

GRACE CLASSICAL ACADEMY

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Let us consider...

Congratulations to the Senior Class of 2020!

Our final newsletter is a celebration of the seniors of 2020. We interviewed each one, asking for their thoughts, memories, and advice. We are incredibly thankful for each of you!

Annie Adams

Our first profile is of Annie Adams. She has spent her entire academic career at GCA, beginning in PreK. In the fall, she says, "I plan on attending the Academy of Hair and Design...I love the salon environment; it's an amazing opportunity to talk to so many people, build relationships, and pour into people's lives. And of course, I love doing hair!"



She shared with us a few of her fondest memories at GCA. Here are a couple: "In my 11th grade year, I assisted Mrs. Schriver with the 1st grade class during my study hall period. It was such a blessing getting to know the younger students that I normally didn't talk to. I recently found a video from the last day of school with them. They all gave me a group hug and showed off the sweet letters they wrote for me (I still have them). Another fond memory was from my ninth-grade year when the class would separate into two iconic teams that battled it out in ruthless games of charades. The games involved lots of screaming, laughing, and the development of inside jokes. I'm so grateful for this school family that I've shared many memorable moments with."

The mission of Grace Classical Academy is to provide an education designed to help our children know the love, grace, truth, and holiness of our glorious God and, from this understanding, strive for excellence in knowledge, wisdom, and service.

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Inside Katanomen:



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One of the most impactful people in her life has been Mr. Hyde. She said, “Our freshman year, he was our homeroom teacher and it was his first year teaching; he built a relationship with everyone and challenged us spiritually. If you asked anyone in my class, they could probably tell you that he genuinely loved each of us. That year, Mr. Hyde brought us closer together and brought the love of Christ with him to every class.”

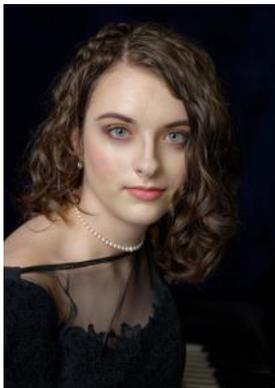
Annie, you have been a joy to teach in class. As teachers, we can always count on you for originality and critical thought. Blessings on your future!

Shepard Amstutz

Shep has been a GCA student since kindergarten. He plans to attend OTC in the fall and learn a trade. One of his best memories from GCA came from a guys’ night at the Garrisons’. He said, “We finished at GCA late at night. A lot of the guys went to the school after the initial party, then we played hide and seek and watched a movie.

The late night hide and seek at school was Mr. Moss’ doing, and Shep is grateful for him. He explains, “Mr. Moss has had a huge impact in my life growing up and going to GCA. Unfortunately, the beginning of our relationship consisted of me in his office (a lot), but he has taught me many life lessons throughout my time at GCA. Mr. Moss is now one of my best friends, and I always enjoy the time we spend together.”

Shep, we appreciate the work you have done at school, and the man you have become. Enjoy the next season of life!

**Linnea Babcock**

Linnea came to GCA in the first grade. As for her next steps, she explains, “The Lord has given me a talent and a passion for playing the piano, which I hope to continue developing throughout my life. I have received the Keyboard Governors Award and the Kiefer-Young Memorial Scholarship, which have given me the opportunity to study piano performance under Dr. Hye-Jung Hong at Missouri State University in the fall. I have also received the MSU Board of Governors and Missouri Bright Flight scholarships, and I am considering spending a few extra years pursuing another major in the STEM field.”

Some of her best memories at GCA involve music and worship. She wrote, “Some of my favorite times at GCA have been when I’ve played the piano for the ‘worship jams’ for the upper grades. It is so incredible to contribute to something bigger than just myself, especially since I’ve been able to collaborate with such talented musicians. I always feel like God is with us when everyone comes together to worship, but I even feel His presence during our practices. In fact, it was during one such practice that I felt most strongly convicted to continue pursuing a piano education. It was very relaxed—the vocalists were leaning on that beat up, old, baby grand piano in the chapel, and the guitarists were idly strumming as they stood behind me. But, when we started the song, I was hit with such a strong sense of purpose and belonging that I nearly cried right then and there. Music is a powerful gift from God that can touch people’s souls, and I hope I can use the ability God has given me to reach people.”

