trivia, maps, and globes!

Her love for Oakhill is evident. "It is the closeness of the teachers, students, and the working faculty that makes the school a community." Mrs. Wills is an

important part of the school community and we are grateful for not only her service to Oakhill Day School, but also her enthusiasm and dedication to learning.

One of the most popular questions asked by alumni is, "Does Mrs. Wills still teach?" This school year marks Mrs. Wills' 27th year at Oakhill Day School. Currently a Third Grade teacher, Helen Wills is just as you remember her! Mrs. Wills prides herself in managing a strict classroom and loves to see her students develop manners and responsibility. Her favorite thing about Oakhill is the rapport with parents, the small classes and the faculty.

Prior to teaching at Oakhill, Mrs. Wills worked for the North Kansas City school district for 19 years. It was Mrs. Wills' relationship with people at Oakhill, including Nancy Downey, that brought her to teach at the school. When Mrs. Wills began her teaching career at Oakhill, the school was not at its current location and only offered Preschool through Third Grade classes.

Mrs. Wills recalls moving into Oakhill's current school building, saying that teachers had quite a bit of work to do in order to make the school presentable. Mrs. Wills shared about the stacked desks and chairs from floor to ceiling, mud in the sinks, and dead birds around the facilities. She stated, "To see the school become what it is today is just wonderful."

With the expansion of our school and addition of new grades, Mrs. Wills is glad that the small classes at Oakhill continue to be a priority. A proponent of reading, Mrs.

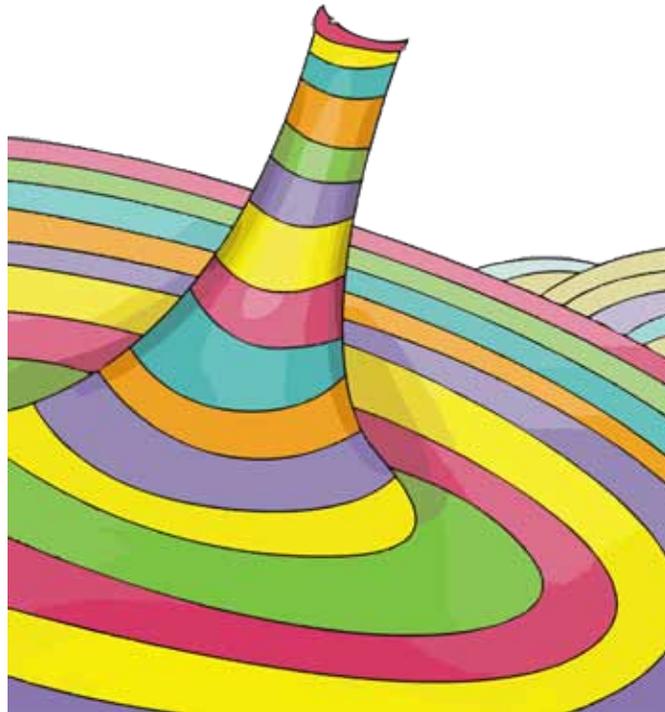


Oh The Places They'll Go:

How One Teacher Prepares Oakhill Students for Tomorrow

Lee Feagles is the Eighth Grade advisor and Middle School Social Studies teacher at Oakhill Day School. He has worked at Oakhill for three and a half years and “absolutely loves it.” Lee grew up in Gladstone, Missouri and attended Antioch Junior High School and Oak Park High School. For many years Lee worked for a private alternative school and he worked for a university assisting military individuals who wanted to earn a degree while being stationed around the world. Mr. Feagles was working at Pembroke Hill High School when he began to substitute teach at Oakhill. He shared, “I loved the school, and when the availability opened up for me to work full time, I jumped at the opportunity.”

Lee enjoys teaching Eighth Grade because it's a very transitional time in students' lives. He comments, “It's very interesting to watch students' growth from Fifth Grade through Eighth Grade...they're growing up and becoming wonderful young men and women.” Lee focuses on the “whole student,” not just the academic portion. In addition to teaching Social Studies and test-taking techniques, Lee discusses a variety of topics with his students, including what to expect in high school and what social issues students might incur. He states, “Oakhill is a very loving and small community where classmates are more like brothers and sisters.” Because of students' unique relationships with both peers and teachers at Oakhill, Mr. Feagles feels it is important to address the different challenges people have encountered when transitioning from a small school to a larger school. One of the ways Oakhill prepares Eighth Grade students for high school is by hosting a “Chat and



Chew” at the end of the school year. Alumni who are currently in high school return to Oakhill to speak with the Eighth Graders. The Chat and Chew event provides time for alumni to share their encouraging stories as well as some of their challenges after leaving Oakhill.

Lee designed his own Social Studies curriculum for his Middle School classes. He looked at the core standards for Missouri, Kansas, and the Nation and included the things that he personally feels make Oakhill unique. “I tried to pick the best of all curriculums so we could make one excellent opportunity for our students to learn.” Oakhill has great core standards, but teachers don't worry about having to teach to a test. Lee addresses a central component of learning at Oakhill: spiraling. Spiraling is when teachers build upon students' knowledge each year. Mr. Feagles suggests, “What students learn in Fourth Grade is reaffirmed in later grades...Grades become more intense and in depth, building upon the knowledge students have already gained.” Instead of focusing on questions that barely scratch the surface of the material, Mr. Feagles works on developing his students' critical thinking skills. Rather than asking about “the who and the what,” Eighth Graders are asking the question, “why?”

