EC Seniors are SOARING HIGHER WITH HIGHER EDUCATION

PLUS CHISTIAN COLLEGE COMING TO NJ
Eastern Christian School is a wonderful place to learn, to experiment, and to experience new things each and every day. It is this legacy of learning and innovation that keeps our school new and exciting as we enter our 126th year of service this month.

This issue of The Herald chronicles learning and innovation at Eastern Christian School as we celebrate the significant accomplishments of our Class of 2018, report on notable learning experiences encountered by our students throughout the past school year, and look ahead to innovative new programming introduced in this issue.

Of particular note is a ground-breaking new program to offer an associates degree on the campus of Eastern Christian High School beginning in 2019. Partnering with Geneva College, this program will be unique in New Jersey and continues Eastern Christian School’s history of distinctive, cutting edge programs that serve the needs of Christian students and families in innovative new ways.

Following in the footsteps of ditto of North Jersey, Eagle Solar LLC, and our Extended Learning and International Student programs, the Early College Program resulted from the Eagles Perch innovation incubator held in November, 2017 which resulted in numerous proposals to build innovative programs that support the core educational mission of our school. Eastern Christian School has a well-established reputation of such entrepreneurial efforts, having been named the Small Business Success Award Winner for Social Entrepreneurship by the New Jersey Small Business Development Corporation for its prior efforts.

We are excited to share these stories of learning, discovery, and innovation that keep Eastern Christian School new and dynamic, even after 125 years of history!

We hope that you enjoy this issue of The Herald.

Thomas G. Dykhouse ’76
Executive Director & Head of School
The Herald is a bi-annual publication of The Foundation for Eastern Christian School. The purpose of this publication is to share the story of Eastern Christian School and to strengthen the bonds among our extended school community in support of Christian education. The Herald is mailed free of charge to over 6,500 alumni, families, and friends of the school.

Our address database is always being updated. If you would like to update your contact information or if you know of someone who would like to receive The Herald, please contact The Foundation for Eastern Christian School Association office and we will be very happy to update our database accordingly.

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the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, the agency accrediting both institutions. Provided these approvals are obtained in a timely manner, the intention is to open for students in the fall of 2019.

Liberal arts, business, engineering, and pre-nursing programs were selected so students can transfer credits to a broad array of four-year Christian and secular colleges. In addition, EC aims to work toward pairing students with internships within their desired major while they are enrolled in classes in the evenings and on Saturdays.

The idea of bringing a Christian college to NJ was first presented at Eagle’s Perch, where Eastern Christian’s leadership solicits proposals from employees that would signify “The Next Big Thing” for the school. High school teacher and publications director, Leah Genuario, pitched the proposal that ultimately led to this agreement between the two schools.

The schools share a similar history. In the mid-1800s, a Reformed Presbyterian minister established Geneva College in Northwood, Ohio. About 50 years later and 500 miles away, another Reformed congregation—this time, of Dutch immigrants—armed with the same goal of providing Christian education for young people, formed the Christian School Society in Paterson, NJ.

Over time, the first would move to a new location in Beaver Falls, PA, and grow to hold 1700 undergraduate and graduate students in over 80 different majors and programs. The second would change its name several times, branch out to several locations, and finally become Eastern Christian School, currently hosting about 850 students from 150 Christian churches.

“This unique partnership between Eastern Christian School and Geneva College presents fantastic new opportunities for both institutions and, most importantly, the students and families that we serve,” said Eastern Christian’s Executive Director & Head of School, Tom Dykhouse. “We look forward with great anticipation to providing high quality, cost effective, Christian higher education opportunities to students in Northern New Jersey.”

Through all of the decades that both schools have been in existence, God has remained faithful: “For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations” (Psalm 100:5; NIV).
HOPE FOR HAITI

ECES students support Hope Haitian Ministries

The ministry started with just 15 kids and a choir in 2012. Two years later, it became an official non-profit organization—Hope Haitian Ministries—and two years after that, it launched a school in Lamarre, Haiti.

In its second year, the School of Hope enrolled more than 200 students, with new students sponsored through Compassion International.

Through EC teacher Jill Battle, ECES and School of Hope joined together this year, enabling students to embrace community and exhibit compassion, two core values at EC.

“In celebration of the 125th anniversary of Eastern Christian, we decided to partner with Hope Haitian Ministries to support a young, Christian school in Haiti and enable the students at School of Hope to receive a Christ-centered education like we receive at EC. We thought about ways we can be ‘living stones’ and help build up the school. We learned about the culture, economy and geography of Haiti,” says Elementary School Principal Sandra Bottge.

Although every student participated, the approach each EC grade used to solve the question, “How do we support the School of Hope?” was different. For example, preschool students collected school supplies, while first graders designed and sold bracelets, and third graders wrote devotionals.

Although this particular ministry was new to EC this year, the idea behind the project is not. Bottge explains, “Each year, preschool and elementary school students participate in a school-wide PBL project. Problem Based Learning is an authentic learning experience where students are presented with a real-world problem. They must collaborate with their classmates to come up with solutions to the problem. Our PBL is integrated with our spiritual theme, core values and curriculum.”

Fourth graders made salvation bracelets and bracelet kits.
Since Columbine in 1999, school shootings have directly impacted 187,000 students, according to a March 2018 article published in The Washington Post. The nationwide threat has led to a need for routine lockdown drills in schools. After a lockdown drill two years ago in one of his art classes, Jesse Wright asked students what the opposite of lockdown was. The answer came immediately: Open Up.

Open Up is now a multi-school painting project promoting a creative dialogue where students address issues they are facing. It is intended to promote discussions before crisis scenarios occur. The canvas started at EC, but has since moved to 11 schools in New Jersey and a school in Texas. It will continue to 11 more schools before the project is over.

Students are invited to paint over the canvas and write inspirational quotes, while recording the process. The footage is then time lapsed and put together into one collaborative video.

“We have a mission at EC to try to transform the world in a Christ-like manner. We hope this is one way of doing it. We’re grateful to have the support of the community and it’s powerful to see ways that faith, art, creativity and community can make a difference,” says Wright. “We hope through opening up about the issues that people might be dealing with, it can be addressed before it reaches a crisis point. By talking and listening to one another while creating together, hopefully we’ll support one another.”

To view a video of the project, go to http://openupproject.org
Every year, middle school students learn and serve with a non-profit organization in the school’s Make A Difference (MAD) program. In the past, students were grouped according to grade level; however, this year, students worked in smaller groups and had options on where to serve. One of those options was the Lighthouse Pregnancy Resource Center MAD group, facilitated by physical education teacher, Aaron Goldstein.

Considering its mission to serve in crisis pregnancy situations, Goldstein was surprised to find that an all-boy group signed up and committed to the cause for a year.

“You would normally think of this issue as something females would be more drawn to. [But] Each of these guys has a real desire to serve in this area. Their hearts are burdened for babies and life,” shares Goldstein, who has been an active volunteer with the organization, together with his wife, for several years.

