

LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATES

Board of Visitors

April 29, 2022



Admissions

Bayh Sullivan



All signs suggest that enrollment for the 2022-2023 school year will be robust. Inquiries are up 27% over the total at this time last year. Year-to-date applications are up 13%. If we keep pace with last year's outcomes, we should see ~270 more inquiries and ~96 more applications.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>YTD Inquiries</u>	<u>Total Inquiries</u>	<u>YTD Apps</u>	<u>Total Apps</u>	<u>YTD New Students</u>
2021-2022	960	1,175	416	502	170
2022-2023	1,226	1,495*	471	567*	94

* Projections are based on 2021-2022 outcomes.

Going into 2022-2023, Academy-wide attrition is currently 3.4%, down from 7.7% going into 2021-2022 and well under the average attrition for independent schools, which stood at 12% in 2021-2022 according to the National Association of Independent Schools.

The value that SSA offers families is evident. In 2021-2022, 67% of students paid full tuition. In 2022-2023, we project that approximately 70% of students will pay full tuition.

<u>School Year</u>	<u>Full-Pay</u>	<u>Financial Aid</u>	<u>Merit</u>	<u>Remission</u>
2021-2022	67%	21%	3%	9%
2022-2023	70%	18%	3%	9%

This means that the Academy can deploy its financial aid resources strategically and equitably to support extraordinary students and ensure that nothing inhibits our ability to enroll the most compelling candidates. It is also an incremental step that further solidifies SSA's long-term financial health.

Perhaps most importantly, next year Shady Side will welcome more than 200 new students who bring wide-ranging interests, academic gifts, deep curiosity, athletic prowess, and the power of their own potential to the already remarkable SSA student body. They will learn to do things they couldn't before. They will conquer fears and hatch new ideas. They will aspire and inspire and strive and achieve. They will find their forever-friends. They will become Bulldogs. And we can't wait!

Alumni & Development

Dr. Allison Saras



Throughout this current fiscal year, the Alumni & Development team is focusing on funding for capital projects and increasing support for Shady Side's annual fund, shifting to a new data system, and alumni and parent engagement and stewardship. We've completed or are actively working on the following:

- Completion of the Gene Deal Fields fundraising initiative, raising just over \$2,000,000
- Actively raising funds for the Memorial Hall Library Project, raising \$1,400,000 to date
- Surpassing the \$2 million mark for the Blue & Gold Fund
- Assisting the President on identifying and organizing meetings with key stakeholders
- Collaborating with the President's and Communications Offices on designing a publication for the upcoming campus master plan
- Transition of former Athletic Director Gene Deal to the Alumni Office as a strategic staff member for alumni and former athlete engagement
- Production of more in-depth, high-level reports to identify and target new fundraising prospects
- Focus on database accuracy: working in the new system to research "lost" alumni and/or update alumni records
- Partner with Admissions and Communications Offices to devise a stewardship plan for all endowed funds, including named scholarships
- Managing volunteers for reunion committees, Alumni Council and the IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Awareness) Committee

OVERALL FUNDRAISING OVERVIEW

	FY21	FY22 (as of 4/15/22)
Overall Donations	\$4,351,172	\$5,987,239
Overall # of Donors	1647	1414
Donor Acquisition	152	160

**Includes restricted and unrestricted (Blue & Gold Fund) giving*

***All numbers reflect cash-in only*

DEVELOPMENT BREAKDOWN

	FY21	FY22 (as of 4/15/22)
<u>General Contributions</u>		
Unrestricted/Blue & Gold Fund Donations	\$2,157,291	\$1,999,741
<u>Restricted Contributions</u>		
Gene Deal Fields	\$857,584	\$669,660
Memorial Hall Library	\$70,000	\$639,976

**All numbers reflect cash-in only and amount raised within that fiscal year.*

College Counseling

Lauren Lieberman '98



The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted all aspects of life as we know it, and the college admissions process is no exception. Nationally, the past two years have seen unprecedented growth in college applications as well as unpredictability at the most selective universities. Here at Shady Side Academy, the admission process at the colleges most popular with our students also looks dramatically different; what remains the same is that our students are well-prepared and highly-desirable candidates. In short, Shady Side Academy students continue to have many wonderful options for life beyond high school even amidst the uncertainty of the world around us.