In May 2013 Oakhill will celebrate its fourth Eighth Grade Graduation. For Mr. Feagles, graduation ceremonies are a “happy sad” occasion. “It's very happy for the Eighth Graders because they are moving on, but it's sad that we won't get to see them on a day-to-day basis.”

Oh The Places They'll Go (Continued from Page 9)

Oakhill fosters a unique relationship among students and teachers; Oakhill is more than a school, it's a tight-knit community. Because Mr. Feagles works with students from fifth to eighth grade he is able to create not only educational relationships, but also personal relationships with his students. He is happy to see students graduate but is sad to see them go because they are part of the Oakhill community.

Mr. Feagles views his role as an educator as "an opportunity to give to the next generation." He states, "Oakhill creates wonderful people, as well as wonderful students." Lee's dream is to see the Eighth Grade students become the people he knows they can be, and he feels privileged to be a part of students' education as well as their growth into adulthood.



Did you know?

Mr. Feagles has performed professionally in over 60 plays, done improvisational comedy, and has acted in movies and music videos. His acting portfolio includes meeting the band U2 and participating in the making of their music video "Last Night on Earth."

Mr. Feagles enjoys cooking, reading, creative writing, his family and friends, and his doggies! He also loves museums and traveling. He loves working with the "fabulous administration and faculty, and educating the wonderful students here at Oakhill."

Congratulations to the Oakhill Day School Class of 2012!



Noah Carter-Doane Barth
North Kansas City High School



Taylor Brooks Clevenger
Kansas City Christian High School



Robert Shannon Stancic*
Winnetonka High School



Leah Kay Booth
Park Hill South High School



Alexander Jordan Diaz*
St. Pius X High School



Madeline May Yosel*
Park Hill High School



We are proud of our Oakhill Graduates who have attended the following colleges and universities.

Arizona State University, AZ
Baylor University, TX
Central Missouri State University, MO
Creighton University, NE
DCT Hotel/Business Management, Switzerland
Drury University, MO
Duke University, NC
Kansas State University, KS
Loyola University, Ill
Maple Woods Community College, MO
Meredith College, NC
Missouri Western University, MO
Northwest Missouri State University, MO
Oklahoma State University, OK
Park University, MO
Pittsburg State University, KS
Rockhurst University, MO
Stanford University, CA
Stephens College, MO
The Kansas City Art Institute, MO
Truman State University, MO
University of Missouri - Kansas City, MO
University of Kansas, KS
University of Minnesota, MN
University of Missouri - Columbia, MO
University of Missouri Medical School, MO
University of Missouri - Rolla, MO
University of North Carolina, NC
University of Northern Iowa, IA
University of Oklahoma, OK
University of Tulsa, OK
Villanova University, PA
Washington University, MO
William Jewell College, MO
Yale University, CT

Oakhill Day School Class Representatives

By becoming a class representative, you agree to be the bridge between Oakhill and its alumni. Your job as class representative is very important. We hope that by accepting this duty, you will always be an advocate of Oakhill Day School to your fellow classmates/alumni, prospective families, and members of the community at large.

Representative responsibilities include:

Updating contact information, such as mailing addresses, telephone number and email addresses, of fellow alumni upon notification of such changes. Notify Oakhill of changes.

Encouraging communication and participation in Oakhill Alumni events

Gathering alumni data on a per class basis (including college acceptance, honors and awards, marriage, birth, illness, death, etc.)

Keeping Oakhill current on the needs of its alumni community, such as summer or after school work, volunteer opportunities, and connections

Assisting in future alumni fundraising and assist in various phases of planning for alumni events: ideas, planning, implementation

Please contact Brooke Van Lear-Jones if you would like to be a class representative or if you would like more information. (brooke.jones@oakhilldayschool.org)

KALSU

SOCIETY

of *Friends*

The Kalsu Society of Friends honors Oakhill alumni who make a gift to the annual fund.

Inclusion in the Society will be renewed each year you make a financial gift to Oakhill Day School.

Giving is easy!

