The Mission and Core Values for Erskine Academy

Erskine Academy is an independent secondary school dedicated to providing all students a high quality education. Through an extensive academic program, rich and meaningful experiences, and a caring school community, the Academy develops a firm foundation in scholarship, leadership, stewardship, and relationships.

Scholarship - A rigorous and relevant program of studies, with high standards for teaching and learning, provides students with knowledge and skills for success in high school and beyond.

Leadership - Through positive and active engagement in school life, students learn more about themselves, discover their gifts and talents, and mentor and motivate others to strive for excellence and put forth their best effort.

Stewardship - Through a culture of awareness and sense of responsibility, individuals are encouraged to enhance and preserve their communities—school, local, and global.

Relationships - Through mutual respect and care, the Erskine Academy community fosters a school environment that is centered on kindness, civility, and safety and that accepts and values its members for their unique characteristics and individuality.

Beginning with the end in mind

Greetings from the top of the stairs... by Michael J. McQuarrie, Headmaster

The ending of a school year is a celebration when with the issuance of diplomas graduates become Erskine Academy alumni forever. Within this Connector, you will see our All Classes Reunion 2018 attendees enjoying one another through their reminiscing and storytelling as well members of the class of 2018 engaging with alumni who span the years. When I am present among our senior alumni and our soon-to-be alums, I understand, appreciate, and am humbled by their shared affection for Erskine Academy, despite their having experienced the school at markedly different times.

We cannot foretell with certainty what a school year will bring, but whatever may come, at times we have the power to say, “This is who we are and what we are choosing to become as a school.” We—all of us—are responsible for making our school year what it will be. For example, the year the golf team became state champions, the year we won the one-act drama competition, the years we made the Washington Post’s list of the Most Challenging High Schools in America, and the year we became School Spirit Challenge Champions (for the first time), we didn’t expect these outcomes, we pursued opportunities and achieved results.

Each year, I challenge students to do extraordinary things for their class, school, and communities. A class decides what impression they wish to make on their school, their teachers, and their fellow students. A class’s character and accomplishments influence what we will be talking about after their graduation. To paraphrase a Chinese proverb: If you wish to enjoy the shade of a tree, the best time to have planted it was twenty years ago; the second best time to plant it is now. If we wish for a spirited, enjoyable, and successful school year, we need to begin now and make it so every day for the next one hundred and seventy-five days.

Inside are Senior Class President Elizabeth Sugg’s remarks to the student body on this subject made at Opening Assembly.

When I am before a graduating class, I see a spirited group, unified and bonded by the experience of having gone through their high school years together. That sight affects me the most and makes me proud and most satisfied. In that moment, I know that by graduating from Erskine Academy, these young people leave us full of promise, that they will be all right, and that they have a real chance to live prosperous and meaningful lives “out there.” It is this fulfillment of the school’s mission that motivates most of us to continue our careers and professional lives to Erskine Academy. As Director of Guidance Sue LaGasse said on the occasion of her retirement after thirty-seven years with Erskine Academy, “There’s just something about this place.” Learn more inside from Ms. LaGasse’s commencement address to our 2018 graduates.

It is so that we cannot know for sure how a school year will end, but if its beginning is any indication, we are in for another great one. This year, we once

Inside

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COVER A beautiful fall day on campus Photo credit Betsy Benner. Top left clockwise Camp EA, retired guidance director Sue LaGasse, girls soccer in tug-o-war at Homecoming assembly, food collection for School Spirit Challenge, valedictorian Caleb Tyler ’18, art students with cards for veterans.

continued next page
A senior's message to underclassmen

by Liz Sugg ’19

One of the first duties of a new senior class president is to pass along wisdom to the underclassmen at the opening assembly. Class of 2019 President Liz Sugg continued the tradition and offered sage advice that she collected over her last three years. An excerpt is below.

...Your story just ceased its prologue and has finally begun. Your future is filled with thriving at an academy that challenges you to be the best you can be... and then a little more. Your friends are all around you, and I want you to include me in that group. And, finally, what brought you to this place in this exact moment? Well, fate I guess.

Please recognize that you are amongst some of the most beautiful writers, creative artists, excellent mathematicians, the future’s next scientists, exceptional athletes, and so many more people that make attending Erskine Academy one of the best decisions you’ll ever make, which I am sure many upperclassmen can attest to.

To everyone—no matter where you are on your journey—today and everyday,

I advise you to get involved as much as you can, breathe in the energy that these hallways have to offer, and, most importantly, over anything else, make sure that one, two, three, or four years from now you can safely say that your high school years made for the best blink of an eye you’ll ever experience. Thank you.

"Your future is filled with thriving at an academy that challenges you to be the best you can be... and then a little more."

Beginning with the end continued from page 2

again combined Homecoming with the School Spirit Challenge Tournament of Champions through which we engage in friendly competition with other past champions to raise food and funds for the Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine and our local food pantries. In 2016, we raised nearly 85,000 pounds in food and funds; this time, our goal is 100,000 pounds. We embrace this cause and opportunity to bring together students and families, faculty and staff, alumni and friends, and many of our business partners to celebrate our school and deepen our relationships while providing a meaningful and critical service with statewide implications.

The end of the 2018 school year also closes my twentieth year at Erskine Academy, a milestone in my professional life, yet a beginning too. It is my good fortune to have been “planted” here twenty years ago, and although I accept that I’ll not have another twenty years at this remarkable school that I revere, I am enthused and grateful to begin the twenty-first best year of my career.