Eighth grader Luke Parker remembers several reasons why he first signed up for Lighthouse MAD group. It was an organization his church had partnered with before. The cause felt important to him. And then there were his personal reflections about the value of life: “I also chose it because I was just thinking of my own life, and how we are all so lucky to be alive.”

Throughout the year, the boys organized a “Baby Olympic” fundraiser at the middle school, assisted with Lighthouse mailings, and helped set-up for the organization’s major banquet. MAD also involves a learning component, and students studied Roe v. Wade, as well as examined scripture and prevailing cultural attitudes surrounding the value of life. They also took a tour of the Lighthouse Pregnancy Resource Center facility in Wayne.

Goldstein adds, “It has been a great journey. These young men are equipped with the knowledge and experience to greatly impact our community for the cause of life. It has been a great experience, even if they do not continue serving in this area. The MAD experience is supposed to expose students to many different areas where God may be able to use them.”

The entire experience has profoundly affected students like Luke, who shared, “We are children of the Most High, and we have a purpose in this world. This year, MAD has been such an amazing and impactful time for me, and I won’t forget about any of it.”
BRONX ZOO

Campuses Team Together to Explore the Zoo

In a darkened room near the entrance of the Bronx Zoo, a Coquerel’s Sifaka clings to netting as it curiously stares back at the boisterous group watching him.

Later, a King Cobra—known ominously as the longest venomous snake in the world—uncoils himself and slinks slowly up a glass pane. Meanwhile, outside, a Snow Leopard licks her paws and then settles down for a catnap, oblivious to the strangers snapping photos.

On a brisk spring day in early April, a ninth and tenth grade writing workshop class and a select group of fourth graders traveled together to the Bronx Zoo to view these creatures and many more. The unlikely pairing across campuses was a result of an unusual collaboration leading to two non-fiction writing projects, as well as a fictional poem designed around exhibits at the zoo.

The project represented a first for both classes. “Having advised the school newspaper for several years now, I have seen how important it is to give students a chance to practice writing within the context of authentic projects. When I approached Alisa Engelhard about having some of my students write a narrative to read to her fourth grade students, she counter-offered with a multi-day collaborative project attached to a culminating field trip. It was an excellent idea, so I was all in,” says Leah Genuario.

In preparation for the visit, students in high school chose an animal exhibited at the Bronx Zoo, researched that particular animal, and wrote research essays to present to fourth graders. The fourth graders and high school buddies then worked together during class time to take that information and craft a portfolio on the same animal. After the field trip, the group got together one last time to write a fictional poem about the same animal in celebration of National Poetry Month. All pieces were culled together to create a book.

Engelhard adds, “The EC 4th grade students were so thrilled to spend time with ECHS kids. We are grateful for the opportunity to work with upperclass students.”

Left: High school students traveled to ECES to pair up with fourth graders; Above: A sampling of fourth-grade research.
PIZZA WITH THE PRINCIPAL
Valuing Student Voices

The suggestions have run the gamut, ranging from easily executable—like another fundraiser for St. Jude’s—to a bit more challenging to accomplish—like overhauling the playground and turning it into a waterpark. And although not all suggestions make it past the drawing table, so to speak, they are each welcomed and valued.

For the past nine years, ECES principal Sandra Bottge has implemented Pizza with the Principal, a once-a-week, invitation-only event that ultimately enables every student in the school to speak with the principal in a small group setting. The all-school rotation takes approximately one year to complete.

“Students are excited to be invited to Pizza with the Principal. I often hear from parents that their children posted their invitation on the refrigerator. I’m glad to see that students see the principal as someone who loves them and cares for them,” shares Bottge.

Every meeting consists of several questions. Students are asked what the best part of school is (besides recess), how to make the school better, what they want to be when they grow up, and where they might like to travel. Students are invited to ask Bottge questions, and, if time allows, some choose to tell their favorite jokes.

The meetings reveal several findings. “Our students love Eastern Christian. They have long lists of the best parts of school, including reading, math, P.E., art, computers, music, science, social studies, Bible and chapel. They also love their teachers—and recess,” she shares.

Although the waterpark suggestion has not been considered to date, the school has made changes based on ideas from students. For example, a group of fourth graders once asked for more swings on the upper playground. “We worked with the PTO to use their fundraising money to add more swings and a larger wood chip area on the upper playground,” says Bottge. Also based on student feedback, the school is currently working with the PTO to secure Chrome books for keyboarding practice, rather than continue to use AlphaSmarts.

In addition to Pizza with the Principal, students may share suggestions at any time by placing their ideas in the suggestion box in the front hallway. Bottge adds, “It’s important for students to take ownership of their education and feel like a valued member of our Eastern Christian family. We enjoy hearing their opinions and ideas. Our students love school and they have fun, creative ideas on how we can improve.”

WE ENJOY HEARING [STUDENTS’] OPINIONS AND IDEAS.
OUR STUDENTS LOVE SCHOOL AND THEY HAVE FUN, CREATIVE IDEAS ON HOW WE CAN IMPROVE.”
- Sandra Bottge

Principal Sandra Bottge, flanked by several of this year’s fourth graders.
Excited for an adventure, exhausted from 27 hours of travel, and a bit nervous of the unknown, 15 students, ages 9-14, arrived at Eastern Christian Middle School on New Year’s Day to meet their Winter American Experience host families.

The visiting Korean students were immersed in the EC community to experience American culture, cuisine and classes for 3 weeks. In turn, EC students learned about another culture, developed new global friends and grew in their role as servant leaders.

Aligned with the broader EC mission statement, short term international programs are designed for students to discover and authentically engage a culturally diverse community as they strive to be Christ’s transforming agents in a global society. Beyond the macrocosmic vision of the program, detailed preparation came in the form of student ambassador training, as well as host family and teacher information sessions.

During the 18-day program, visiting students audited classes at all three campuses and attended ESL enrichment. The group also teamed with EC students to attend field trips, which included the 9-11 Memorial and Museum, Rockefeller Center and Hard Rock Café for lunch, as well as sightseeing in NYC at the Statue of Liberty and Times Square. With their partner’s support, the visiting students worked through a portfolio throughout their week to document the experience and their learnings using pictures, captions, interviews, and a narrative.

Extended Learning Director, Suzanne Kraai, further notes her focus on helping to form a truly fun and educational opportunity. She says she hopes “EC students grow to be responsible, informed, experienced, and educated agents in a global society as students develop their understanding of global citizenship and their responsibility and privilege to serve others, embrace community, and exhibit compassion.”

Charlie Denenkamp with three visitors.
There are an estimated 40 million people currently trapped in slavery, according to non-profit organization, the International Justice Mission. Startling facts like this have prompted students and alumni in the Eastern Christian School community to take a stance against the injustice, known more commonly as human trafficking. Here are a few initiatives:

**Micah Challenge**
This year, the Micah Challenge club, a high school group based on the verse Micah 6:8, held a fundraiser to support the International Justice Mission and the Justice Network. The group, advised by Petra Van’t Slot and Anne Bazanowski, sold key rings to represent those who are enslaved in the United States and around the world.