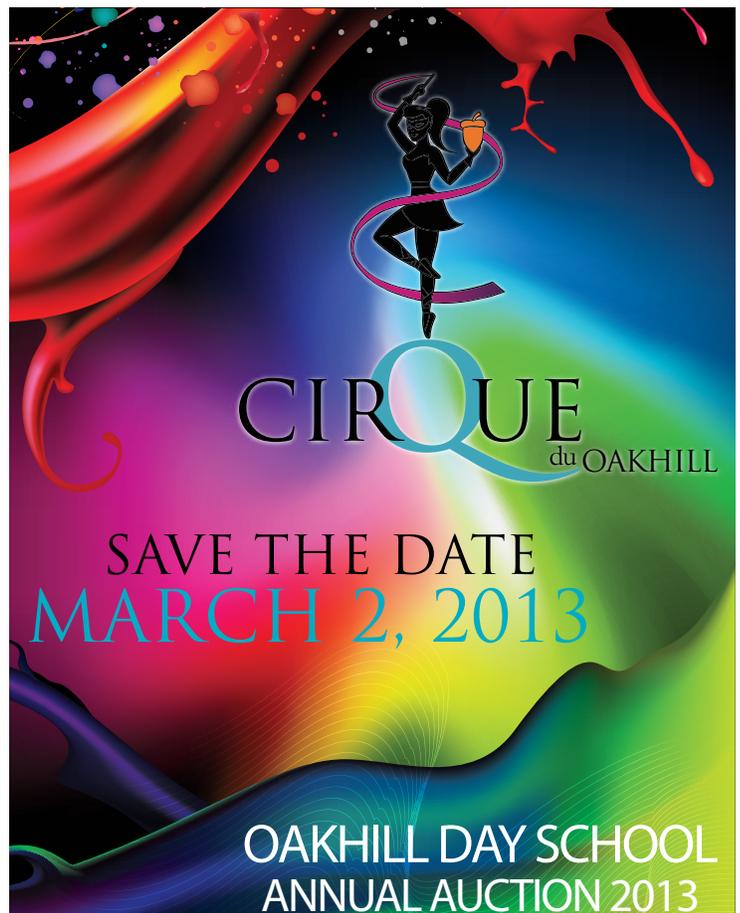
Cash/Check
Corporate Matching Gifts
Online
Pledge a Gift



oakhilldayschool.org/annual-giving.html



ANNUAL FUND
Oakhill Day School



CIRQUE
du OAKHILL

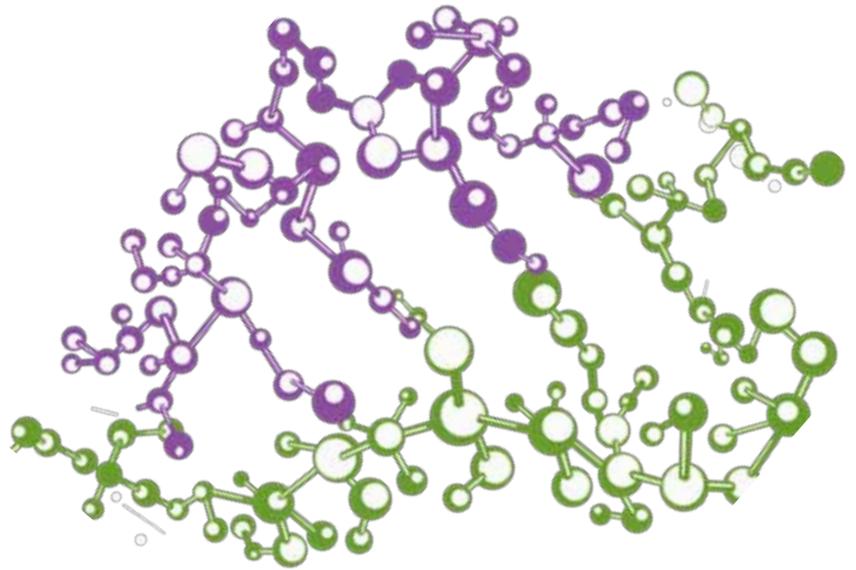
SAVE THE DATE
MARCH 2, 2013

OAKHILL DAY SCHOOL
ANNUAL AUCTION 2013

OAKHILL FACES



Madison Fitzgerald '98-'10



STANFORD BOUND

Madison Fitzgerald, a 2010 Oakhill Graduate, attended Oakhill from 1998-2010 and is now in her junior year at St. Theresa's Academy. Madison started choir at Oakhill in second grade with Mrs. Hill, and to this day she is an enthusiastic choir member at her high school. Madison has participated in State Solo and State Ensemble choir competitions. In addition, Madison made District Choir last year as a sophomore.

Madison is currently trying to get into one of the top Molecular Biology programs at Stanford University. According to Madison, the most interesting thing she did this past summer was work in a laboratory at William Jewell College. Madison states, "I went to science camp at William Jewell the summers before seventh and eighth grade and discovered my love for studying the smallest bits of life." This summer, Madison spent six days a week in one of William Jewell's biology labs learning how to use a variety of laboratory equipment and studying the process of culturing cells. Madison and her supervisor grew K-562 cells, a type of leukemia, and treated the cells with two different drugs to determine the size and complexity of the cells. In reflection of her time at William Jewell over the summer, Madison shares, "I learned a lot and it cemented my career path in some area of cell-related biology."

In addition to her musical accomplishments and aspirations to study molecular biology, Madison gives back to her community through volunteer work. Throughout the school year and during the summer, Madison volunteers at the Youth Volunteer Corps of Kansas City. This year will mark her fifth year serving on the Youth Advisory Board for the Corps.