More great things ahead.
above Alums at Friday night’s kickoff at The China Dine-ah. right The Class of ’53 celebrating their 65th Reunion left to right Beverly Wallman McKenney, Betty Reed Glidden, Sylvia Parsons Rose, Amy McKenney Ingraham, Marilyn Dodge Pullen, Pauline Bailey Glidden, Shirley Fletcher Fitzgerald, Mary Lou Nelson Noyes, Virginia Grant Boudreau, Carlton Fitzgerald. Below Alumni looking at items from the archives and the Class of ’53 at their 65th reunion luncheon in the library. Photo credit Jenny Haskell Sutter ’91.
Leadership seniors were honored guests, and EA Alumni Scholarship Awards were won by Cody Daigneault and Jakob Peavey. The Spirit Award was presented to Brenda Foster Williams for her help organizing the 50th Reunion celebration.

The very capable student volunteers standing by to wait on tables.

Retiring Guidance Director Sue LaGasse is presented with an honorary diploma by Board President John Nored ’70 and Headmaster McQuarrie.
It is with sincere thanks that we acknowledge the following people for their generous financial support of Erskine Academy through the Annual Fund and other special funds. We also gratefully acknowledge the many people who gave of their time and talent. Without all of your support, Erskine Academy would not be the exceptional place of learning it is today. Thank you!
On behalf of all Erskine Academy students, we thank you for helping ensure they will have bright and promising futures as responsible citizens.
Why Give to EA?
Since 1883, Erskine Academy has played an important role in the lives of the families we serve. It has received recognition for the excellence of its facility, the quality of its educational programs, and its safe and disciplined environment. The ongoing generosity of individuals and businesses has made this achievement possible, and gifts of all sizes are crucial to the institution’s continued success.

Why does Erskine Academy need to raise money every year—don’t the sending towns pay the school tuition for their students?
While our eight sending towns do pay tuition for their students, that amount is calculated each year by the state. The tuition allowance always falls short of what it actually costs to educate an Erskine student. Every year Erskine depends on support from the Annual Fund to bridge that gap and make up the difference.

Your gifts matter because...
...you are changing for the better the lives of many young people in your community and beyond.
...they are your investment in the future of Erskine Academy.
...you are exemplifying what matters—and that is an extraordinary gift.
Erskine Academy is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that has qualified as required by 9 MSRA, Chapter 385 and is registered as an Exempt Charitable Organization. Gifts are tax deductible to the extent provided by law.

Report of Contributions 2017-2018
Gifts received July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018

EA Employee Scholarship Fund via payroll deduction
Lauren Potter Arnold ’08
Susan Beckwith
Diane Flye Dow ’76 P’00 ’02 ’04
Brian R. Dutil
Abby J. Everleth
Emily J. Foss P’90 ’93 ’98
Jessica Dow Haskell ’02
Kathryn D. Hersom
Heide Starkey Hotham ’91 P’20
Jon Jorgensen P’18
Shara MacDonald
Eileen B. McNeff P’89
Ryan C. Nored ’93
Deann Willoughby Porter ’90 P’18 ’23
Erika Jones Reay ’98
Melissa G. Romac
Dennis L. Scates ’76 P’10 ’12
Rebecca Dow Sellers ’00
Michael J. Soule ’95
Christopher A. Vogel ’10
Benjamin F. Willoughby ’94
Cheryl Wellman York ’85 P’19 ’21

HOPE Club (Helping Others Persevere at Erskine)
Dutil Enterprises, Inc.

Leo Club
Falla & Sons Land Surveys Inc
Margaret Chase Smith Library

Music Fund
Richard M. Ferris P’09
Brian E. Haskell P’19
Carl and Phyllis Farris P’01
Farris Variety Inc.
Fieldstone Quickstop LLC
Freddies Service Center Inc.
Helen Cates Devoe ’02 and Anonymous in memory of Tanner Smith ’05
Lakeview Lumber
Maine Savings FCU
Michael and Karen Falla P’19 ’19
Sylvia Parsons Rose ’53
Thadius M. Barber ’91 P’13 ’21 ’22
William Pullen P’05

Project Grad
Augusta Kiwanis Club
Dairy Queen

Robotics
The Benevity Community Impact Fund
Nathan Klein ’05
Thomas M. O’Keefe ’69

Science Dept.
Benevity Community Impact Fund, The Nathan Klein ’05
Thomas M. O’Keefe ’69

Wellness
Anonymous
United Way of Kennebec Valley

Memorial Funds
Kermit E. Jordan Scholarship Fund in memory of Kermit E. Jordan ’76
Glenna B. Jordan in memory of Floyd ’46 and Kermit ’76 Jordan
Larry and Patricia Delucchi in memory of Kermit Jordan ’76
Lori Anne Pinette Piano Scholarship Fund in memory of Lori Anne Pinette
The Benevity Community Impact Fund
Gloria Dowe Pinette ’55 in memory of Lori Ann Pinette
Greg Kearney
Taylor Asen and Rebecca Watson
Windsor Fair
Ridgeway Endowment Fund in memory of Donald F. Ridgeway P’08
Jon and Alison Jorgensen
Robert Regut
Bernard Sean Winkley ’81 Memorial Scholarship Fund
The French and Brann Families in memory of Bernard Sean Winkley ’81

Grants
MELMAC Education Foundation
Oak Grove School Foundation
Robotics Institute of Maine

In Kind Gifts
Lapointe Lumber

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...they are your investment in the future of Erskine Academy.
...you are making a statement about giving back.
...they mean you value your Erskine education.
...you are helping to uphold the Mission of Erskine Academy: Through an extensive academic program, rich and meaningful experiences, and a caring school community, the Academy develops a firm foundation in scholarship, leadership, stewardship, and relationships.
...you are exemplifying what matters—and that is an extraordinary gift.