Cara Shotmeyer ’20, a member of Micah challenge says, “We chose to raise awareness for human trafficking...we [also] want people to remember to pray for those being trafficked, because we are told in the Bible that prayer changes things.”

**Middle School MAD**
ECMS’s principal, Dan Lazor, led a human trafficking awareness group during the middle school’s Make a Difference (MAD) program for seventh and eighth graders.

Lazor says, “By the time students get to middle school, they are developing a strong sense of justice, and learning to discern issues of morality and right and wrong...Of course, we talk about this issue in a way that is age-appropriate, but given the reality of how many children (under 18) are trafficked every year in the US alone, it is a real issue for these students.”

**Alumni Efforts**
The current school initiatives follow the legacy of Jennifer (Tartini) Olsen ’14, someone who heightened awareness for human trafficking at EC during her tenure. Tartini commented, “I became interested in human trafficking for many reasons, but the primary reason being that my junior year of high school, when I became a Christian, I had heard the testimony of a survivor on I Am Second.”

After graduating, Jennifer started Jars of Hope, an LLC that supports global organizations through the sales of its necklaces. She adds, “It is our prayer that the redemptive love of Jesus Christ would be made known through all of our efforts to raise awareness and funds in the fight against human trafficking.” Her latest event, called Bondslave Summit and hosted at Liberty University, has a goal of raising $70,000. The money will help fund rescue missions, build safe homes, send care kits and more.

She is not the only alumna to continue to champion for human rights. Several years ago, a group of young alumni attended a human trafficking conference together. Since then, the group hosts a Thanksgiving football tournament on an Eastern Christian campus each year that supports local human trafficking abolition. **Ben Kuiken**, one participant, explains: “Athletes and spectators pay an admissions fee, which is the primary fundraiser, and there is also food, drinks, and desserts on sale throughout the day, with 100% of proceeds going to LoveTrue.”
The high school gymnasium came alive as 85 seniors, awash in navy graduation gowns, made their way down the center aisle to assume seats at the front.

In their final moments as the class of 2018, commencement speaker Ryan Dykstra exhorted them to remember the past as they head toward the future, borrowing the words of Psalm 143 for his commencement address, titled: “Make me know the way I should go,” while also tying in the school’s annual theme of living stones.

“We’ve spent the last year talking about what it means to be Living Stones. How will you be a living stone in your new community? What will you take from...
Dykstra boldly challenged the world’s standards and perceptions of college life, encouraging them to use their time to continue to serve the Lord. “We sometimes think that college is a time to discover yourself,” he said. “Too often, the world interprets this as a time for experimentation, for wastefulness, for laziness, and ultimately for self gratification. But this is not what Paul reminds us: “do not use [your] freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.” Do not use college and “finding yourself” as an excuse for self indulgence, but sharpen yourself through perseverance, diligence, faithfulness. Most importantly continue being a living stone,” he urged.

This year’s valedictorian, Steve Blanco, also urged his fellow classmates toward boldness and action in the next phase of life, tying in the need to work together. “Remember, we are the future, its very foundation. And, we’re all in it together. Nature even shows us that a beehive is nothing when its members do not cooperate for a common goal.”

He ended with a challenge to his peers: “Do not act out of fear for what the world will say, but act because you have something to say to the world.”

“Let the morning bring me word of your unfailing love, for I have put my trust in you. Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life. Rescue me from my enemies, Lord, for I hide myself in you. Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground.” - Psalm 143:8-10
THE CLASS OF 2018

Show me the way I should go, for to you I entrust my life.
- Psalm 143:8b
THE EASTERN CHRISTIAN GRADUATE IS PREPARED TO BE A PERSON OF CHRISTIAN VISION AND INFLUENCE AND SEEKS TO CONTRIBUTE COOPERATIVELY AND RESPONSIBLY TO GOD’S MISSION OF RENEWING ALL CREATION.

- excerpt from EC’s graduate profile
CLASS OF 2018 AWARDS

Department Awards

Art Department Award
Steve Blanco
Elianna Gregory

Bible and Life Award
Siobhan Hunziker

English Department Excellence in Creative Writing Award
Emily Saunders

English Department Excellence in Scholastic Writing Award
Stephanie Zhang

Journalism Award
Zoe Schafer

Technology Department Award
Gabriel Roberto

Foreign Language Award
Steve Blanco

Mathematics Award
Mo Zhou

John Philip Sousa Award
Jiahao (Leo) Lin

Orchestra Award
Yeun Soo (Lauren) Choi
Clara Visser

Choral Award
William Torrez

School and Community Awards

Overall Musical Achievement
Adelina Peretti

Arion Award
Sona Borekjian

Faculty Award
Rebekah Parker

Valedictorian
Steve Blanco

Lakeland Bank Scholarship
Clara Visser

Sam Braen Memorial Scholarship
Cassidy Martin

Christine H White Memorial Scholarship
Sona Borekjian

Brett Zuidema Endowed Nursing Scholarship
Allison Steiginga

Henriette & Kathryne Houseward Vocational Scholarship
Hanna Faber

Hoitsma-Jeffer Scholarship
Cassidy Martin

Richard J Vander Plaat Service Award
Stephanie Zhang

Smith-Shute Nursing Scholarship
Ryan Visbeen (alumnus)
Victoria Holmes
Allison Steiginga
Hanna Faber
Megan Leegwater

State and National Award Winners

President’s Education Award - Gold Certificate
Steve Blanco
Sona Borekjian
Evan Caviasco
Yeun Soo (Lauren) Choi
Jason De Vries
Hanna Faber
Qingyao (Bill) Fan
Samantha Frank
Noah Hagedoorn
Victoria Holmes
Haoyang Huang
Siobhan Hunziker
Diana Ibrahim
Hoi Jiang
Richard Klas
Paige Kuipers
Megan Leegwater
Jiayi (Alison) Li
Yilin Liu
Olivia Madonna
Juliet Marcucci
Cassidy Martin

Sung Hyun (Andrew) Park
Rebekah Parker
Adelina Peretti
Sabrina Pierre
Ou Ying (Federica) Qin
Gabriel Roberto
Zo Schafer
Matthew Shore
Amy Snyder
Allison Steiginga
Hanna Sytsma
Brianne Veenstra
Clara Visser
Haopu (Simon) Zhang
Yujing (Stephanie) Zhang
Mo Zhou

New Jersey Stars Eligibility Recipient
Steve Blanco
Diana Ibrahim
Clara Visser
Siobhan Hunziker
Rebekah Parker
Richard Klas
Hanna Sytsma
Adelina Peretti
Victoria Holmes
The Class of 2018 reported their college acceptances and post-graduate plans to the College and Career Office. Following is a list of colleges reported.