National Trends in the Past Two Admissions Cycles

- Application growth continues:
 - Applications submitted through the Common Application (the main vehicle for app submissions) increased 20%.
 - The number of applications per student has increased 6%.
 - Increases are most dramatic in the country's selective schools (those which admit less than 50% of their applicants) with an average application increase of 25%.
- Colleges that offer early decision (ED) continue to fill a larger percentage of their class through this binding application – in some cases 60-70% of the class are admitted in this round.
- Standardized testing was made optional early in the pandemic and has largely remained so, though a small handful of schools are requiring it again starting next year (e.g., MIT and Georgetown).

Class of 2022 Demographics and Highlights

- 127 students
- 85 students (67% of the class) have selected a college as of April 20, 2022.
- 17 students committed to continue playing a sport at the college level across a variety of schools and divisions.
- Mirroring national trends, SSA students are applying to more schools. The Class of 2022 has an average of nine apps per student, as compared to seven apps per student in the Class of 2020.
- Fewer than half of the 1,109 applications submitted by seniors this year included a standardized test score (though nearly every student had a score to submit if needed.)
 - Sending test scores is now decided on a case-by-case, school-by-school basis.

Looking Ahead...

- We continue to maximize on a hybrid model of in-person and virtual events, even as COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. We are excited to have college visitors back on SSA's campus, both in the fall and for our annual spring PCIS College Fair, which was held just this past weekend. We continue to offer opportunities to engage through Zoom for larger-scale family programs, colleges unable to travel to Pittsburgh and boarding families around the world.
- The members of the Class of 2023 are in full swing with their college processes. We are starting to see a return to pre-pandemic activities, including college campus visits and in-person family meetings here in our offices.

College Counseling

Lauren Lieberman '98



College Enrollments as of April 20, 2022

Amherst College	Liberty University (2)	Texas Christian University
Bates College	Maine Maritime Academy	Tulane University of Louisiana
Boston College	Marietta College	U.S. Merchant Marine Academy
Boston University	Mass. Institute of Technology	University of Chicago
Brown University	New York University (2)	University of Florida
Bucknell University (3)	Northwestern University	University of Illinois
Carnegie Mellon University	Ohio State University	University of Kentucky
Chatham University	Pennsylvania State University	University of Maryland
Clarkson University	(Univ. Park) (2)	University of Massachusetts
Columbia University	Pennsylvania State University	University of Miami
Connecticut College	(New Kensington)	University of Michigan
Cornell University (3)	Princeton University	University of New Hampshire
Dartmouth College	Providence College	University of Notre Dame (2)
Davidson College	Purdue University	University of Pittsburgh
Denison University	Ringling College of Art & Design	University of Toronto
Duquesne University	Rochester Institute of Technology	University of Virginia (2)
Elon University (2)	Rutgers University	University of Wisconsin
Furman University	Southern Methodist University	Vanderbilt University
George Washington University	Spelman College	Wake Forest University (3)
Grove City College	Stanford University	Washington University (2)
Hampton University	Syracuse University (2)	Wesleyan University
Johns Hopkins University	Temple University	Westminster College

College Athletic Commitments (*W-Women's, M-Men's*)

Crew-M	Ice Hockey-W	Soccer-W
Marietta College	Chatham University	Bates College
Crew-W	Lacrosse-M	Soccer-W
University of Virginia	Marine Maritime Academy	Westminster College
Golf-M	Lacrosse-M	Soccer-M
Cornell University	Amherst College	Liberty University
Ice Hockey-W	Lacrosse-M	Squash-M
Dartmouth College	Merchant Marine Academy	Mass. Institute of Technology
Ice Hockey-W	Lacrosse-W	Track-W
Lacrosse-W	Columbia University	University of Maryland
Wesleyan University	Lacrosse-W	
Ice Hockey-W	University of Florida	
Clarkson University		

Communications

Jen Roupe



As Shady Side Academy emerges from the pandemic and school life returns to a more "normal" experience, the Communications Office remains focused on providing strategic, transparent, consistent communications to our constituents, with a renewed focus on storytelling, spotlighting the people, programs and events that make our school unique and reinforce our core strategy. This year, we also began to fully roll out and embrace our new "SSA Bulldogs" brand identity and mascot, which has sparked a renewed sense of school spirit and community across all four campuses.