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Class of 2018 Top Ten Seniors

Valedictorian: Caleb Tyler, son of Regan and Jason Tyler of Palermo. Throughout his four years at Erskine, Caleb participated in National Honor Society, Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Soccer, and Lacrosse and completed a variety of community service projects. Caleb is a Maine Principal’s Association Award and Rensselaer Medal recipient. He received high honor roll distinction every trimester with awards of excellence in the areas of Algebra, Integrated Science, Chemistry, and US History. Caleb attends the University of Maine studying Mechanical Engineering.

Salutatorian: Kayla Hubbard, daughter of Phil and Julie Hubbard of Palermo, Maine. Kayla is a member of National Honor Society and has participated in Student Council, EA Leadership, the Friends of Rachel (FOR) Club, Drama Club, Soccer, and Tennis, and numerous community service endeavors. She earned high honor roll distinction every trimester and received awards of excellence in the areas of Algebra, Social Studies, PreCalculus, and Physics. She was the recipient of the Bausch & Lomb Honorary Science Award and received Renaissance Recognition and Senior of the Trimester awards. Kayla attends Lancaster Bible College, where she is majoring in Elementary Education.

Third: Kassandra Nadeau, daughter of Christine and Andrew Nadeau of Vassalboro, Maine. Kassandra is a member of National Honor Society and participated in Business Club, Prom Committee, Cross Country, Indoor Track, and Track & Field. She completed a variety of community service projects and was selected to attend the New England Student Leadership Conference. Kassandra attends the University of Maine studying Biology.


Fifth: Maggie Anderson, daughter of Michelle Anderson of China, Maine and Frank Anderson of Augusta, Maine. Maggie is a member of National Honor Society and participated in the Drama Club, Prom Committee, and TLC (Erskine’s community service group). Maggie was a recipient of the Phi Beta Kappa Award and received high honor roll distinction every trimester. She attends Gordon College.

Sixth: Megan Lemieux, daughter of Debbie and Richard Lemieux of Vassalboro, Maine. Megan is a member of National Honor Society and participated in TLC, Drama Club, Math Team, and FOR Club. She received the Society of Women Engineers award, earned high honor roll distinction every trimester with an award of excellence in English and received a Renaissance Recognition award. Megan attends Unity College with a major in Biology.

Seventh: Emma Stone, daughter of Katrina Johnsen Smith of Palermo, Maine and Andrew Stone of Hope, Maine. Emma is a member of National Honor Society and participated in Drama, FOR Club, and Tennis. She is studying Business at Gordon College.

Eighth: Gabriella Pizzo, daughter of Deanne and Greg Pizzo of China, Maine. Gabriella is a member of National Honor Society and participated in Drama Club, FOR Club, and Tennis. She earned high honor roll distinction every trimester and received a Senior of the Trimester award. Gabriella attends Sarah Lawrence College with a major in Theater.

Ninth: Kaylee Porter, daughter of Deann and Shawn Porter of Palermo, Maine. Kaylee is a member of National Honor Society and participated in Student Council, EA Leadership, FOR Club, Soccer, Cross Country, Indoor Track, and Track & Field. Kaylee completed a variety of community service projects. She was the recipient of the Smith Book Award, The Most Valuable Member of Student Council Award, and was a Renaissance Recognition award recipient. Kaylee is majoring in Nutrition and running track for the University of Maine.

Tenth: Carleigh Ireland, daughter of Amy and Scott Ireland of Vassalboro, Maine. Carleigh participated in Math Team and Prom Committee. She received awards of excellence in Health, English, and French. Carleigh is majoring in Nursing at the University of Maine.
Beginning in September, Erskine Academy committed to a challenging mission once again to collect food and funds to support the Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine (GSFB) by participating in WGME13/Fox23's School Spirit Challenge Tournament of Champions. The School Spirit Challenge (SSC) is a friendly competition between schools to show school pride and spirit, all while helping the community. The program is designed to promote the school community and good stewardship with students of high schools in Central and Southern Maine through an eight-week food drive to benefit the GSFB and local food pantries.

Just this past year, the GSFB distributed 24 million meals to Mainers in need through their network of local partner agencies. The organization partners with more than 400 local organizations—food pantries, meal sites, schools, senior centers, and more from Kittery to Fort Kent and provides nutritious food to Mainers who are struggling to make ends meet. The GSFB is also working on long-term solutions to break the cycle of poverty and food insecurity.

This was the second time Erskine participated in the School Spirit Challenge, the first being two years ago, an event which we won handily over the other participating schools thanks to the efforts of many students, parents, alumni, businesses, and friends. In 2016, we were the School Spirit Champion for having raised nearly 85,000 pounds of food, an amount exceeding the total raised by the second and third finishers combined. Given this accomplishment, we entered this tournament of champions with confidence. However, since the other competing high schools, also past champions, are all south of Erskine and have larger school enrollments, we set our collection goal at an ambitious 100,000 pounds of food.

Always up for a challenge and a worthy cause, we kicked off the campaign at the Homecoming Assembly in September. Enjoy the images of the spirited students and staff in front of the TV cameras spurred on by WGME13's Jeff Peterson and his crew on these pages. In attendance were representatives from the GSFB and the sponsors of this year's SSC. The morning kicked off with students arriving at 5:30 a.m. for a tailgate breakfast served in exchange for their food donations.

The campaign continued until November 2 and was a bigger success than we ever imagined. The Erskine community pulled together collecting food, giving money, and supporting the many planned events to support the Challenge. On-campus events included "Fill the Bus" with cans and bottles, Fly Like an Eagle 5K Run/Walk, Trivia Night, Trunk or Treat, Open Mic Night, and a dodgeball tournament. Off-campus activities included an EA Parents Food Drive Challenge and a 21+ Sharing Spirits hosted by alumni. An online appeal went out on social media, and many generous donors gave
School Spirit Challenge Tournament of Champions

through the GSFB’s virtual food drive.