**Total Reported Amount of Scholarships Awarded to This Year’s High School Graduates**

$7,957,484

Albright College
American University
Arizona State University
Ave Maria University
Becker College
Bentley University
Bergen Community College
Berkeley College
Berry College
Bloomsburg University
Boston College
Boston University
Binghamton University
Calvin College
Case Western University
Cedarville University
Centenary University
Champlain University
Christopher Newport University
Coastal Carolina University
Curry College
DeSales University
Dordt College
Drew University
Drexel University
Duquesne University
East Stroudsburg University
Eastern University
Elon University
Emerson University
Fairleigh Dickinson University
Felician University
Fordham University
Furman University
George Mason Korea
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Georgia Institute of Technology
Georgian Court University
Gordon College
Grove City College
Harrisburg University
Hartford University
High Point University
Hiram College
Hofstra University
Howard University
Iona College
James Madison University
Jefferson University
Johnson & Wales University
 Juniata College
Keans University
Kutztown University
La Sierra University
Liberty University
Lincoln Technical Institute
Loyola University
Malone University
Manchester College
Marist College
Maryland Institute College of Art
Marywood University
Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
Messiah College
Michigan State University
Monmouth University
Montclair State University
Mount St. Mary’s University
Muhlenberg College
New Jersey City University
New Jersey Institute of Technology
New York University
North Carolina State University
Northeastern University
Northern Michigan University
NY Film Academy
Nyack College
Oberlin College
Oberlin Conservatory
Ohio State University
Pace University
Pacific Rim University
Palm Beach Atlantic University
Passaic County Community College
Pennsylvania State University
Pepperdine University
Purdue University
Quinnipiac University
Ramapo College of New Jersey
Rensselaer Polytechnic University
Rider University
Roanoke College
Rutgers University - New Brunswick
Sacred Heart University
San Diego State University
Sarah Lawrence College
Savannah College of Art & Design
School of Visual Art
Scranton University
Seton Hall University
Sewanee: University of the South
Siena College
Southeastern University
Springfield
St Louis College of Pharmacy
St Peter’s University
Stevens Institute of Technology
SUNY Alfred State
SUNY Buffalo State
SUNY Cobleskill
SUNY Delhi
SUNY Geneseo
SUNY Plattsburgh
SUNY Stony Brook
Susquehanna University
Syracuse University
Taylor University
Temple University
The College of New Jersey
Towson University
University of Illinois Urbana Champaign
University of Minnesota Twin Cities
University of Pittsburgh
University of Rhode Island
University of Rochester
University of South Carolina
University of Texas Austin
University of the Sciences in Philadelphia
University of the South Sewanee
University of Utah Asian Campus
University of Vermont
University of Virginia
University of Washington
Villanova University
Virginia Technical Institute
West Virginia University
Westmont College
Wheaton College
William Paterson University
Xavier University
Yale University

*Students pose with college-themed cupcakes and attire for “Pledge your Collegiance” Day*
Middle school is a challenging, life-changing time in a person’s life, where much growth happens and much growth is to come. As such, eighth grade graduation could be likened to a cliffhanger, said middle school principal Dan Lazor in his commencement address to the class of 2018.

Lazor began his address relaying the true story of missionaries from 1985 who were captured by guerillas in Columbia. He read a piece of a book detailing plans for a harrowing escape, but then ended his reading before telling his audience what happened next.

He then explained, “Cliffhangers work because they play on our desire to know the story and to see what comes next. The element of suspense allows our minds to wander a bit, and even though we don’t know exactly what will happen, our minds will naturally try to fill in the gaps and anticipate the most likely next event.”

Encouraging and challenging the students, he reminded them that in God’s story, “we already know the ending,” but nevertheless, “the drama of our lives and the way God will work in and through us is part of the unknown.”

“At this point in your story, you may not be able to see clearly what it is that God is doing in your life, how He is calling you into this mission. And that unknown adds to the suspense.” After reading from a poem by Minnie Louise Haskins, he modified the prose, adding, “Graduates, as you walk out into the unknown - I encourage and implore you to put your hand into the hand of God, and it shall be to you better than the light, and safer than the known.”

The evening included 49 graduates, and was enhanced by student participants, including an Eighth Grade Ensemble group singing Chris Tomlin’s...
hit, Amazing Grace, My Chains are Gone, and Salutatorian Olivia Fishburn’s prayer for graduates.

As Valedictorian, Anya Veinberg addressed her class in a speech overflowing with thankfulness for her teachers, who she says acted as living stones. She concluded with the following reflection: “While middle school can be difficult, I am thankful for the years I’ve spent at Eastern Christian Middle School. I am thankful for each and every person that has had an impact on my life. Most of all, I am thankful for the value of, and opportunity to have a Christian education. I am honored to stand here and represent the class of 2018.”

“We already know the ending...the drama of our lives and the way God will work in and through us is part of the unknown.” - Dan Lazor

“...put your hand into the hand of God, and it shall be to you better than the light, and safer than the known.” - Dan Lazor, paraphrasing a poem by Minnie Louise Haskins
On June 12, 46 fourth graders marched into the ECES gymnasium for their last time as elementary school students.

“We are going to miss you here, but are thrilled we can celebrate with you,” greeted Head of School Tom Dykhouse. Turning to the parents, he added, “We are so thankful you’ve entrusted them to us and we have had this opportunity to be a part of their lives.”

In addition to several speakers, the time was also filled with music. The fourth graders kicked off the event with a recorder-rendition of Ode to Joy, and later, with a song titled, “Lord, we are your people.”

Much of the promotion chapel was centered around the year’s verse, 1 Peter 2:5: “You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

Fourth grade teacher Donna Hoogerhyde exhorted the students with a reminder that “our lives should be like a stone monument that points others to Christ.”

Principal Sandy Bottge followed up showing a picture from 1898, which depicts students who had attended the school many years ago. “In their own unique way, they had an impact on Eastern Christian.” She later reminded the students that they are uniquely gifted as well. “We are individual stones, and we all fit together to build God’s kingdom.”
Head of School Tom Dykhouse opened the night’s preschool closing program with a special greeting: “It is my privilege to welcome you to EC’s newest preschool campus.”

For the first time, the final ceremony for the youngest EC students took place at Faith Community Christian Reformed Church in Wyckoff, which housed one preschool class this year, taught by Jenna Beverly. The night reflected the growing enrollment that had necessitated the expansion—a packed church filled with doting family members and friends greeted 68 students as they made their way down the aisles.

Dressed in frilly bows, floral prints, plaid button-downs and the occasional bowtie, the group was only momentarily distracted by an outside peak of the patio and awaiting lemonade, before setting their focus back on parents and friends inside.

Once to the front, the preschoolers did not disappoint the large crowd. Almost in unison, camera phones lifted high as the preschoolers debuted their first song, belting it out with all of their might (most of them, anyway): "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind with all your strength..." Led by music teacher Melissa Macy, the students continued with a medley of songs that ended with Jesus Loves Me.

The celebration culminated in a presentation of certificates—including sharing what each student hoped to do as a job one day, with answers ranging from doctors to digger drivers—and a final prayer by preschool director, Karyn Baitzel.