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Editor: Luke Shawhan

Please e-mail comments and suggestions to lshawhan@graceclassical.org

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Having completed her education at GCA, Linnea has some advice for future junior high students. She says, “Don’t distance yourself from your classmates. Sure, the drama can be annoying and the classmates immature (what seventh grader isn’t?), but there is so much more to them than meets the eye. Really get to know these people and you may end up with at least a few (if not a lot of) lifelong friends. But first, you have to be the one to take action, to start asking questions and open up yourself.”

Some of the people who have been the most impactful on Linnea have been Mrs. Vandiver and her piano teacher, Connie Osgood. Linnea explained, “Esther Vandiver made one of the most lasting impressions on my life. Having attended GCA since first grade, I of course ‘knew’ her since then, but I didn’t really get to know her until fifth grade when she taught my math class. Many of her lessons went beyond just math, and I will never forget them—I think she’s the person who really sparked my love for math. Her faith through everything she experienced was very inspiring to me, and I wish I had been able to get to know her better, but it comforts me to know that she has been able to fulfill her dream of flying in heaven now. The other person who has most impacted me most has been my piano teacher, Connie Osgood. She has taught me so much more than just how to play the piano—the value of hard work, determination, patience, and more. Playing the piano has changed my life and shaped who I am, and Mrs. Osgood has been a big part of that. Her passion for music and care for her students is apparent in everything she does, and the lessons I have with her are one of the highlights of my week. I am so thankful that God placed both of these amazing women in my life.”

Linnea, we have been blessed to have you as a student at GCA. May you continue to grow in the gifts God has given you.

Katie Cullins

Katie joined the GCA community during her kindergarten year. She plans to attend OTC in the fall and transfer to College of the Ozarks in the spring to study criminal justice. She says, “I hope to be in law enforcement upon graduation; but, in what capacity, I do not know. I have already been able to be a part of the Greene County Sheriff’s Office Explorer’s Program, which has enabled me to learn a lot about my field of study. I would like to return to Greene County Sheriff’s Office once I graduate with my bachelor’s degree in criminal justice.”



Some of Katie’s best memories from GCA include her first visit to the school. “I remember visiting the school for the first time in kindergarten. School had already started for the year, so I would be coming in late. I honestly do not remember a whole lot about my first visit, but I remember peeking my head into what would be my class. I was so nervous! I stood shyly behind my mom like most small children do when they are scared. All the kids were standing at their desks just staring at me. This was not my first school experience, but the kids all looked so intimidating with their uniforms and good behavior. My parents attempted to get me to interact, but I would have none of that. I refused to say a word and didn’t even want to go into the classroom. It all worked out in the end. I started attending GCA shortly after and have loved it ever since!”

If Katie could travel in time and speak to her 7th grade self, she would tell herself “to relax and stop focusing on the details so much as the bigger picture. I have always been the stressed-out kid who focuses so much on the details that I miss out on the big stuff. I am only just now learning that most

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Linnea Babcock

people don't worry about the small stuff, or at least to the extent that I do. My middle school and high school years were tough for me because of this. I think I could have handled it a lot better if I had understood that then. I wouldn't have worried about whether my no-show socks or ankle socks looked better with my shoes, but focused more on the relationships and memories I was making and being a part of. I have recently learned how minute those things are in the grand scheme of life. So, to my 7th grade self, don't worry about those socks. They both look just fine."