Though initiated by Erskine’s students and faculty, we led what was a broader community campaign supported substantially by many area businesses and organizations. We are grateful to our partners including Albison’s Printing, Augusta Emblem Club #233, B & B Septic Service, Bar Harbor Bank & Trust, Borislow Insurance, Brian Reay Plumbing & Heating, Central Maine Pyrotechnics, Darling’s Ice Cream For A Cause, Dutil Enterprises, Fieldstone Quickstop, G & E Roofing, Glidden Construction & Foundations, Harvest Time Natural Foods, Hussey’s General Store, Jackson’s Lawn Service, Kempton Tobey & Son, Kennebec Savings Bank, Knowles Mechanical, Legacy Home Improvements, M.A. Haskell Fuel, MC Disposal, Mid-State Machine Products, Natanis Golf Course, O’Connor GMC-Buick-Chevrolet-Cadillac, Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, Tobey’s Grocery Store, TRICORP Federal Credit Union, William H. Brewer & Co., and United Insurance/Tilton Agency. Our thanks go out to everyone who donated to this important cause.

And the results? We won the competition handily by far exceeding our goal. Erskine raised a record-breaking 196,969.25 pounds of food for the GSFB, which is over twice the amount that any of the 60+ competing schools has raised in the five years and ten seasons of this competition! About this accomplishment, Headmaster McQuarrie says, “The School Spirit Challenge was for a great cause and through it, our community engaged in collective problem-solving and activism as we made a significant difference...”

In the coming weeks, we will continue to recognize and thank the many individuals, including alumni from across the country, businesses, and organizations for their generosity and goodwill that aided our efforts, strengthened our school community, and fed many hungry people in Maine. We will celebrate, too, beginning with December’s Renaissance assembly, at which Jeff Peterson of WGME13 will be present for the public presentation of our gift to the Good Shepherd Food Bank of Maine.
An extraordinary career... Ms. LaGasse retires after 37 years

From biology teacher to Guidance Director, Sue LaGasse has served Erskine Academy since 1981. She was aptly chosen as commencement speaker in June. Headmaster McQuarrie introduced Sue LaGasse at the ceremony:

This evening’s speaker is well known to several thousands of Erskine alumni, hundreds of Erskine faculty and staff, and certainly to our current 580 students—who collectively have received countless hours of her distinguished service, support, and counsel.

Susan Marie LaGasse was born and raised in Madison, Maine. She and her four siblings attended the University of Maine at Farmington; all became teachers in Maine schools.

Upon graduating from UMF in 1977, Sue began her career teaching biology in Greenville. In 1981, she joined the Erskine Academy faculty where she has remained ever since.

Her roles, responsibilities, and achievements are too numerous to mention, but a short and representative list would include: Beginning as a teacher of biology, she taught one of our first Advanced Placement courses—not surprisingly, biology. She coached softball—four years in Greenville and 15 at Erskine, and she coached JV basketball and JV soccer for a time. She was instrumental in presenting EA’s inaugural Project Graduation program in 1985. She has chaired the Renaissance Committee since the 90s, and since 2006 she has coordinated graduation, including this evening’s ceremony.

While an effective and happily tenured science teacher, Sue pursued graduate studies in school counseling, earning her masters in that area from the University of Maine in 1991, a credential she immediately put to work for Erskine, first as a halftime counselor/halftime teacher, then full-time guidance counselor until becoming the guidance director in 1997. In this role, Sue can be credited with growing the AP program and the school’s second-to-none advisor/ee program. She successfully advocated for and promoted the Jobs for Maine Graduates program and administered our MELMAC program.

After 41 years in education, Susan LaGasse’s retirement not only marks a significant passage in her life, it signifies the passing of an era for the learning and workplace that is Erskine Academy. For being an inspirational leader of our school and for committing a lifetime—37 of her 41 years in education—to Erskine Academy, and in recognition of her not only promoting but actually living the school’s values of scholarship, leadership, stewardship, and relationships, for only a fourth time in our 135-year history, last week at All Alumni Reunion we conferred upon her the honorary diploma, making Susan Marie LaGasse an alumna of Erskine Academy and forever a classmate of the Class of 2018.

...It is my high honor and true pleasure to present a generous colleague, steadfast friend, extraordinary educator, and an instrumental contributor to all that is good about Erskine Academy, Ms. Susan LaGasse.

Here are excerpts from Ms. LaGasse’s speech that followed:

For me, our four years together have flown by. For many of you, our first meeting was at 8th grade Open House in February 2014... one of my special memories of Erskine and your class will always be your participation in the School Spirit Challenge at the beginning of your junior year. The participation and energy level in the gym that morning was truly amazing. Some staff members were concerned that very few students would show up at 5:30 in the morning to participate in this event. I just knew, in my heart, Erskine Academy students would not let us down. That is what makes you special. No other high school in the competition even came close to the number of students participating or the amount of food collected at the kick-off event.

Ms. LaGasse continued on page 18
It's a tough job to come up with the right words to fully describe someone's long and successful career, particularly at Erskine where you are practically talking about your family. However, Headmaster McQuarrie made a good attempt in June at the Renaissance assembly before he presented Mrs. Foss a Faculty of the Trimester award:

Being first recognized as Faculty of the Trimester in 1995, her second award is far too long in coming. Today, she joins the small, distinctive group to be recognized now for a second time—finally. Since the time she was first publicly acknowledged, her commitment to the school and dedication to her students evidenced by her numerous roles held over the years have been unwavering, notable, and most important, authentic.

Selecting this teacher for Faculty of the Trimester, again, was made easy for me—I merely had to hear from those to whom she is so endeared—her students—many of them, in fact. …Here is how she is known to and experienced by her student nominators:

“She is the most down to earth and most understanding teacher at Erskine Academy. She knows how to have a good time and can put a smile on any face. She’s a joker at heart and awesome at planking, destroying every challenger at the plank. She is cute as a button. She always has your best interest in mind.”