“We pray that they would continue to grow in their understanding of who you are, that they would chose to place their trust in you, and that they would honor you all the days of their lives.”

As a reward for their patience and hard work, the preschoolers got what they had been eyeing up from the start: a refreshing cup of lemonade and a few snacks to end a joyous evening.
SPECIAL MOMENTS
From the 2018 Graduations

Congratulations to all of our 2018 EC graduates!
LIKE LIVING STONES BEING BUILT INTO A SPIRITUAL HOUSE TO BE A HOLY PRIESTHOOD

We have all heard the expression: It takes a village to raise a child. And most of us would agree, that raising children is something that can’t be done alone. But that phrase doesn’t only apply to raising children. It takes a village to manage a school and it also takes a village to operate a thrift store.

September 2018 will mark ditto of North Jersey’s 8th anniversary. During the course of those 8 years, there has been a village of people who made the store not just a reality, but a smashing success.

There are the members of our management team. While some of the names and faces have changed over the 8 years, the level of energy and commitment to the mission of ditto has not wavered. Eric Hawn gave a tremendous amount of leadership using his retail experience and his deep commitment to Christ to establish most of the processes still in place today. When he left the area to be closer to family, Betsy Kelly stepped up and led the team of managers, keeping things running smoothly and efficiently until her retirement last year. Now Tim Maggiore leads our team bringing a wealth of retail background, a clear commitment to serving the ditto team and its customers, and always leading with optimism.

Next, are our volunteers. There have been hundreds, We began with a core of women who had given years of service at The Corner Closet. Their experience and enthusiasm helped to launch ditto with a bang! And in the years since, we have seen an amazing number of volunteers who have come to sort, stack, clean, stock, and sell our goods, On May 16, 2018 we celebrated our volunteers with the annual volunteer dinner. This year, there were 151 individuals who volunteered over 14,000 hours to ditto. It is just great, to watch this group of individuals who came together to serve Eastern Christian interact as friends. The food was great, but the fellowship was amazing.

Our part-time student helpers do the jobs that volunteers just can’t do. They cashier from 4 PM to 6 PM when our volunteers need to be home getting dinner ready or helping their own children with school work. The students work in the stockroom doing the heavy lifting. And finally, our students do the cleaning. From windows to carpets to bathrooms, they keep ditto clean and fresh.

What would a resale shop be without donors? We continue to marvel at the way that God continues to bring quality used and even new items to ditto for our customers. It’s a bit like the widow’s jar of oil: it just never runs dry. No one could imagine, the support we would receive from not just the EC community, but from the broader community with no ties to Eastern Christian. It is simply overwhelming to consider the generosity of the community.

And finally, our customers. Those faithful individuals who come back again and again to see what might have arrived since their last visit. Our 2,548 Facebook followers who watch for sales and specials. I know our customers come because we provide good value: quality products at great prices. And yet I am so grateful for their faithful shopping. Each one is supporting Christian education.

So it takes a village to run a resale shop. And we thank God for each and every villager and for the way they have contributed to ditto of North Jersey’s amazing success. At the end of fiscal 2017-2018 ditto of North Jersey had contributed $1,215,800.00 to Eastern Christian School since opening in 2010.

Who inspires you? The EC Herald would like to highlight inspirational people from our community—students, alumni, parents, staff, or volunteers—who have inspired you to try harder, think differently, increase in faith, or pursue unlikely dreams. Please send your nomination and an approximately 150-word explanation to Herald@easternchristian.org.
LEAVE A LEGACY
For Generations to Come

Proverbs 21:12 tell us that The plans of the diligent lead to profit. It was the planned giving of many diligent EC supporters over the years, that grew Eastern Christian School’s endowment fund. The endowment has been helping to fund EC for many years and will continue into the future.

“Eastern Christian School’s mission is measured not in years, but in generations”. Today EC students continue to benefit from those who had vision and included the Eastern Christian School in their wills. You may have supported EC for most of your life. A simple way to continue your support in the future, is to include Eastern Christian School in your will.

You will impact students for years to come when you name Eastern Christian School in your will.

There are income and estate advantages for charities and families depending on how assets are distributed. You may actually increase the share of your estate that goes to your heirs.

The 1892 Society is a group of individuals who have named EC in their wills. We can help you find a plan that fits your needs. Contact The Foundation at foundation@easternchristian.org or call 973-423-9294 for more information on:

- Adding Eastern Christian School to your will
- Naming Eastern Christian School as beneficiary for your IRA, 401K, or Life Insurance Policy
- Donating appreciated stock to Eastern Christian School and saving capital gains
- Creating a Charitable Gift Annuity that will provide tax benefits today and provide regular payments to you for the rest of your life.

A LEGACY OF SERVICE

In 2005, after he died unexpectedly, family, friends, and colleagues of Adrian “Bud” Visbeen established a scholarship in his memory. Bud was one of those men who would do just about anything for anyone. Whether you were family, a co-worker, a neighbor, someone from church, or someone living in a village in Honduras, if you needed help Bud would lend a hand. He was a strong man with a strong personality and a very big heart. The Adrian “Bud” Visbeen scholarship is awarded each year to members of the incoming Eastern Christian senior class who are recognized for their devotion to serving others. The scholarship gets applied to their senior year tuition at Eastern Christian School.

If you are interested in establishing a named scholarship in memory of a loved one, please email David Visbeen at davidvisbeen@easternchristian.org or call 973-427-9294.

This year’s recipients: Rylan de Waal Malefyt, Sean Rosero, Gwenneth Van Goor, and Madeleine Van Goor
Our 2018 event season began in late January with the Athletic Boosters Beefsteak. The perennial favorite did not disappoint. Our guests included alumni from years past as well as current athletes and their families. This year, we enjoyed viewing slides of athletes from the 40’s forward. Many of those pictured from the 60’s through the 90’s were present for the event.

As usual, dinner began with delicious antipasto platters, followed by pasta, fries, and of course there was copious amounts of tender beef as well as artful stacks of bread. The warm cider donuts were amazing and followed by ice cream cake.

On March 8, 2018 following a major snow storm in the area we hosted a dedicated group of EC supporters for the Scholars Dinner. Although most of Wyckoff and many surrounding areas were without power, the lights were on at The Brick House and we welcomed Michael K. Le Roy, president of Calvin College who spoke on the importance of Christian education in today’s culture. Young alumni Ryan Visbeen told those gathered how EC had prepared him for college, graduate school, and his career.

While emergency crews were working in the neighborhoods around us to restore power, we were blessed with an evening of good food and fellowship. Eastern Christian was blessed by the generous support of those who attended and significant dollars were raised for scholarship at EC.