Communications

- Continuing to lead COVID-19 communications strategy, writing/co-writing all community emails and website content
- Implemented new campus beat reporting system for Communications team with the goal of finding and telling more stories from each campus
- Undertaking comprehensive parent communications audit this spring to assess and optimize communications strategies and vehicles for 2022-2023
- Preparing annual Parent & Student Exit Surveys for grades 5, 8 and 12 in May 2022
- Produced Winter 2021-2022 issue of SSA Magazine, spotlighting mental health & wellness; working on Summer 2022 issue, spotlighting the new Campus Master Plan
- Continuing transition to new website software modules and new mobile app in spring/summer.
- Visual Media Manager James Knox launched a new MS student video club and is partnering with Athletics to launch a new WSSA-TV Sports program at the SS in 22-23.

Bulldog Branding & Mascot

- Successfully debuted SSA's new costumed Bulldog mascot, Blue, at Homecoming 2021
- Assistant Director Lindsay Kovach led planning for SSA's second annual National Bulldog Day Celebration on April 21. The event featured food, music and activities on all four campuses, including mascot appearances, service dog visits, an animal supply drive, SSA pet bandanas and an original children's song about Blue the Bulldog.
- Partnered with Jesse Robinson of the Glimcher Tech & Design Hub to launch Build the Bulldog, an initiative to create a collaborative, crowdsourced, 3D-printed statue of the SSA bulldog
- Partnered with the SSA Spirit Store on the launch of new branded Bulldog merchandise
- Working with Business Office and legal counsel to begin process of trademarking Bulldog logos

Marketing & Advertising

- Consulted on position description and served on search advisory committee for SSA's first Chief Marketing Officer
- With Nate Verbanets, developed and executed marketing plan for 2022 Summer Programs, including print/digital/PPC advertising and web/email/social media marketing
- With Dek Ingraham, developing marketing plan for summer 2022 Hillman Series shows
- Developed advertising plan for Class of 2022 college placement list in May/June

Equity, Inclusion & Community Relations

Lillian Grate



Community, collaboration and connection are at the forefront of our efforts at Shady Side Academy, which align with our guiding principles and community norms. Our priority remains to build an equitable and inclusive community of diverse perspectives, which values civility and respect. We will continue to focus on the objectives and initiatives outlined in the Equity and Inclusion Action Plan for the upcoming year.

Over the past year, Shady Side Academy has received the largest programmatic gift in its history – An anonymous \$2 million donation dedicated to academic and social support for talented students of promise whose enrollment at Shady Side presents a uniquely challenging educational or cultural transition. The philanthropic gift also establishes a permanent endowment for Shady Side's Equity and Inclusion Fund, a critical step in the Academy's Equity and Inclusion Action Plan.

- We are establishing the inaugural Semper Scholars Program at SSA from this gift
 - This unique non-tuition support initiative is designed to help close achievement gaps for Middle and Senior School students of promise. For these students, enrollment at Shady Side represents a significant educational or cultural leap.
 - Open to both students who qualify for financial aid and those who do not, this program will specifically provide these students with the academic, social and emotional resources and tools that they need to explore and develop their talents at Shady Side.
 - This initiative will also serve as a critical source of peer support and camaraderie for the Scholars and their families, providing a sense of belonging and membership at Shady Side.
- We are currently hiring the Semper Scholars Program Coordinator, who will oversee the creation and operation of the program.