“She is one of the funniest and most welcoming teachers I have met. When I am stressed about my work, she will help me any way she can. She knows how to make someone smile—always cracking jokes and making the classroom fun.”

“She’s the nicest teacher I have ever had. She cares about her students and wants us to succeed, pushing us to do our best and just put our own effort into our work. She’s my favorite teacher, and I always look forward to her class.”

“She knows how to have fun, but still get work done. She is supportive of her students and their school activities. She is encouraging. She knows how and when to lighten the mood even in the most stressful situations. She is kind to everyone and accepts all people with open arms.”

If I might summarize, she is an outstanding teacher—accepting, warm, charitable with her gifts and talents, understanding, caring—these are the qualities that gain you universal acceptance in a school community, from students and peers alike. To all of the points made by her student nominators, I am in complete agreement. She is among the best in her field, content area, teachers. I will never forget her classes; they were always fun and memorable. I still have my journals from Visual Journaling class that I took twice! —Taryn Peaslee ’08

Congrats to Ms Foss! You were the best high school advisor a guy could ask for. I loved being in your advisee group. —Kenja Barney

Mrs. Foss is the reason I went to college right after high school. I am forever grateful! Congratulations on your retirement! You deserve to relax! —Amanda Saban ’98

Oh gosh! Mrs. Foss!! You were such a joy to learn from and made me feel so good about my work. Your positivity helped me continue to draw. May you enjoy your retirement. It’s well deserved. —Heather Sutter ’10

Congratulations, Emily Terrill Foss. You helped me through a rough time in life and made me the person I am. I will always remember your caring presence and always wanting to help any student. I am happy sad right now. Happy you are getting to retire as you deserve to but sad for the kids who will never have you as a teacher. You are a gem as an educator and one every teacher should aspire at being. —Phil Ferguson ’98
AFS to build home in Guatemala

In March 2019, Erskine’s AFS students will be taking on the challenge once again of building a new home for people in need—this time in San Juan Comalapa, Guatemala. The students have named the project “Casas de Esperanza”—Hopeful Homes.

AFS advisor Sonia Stevenson and the students have visited Guatemala, where they worked in schools, delivered corn, and worked at a community center. Guatemalan contacts Miguel and Gloria Tuctuc visited the Spanish IV classes at Erskine to talk about life in their Mayan village.

San Juan Comalapa is in the Chimaltenango area of Guatemala and sometimes called the “Florence of America” because of the many Kaqchikel painters living there. Today there are some 500 painters in the town, and the majority of them still use the techniques of Curruchiche. These painters are dedicated to painting the costumes, life experiences and traditions of the Indian towns. The town was devastated by the 1976 Guatemala earthquake. It is is home to the longest mural in Guatemala, which chronicles the town’s history from pre-Columbian times through colonization, the earthquake, the Guatemalan civil war, until the present.

According to the Central American Association for Housing, the housing deficit in Guatemala exceeds 1.6 million households, including inadequate, rented and overcrowded housing. In addition, the need for basic services such as drinking water, sanitation, electricity and safe stoves in rural areas is very high.

AFS students have been busy fundraising to cover the cost of building the home. In the past, the club managed to cover the cost of previous homes the group built in Costa Rica. This month, they put together a holiday fair featuring many area vendors, live music, and “breakfast with Santa.”

Student trip to England and France

Last April, French teacher Lauren Arnold led a group of Erskine students to Dublin, London, and Paris. The group began their trip in Dublin where they saw Phoenix Park, St. Patrick’s Cathedral, The Book of Kells, and Trinity College. Next the group took a ferry to North Wales to visit the town of “Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogogoch”, a name that consists of 58 letters! While in Wales, the group also visited Snowdonia National Park. From Wales, the group traveled to London to see Buckingham Palace, Big Ben, Westminster Abbey, Hyde Park, and the London Eye. From London, the group took the Eurostar Chunnel, which travels under the English Channel to Paris. In Paris, the group visited L’Arc de Triomphe, The Eiffel Tower, The Louvre, Notre-Dame, Montmartre, Sacré Coeur, and much more. The group ended their trip with a nighttime cruise on the Seine River!
Leo Club new inductees

Twenty-two Erskine Academy students were inducted into the Erskine Academy Leo Club at the Whitefield Lions Club, on October 12. The new members joined an original 25, making the Erskine Academy Leo Club the largest in the state. Leo Club members were presented with a banner supplied by the Whitefield Lions Club.

During the induction ceremony performed by District Governor Norman Hart and past District Governor Paula Beach, members were awarded Leo pins by Whitefield Lions Club President Cindy Lincoln and Club Director and Leo Club organizer, Barry Tibbetts. The Leo Club was formed last Spring in conjunction with the Whitefield Lions Club and Erskine Advisor Roxanne Malley.

Whitefield Lions Barry Tibbetts, Ron Kenoyer and Calvin Prescott have been instrumental in the formation and support of this club, which helps students conduct local civic duties and develop leadership skills.

Erskine Leos have attended Whitefield Lions Club meetings and helped with their local fundraisers including a golf tournament, fishing derby and working at the Windsor Fair. The Erskine Leos held a pumpkin painting and visitation day at the Country Manor Nursing Home in Coopers Mills on October 26.

For more information about the Leo club or to make a donation, please contact Roxanne Malley at (207) 314-9859, email rmalley@erskine247.com or call Barry Tibbetts (207) 549-3109. To learn more about the Whitefield Lions Club and upcoming events, visit www.WhitefieldLionsClub.com.