Clarice Miller '97-04



Proud & Prepared Hawkeye

Clarice Miller began her relationship with Oakhill Day School as a Prekindergarten student in 1997. For the next eight years, through sixth grade, she participated in cheerleading, school plays, sports programs, after school activities including Chess Club, Math Club, pottery classes, talent shows, and much more. Clarice easily transitioned into the Park Hill School District attending Lakeview Middle School and Park Hill South High School. She was especially active in band, playing the flute and piccolo. Clarice was flute section leader in the Panther Marching Band and first chair flute in Symphonic (Varsity-level) Band. She qualified for All District band throughout high school, including All-State Band, the Kansas City Youth Symphony and the Parkville Community band. Clarice stayed busy with community service projects, as well. Following graduation in 2011, Clarice enrolled at the University of Iowa where she is currently a sophomore majoring in both Flute Performance and Health Studies. She is a very proud member of the Hawkeye Marching Band. Clarice is the parliamentarian of the Epsilon Sigma chapter of Phi Sigma Pi National Honors Fraternity and is a member of

the honors program at the University of Iowa.

Clarice has many fond memories of Oakhill and the education she received. Clarice says, "Oakhill allowed me to be myself and develop my own personality so that when I made the transition to public school, it was easy to stay true to myself because I knew who I was thanks to the support of the Oakhill faculty. I always thought that was a really important part about Oakhill." Clarice remembers how well Oakhill prepared her for public speaking. She remembers how second nature it was to prepare a Power Point presentation for a book report, or to design a web page in elementary school thanks to Oakhill's computer technology class while her peers in middle school were doing entry level keyboard classes. Clarice recalls the positive reinforcement Oakhill provided which allowed her to excel as an individual while still holding her accountable for school responsibilities.

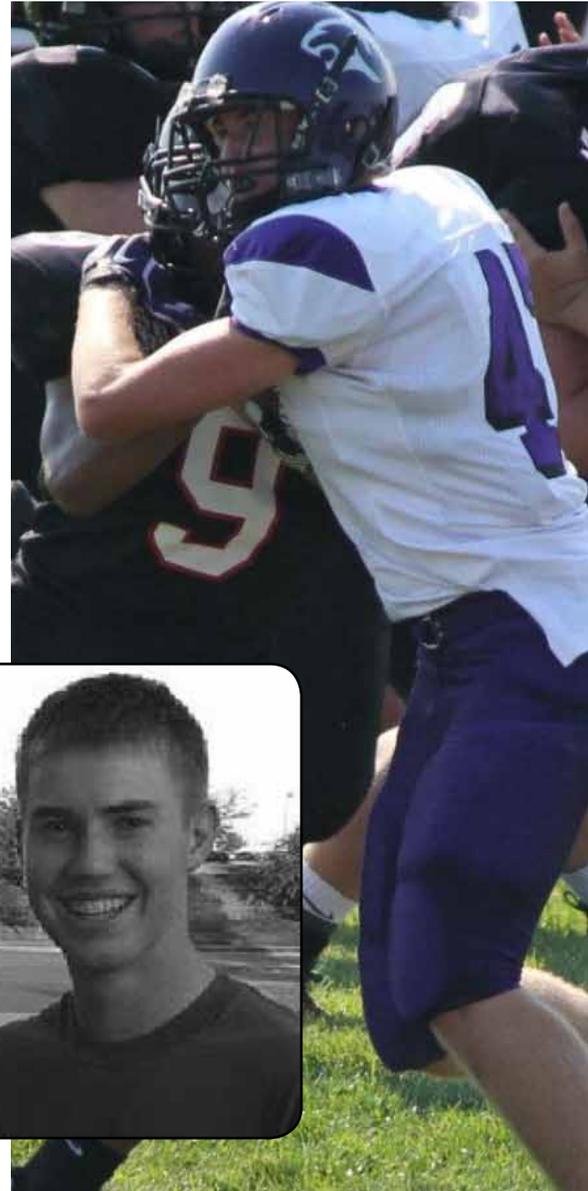
OAKHILL FACES continued...

Luke Becker is a junior at Park Hill South High School. Luke is ranked the top 5% of his class of 407 students, earning academic letters both his freshman and sophomore years. In addition to his academic achievements, Luke is an accomplished athlete. His freshman year, Luke received a three sport medal for participating in football, basketball and golf. Luke earned a Varsity letter for golf his sophomore year, achieving team and individual 1st Team All-Conference and 1st Team All-District honors. This year Luke received a Varsity letter in football.

“This I Believe” is a short piece written by Luke. He comments, “The great teachers at Oakhill really helped me recognize the meaning of hard work and determination and helped me develop organization skills, which I have carried with me to high school in each area of my life.”

This I Believe...

I believe the formula for success is: hard work, character, integrity, and maximum effort. The reason I believe this is because my parents raised me that way. I plan on raising my own children with these values, and also plan to pass them on to my grandchildren. I think with these basic characteristics, you can achieve anything. Hard work and dedication will always pay off in the long run. I believe that anything is possible with great determination. It seems the more work you put into something, the more you will get out of it. If something comes too easy, you don't appreciate it as much. If you have good character and live everyday with integrity you will earn other people's respect. They will know they can count on you. With maximum effort you will achieve more, feel better about those achievements and obtain greater things. All of these characteristics are equal to success. This is what I believe.