Divisionally:

- Working with the Middle and Senior School faculty to use the community norms in classroom discussions as a tool to help navigate conversations
- Working with the head of the lower schools to assess the lower schools' needs
- Meeting monthly with heads and assistant heads of Senior and Middle Schools to help inform equitable practices and processes
- Advising a student lead club to help build a platform for students to have courageous conversations
- Partnering with the Senior School deans, residential life staff and the Middle School head to responsibly implement Restorative Practice
- Partnering with The Social Institute to positively help students navigate social media and technology to help support healthy relationships and character development

Community Building:

- Led several professional development sessions, which explored the importance of DEI within an institution and civil discourse
- Meeting with various students to check in on their social-emotional needs
- Consulting with faculty on best practices related to curriculum and student relations, or for general concerns/questions
- Worked with football coaches to help with The Neighborhood Academy and Shady Side Academy team building
- Partnering with Jamie Scott and the Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Awareness (IDEA) alumni committee

Finance

Jim Rohr



- SSA's endowment grew from \$75.7M on 12/31/20 to \$86.7M as of 4/20/22
- Accounts receivable exposure is low, as more than 90% of tuition has been collected for the 2021-2022 school year.
- SSA is in the process of simplifying its debt and improving its cash position by paying off a \$2 million loan and opening a line of credit with PNC.
- Through nine months of the 2021-2022 fiscal year, we are running ahead of plan with a cash surplus of more than \$3 million, due primarily to the S&T loan and the forgiveness of the PPP loan we received during COVID-19.
- Key expenses covered by the new "Inclusive Tuition" format are running on budget. Some of these expenses include food, books, instrument rentals, and academic and athletic travel.
- We have broken ground on the Gene Deal Fields project and will have a busy summer expanding the Junior School, renovating the Junior School kitchen and starting work on the Memorial Hall Library project.
- We are in the process of finalizing the Emergency Operations Plan, which will provide a step-by-step blueprint for faculty and staff on how to respond to emergency incidents.
- This summer we will utilize our three Fox Chapel campuses for our annual summer programs. Through 4/20/22 revenues are more than 8% ahead of last year, with more than 600 kids enrolled. Next year, we plan to keep McKnight Hockey Center open for an extra month to maximize our annual rental income. The extra month will yield an additional \$25,000 at a minimum.

Lower Schools

Dr. Jennifer Asmonga



After a long two years of adapting our students' educational experience to ensure their safety during the pandemic, we have begun to re-establish programs that enable us to gather once again as a community. From the Greek Museum at the Junior School to the Spring Musical at Country Day, these are the types of experiences that bring us joy and renew our hope for brighter days ahead.

As the head of lower schools, it has been my goal to build bridges between the Junior School and Country Day while continuing to honor each school's unique identity. Both schools benefit from better understanding the experiences, knowledge and traditions of the other. It helps to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing, and cultivates a lower school community. The information below outlines the many connections we have aimed to forge this year:

- The assistant heads of school from both campuses meet once a month with the head of lower schools to discuss topics that impact the lower schools and collaborate on various initiatives.
- The head of lower schools and the assistant heads for teaching and learning from each campus meet on a biweekly basis to discuss curriculum, assessment data and professional development.
- All of the faculty from both lower schools participated in professional development about positive discipline led by Dr. Shannon Wanless
- Teachers from both schools have met five times this year to learn and grow together. A main goal of these meetings was to learn about the other campus and to move toward utilizing more consistent practices across lower schools. Each group is facilitated by the head of lower schools and an assistant head. The topics explored are listed below:
 - **Technology/STEEM** - This group focused on identifying the central tenants of the STEEM program, how instruction is delivered, and resources used to support their instruction.
 - **Theater Arts and Community Events** - Participants discussed the current theatre arts offerings at both schools and how the programs can be consistent. The group also explored current community events with the aim of sharing ideas and identifying events in which both lower schools can participate.
 - **Pre-K** - Participants in this group discussed the curricula and programmatic components of the pre-k programs. They explored research-supported best practices to ensure our programs align with them.
 - **Language Arts** - This group explored the current language arts practices at both schools and discussed opportunities for instructional alignment.
- Students from both campuses have also had more opportunities to connect. Students attended virtual assemblies together for Martin Luther King Jr. and Bulldog Day. We are also exploring ways of having each grade collaborate. For example, the second graders from each school are becoming pen pals and writing letters back and forth to each other.

These efforts are just a start in fostering collaboration between Country Day and the Junior School. We are looking forward to many more opportunities in the future to deepen our connections, making us all stronger.