She also has some helpful advice to future GCA students, "Keep going. Everything might seem difficult or pointless, but in the long run, it will be worth it. You will appreciate all the skills you have learned over the years, whether you realized you were learning skills or not. When it comes time to write those dreaded college papers, you will be grateful that you know you are capable. When you encounter a situation you've never experienced, you'll be glad you know how to figure it out on your own. When you run into financial trouble, all those personal finance lessons will be a life saver. They may not seem like important skills to know now, but they may just change your world later on."

Katie, thanks for always giving 100% of your effort. May God prosper you on your journey!

Silas Garrison

Silas began at GCA in kindergarten. He plans to enroll at Missouri State University in the fall, but quips, "No, I haven't the faintest clue what I will be studying, and yes, I am okay with that."

Silas is grateful for the teachers he has had at GCA. "The immense amount of energy that the teachers spend each day to ensure we are prepared for whatever our future holds is evident in everything that they do. Each teacher spends time in class, not only teaching us how to plot a rational function or the proper placement of a semi-colon, but also sharing their life experiences with us and the wisdom they have gleaned from those experiences."

Silas also has some helpful advice for future students. It includes:

"Put effort in. It will make class and life in general, more enjoyable.

Listen first, then speak. It will save you from several embarrassing moments.

If someone gives you \$40 to eat a Carolina Reaper Pepper, don't eat it. Trust me."



Silas, we are excited to see God's work through your life! May you continue to grow in wisdom and stature!

Brooklin Gillen

Brooklin joined GCA as a freshman in high school. She plans to attend either Evangel or Drury and pursue a degree in the medical field. One of her best memories comes from her ninth grade year when the class would engage in heated rounds of charades. We had designated teams and we permanently named my team: Crush, Kill, Destroy. Thinking back, that probably wasn't the most fitting name for our team in a Christian school. My class was quiet when it came to answering questions, but when it came to charades we were completely out of hand!"

Brooklin is thankful for many aspects of her education, but she wanted to mention a couple of people in particular. "Many of my teachers have impacted me in some way. One particular teacher that has influenced me is Mr. Hyde. We both came to GCA the same year and connected over our similar pasts. He has instructed me on the importance of ultimate truth. Whether it be in debate, ethics,

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Silas Garrison



or apologetics, his lessons always point back to seeking truth and the fact that God is the ultimate, unchangeable truth. Each of his lessons are filled with advice about focusing on what's important, sweet stories about how he's had over 30 years of happy marriage and how we can too, and instructions on how to approach others with a sense of humility and open ears. I believe it was Mr. Hyde who brought my classmates and I closer together through the fellowship we experienced in his class. Without fail, we always began his class by laying out our latest woes and praises and then prayed for each other before we began our work. Also, I would like to give a shout-out to Dr. Sellers for teaching me to "be bold for Christ and be bold when asking for a raise!" As far as people outside of GCA, I have my

parents who have made a lasting impact on me. My mother wakes early every morning and has a Bible study. Often times, she comes into my room while I'm still asleep and lays her hand on my head and prays for me. My mother has taught me what it looks like to make sacrifices. She is kind, humble, and godly, and I hope one day I grow to become as great a woman as she. It is my father that has shown me what a Godly headship ought to look like. He has helped me sort out my emotions and insecurities, as well as teach me how to be a diligent worker."

We asked Brooklin what she would repeat about her high school experience if she had the chance. "Everything. I love the sense of peace and belonging I experience when I walk through the halls and down the stairs of GCA. Every time I walk down the many stairs from the third floor, I think how extremely blessed I am to attend Grace. In 11th grade I would tell myself, "Okay, you just have two years left, enjoy all the little things." As I entered into my senior year, I would think to myself, "This is your last year, make the most of it, someday you're going to look back and think, 'Those were the good old days.'"

Brooklin, it has thoroughly been a joy to have you in class. We know that God will use you in whatever you decide to do!