Luke Becker '98-'01 & '04-'07

THIS I BELIEVE

the formula for success is: hard work, character, integrity, and maximum effort



Gabby Ferro '99-'10

PANTHER FOR LIFE

Gabriella Ferro attended Oakhill from Preschool through Eighth Grade. After graduating from Oakhill in 2010, Gabby started her freshman year at St. Teresa's Academy, where she is currently finishing her junior year. The past two years have been filled with activities including tennis and theatre. Last year, Gabby was ranked number three on the Varsity tennis team and lettered and barred in tennis as well. Freshman year, she was inducted into the International Thespian Society and has since lettered and barred multiple times in theatre. Gabby has contributed to every production performed during her time at STA, which includes musicals, plays, and student productions. Academically, Gabby has been the top student in both Intro to Chemistry & Physics and Biology. She has also maintained first honors during her high school career.

This past summer, Gabby started the college search. She has toured and visited multiple schools and has found almost every school to be amazing; this makes the choosing process very difficult. This year, she continues her search, applying to multiple schools, and hopefully selecting the perfect college to start her independent life!

Gabby shares, "Oakhill trained me to balance extracurricular activities and academics, which has played a huge role in surviving high school! Whenever I return to Oakhill for events or service work, familiar, smiling faces still greet me in the hall. Unlike most of my new high school friends who say high school is infinitely better than their elementary and middle schools, I will always have a special place in my heart for Oakhill."





HIGH SCHOOL

'00-'03 Tucker Blanchard is a freshman at Shawnee Mission East High School. Tucker is very involved in Boy Scouts and is on track to get his Eagle Scout award this school year. He is in the process of applying for a summer counselor position at Bartle Scout Reservation. Tucker is an avid photographer and has his own business. In addition, he has an arrangement with Sporting KC to take pictures at their games. Tucker is also highly involved in his church's youth group.

'10-'12 Noah Barth graduated from Eighth Grade at Oakhill May 2012. Noah is a freshman at North Kansas City High School where he is involved in drum line, the International Baccalaureate program and swim team. Outside of school, Noah is involved in

his church's praise band as well as Boy Scouts. Noah just completed his Eagle Scout Project Summer of 2012 and attained the rank of an Eagle Scout this past October. Noah is thinking about attending college at the University of Kansas or another large university when he graduates from high school.

'99-'02 Garhett Preece is currently a sophomore at North Kansas City High School. Garhett is an Eagle Scout and has lettered in both golf and wrestling at his high school. Garhett also plays in a Scottish bagpipe band along with his brother and father.

'00-'11 Brianna Ely is a sophomore at North Kansas City High School. Brianna is a part of the International Baccalaureate program at North Kansas City and is also involved in extracurricular activities. Brianna plays on North Kansas City's JV volleyball team and is in the A Cappella choir.

'99-'11 Alex Roney graduated from Oakhill's Eighth Grade in 2011. Currently he is a sophomore at North Kansas City High School. Last month he performed in the musical *Something Funny Happened on the Way to the Forum*. Alex is in A Cappella Choir and his choir teacher is encouraging him to solo during their next contest. Alex will play baseball for North Kansas City in spring 2013. He is also active in Boy Scouts and working toward his Eagle rank; he became a

warrior in the Tribe of Mic-O-Say this past summer.

'98-'03 Abigail Peoples is a junior at Park Hill High School. Abby was nominated as Secretary of Student Council this year. She previously held the secretary position of her Class Executive Council the past two years. Abby is also involved in Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Math Club, Students Against Destructive Decisions, Natural Helpers, and Character Council. Abby is also a cellist in the Symphonic Orchestra. Abby lettered as a freshman in Varsity soccer and, as a sophomore, she advanced to the Varsity position in tennis where she lettered and traveled to State with her team which took 4th place. Abby's after high school plans are still under consideration as "there are just not enough hours in high school to take all classes."

'99-'04 Kendall Wilson is a junior at Park Hill High School. She just recently got her driver's license and is employed in her first part-time position. Kendall excels in school and is taking several Advanced Placement courses.

'01-'08 Olivia Miller is a junior at Park Hill South High School. She is a violinist in the Symphonic (Varsity-level) Orchestra and was a member of the Metropolitan Youth Orchestra. Olivia received an "I" rating in 2010 for her violin solo in the Missouri

Class Notes continued from page 17

State High School Solo and Ensemble competition. She credits Mrs. Hill for introducing her to the violin when the Kansas City Symphony's Instrument Petting Zoo visited the school. Olivia also plays piano and cello. She is a member of the Key Club and was selected as a mentor in the Freshman Mentoring Program at Park Hill South. In addition to these accomplishments, Olivia is a Junior Varsity runner in cross country, a member of the Assistance League of Kansas City Assisten's Auxiliary, and a Youth Ambassador for JDRC (formerly known as Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. "My fondest memories are of my Oakhill teachers, because they inspired me to do my best and created a strong foundation for my character and education." Following high school, Olivia plans to pursue a career in pharmacy.

'00-'06 Abigail Hill is a senior at Park Hill High School and will graduate this May. Abigail plans on attending the University of Missouri next fall. She is highly involved in sports at her school. Abigail is the Team Captain of the girls' swimming team, has qualified for State in swimming all four years of high school, and she is also a part of the school golf team and drum line.

'98-'03 Max Blanchard is a senior at Shawnee Mission East High School. Max played soccer for three years at Shawnee Mission East, and this year Max lettered in cross country. He takes pride in being the editor of the Shawnee Mission East yearbook, the Hauberk. Max is very involved in mission work for his church, Village

Presbyterian. Max has applied to several colleges and is waiting to make a final decision until after his college visits.