April brought the EC Auction Gala. Thanks to a tremendous amount of planning and energy by our amazing auction committee, we had a wonderfully successful night. Online bidding once again drove the silent auction numbers high and with over 160 items to choose from, there was something for everyone to bid on. The new EC video, How Far I’ll Go,
was premiered and got the crowd ready for the Live Auction. With items like The Country Music Awards in Nashville, a vacation on Sanibel Island, and producer seats for Once on This Island the bidding was strong and competitive. The auction concluded with a Fund a Need opportunity that raised over $28,000.00 in a very short time for ongoing safety and security improvements that will be completed this summer.

The 2018 EC Auction Gala exceeded expectations and raised over $100,000.00 for Eastern Christian School.

Eastern Christian’s Spring event season culminated with our Annual Spring Golf Outing at Black Bear Golf Club on May 21, 2018. While weather has never kept our golfers away, this year’s weather was the very best anyone could recall for an EC outing. It was a beautiful day as 128 golfers gathered just before noon for the BBQ lunch. The shotgun blasted at 12:45 and the play began. This year, in addition to our Beat the Golf Team and Yankee Ticket competition, we added a Harley Davidson motorcycle, a cruise, and plane tickets as hole in one prizes scattered around the course.


Special thanks goes to Atlantic Stewardship Bank, event Platinum Sponsor and to Visbeen Construction Company, prize sponsor. Our sponsors and loyal golfers made this another successful event, bringing in nearly $40,000.00. For a complete listing of sponsors, contest winners and event photos, go to easternchristian.org/golf2018
Celebrations
Paul ’96 & Cheryl (Crean) Cusack ’01 welcomed Leah Grace on 1/16/18.
Keith & Karen (Ten Kate) Vander Leest ’98 welcomed Benjamin Alavi on 9/19/17.
Becky & Paul Groenewal ’00 welcomed Lucy Elsbeth on 12/21/17.
Tara & David Ten Kate ’01 welcomed Cora Ireland & Declan Herbert on 12/28/17.
Kyle ’02 & Lauren (Bruins) Bushoven ’06 welcomed Annelise Clair on 3/6/18.
Yeung & Betsy (Ratcliffe-Lee) Cheung ’03 welcomed Eliza Kathryn.
Katrina Hutton ’03 & Marcin Byra were married on 5/19/18.
Kara & David Kooistra ’03 welcomed Eliette Aanae on 5/7/18.
Mark ’03 & Kali (De Haan) Spoelstra ’06 welcomed Ryder William on 2/17/18.
Brian ’03 & Melissa (Pruiksma) Visbeen ’05 welcomed Kassidy Mae on 4/12/18.
Kevin ’03 & Rebecca (Santhouse) Vriesema ’03 welcomed Anna Grace on 12/7/17.
Katie Den Hollander ’04 & Christopher Hoehl were married on 7/28/18.
Jessica & Michael Steenstra ’05 welcomed Abigail Marieke on 5/6/18.
Andrew & Melinda (Struyk) Hanko ’06 welcomed Silas Jan on 2/14/18.
Scott & Kirstin (Lane) Anderson ’07 welcomed Hannah Elizabeth.
Ray Torbet ’07 & Kimberlee Abbott were married on 7/28/18.
Katherine & Justin Vierling ’07 welcomed Payton Karin on 2/24/18.
Brian & Meghan (Visbeen) Vis ’07 welcomed Hadley Claire on 2/26/18.
Andrew Davidson ’08 & Cheryl Brasda were married on 7/7/18.
Timothy & Joanna (Switzer) Gallacher ’08 welcomed Cameron Timothy on 4/23/18.
Jonathan Mas ’09 & Amber Kudelsky were married on 3/18/18.
Carolina Candamil ’10 & Jordan Gayfield were married on 3/17/18.
Jordan ’11 & Brittany (Faber) Klingler ’10 welcomed Kinsley Ellen on 3/4/18.
Tyler Westra ’10 & Kimberly Cleary were married on 7/21/18.
Kevin & Allison (Vriesema) Boss ’11 welcomed Tyler James on 2/8/18.
Diana Kleinmanns ’12 & Nic Trout were married on 7/28/18.
Rachel Barrett ’13 & Mark Travis were married on 5/27/18.

2018 Service Awards
5 years
Kelly Breur
Kate Culp
Leah Genuario
Kristen Rudd
Linda Spycaboer
Lynda Vincenti
10 Years
Anne Bazanowski
15 Years
Laura Kuehlke
Tim Steen
Anna Tortos
20 Years
Sue Boonstra
Marilyn Bushman
Alisa Engelhard
Kathy Kooistra
Paige Visser
Mary Faber
25 Years
Doug Wanamaker
35 Years
Deb Vandenberg
Retiring
Cynthia Visbeen – 38 Years
Lynda Pasqueretta – 17 Years
Ben Stout & Kailey Kuipers ’13 were married on 5/20/18.

Nina Schur ’13 & Josiah Stucki were married on 6/2/18.

Seth Stadtlander ’13 & Taylor Faber ’15 were married on 6/29/18.

Jennifer Tartini ’14 & Austin Olsen were married on 6/2/18.

Jared & Elizabeth Yoder (Staff) welcomed Lincoln Bennett on 2/20/18.

Michelle & Dan Lazor (Staff) welcomed Andrew Josiah & Adelina Joy on 3/27/18.

**SEND US YOUR BABY ANNOUNCEMENT TO RECEIVE AN EC ONESIE!**

Kassidy Visbeen

Annelise Bushoven

Declan & Cora Ten Kate

Anna Vriesema

Benjamin Vander Leest

Silas Hanko

Cameron Gallacher

Elliette Kooistra

Ryder Spoelstra

Kinsley Klingler

Benjamin Stout & DLOXLSHUV

ZHUHPDUULHGRQ

Nina Schur ’13 & Josiah Stucki

ZHUHPDUULHGRQ

Seth Stadtlander ’13 & Taylor Faber ’15

ZHUHPDUULHGRQ

Jennifer Tartini ’14 & Austin Olsen

ZHUHPDUULHGRQ

Jared & Elizabeth Yoder (Staff)

ZHUHPDUULHGRQ

Michelle & Dan Lazor (Staff)

ZHUHPDUULHGRQ

Ben Stout & DLOXLSHUV

ZHUHPDUULHGRQ

Cameron Gallacher

Elliette Kooistra

Ryder Spoelstra

Kinsley Klingler

Benjamin Stout & DLOXLSHUV

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Seth Stadtlander ’13 & Taylor Faber ’15

ZHUHPDUULHGRQ

Jennifer Tartini ’14 & Austin Olsen

ZHUHPDUULHGRQ

Jared & Elizabeth Yoder (Staff)

ZHUHPDUULHGRQ

Michelle & Dan Lazor (Staff)

ZHUHPDUULHGRQ

Ben Stout & DLOXLSHUV
REMEMBERING

The Foundation Office has learned of the following deaths of these alumni and former faculty members since our last issue of The Herald.

**Former Board Member**


J. Robert Struyk, age 91 of Grand Rapids, MI on 7/1/2018. Bob served on ECSA School Board from 1973 to 1976 and served as Recording Secretary.