Emerald Humphreys

Emerald has been a GCA student since the first grade. She plans to enroll at Evangel University in the fall. Her favorite stories are "all the little things throughout my time at GCA. There isn't really one specific instance, but everything along the way. The way we all laugh at something that happens and we roll on the floor laughing and can't catch our breath. When one of us needs prayer or help, we all come together. The times we get so competitive with one another pushes us to our breaking point. We've gotten in trouble together. We've cried together and we've grown together. My favorite story? The story of how we became family."

Emerald wants future students to remember that God is sovereign. "Don't worry about everything so much. God is in full control and He has a plan for your life. Take it easy and enjoy the experience!"

We asked her what she would repeat about GCA: "I would repeat freshman year. It was the first year with Mr. Hyde and being in high school. There were so many new experiences and growing in relationships with people. I learned so much that year and grew so much in Christ. I'm just now beginning to see the yield that God has poured into all of our lives."



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Katie Cullins

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Emerald, we are so grateful for your steady presence in class. May you continue to follow the Lord with your next steps!

Christian Schnake



Christian has been a GCA student since kindergarten. Upon graduation, he hopes to enter into a career working on trains. He says, "In 10 years, I hope to be working as a locomotive engineer for BNSF Railway. I have been passionate about trains for as long as I can remember and being an engineer is my dream job."

Some of Christian's favorite memories and experiences include: "the various play dates in 1st grade, occasionally singing hymns in 2nd grade with Mrs. Pratt, memorizing James in 6th grade, geography reports in 7th grade, and chemistry class in 11th grade with Dr. Sellers, even though it was difficult at times, and the times when we ended up having class discussions in Mr. Hyde's classes. (When he would occasionally go off on rabbit trails, it would make the class experience more fun, interesting, and exciting in my opinion.) Also, being able to hang out with friends outside of school was refreshing."

Christian is especially grateful for a few of the friends he has made at GCA. "Even though these people graduated from GCA two years ago, Ryan Edney, Flex Masadao, and Paige Steelman have all impacted me in many ways, especially if I needed someone to talk to. I have known Ryan since I came to GCA in kindergarten. He used to push me on the swings at recess all the time when we were younger, and we still occasionally see each other today. He was one of my first true friends."

Christian, thank you for the joy you have brought to GCA. May God bless you in your next steps.

Elizabeth Sherman

Elizabeth has been a GCA student since the 8th grade. Her plans are to attend OTC "for two years to get my associates degree in nursing. Then, I will be attending Cox College of Nursing to earn my bachelor's degree. My plan is to obtain a career as either a neonatal intensive care nurse or as a pediatric nurse."

Elizabeth is "most grateful for the close community and how important it is to the teachers to integrate God into every class... During my first year at GCA, all of my classmates were extremely welcoming and kind to me. Throughout my whole time at GCA, my classmates and teachers have become family to me. This school has blessed me with relationships that have impacted my life and changed me. God truly used Bible class that first year to help me put feet to my faith and build my relationship with God. Also, in eighth grade, the junior class at the time invited me to attend a Bible study with them. Through spending time with them and hearing their passions, God placed a burden in my heart for missions and witnessing to the lost. Additionally, I will never forget the girls' lock-in we had in 2018. It was full of laughter and conversations that will stay with me forever."



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Elizabeth wants future students to realize how quickly high school flies by. “Life is incredibly short and your time at GCA will go by fast, so lean in on the opportunity you have to develop close relationships with other students and learn from teachers who care so deeply about you. Also, make sure you go and apply what the school teaches—whether that be ministering to someone across the street or in another country. Don’t be afraid to share with others the hope that is in you!”

Elizabeth, thank you for your diligence as a student and follower of the Lord. May the Lord bless you and keep you!