'00-'07 Cole Koeniguer will graduate from Rockhurst High School this May. Cole has Varsity letters in both soccer and lacrosse. All four years at Rockhurst, Cole has been a part of Ignation honors, obtaining a 4.0 GPA or higher. He is in the top 1% of his class and has received several awards, including: Freshman Math Department Award, Sophomore Science Department Award, and Junior Math/Chemistry/Physics Award. Cole is an AP Scholar with Honors, a National Merit Commended Scholar, and is an officer for the National Honor Society at Rockhurst. Cole has been twice awarded Sporting 22 scholarship from Sporting Kansas City for work with Oakhill Day School students and the soccer program. Cole plans on studying Biomedical Engineering and Business in college.

'01-'07 Douglas Soule is a senior in high school at St. Pius X. Douglas has been involved with Theatre Arts at SPX and Christian Youth Theatre (CYT). He has been involved in backstage and technical lighting for many theatre performances and has done some acting. This year, Douglas was chosen to be on CYT's leadership team HYPE where he mentors younger students through CYT programs. Douglas intends to major in Engineering when he goes on to study at college next school year.

'98-'01 Laura Flannery is a senior in high

school and a part of the International Baccalaureate Program and National Honors Society at her school.

'98-'03 Elizabeth Peoples is a senior at Park Hill High School. Elizabeth is a company member of Ballet North and is completing her 14th year. Her commitment includes extensive weekly hours, participating in school tours for The Nutcracker and full-length ballet performances. At Park Hill, Elizabeth is a member of Tri-M Music Honors Society, upright bass in Symphonic Orchestra, NHS, Officer Positions for the Conservation Club, Natural Helpers peer counseling and Student Council. Based on her high academics, Elizabeth was chosen to attend the Washington Youth Summit on the Environment in Washington DC this past summer. Elizabeth plans to attend the University of Missouri and study in the department of Natural Resources next fall.

'00-'02 Geoffery Preece is currently a senior at North Kansas City High School. Geoffery is an Eagle Scout, and has lettered in both sports and academics. Geoffery is President of INTERACT, International Service Club for Young Adults, an organization at North Kansas City High School. Geoffery is also a member of a Scottish bagpipe band along with his brother and father.

'98-'99 Victoria Coy is a senior in high school. She is a member of the varsity girls' trapshooting team at her high school and also competes for American Sign Language. Victoria is passionate about sign language and plans on studying American Sign Language in

college. It is Victoria's dream to work at a deaf school as either a teacher or a speech pathologist.

'96-'04 **Zach Hannon** is a senior in high school at Rockhurst Jesuit Prep High School. Zach plays offensive tackle on Rockhurst's football team and is ranked the 7th best player in the state of Missouri. Zach is also ranked the 19th best offensive guard in the United States by Rivals. Fall 2013 Zach will attend the University of Nebraska on a football scholarship. In addition to his football accomplishments, Zach also is a starting attack player on the Rockhurst lacrosse team. Zach obtains a high GPA. Zach is very active in the community and volunteers for the Upper Room at the St. Louis Parish Catholic Church, volunteers for Special Olympics, and is a member of his church's youth group. Zach is planning to major in Civil Engineering at the University of Nebraska.



Oakhill Carnival, 1984

COLLEGE

'96-'07 **Joel Roney** is a freshman at Drury University. He is double-majoring in Theatre as well as Arts Administration. Joel is minoring in Biology and

Spanish. Joel had his first college role this semester as Daryl Grady in the musical *Curtains*. Joel will also play the roles of Borachio and Fryer Francis in *Much Ado about Nothing* this year. The Shakespeare roles will run throughout the school year in Drury's "Shakespeare in the Schools" program.

'00-'02 **Matthew Smith** is a graduate of Park Hill South High School and is now a sophomore at the University of Minnesota studying Strategic Communications and Business Management.

'98-'04 **Carly Evans** is a sophomore in college at Baylor University. Carly attends Baylor on a full scholarship for debate. She debates competitively for Baylor's Debate Team and is studying political science.

'96-'03 **Katie Smith** graduated from Pembroke Hill High School in 2011 and is a sophomore at Washington University. She is double majoring in entrepreneurship and linguistics. Katie is fluent in both French and Spanish. When she graduates from college, Katie wants to start her own business. It is her dream to teach others how to work and communicate with people from different countries and cultures.

'96-'00 **Kevin Hadley** is a sophomore in college at the University of Oklahoma. Kevin plans on double majoring in both History and Economics and double minoring in Chinese and Math. As a freshman, Kevin was selected as a Freshman Leadership Scholar and is on several Dean's lists.

Kevin is a Teaching Assistant to the head of the economics department at the University of Oklahoma and is also on the advisory board for the Dean of the Honors College. In addition to his extensive academic accomplishments, Kevin is a member of a fraternity and on Oklahoma's rowing team.

'95-'05 **Kaitlyn Lewis** is a sophomore at Northwest Missouri State studying Elementary Education for her major and working to receive a minor in Early Childhood Education. Kaitlyn has spent several summers at Oakhill helping with the summer programs.