Bringing the world to the library

The Myrtle Huff Austin Library under the leadership of head librarian Dr. Crystal Shamas-Douglas continues to be a space dedicated to being a positive force in the academic and cultural development of Erskine students. Dr. Shamas-Douglas has arranged for some wonderful speakers from around the world.

In late spring, two visitors from Kikuube, Uganda, Pamela Nyakato and Daniel Mugume, were brought by Colby College Assistant Professor in Government Laura Seay to speak about their experiences in their African country. Pamela Nyakato runs Raintree Farms located northwestern Uganda and spoke about her company’s innovative Moringa oleifera crops. Daniel is a student in Social Work and Administration at Ndejje University in the capital city of Kampala, Uganda and spoke about the Ugandan educational system. Colby College students travel to Uganda as well in an exchange program.

U.S. Senator Angus King took time out of his busy schedule to hold a real time video session with students in the library and take questions. He is a well practiced bipartisan communicator and role model. Sen. King graciously explained the daily challenges and duties in his official life and encouraged the young people to take on civic duties in their lives.

Last month two more outstanding speakers visited the library. Bassam Khabieh, a freelance Syrian photojournalist and 2018 Oak Human Rights Fellow shared his beautiful but searing photography of war crimes and other ongoing human rights violations in the Syrian conflict.

The second speaker was University of Maine at Farmington’s Professor of...
The Wellness Team has grown over the past few years into a group that positively affects all students and staff on a regular basis. The team offers many wellness opportunities from which individuals can choose.

Recent wellness projects included an early release day afternoon of fun mixer options for staff such as volleyball, gentle yoga, playing with clay, walking, knitting, reading, a diet discussion, medical consumerism, and other active and relaxing sessions. Staff made tasty soups to share before the activities.

Funds are being raised by students to install a water bottle filling station in the gym lobby. The team instituted “Try Teacher Mike Choate taking off with his aloe plant at the Wellness plant exchange! Humor is healthy, too!" talk concluded by noticing the role the internet has played in making the plight of child soldiers more visible, and reflected on the work of many organizations that may be making it less common to use child soldiers. Finally, he reflected on the role of the West in these conflicts, and how the conflicts that produce child soldiers are often the product of a context of corruption and political/economic exploitation. It was an eye-opening talk about horrendous inhumanities, which the world has responsibility to eradicate.

Sidekicks grads

The students at the right are the first of three classes that will be graduating from Sidekicks training this semester! Sidekicks are teens who are trained and provided with ongoing support to be successful in holding respectful, helpful conversations around quitting with peers who use tobacco. They have had four hours of training with April Hughes ’07! Well done and congratulations! 

Ms. LaGasse retires

This is just one example of the many times you have displayed stewardship through your four years at Erskine, and I hope that you will continue to do so in the future. You have also exhibited less visible acts of kindness each and every time you hold the door open for someone, greet visitors with a smile and ask if you can help them, welcome new students to our school, and say please and thank you on a regular basis. This does not go unnoticed by visitors to our school as many of them comment on how polite and respectful Erskine students are. You make Erskine a special place and are the reason why so many alumni want to come back to Erskine to work. We currently have 19 teachers and 13 support staff that are Erskine graduates. They loved Erskine when they were a student and wanted to come back to make positive contributions to their school and rejoin their Erskine family. Class of 2018, I want you to know that you are and always will be in our Erskine family.

It has been amazing to watch Erskine transition academically from the high school it was in 1981 to what it has become today. You have been the beneficiaries of administrators who have had an excellent vision for Erskine Academy. First, an Academic Assistance program was put in place to help students who might struggle with writing, math, or their organizational skills to be certain they could earn the necessary credits. Over the years, administration increased academic options by first adding Advanced Placement courses and more recently Dual Enrollment courses. Capital Area Technical Center has also added Dual Enrollment courses for their students and adjusted their programs according to the demands of area businesses. It is exciting for us to learn you have earned a semester’s worth of college credits and in doing so have saved a great deal of money. Erskine has also maintained programming that most other high schools have dropped, such as Industrial Technology and Consumer Science. In short, Erskine put all the necessary ingredients together for any student to be successful if they chose to do so. All of these

continued next page
programs helped to prepare you for the many career opportunities that are now available to you. No matter what your career choices are, I hope you have felt supported by the guidance office. We honor all jobs and respect the training pathway to get there. …

It is my hope that you will all find careers that you are passionate about and enjoy doing. Be patient and persistent in finding what energizes you. You may not find it in two years, four years, or even 10 years, but when you do find your passion, going to work will be a pleasure and enjoyable just as it has been for me as an educator for the past 41 years. …

No graduation speech is complete without a bit of advice. You probably have heard most of them, but they are worth repeating. These are the ones that I feel are important: Do what you love, enjoy each and every day, make new friends, be kind, give more than you receive, mend a quarrel, forgive and forget, apologize if you are wrong, keep a promise, think of someone else first, express your gratitude, have a sense of humor, and laugh often. …Class of 2018, please remember, no matter how bad things can get, a good laugh can help to reframe your mood. So please surround yourself with people who make you laugh and who have a positive and optimistic outlook on life. This is a conscious choice you can make that will have a direct impact on your happiness.

This fall, you and I will be embarking on a new adventure. It will be very different for you as you will leave the safety and surety of Erskine Academy. You will be leaving the caring environment of your teachers, advisors, and administration. For me, it will be the first time in 37 years that I do not get in my car and drive to Erskine. I must admit as much as I will miss Erskine, I will not miss getting up at 5:30 every morning! I plan to stay connected to Erskine and will always be available to help the school in any way that I can.