Madison Smith

Madison has been a GCA student since her 1st grade year. She shared with us quite a few of her favorite memories: “I have many memories from my time at GCA (most of which are good). Everything from my class’s obsession with different sports (such as capture the flag, dodgeball, knockout, or ultimate Frisbee) to our immense desire to succeed at all we put our hands to—these have helped shape me into who I am today. I cannot help but smile and laugh as I reflect on my time at GCA; I want to share with you a few of the stories that bring me joy. The first story begins on Valentine’s Day of my fifth-grade year. I decided to confess that I had once had a crush on one of the guys in my class; that was the WORST decision because my class reminds me of that very embarrassing moment every Valentine’s Day. Every year they say, ‘Hey! Remember when...,’ and every time I think to myself, ‘How could I ever forget?’



Flash forward to my freshman year. This was the year that we made a movie based on the Roman Colosseum; I had spent hours working on the perfect script, and my team couldn’t wait to start filming. Of course, there was no better place to film than at Sequiota park. It was a beautiful sunny day, and a handful of my classmates and I showed up to the packed-out park to film the movie in our togas (a.k.a. sheets that we wrapped around our normal clothes). Many judged us, especially while filming my favorite scene, the escape scene. Due to lack of clarification, our group only had one toy sword to use, so most of us had to make do with stick swords. That worked for about three seconds; then, as I was going for the last blow before I ran to freedom, my stick sword snapped in half and hit me in the face. I watch that movie every now and then because it never fails to make me laugh. It is now the final quarter of my senior year; my heart is full of love and memories. I cherish the time I spent here at GCA, and I know that the lessons I learned and memories I made have prepared me for all that is to come. “

Madison plans to spend her life investing in youth. She writes: “I feel led to invest in the next generation through youth ministry. I will begin that journey by attending James River College for two years; I will graduate there with my A.A. in leadership. After that, I will go to Northwest University in Kirkland, Washington to pursue a bachelor’s degree in pastoral ministries...I hope to lead a successful youth ministry, one where teens experience the presence of the Lord weekly and grow up to be obedient servants of the Lord. Wherever the Lord leads, I want to follow. In ten years, I hope that I can say I was obedient to Him in every step I took and that I honored Him in all that I did.”

You can see Madison’s heart in her advice to future students: “Developing a RELATIONSHIP with the Lord is the most important thing you can do. Don’t get me wrong: it is very important to get good grades and to make friends. However, being in relationship with the Lord is the only thing that will sustain you in times of uncertainty. When you are anxious about school, when you are overwhelmed with life, when you are asking the hard questions, it is the Lord who will help you through it all.”

Madison, thank you for your desire to serve and work. May God bless you in your future endeavors!

As I entered into my senior year I would think to myself, “This is your last year, make the most of it, someday you’re going to look back and think, ‘Those were the good old days.’”

Brooklin Gillen

Ansley Strong

Ansley started her education at GCA in the 5th grade. In the fall, she will attend Southwest Baptist University. One aspect of GCA she loves are the field trips: “Some of my favorite memories at GCA were the amazing field trips I got to go on! I really loved the first discipleship girls lock-in we ever had. It was so much fun talking and staying up way too late with all of my girlfriends! I also loved going to the City Museum and this year’s outdoor education ski field trip. I made so many good memories with my friends and will never forget the laughter and fun we shared.”

If Ansley could speak to herself from 7th grade, she says, “I would encourage myself to make every single moment count, no matter how insignificant it may seem at the time. I would encourage myself to jump at every opportunity to be with friends and to have exciting adventures, to be silly and laugh and have joy, and to open up and pray for one another.”

Finally, we asked Ansley who has had the most influence on her life. She said, “I have been most influenced by my parents. I really appreciate all of the love they show to me, my sisters, and towards one another. I have definitely been influenced by both of my parents and how they serve others, and I hope and pray to work as well with a servant’s heart.”

Ansley, you are a joy to teach. May you continue to follow the Lord all your days!

**Genna Tlustos**

Genna has been a GCA student since kindergarten. She plans to attend Truman State University in Kirksville in the fall. Genna is filled with memories from her time at GCA. She shared quite a few: “One of my favorite years in elementary school was first grade.