'94-'02 **Katie Owen** is a senior at Arizona State University studying broadcast journalism and will graduate this May. Katie aspires to be a morning show news anchor. She is currently interning at SheKnows.com, an online editorial company in the valley. This January 2013, Katie will start her internship at Good Morning Arizona. Katie enjoys working out, changing someone's life, reaching goals, hiking Camelback Mountain, interviewing athletes on camera, writing news packages, and working hard.

'96-'02 **Brandon Roney** is a senior at the University of Missouri and will graduate in May 2013. Brandon is double majoring in History and Political Science. He is considering Law School as well as other graduate school programs.

'94-'02 **Bryce Wehling** is a senior at the University of Northern Iowa. Bryce is receiving his degree from UNI in

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Business Management and is receiving a minor in Spanish. Specifically, Bryce is interested in supply chain operations management and logistics. As the Outreach Coordinator for the Honors Student Activity Board, Bryce coordinates all of the honors program volunteering and outreach committees at his school. This year marks Bryce's fourth year as a member of UNI's Varsity Men's Glee Club. In his spare time, Bryce can be found listening to the Top 40s best music or enjoying a variety of sports such as frisbee, tennis, golf, basketball, or running.

'95-'02 **D o m i n i q u e Giordano** is a senior at Creighton University and is a psychology major. Dominique plans to continue her education after graduating from Creighton and is applying to medical school.



GRADUATE SCHOOL

'94-'01 **Taylor Kennedy** graduated from Truman State in December of 2011. Taylor is now studying at UMKC's Dental School.

POST GRADUATE

'99-'01 **Emily Smith** attended Oakhill for Preschool in 1993 and later returned for Fifth and Sixth grade when Oakhill first introduced Middle School. Emily attended Park Hill South High School and graduated from the University of Missouri December 2011, in just three and a half years, with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Marketing. Emily currently lives in Kansas City and is employed by Smith Group Inc. for account services.

'94-'99 **Jillian Riscoe** went on to graduate from Oak Park High School. She is a highly accomplished musician and has her own band called Red Velvet Crush. Jillian released a solo record three years ago and is currently working on a new record for her next tour. Jillian has worked with Katy Perry and Death Leopard on writing and recording songs, and she has a song that is currently being played on 20 radio stations titled "Beautiful Mess."

'94-'02 **Zach Buckner** graduated from Washington University in 2011 and is back in Kansas City working as a tutor at Get Smart Prep.

'89-'90 **Katie Groves (Smith)** is married and is an elementary special education teacher at Westridge Elementary in Raytown School District. She graduated from Park Hill South High School and received a double degree in Elementary Education and

Special Education from the University of Central Missouri. Katie and her husband Phillip have been married for two years and live in their home in the Northland with dog Mikey and cats Abby, Gracie, Cali, and Riley. (She loves animals). Katie loved Oakhill, her teachers, the school carnival, and most memorable, she was Goldilocks in her first production.

'88-'94 **Taylor Leigh Beemer (Freeman)** went on to play soccer in college for North Carolina. Then, she graduated top of her class from Apple Athens State University. Taylor is married and lives in St. Augustine, Florida, where she is a teacher in the St. John's county school district. She coaches soccer and cheerleading.

'89-'92 **Sara Jaeger (Lakin)** received her Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Missouri and taught middle school for three years before relocating to Minnesota. Sara married Chris Jaeger in 2007 and now resides in Rochester, Minnesota, where Chris is completing medical residency. Sara and Chris have a two-year-old daughter, Lakin, and they just welcomed their son, Bennett, this September. Sara works part time as a wedding photographer for Midwest LifeShots and spends time at home with her children.

'89-'93 **Karl Shikles** went on to graduate from Oak Park High School in 1996 and graduated from William Jewell College in 2000 with a degree in psychology and philosophy. Karl currently lives in Kansas City and owns his own business, Shikles Cabinets.

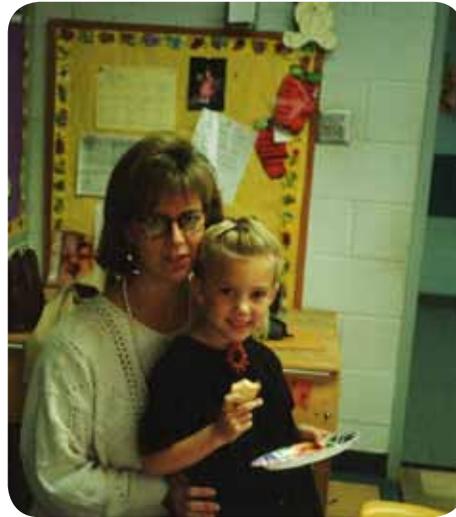
'85-'90 Justin Kauk obtained a BS in Biology in 2001 from the University of Nebraska. He then spent four years completing his doctorate of medicine at MU. In 2006, Justin began his five years of residency training at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill in Orthopaedic Surgery. After an additional year of training in orthopaedic traumatology in Reno, Nevada, Justin took a position with Hinsdale Orthopaedics in the southwest suburbs of Chicago. Justin currently resides in Naperville, Illinois, and is engaged to be married spring of 2013.

'78-'81 Bill Dillingham is an Account Executive at Hartford Life Financial. He and his wife Keri have three children. Their son Lucas is five years old, and their twins, Lily and Jack, are two and a half.