Donald Van Hook, age 86 of Jenison, MI on 2/16/18. Don served on the ECSA School Board from 1971-1974 and worked with the Finance Committee.


**Former Staff**

Phyllis (Barsema) Klapmust taught 2nd grade at North Fourth Street Christian School in the early 1960’s. She was living in Grand Haven, MI and passed away on Dec. 25, 2017.

Andy Tjeerdsma passed away in Denver, Co on Nov.15, 2017. He taught social studies at Eastern Christian High School.

**Alumni**


Gertrude (Faber) Kelly ’41 of Panama City, Fl on 12/29/17.


Alice Borduin ’43 of Grand Rapids, MI on 6/1/18.

Diena (Minnema) Unrath ’44 of North Haledon, NJ on 3/31/18.

Raeann (Dyksten) Dykhouse ’44 of Wyckoff, NJ on 5/4/18.

Mildred (Schuurman) Sonnema ’45 of Boynton Beach, Fl on 1/5/2018.

Elaine (Hey) Hoogstra ’45 of North Haledon, NJ on 2/25/18.

Christina (Oosthoek) Ekdum ’48 of Grand Rapids, MI on 3/15/18.

Catherine (Schuurman) Hoekstra ’48 of Boynton Beach, Fl on 5/20/17.

Elizabeth (Hagedoorn) Vande Guchte ’48 of Grand Rapids, MI on 1/15/2018.


Matilda (Baker) Roetman ’50 of Wyckoff, NJ on 6/17/18.

Helen (Van Halsema) Vande Polder ’50 of Bradenton, Fl on 2/13/2018.


Carol (Bush) Prawetz ’66 of Clifton, NJ on 3/21/18.

Frank Fyffe ’67 of Franklin Lakes, NJ on 2/19/2018.

Larry Hoekstra ’74 of Boynton Beach, Fl on 5/23/2018.


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**UPCOMING REUNIONS**

**Class of 2008 – 10 Year Reunion**

An “EPIC” 10-year reunion is being planned by committee members: Shaun Patterson, Francesca Gravinese, Julie Ring, Linley Thobourne and Becca (Ydo) Steyling. Please join the group ‘EC Class of 2008 10 Year Reunion’ on Facebook for details or contact Shaun at shaun.patterson@nyack.edu.

**Class of 1968 – 50 Year Reunion**

Reunion Dinner: Friday, October 19, 2018 at 6pm at Portobello Restaurant in Oakland.

Buffet Breakfast: Saturday, October 20 at 9am at Faith Community CRC, Wyckoff.

For more information, call Pat (Borduin) Steiginga at 973-337-0928 or email John Belanus at johncbelanus@gmail.com.

**Heritage Years**

All those who have graduated 50+ years are welcome to attend, highlighting 1942, 1948, 1953, 1958 and 1963.

When: Friday, October 19, 2018

Where: 5:30pm at Eastern Christian High School
Class of 1958

60-Year Reunion || Class of 1958 celebrated their 60-Year Reunion with a buffet luncheon on June 16, 2018 at Justin’s Ristorante in Hawthorne. There were 25 classmates and a total of 37 who attended, some who traveled from Canada, California, Pennsylvania and Florida. This was the 7th reunion for this class since graduation! Many wonderful memories were shared by the classmates of their experiences at Eastern Christian. Class President Garret Nieuwenhuis was the MC and brought the class up-to-date on members of the class that could not attend as well as brief “State of School” comments. Without exception, all who attended expressed a sincere thankfulness for the opportunity to have been educated at Eastern Christian. Classmates spent several more hours together after the luncheon at the home of Garry & Florence Nieuwenhuis to continue to renew old friendships and share life experiences. A great time was had by all!

Class of 2007

10-Year Reunion || Class of 2007’s 10-year reunion was held on April 27, 2018 at Park West Loft in Ridgewood, NJ. Classmates were happy to have such a great turnout – it was a fun evening of catching up with each other and renewing friendships.

Class of 2009 – 10 Year Reunion

A reunion is in the planning stage! Please email Amber (Fiedler) Dempsey at amberjoydempsey@gmail.com or visit Facebook group “ECHS Class of 2009” to join.

Class of 1989 – 30 Year Reunion

A reunion is in the planning stage! Please join our Facebook group for updates & suggestions.

Please be sure EC has your email address to receive class-related updates and information about reunions. Update your email address at: www.easternchristian.org/alumni/submit-news-update-contact-info/
SERVING IN CYPRUS

Alistair Wynne, Class of ’69

Their families held funeral services in countries across the Middle East—Turkey, Syria and Egypt, to name a few. However, the sons and daughters being mourned for were not actually dead. Quite the opposite, in fact: They had been born again, baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Now, kicked out of their homes and often unwelcome in their communities, they traveled to Cyprus.

Cyprus is an island in the eastern Mediterranean, and “one of the few safe bases for Christian missionary work in the Middle East,” explains Alistair Wynne. Much of his ministerial career—22 years in fact—involved serving at an international church in Cyprus with members from 22 different countries. “During this time, we regularly welcomed Muslim converts who had been forced to flee their home countries when they became Christians…Our church provided housing for them and their first experience of being part of a church family,” he shared.

In addition to his work in Cyprus—which also encompassed marriage enrichment courses for Protestant Christians married to Orthodox Christians—Wynne has ministered in Tiberias (beside the Sea of Galilee), as well as several places in Scotland. After receiving a bachelor’s from The College of William and Mary in 1973, he completed his Bachelor of Divinity degree (the American equivalent of an M.Div) from New College Faculty of Theology of the University of Edinburgh in 1976, and was then ordained as a minister in the Church of Scotland (Presbyterian).

He met his wife, Judith, while taking post-graduate courses at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.

His decades-long career has taken him very far from his humble beginnings at Eastern Christian School, though he remembers the foundation he received fondly. He shares, “I found the Church History courses to be especially helpful in laying the foundation of how the Reformed outlook fits in with other denominations and religions. The underlying truth of God’s sovereignty sustained me at Hebrew University, where I was the only Gentile among rabbis-in-training. And in Cyprus, where 98% of the population belongs to the Orthodox Church.”

He adds, “Knowing the Lord Jesus Christ is in sovereign control means that our approach to others who have different backgrounds and different understandings can be respectful, both of them and of the Truth that is Jesus Christ. His perfect love drives out all fear and anxiety about dialogue and witness. Again, those lessons for me began at EC…many of us thank God for EC and the equipping we received there for future ministry and witness.”

“KNOWING THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS IN SOVEREIGN CONTROL MEANS THAT OUR APPROACH TO OTHERS WHO HAVE DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS AND DIFFERENT UNDERSTANDINGS CAN BE RESPECTFUL … [BECAUSE] HIS PERFECT LOVE DRIVES OUT ALL FEAR…”

ATTENTION ALUMNI

Where are you now? We would love to hear your career stories and how EC helped shape you into the adult you are today. Please send testimonies and photos to herald@easternchristian.org for a possible feature in an upcoming issue of The Herald.
Matthew Hartensveld’s pathway to microelectronic engineering had an unlikely beginning: a friend’s broken Xbox 360 game system.