I remember making green eggs and ham in class. I also remember us eating bread in class and our teacher, Miss Taylor, asking if anyone liked the heel of the bread. I raised my hand without knowing what the heel of the bread was! I was really disappointed when I found out I had to eat the gross, dry end of the bread loaf. From then on, I made sure I knew what I was volunteering for. Another favorite memory is walking to McDonald’s as a field trip in 5th grade because we had had so few field trips that year. In 7th grade, when we first moved into the high school building, I fell down the stairs in front of a bunch of seniors, who were really nice about it, which made me feel worse. In Mr. Hyde’s class in 9th grade, we were assigned to make a Roman-themed board game. Micah and I were on a team, and we decided that the budget for our project was going to be about two dollars, which we spent on the poster board Micah purchased. For the game itself we got a bunch of rocks from the playground and hot glued them onto our board, and then cut up index cards to make a board game that was similar to memory. Mr. Hyde kept trying to get us to make our board better and add more stuff to it, but our team slogan was, “It’s not in the budget.” In that class Mr. Hyde also showed us a video from the 80’s or 90’s of these missionaries who wore all denim. Something about the way it was filmed and their outfits was really funny to me, and I couldn’t stop laughing. Mr. Hyde was a little offended at the time I think, but I still ask him all the time to show us the jean jacket video.”

Genna is thankful for the classes at GCA. “I’m grateful for all of my classes. The ones that I learned the most from were probably physics, where I learned that I actually liked science, and logic, where I learned how to argue. I also had some really fun classes, like Mrs. Greenwood’s history class, Mr. Hyde’s history class, and Mr. Bradley’s art class. I’m also grateful to my classmates for making school fun, for always being kind, for bringing my water bottle when I leave it somewhere, and for laughing with me when I

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think random things are funny. I'm grateful for all of the small moments, like playing on the playground or sitting in the cafeteria with my class."

Going along with her memories, Genna has some advice for the next generation of GCA students: "Get Mr. Hyde to show you the jean jacket video. Keep track of your stuff because it's embarrassing when you have to go to the lost and found all the time, including the first week of school. But seriously, invest in your classmates because you are about to spend a lot of time with them. Stay connected and involved in the school; you'll be glad you did. Don't be afraid to try new things—now is the time. Your teachers are really smart, so don't be afraid to ask them questions or ask for help. Most of all, enjoy your time and grow in your relationship with God."

Genna, thank you for the work and diligence you apply to everything you do. We pray that God will continue to work through you!

Ami Toeneboehn

Ami began at GCA during her 10th grade year. She plans to enroll at Evangel University in the fall, participate in their choir and drama departments, and see where God leads from there.

We asked Ami who has had the greatest impact on her, and she had trouble picking: "How could I choose just one? All of my teachers at GCA impacted me in one way or another. The sweetness of Mrs. Tolbert, the sincerity of Mr. Hyde, the kindness of Mrs. Harrison, the humor of Mrs. Morris, the wittiness of Mr. Moss, the thoughtfulness of Mrs. Beeson, the heart of Dr. Sellers, the calmness of Mr. Williamson, the fun nature of Mr. Shawhan, and the genuineness of Mrs. Mercer are only glimpses of what I have been blessed with. Then, there is my class.... over the past two and a half years I have come to know the most wonderful, godly, people I have ever encountered. They make me laugh and cry. When I think of my fondest memories, their faces always appear. They hold a special place in my heart. Outside of GCA, the list is equally beautiful. My family, in short, have impacted and shaped my life in ways I can't describe. My parents, however, are at the top of the list. My mother embodies everything a godly woman should be. She has taught me to be strong in times of trouble and grateful in times of peace. My father leads our family with patience, and he has taught me to pursue my goals with faith and understanding that the Lord gives and takes away."