To state that I am a strong advocate for Erskine is an understatement. It is my hope that you too will stay connected to Erskine. Please keep us updated on where you are and what you are doing so it can be included in Class Notes in the Erskine Connector. Also included in the Connector is information about upcoming alumni events, at which I hope to see you someday. …

In closing, my three words to you are, and never forget this—Biology is everywhere!

A alumna’s comment reflects the kind words from many alumni about Ms. LaGasse:

From Heather French ’92—“Ms. Lagasse is one of my most cherished mentors. She created a safe and nurturing space to learn and grow, and she provided reassurance that we could all find our way and accomplish our goals. I remember sitting in her bio class when she put a college brochure in front of me and said, “I think you should apply here.” And so I did! And my time at Bradford College became one of the most pivotal influences on my eventual career path. LaGasse, you’ve touched more lives than you can imagine, and you will leave a wonderful legacy at EA. Warmest Congratulations on your retirement. So deserved!”

SAVE THE DATE!
All Alumni Reunion Weekend
May 31–June 1, 2019
If your graduation year ends in a 4 or 9, it’s time for you to start planning for your Reunion. We are designing a weekend for you and your class to meet, greet, and catch up on Erskine stories, old and new. If you would like to be involved in the planning of your Reunion or have questions about Reunion, call the Alumni Office (207) 445-4026 or email hstout@rskine247.com.

Erskine Connector Fall 2018–19
1943
Lifelong Whitefield resident and “legend” Albert Boynton was presented the Boston Post Cane by the Whitefield Historical Society on November 3. A New England tradition, the cane recognizes a town’s oldest resident. Albert graduated from the University of Maine at Orono with a degree in agricultural engineering. When Boynton was 17, with his father’s signature for permission, he entered the U.S. Navy during World War II. On April 2, 1945, at the age of 18, he survived a kamikaze attack on his ship near Okinawa. Boynton was a nurse’s aide at Togus for eight years, a mailman for Whitefield and surrounding towns from 1960–1990, and a dairy farmer. He has 12 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Marie Sacks, an archivist and founding member of the Whitefield Historical Society, presented the cane. ‘On behalf of the town of Whitefield and the Whitefield Historical Society, I am overjoyed to present this Boston Post Cane to you, not because you’re old, although that is why you’re getting it, and not because I now know you’re older than I am, but because you have been a true friend to the history of the town and to me,’ Sacks said. Sacks called Boynton a “legend” in the town. ‘I may not be the oldest. If an older one comes along, he’s welcome to it,’ Boynton said, ending the ceremony with laughter. photo by Jessica Clifford

1964
Terrence Walsh wrote in June: “Since attending the 50th reunion of the Class of ’64 in 2014, my return to Maine began. The reunion reconnected and revived many longtime memories and friendships, and I heartedly endorse the reunion as a vital alumni event! Being fortunate to have created several technology businesses over the past 45 years, I understand the necessity and vitality of giving back. I look forward to further involvement as my latest business venture winds down and my new home in Maine starts up!” In May, Deloris Newton Libby, quartermaster of Farrar-Ross VFW Post 9437 in Washington, ME, announced her resignation for health reasons. She served in the post since 2013 and describes the experience as rewarding and memory-making. Dee, as friends call her, went to a one-room school locally until Prescott Memorial opened. Her dad, Alonzo (John) Newton, was a World War II vet and member of Post 9437 in the 60s. Dee is a retired career Army enlistee who earned a bachelor’s degree in business after retirement and worked in Texas prior to returning to Maine in 2012. As part of renewing old acquaintances and reconnecting with Erskine Academy classmates, Dee joined Post 9437 and stepped right into service reorganizing and recruiting. She is very proud of her military career and contributions to the community, especially the VFW. She thanks the post members, patrons and friends for the support she received throughout her careers and is “grateful to the people who started this post way back in the 50s and continue to help and honor veterans and their families.” We thank you, Dee, for your service to our country, for your many contributions to Post 9437, and for being a friend in our community. We wish you a speedy return to good health.

1967
Ken Cunningham wrote: “Last year was our 50th class reunion. We gathered Friday evening before the Alumni Reunion on Saturday. We had a great time reuniting with each other, some we had not seen since graduation. There were 22 of us there but wished it could have been more. I think everyone had a wonderful time catching up on what we all had been doing.”

1975
Deborah Studley Flynn attended the reunion celebration of the late 70s classes at the Windsor Fairgrounds in late June with her mother, Ellen Studley, who worked for many years at Erskine and now lives with Deborah in Florida.
1979

Deborah Emmons is the mother of three and “Meme” of eight granddaughters and one grandson.

2004

Nichole Beal Lee joined Bar Harbor Bank & Trust in 2013 as a Customer Service Representative. Working from the South China office, Nichole has risen quickly through the ranks acquiring the knowledge and skills to assume her new position as Branch Relationship Manager. In the community, Nichole serves on the board of the South China Public Library and teaches financial education classes at Erskine Academy.

2006

Kelly Burns Thebarge heads up Kelly’s Cause for Brain Tumors, which hosts events in Maine throughout the year to raise money and awareness for The National Brain Tumor Society for brain tumor research. The biggest event is The Bob Burns Memorial 5K held the last Sunday in July every year. Last spring, the organization held an event at The Calumet Club with the Nikki Hunt ('03) Band, and Kelly reports it was a huge success!

2007

Laura Columbia was hired after a vote by Maine RSU 9 as Curriculum Coordinator. Laura had been the interim coordinator since August 2017. Before that, she was a science teacher at Mt. Blue High School. The board’s Administrative Evaluation Committee recommended Columbia to be hired. She was one of three candidates for the position. “I love this job. I love how fast it is. Thank you all for choosing me,” Columbia said after the vote.