'73-'76 Todd Bartels lives in Parkville, Missouri with his wife, Kimberly, and sons Jacob (age 5) and Luke (age 2). Todd graduated from the University of Missouri with an Accounting degree in 1992 and a J.D. in 1996. Todd is now a Shareholder with Kansas City-based law firm, Polsinelli Shughart, P.C., specializing in business litigation.

'96-'99 Zach Warren went to the University of Missouri and graduated with a BS in Mechanical Engineering. Currently Zach works as a Mechanical Engineer for the US Army Corps of Engineers in the Kansas City District. Zach really enjoys his job, and his hobbies are working out, listening to music, watching sports, and the outdoors.

Recently, Zach climbed Longs Peak in Colorado.



'66-'67 Lisa Blanchard went on to graduate from Liberty High School and receive a BS from the University of Central Missouri. Lisa spent 22 years as a flight attendant for United Airlines. She just recently went back to school and graduated this past August with a BS in Nursing from Rockhurst University - Research College of Nursing. Currently, Lisa is a Labor and Delivery nurse at Research Medical Center. Lisa's two children also attended Oakhill. While her children attended school, Lisa was actively involved in Parent's Guild, served as chairperson for the annual auction, and sat on the Board of Directors.

'61-'63 Bob Stevens attended Little Folks when the school was in the basement of North Cross Methodist church. Founder of the school, Wanda Lee Kalsu, was his teacher. Since Little Folks, Bob graduated from North Kansas City High School and went to Rolla where he received a BS in Chemical Engineering. He also received a Master's in Engineering Management. For the last 22 years Bob

has worked for Bechtel, the largest engineering and construction firm in the United States. As an engineering manager for Bechtel, Bob's work has been in oil, gas, & chemical, power plants, and nuclear environmental cleanup. His work has taken him around the world, including stints living in Mexico and Egypt. In 2004, Bob was inducted into the Academy of Chemical Engineers in Rolla, one of less than 3% of the alumni from that department to be so inducted. Bob currently resides in Houston, Texas.

'64-'65 Karen Carlson graduated from the University of Missouri with a degree in Radio and Television Broadcasting in 1982 and spent many years working for the news. This year Karen received a Master's degree in education from Antioch University New England for Waldorf Teacher Certification. Karen works as a teacher for Primrose School and lives in Minneapolis with her daughter, Ingrid, and son, Gabe.



*Nancy McKee
Parent of Oakhill Alumni
Heather McKee '75-'79*

Class Notes *continued from page 21*

'75-'79 Nancy McKee's daughter, Heather McKee, attended Oakhill 1975-1979. At that time, Oakhill only offered Kindergarten through Third Grade, and Heather attended school all four years. This past fall, Brooke Van Lear-Jones met with Nancy and was fortunate to hear about her stories and all she remembers about Oakhill. She recalled her daughter learning French and Spanish as an early childhood student and traveling on field trips to exciting places such as Jefferson City. Nancy remarked about how involved and important the families and parents at Oakhill were when she was a parent. She shared that her husband, Roy, used to mow the school's yard and that there was an incredible amount of parent participation outside of annual giving. Nancy was a highly involved Oakhill parent; she was a part of the Women's Bowling League, President of Mother's club, and assisted with a variety of activities at the school. When Brooke told Nancy that Oakhill now offers education for students age 2 through Eighth grade, she was elated. She stated, "I've always pictured that in my mind..."



Roots is published for the alumni, parent, past parent, grandparent, faculty, staff, and friend community of Oakhill Day School.

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Co-Editors: Brooke Van Lear-Jones and Michelle McDaniel

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Letters and suggestions for future editions of Roots are welcomed and encouraged. Correspondence should be addressed to Brooke Van Lear-Jones, Alumni Coordinator at brooke.jones@oakhilldayschool.org.

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Please send all address changes and Notifications (Marriage, birth, and death announcements) to the Development Office.

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ON CHERRY STREET

Familiar faces can be spotted visiting 7019 N Cherry Street throughout the year... Maybe next time it will be you!

Dan (L) and Melinda Roney (R), parents of Alex ('99-'11), Brandon ('96-'02) and Joel ('98-'07) Roney were spotted at the Annual Oakhill Auction on March 3, 2012!



Steven Brady (L) and Jacob Eisler (R) were spotted at the Alumni/Faculty Basketball Challenge on January 28, 2012.



Perri Miller (L) and Gabby Ferro (R) were spotted at the Annual Fall Red Barn Farm Party on October 11, 2012.



Steven Brady, Alex Diaz, and Mary Gravis (L to R) were spotted at the St. Pius X Information Luncheon on October 23, 2012.



Shelby Dodson, Brianna Ely, Madison Fitzgerald, and Alex Roney (L to R) were spotted rocking out at Oakhillpalooza on May 11, 2012.



Cole Koeniguer was spotted leading a Sporting KC Soccer Clinic for Oakhill Students over the summer of 2012.



Got Pics? Please send any photos of yourself and alumni friends to brooke.jones@oakhilldayschool.org to be featured in the next **On Cherry Street!**



7019 N Cherry Street
Gladstone, MO 64118

First Lil' Folks Kindergarten Class in 1947.