We also asked Ami for advice for the next generation, but she had something else in mind. "Advice? How about warnings? As a good fellow GCA-ian, I take it upon myself to prepare the upcoming grades. I would kindly warn them about the following: Mr. Shawhan will use countless food analogies when delivering a lesson (it's just the way it is). Beware of Mrs. Morris's bowl of destiny (you will just have to find out). Mr. Hyde, bless his heart, though trying to help, will torment you with the yellow slip in debate class (again, you have to be there). Lastly, Mr. Moss...you have not lived until you see him dressed in camo and *Starry Night* (all in the same outfit). By the time you graduate high school, you will be able to paint *Starry Night* with your eyes closed. In all sincerity, I would advise the students to be patient. A patient heart is always seeking. Have faith that things will get better. Understand that the teachers, though they will try, are incapable of fulfilling your every need. Live in the moment. Someone wise once told me: worry does not take away tomorrow's troubles, it takes away today's peace."

Ami is grateful for every opportunity she has had at GCA. When asked what she would repeat if she could, she said, "I would repeat all of it. Every piece of my experience has created a beautiful image.

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Madison Smith

With Christ at
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but also how to
do so in a God-
honoring way.
Because of
GCA, I am
confident to
walk out their
doors and
share such
truth with
others.

Micah Williams

To say that I loved attending GCA is an understatement. Words cannot describe the passion I have for my school and the people in it. I would repeat staying up till midnight writing a debate, racking my brain over my chemistry experiment, countless papers for rhetoric, and I would even repeat the hour or so Mr. Moss spent talking about his deep love for bugs. Yes, I would repeat it all just to relive my time at GCA.”

Ami, it is such a joy to have you in class because you are so filled with joy! May you continue to share the love of God with everyone you encounter!

Ryker Tuter

Ryker has been a GCA student since the 4th grade. As far as his future plans, he says, “The next steps for me are still unknown, but I plan to take a gap year to figure that out. If I were to say a direction that I’m leaning toward, it would be sign language interpretation or electrician. In the end, all that I would like to do is follow the story that God is creating in my life. I would love to do mission trips as well.”



Some of Ryker’s best GCA memories and moments are “the times that I’ve been stretched. Speaking in front of the class for rhetoric and debate pushed me to grow in many aspects of my life. Other experiences that have stretched me (or made me grow) are the times that I got into trouble. After the not-so-good year of 8th grade, I could look back and see how much I had grown from the mistakes that I made. Praise the Lord for Mr. Moss not expelling me!”

Ryker has some excellent advice for future GCA students: “My advice would be to have as much fun as humanly possible while staying focused on God, school, friends, and family. I would tell them that GCA is the greatest place to be right now because God has put you here to do unimaginable things. If he can use me, then I am very confident that He can use you as well. High school is not easy (rhetoric and debate) but talking with God about your struggles will make a big difference on your attitude and your life.”

Ryker is also grateful for all his teachers, but he mentioned a few specifically:

Mr. Moss: Taught me what a mature student looks like (Discipline does a good job.)

Mr. Hyde: Showed me what a mature Christian looks like in day-to-day life

Mrs. Herzog: Helped enable me to read and write

Ryker, it has been wonderful to watch God work in your life. May you continue to trust Him with your future plans!

Madysen Wheeler

Madysen Wheeler has been a GCA student since PreK. Upon graduation, she will attend Missouri State University and study to become a nurse.

One of Mady’s favorite memories came from Mr. Hyde’s 9th grade class project. “He had us make a movie. He split us into groups, and he split Emmy, Annie, Madi and I up into a group. We decided for our project we wanted to film at Sequiota Park. We were dressed in Roman clothes, so the looks we got were something. We all just started laughing at how bad this movie was going to be. It was an adventure. We didn’t get much accomplished, and our movie was more of a comedy than anything, but



we had a blast and lots of laughs making it.”