Middle School

Amy Nixon



While COVID-19 continues to be a factor of life in school again this year, the difference between last year and this year is significant. A major portion of our population is vaccinated, and absences, both students and faculty, are down significantly. Daily life at school feels much more "normal," and having the opportunity to be maskless has helped in many ways, both social and academic. We have resumed the following:

- Concerts
- All sports
- Dances
- Seating at tables in class
- Field trips

The resumption of these activities is healthy and much-anticipated. We are still using synchronous remote learning, but only for students who have COVID-19-related absences.

- COVID-19 did highlight the need for us to be even more attentive to the social and emotional health of our students. In these efforts we are:
 - Creating a new position of dean of students, beginning in fall 2022. The duties of this position will encompass student advisory and activities, as well as discipline.
 - Utilizing the mental health professionals at the Senior School in The Chill Room for our own students at the end of the academic day.
 - Participating in The Social Institute, which helps all of our students navigate social media in a healthier, more positive way.
 - Partnering with the Parents' Association for more fun activities for the students
 - Continuing to partner with Lillian Grate for understanding of issues of inclusion

Academic updates:

- Students are academically on track, with minimal academic losses from last year; social and executive functioning skills need more work than in past years.
- Writing Across the Academy: regular meetings with all four divisions to ensure alignment
- Work on weeklong grade-level interdisciplinary projects for May 2023 has begun, modeled upon the sixth grade work that has been ongoing for years
- The MS Rocketry Team has advanced to nationals in Washington, D.C., in May!

We are coming out of the last two years with a sense of relief and renewal. Faculty are feeling a bit lighter, and moderately less stressed. We are looking forward to a positive end of the 2021-2022 school year.

Senior School

Trixie Sabundayo



The Senior School community continues to show incredible responsiveness and resilience as we enter into the third year of the pandemic. Our faculty has demonstrated continued flexibility in the ways we are supporting students and each other, as we contend with the rippling effects of omicron by rallying behind students and covering their colleagues' classes when needed. Our boarders and Residential Life teams have been particularly nimble in navigating the challenges of this time.

The Senior School programs across the board continue to thrive despite the pandemic. We welcomed new head coaches to our swimming and girls' basketball programs, both of whom found great success this winter season alongside our squash, boys' basketball, and hockey teams. Similarly, our Performing Arts Department continues to flourish under the direction of new Hillman Center Executive Director and Performing Arts Chair Dek Ingraham. Our winter musical had extraordinary participation with more than 80 students in the mid-February production of *Pippin*.

A couple of programmatic updates to note at the Senior School:

- The E.E. Ford Committee continues to move our work forward on immersive and interdisciplinary learning experiences and is capitalizing on the generous grant we recently received from the E.E. Ford Foundation this past summer. They have recently finalized a proposal outlining critical components of this initiative and the potential schedule/calendar changes at the Senior School—all of which will be integral to the work of the planning and design team next year.
- We entered our second year in partnership with The Social Innovators Program, a partnership with the University of Pennsylvania's School of Social Policy and Practice, which gives students the opportunity to learn about entrepreneurship first-hand. This year, once again, a strong core group of students participating are in this leadership program.

We are making good progress on our ongoing efforts to support our leaders at the Senior School:

- Leadership development for the Senior School administration, department chairs and deans cohorts continue to be top priority. The Senior School leadership teams engaged in mid-year retreats at the end of January in an effort to build their individual and teams' leadership capacity. Senior School leaders are sharpening their understanding of their respective roles and their responsibilities around feedback loops and team-building. We will conduct our third and final training with Fierce Conversations in June.
- In hopes of creating more cohesion and connection across our Senior School co-curricular programs, this fall a leadership team of immersive program directors (from our Service Learning, Global Studies, Hillman Center, Glimcher and Senior Projects programs) was created to better align our existing student immersive experiences with our school's mission and values. This team has already found good synergy, and I am excited to see what this leadership group will do in partnership with our E.E. Ford Committee and department chair cohort as we deepen the connection across academic and co-curricular programming at the Senior School.

We are midway through our final term and in the home stretch to the end of the year. Spring is in the air!