2008

Erskine French teacher Lauren Potter Arnold married Derek Arnold of Chelsea at the Lake Lodge in Sidney on July 14. Derek attended Cony and works for Maine Inland Fisheries & Wildlife and is a Fish Culturist at the Governor Hill Fish Hatchery in Augusta. Coincidentally, July 14 is Bastille Day, the French independence day! Lauren’s brothers Brian Potter '11 and Matt Potter '11 were her bridesmen, and her brother Matt’s wife, Blake Bailey Potter '13 was a bridesmaid. Guidance counselor Betsy Benner coordinated the wedding, and the cake was made by Erskine food services director Sharon Brunette.

2010

Congratulations to Monica Malley on her engagement. The wedding is planned for August 2019. Congratulations to Aaren Rivard, who earned a Master of Music, Music-Opera Performance at Wichita State University. He completed his undergraduate degree in music at University of Southern Maine. Aaren was selected to the 2018 Apprentice Artists Program at the Des Moines Metro Opera as one of only 40 vocalists chosen out of 1,000 who auditioned and one of only eight tenors. Celebrating its 44th year during the 2018 season, Des Moines Metro Opera’s Apprentice Artist Program is a comprehensive career training program that bridges the gap between academic studies and a
AWARD NOMINATIONS
REQUESTED
Do you know of an alumnus or friend of Erskine Academy who has accomplished outstanding deeds in their life or contributed greatly to the school? Please consider nominating them for an award. The awards are presented at the annual Alumni Reunion.

Distinguished Alumni Award (open to alumni only)
Exemplary Service (to Erskine Academy) Award (open to anyone)
Volunteer Leadership Award (open to alumni only)

Award criteria and the nomination form can be found on the Erskine Alumni web page or by contacting the Alumni Office for assistance.

The Annual deadline for submitting nominations is APRIL 1.

Class Notes

Daniel Boynton ‘12 and his wife Elise Musicant in May 2018

Daniel Boynton married Elise Musicant on May 26, 2018. Congratulations! Hannah Peabody was awarded the degree of Doctor of Physical Therapy from Husson University in May and received awards for exceptional commitment to Pro Bono Services, induction into the Pro Bono National Honor Society, and The Golden Goniometer award. She previously earned a Bachelor’s Degree in Kinesiology and Human Movement Science in May 2016. She served as a Maine Core Ambassador to the American Physical Therapy Association Student Assembly for the past year. She recently passed her board exam, the National Physical Therapy Examination, in July 2018 and is now a Maine-licensed physical therapist. She works at Back In Motion in Portland, Maine. Congratulations to Courtney Brann, who received her white coat marking her symbolic entrance into the medical field at the University of New England College of Osteopathic Medicine during a Sept. 22 ceremony at the Merrill Auditorium. “This ceremony serves to welcome students into the medical profession and to honor their commitment to serving the needs of their future patients,” said Jane Carriero, DO, vice president for Health Affairs and dean of UNE COM. “As they wear their white coats for the first time, they join generations of physicians around the country committed to service through medicine.

2012

Daniel Boynton

2013

Congratulations to Emily Dutton, who married Tyler Belanger ‘12 in September.

Kat Newcombe is in her second year teaching English, German, and facilitating online Latin classes at Erskine. In May 2017, Robert Soohey graduated summa cum laude from UMaine's Honor College with Highest Honors and a bachelor’s degree in Microbiology, and Stephen Soohey graduated summa cum laude from UMaine's Honor College with High Honors and a bachelor’s degree in Molecular and Cellular Biology. They began their medical school journeys at Tufts University School of Medicine in Boston during white coat ceremonies in August 2018 and September 2017 respectively.

2014

Congratulations to Moriah Cloutier and Richard Preston on their engagement. Congratulations also to Becca Reed and Zach Childs, who were married in August.

US Army PV1 Tyler White is in Advanced Individual Training at Fort Sam Houston in Texas.

2015

Zoe Mather was named to the Husson University Spring 2018 honors list. She is a senior enrolled in the Kinesiology-Human Movement Science/Doctor of Physical Therapy program. Madison Michaud of Vassalboro, Maine, a member of the class of 2019 majoring in biomedical engineering at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), was a member of a student team that completed intense, hands-on research through the WPI project center in New Zealand. At WPI, all undergraduates are required to complete a research-driven, professional-level project that applies science and technology to addresses an important societal need or issue. A signature element of the innovative undergraduate experience at WPI, the
Another longtime employee retired at the end of the school year, custodian Nancy Hannan. She did not want a lot of hoopla over her retirement, but we nonetheless convinced her to have her picture taken with the custodial staff, and there was cake, gifts, and a lot of well wishes! THANK YOU, NANCY!

Class Notes

Above Stephen Soohey '13 in September 2017 and Robert Soohey '13 in August 2018 at their white coat ceremonies at Tufts University School of Medicine. Left At their graduation from UMaine in May 2017.

2017

Cody Elsemore has been training in the U.S. Army at Fort Benning, GA.

Cody Elsemore '17

A project-based curriculum offers students the opportunity to apply their scientific and technical knowledge to develop thoughtful solutions to real problems that affect the quality of people’s lives and make a difference before they graduate.

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Above Stephen Soohey ’13 in September 2017 and Robert Soohey ’13 in August 2018 at their white coat ceremonies at Tufts University School of Medicine. Left At their graduation from UMaine in May 2017.

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All Alumni Reunion 2019 Is Coming! Reunite!

Friday, May 31 & Saturday, June 1

Our lives may grow but our roots stay the same!

Classes ending in 4s and 9s— it’s your special year!

All alumni are welcome. Come back to campus and reminisce about the good old days. Get in touch with your classmates!

Questions?

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Thank you for supporting EA!

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The proverb states *it takes a village to raise a child*. At Erskine's Renaissance assemblies, when families, teachers, and friends join the honored students, we see the village.