“He did not have the money to repair it. I wanted to help him out and I began ‘Googling’ how to fix it. I ended up being able to repair it for him and from that success, started my own business repairing gaming consoles,” he shares. Hartensveld’s fledgling business led to an increased interest in circuitry, an interest which was further fueled with encouragement from technology teacher, Tim Steen.

When Hartensveld was a senior at Eastern Christian School, Steen stepped up to sponsor an independent study, enabling Hartensveld to take an online circuits class from MIT. He went on to receive a bachelor’s degree in microelectronic engineering and then a master’s in material science, both earned at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

Microelectronic engineering, as Hartensveld describes, is “the fabrication of nanoscale devices.” He explains that these devices are found in many modern-day items, ranging from satellites, to solar panels, to computers, to LED lights. “These devices are fabricated in an ultra-clean environment where special suits are worn and where we operate some of the most complex tools ever invented,” he adds.

Although he just graduated with his master’s in May, Hartensveld has already had the opportunity to intern with Texas Instruments to make chips for cars, as well as partner with Northrop Grumman to work on fighter jet technology. He also collaborates with a research group focused on the improvement and fabrication of LEDs.

Instead of moving directly into the full-time job market this summer, he plans to stay at RIT a while longer, setting his focus on obtaining a doctorate. “RIT provides me with the freedom to pursue ideas I develop, which is very unique and has already led to me currently pursuing a patent. RIT is paying for my PhD, along with a stipend to support me while I am continuing my education.”

Although the future is bright, he also looks at his past fondly: “The biggest thing Eastern Christian did is gave me the space to be myself...Eastern Christian’s accepting environment gave me the encouragement I needed. The teachers at EC were always friendly and passionate, and encouraged my learning. EC also had honest discussions about religion in Bible class, making me think critically about the topic.”
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Call Jeff for details

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John Vander Molen Class of 1964 | Jeanette Haakmeester Vander Molen Class of 1927

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Girls Varsity Basketball

The girls varsity basketball team finished another outstanding season with a 21-4 record that included their first league championship since 2012.

Junior center Madison Wynbeek averaged 23 points, 10 rebounds, 3 blocks and 3 steals per game and was considered by many to be the best player in both the league and county. Other significant contributions came from senior captain Hanna Faber who averaged 8 points (including 47 three-pointers) and 3 assists per game and sophomore forward Naomi Engelhard, whose steady improvement and 10 rebounds per game provided a spark for the championship run.

Winter Track

The Eagles winter track team had another fine showing at the NJIC Championship Meet, led by junior Emily Byrnes who won the 800m and anchored the 4 x 400 relay that included seniors Katie Hefty and Eliana Gregory and sophomore Grace Kellogg.

Katie and Grace also took 4th in the long jump and pole vault, respectively. Senior Nico Cortes finished 2nd in the pole vault for our boys. At the County Championships Katie Hefty finished 2nd in the 55m sprint, Nico Cortes 2nd in pole vault, and Emily Byrnes 4th in the 800m run.
Bowling

The winter season also saw another strong performance with junior bowler Rylan De Waal Malefyt who rolled a 266 in the county tournament, had a 629 series vs Hawthorne and finished the season with a 178 average.

Post-Season Honors

**WINTER TRACK**
- Katie Hefty 2nd team All County
- Nico Cortes 2nd team All County
- Emily Byrnes Honorable Mention All County
- Bri Veenstra Honorable Mention All County
- Lex Lugo Honorable Mention All County
- David De Vries Honorable Mention All County

**GIRLS BASKETBALL**
- Madison Wynbeek 1st team All County
- Hanna Faber Honorable Mention All County 1st team All League
- Naomi Engelhard Honorable Mention All County 2nd team All League
- Madison Wynbeek 1st team All League
- Tori Holmes 2nd team All League
- Greta Bothyl Honorable Mention All League
- Barry Veenstra Division Coach of the Year

**BOYS BASKETBALL**
- Jared Post Honorable Mention All County Honorable Mention All League
- Benjamin Parker Honorable Mention All County 1st team All County

**BOWLING**
- Rylan de Waal Malefyt Honorable Mention All County 1st team All League
- Alan Mao Honorable Mention All County Honorable Mention All League

**All EC athletes are expected to uphold the following six pillars for athletic success with the support of the Athletic Director, coaches and parents:**

- **Glorify God**
- **Strive for Excellence**
- **Exemplify Christian Character**
- **Run the Race to Win**
- **Compete as One**
- **Be Committed**

**Congrats to all the EC athletes awarded with honors!**
**SPRING SPORTS HIGHLIGHTS**

**Golf**

The Eagles golf team put together one of the finest seasons in program history finishing second in league play only behind perennial power Glen Rock.

Seniors Noah Hagedoorn and Clay Sietsma led the way with season low scores (for 9 holes) of 39 and 45, respectively. Chase DeJong, Sam Faber and Bobby Wu also played well for coach Ben Kuiken, named Colonial Division Coach of the Year in his final season at EC.

**Track**

In boys track, senior Michael Ji (shot put and discuss) and junior Lex Lugo (100m) were state sectional champions!

The girls track team was again a force to be reckoned with in league, county and state competitions behind gold medal performances from junior Madison Wynbeek in the shot put (setting a school record in the process), senior Katie Hefty in long jump and the 200m, and junior Emily Byrnes in the 800, all of whom were also part of our strong 4x100 relay team!

Having finished his final season at the helm, our school thanks and congratulates long time and beloved head coach Joel Apol, named Colonial Division Coach of the Year, for his decades of dedication in creating, building and maintaining a championship caliber program without a track. Assistant coach Lindsay Pedersen takes over next year and the future looks bright as coach Aaron Goldstein’s middle school girls track team placed third in the NJIC championships behind first place performances from Katherine Marshall in discus and Skylah Zamor in the 200m. Skylah also helped win the 4x200 relay along with Rachel Post, Samantha Garcia and Gabby Grant.

**Other noteworthy performances**

Freshman Daniel Buckles finished with an 11-6 record at second singles that included a trip to the semi-finals in the county tennis tournament. In softball, senior shortstop Tiffany Martin collected her 100th hit as the team put together a solid season, and Mark Foster was named NJIC pitcher of the week en route to his 5-3 record for the baseball team.

**Senior Award Winners**

We also want to congratulate our senior award winners for their significant contributions to our program including Varsity Club and Golden Eagle Award winners Hanna Faber, Greta Botbyl and Nico Cortes for most varsity letters and 12 seasons of participation, Nico and Katie Hefty - County Student Athlete Awards, Greta and Clay Sietsma - NJIC Sportsmanship Awards, Hanna - NJSIAA Women in Sport Award, Greta - Wendy’s Heisman Award and Tori Holmes - NJSIAA Scholar Athlete Award. Thanks to all for representing our program, our school and our community in the way our Lord would have it!
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