Madysen would also like to encourage future GCA students with one of her favorite quotes: “My advice to them would be the best line from Finding Nemo, ‘Just keep swimming.’ High school isn’t easy, and it’s not something you can just expect to get by with without having to do anything. So, no matter how hard you might be struggling in a class, I’m the person to tell you, ‘Just keep swimming.’ Another thing is not to let one bad grade or negative event determine how your year is going to go. Write down good memories from the school year and fill a jar with them. When something happens and you think, ‘Oh, this is going to be awful,’ you can look back and see there were so many good times even in the midst of hard things. So, my friends, ‘Just keep swimming!’”

Some of Madysen’s favorite teachers have been ones that continually pushed her. She explained: “There are two people who have helped me push through when I didn’t believe in myself. I can’t choose one, so I will choose both. Mr. Hyde and Mr. Shawhan have never given up on me when I gave up on myself, and they have never stopped pushing me to become a better person. Mr. Hyde, since the first day I met him freshman year, knew that our class would immediately take up with him. Mr. Hyde is the reason our class is as close as we are now. I sadly didn’t have many of Mr. Shawhan’s classes, but whenever I had him, he was constantly pushing me to my limits, especially in PE. When I said, ‘stop,’ Mr. Shawhan said, ‘You can go a little longer.’ As for people outside of GCA, my parents have impacted me most. They have never given up on me when I gave up on myself, and they have always taught me to rely on God when a mountain is in front of me. They have made me who I am today, and I would be nowhere without them.”

Madysen, thank you for never quitting. May you continue to trust the Lord in whatever difficulty you encounter!

Micah Williams

Micah has been a GCA student since kindergarten. In the fall, she will be enrolled at The Chicago College of the Performing Arts at Roosevelt University in order to obtain a BFA with a concentration in musical theatre and dance.

As is a theme with this class, one of Micah’s favorite moments came from being in Mr. Hyde’s class. “One of my favorite stories from my time at GCA took place in our 9th grade history class with Mr. Hyde. As we took our seats, he pulled down the projector screen and explained we would be watching a video on missions. As the video progressed, our class started to laugh louder and louder, which only confused Mr. Hyde even more. He finally stopped the film and burst out: “What is so funny?” We couldn’t stop laughing at the narrator’s denim on denim outfit. I think we may have crushed Mr. Hyde’s spirit a bit that day, but (every so often) when we all need a good laugh, we re-watch it with him to bring back the memories. It’s simple stories like this that I cherish at Grace because we always found a way to enjoy ourselves through the little moments, especially with Mr. Hyde!”



One of Micah’s favorite characteristics of GCA is “the ways in which GCA equips their students with truth, passion, and grace. With Christ at the center of each subject, we learn how to not only seek out truth, but also how to do so in a God-honoring way. Because of GCA, I am confident to walk out their doors and share such truth with others.”

Some of Micah’s most important role models have been her 3rd grade teacher, Mrs. Temple, and the theatre community. She said, “She taught me at a young age what a Godly woman looks like. She did everything with a loving spirit and giving heart, and I am beyond grateful for the influence she has had on my life. Also, each and every member of my local community theatre at the Landers has impacted my life greatly. It was through the arts that I found my voice and what I want to do with my life after GCA.”

Micah, we are thrilled to see God’s work in your life and have loved teaching you. May you continue to display God’s beauty through your passion for theater!



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Return Service Requested

June 2020

- 1 Tuition Due
Office opens for
summer hours
Monday-Thursday
9 am—3pm
Fridays
Closed
- 12 Summer Drama
Performance
7 pm
- 20 Senior Graduation
2 pm

July 2020

- 1 Tuition Due
- 3 Office Closed
- 4 Independence Day

August 2020

- 1 Tuition Due
- 5-11 Teacher Training and
Work Days
- 10 Orientation Night, 6 pm
- 12 First Day of School
- 20 Evening Prayer for GCA
7 pm
- 28 Special Dress Day