

ENGAGING IN SERVICE | TRAINING FOR LEADERSHIP | PREPARING FOR ETERNITY | FALL 2017

GSAALINK



STUDENT LIFE

STUDENTS AND STAFF ATTEND BOISE SHAKESPEARE FESTIVAL

Sir Hugo Baskerville is dead. Suspected death? Heart attack. What caused it? No one knows. This was the opening scene of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* performed as part of the 2017 Boise Shakespeare Festival. Students



Photo courtesy of Boise Shakespeare Festival

from GSAA attended the play on September 24 and it was a performance “many of us will never forget,” says senior Alexa Davidson.

Davidson says, “Watching the characters from this famous Sherlock story come to life was nothing less than incredible. As the story

unfolded, you could see people leaning out of their chairs, impatient to see the outcome. The performance was packed full of humor, keeping us engaged and entertained throughout the full two hours. By the end, everyone was quoting their favorite scenes.”

Cody Davis, senior, said his favorite part was the train scene. “They did a great job portraying a train ride by continuously bouncing as they acted.”

GSAA JAGUAR’S COMPETE AT FALL CLASSIC TOURNAMENT

GSAA’s Lady Jaguar Varsity Volleyball team played well in the Fall Classic Tournament at Walla Walla University last month. They made it into the Champion bracket. Hannah Miller was awarded tournament MVP for the team. Thank you to our volunteer coaches Dale Maine '89 and Jacquelle Boone Heid '09 for their service and leadership.



Left to right, back row: Coach Dale Maine, Alexa Davidson, Susi Aguirre, Hannah Miller, Montana Gross and Coach Jacquelle Boone Heid. Front Row: Grace Thompsen, Cassidy Lawson, Janae Rogers, Teela Kilby, and Emelie Inghram.



Pictured: Hope Bollin and Linda Kirby perform as part of the Bells Choir.

CHOIR AND BELLS PERFORM IN LA GRANDE FOR LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

The GSAA Choir and Bells Choir performed in La Grande, Oregon last month for a church leadership conference. It was the first performance of the school year. Cecilia Simmons, music director at GSAA, says she is very proud of the students’ hard work. The students will also be performing for the Festival of Praise in November and for various Christmas concerts and nativity scenes during the month of December. A music tour is being planned for April 12-15 as well.

GSAA'S NEW DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI DIRECTOR



Gem State Adventist Academy (GSAA) is pleased to announce the appointment of

Nicole Batten as the Director of Development and Alumni Relations. Batten brings 16 years of experience in communications and fundraising and an enthusiasm for Adventist education.

Batten will work closely with the Alumni Board in planning the upcoming 100th Anniversary of GSAA and its Alumni Homecoming Weekend March 30-April 1, 2018. All alumni and friends are invited to join GSAA during this special weekend commemorating 100 years of history.

Batten is also tasked with finishing the current extended \$75,000 matching challenge for the Annual Fund and raising \$100,000 for Worthy Student Scholarships this year, as well as growing the Alumni Endowment. The hope is to reach the endowment goal of \$1 million in time for end of the 100th anniversary year (2018). The principal balance of the endowment is currently \$800,105. Donations to these funds can be made by mail or online at www.gemstate.org.

"GSAA has a long history of excellence and a commitment to servant leadership that I think are invaluable in training today's youth," shares Batten. "I look forward to inspiring others to support GSAA and invest in its students, staff and mission. It is through our time and

philanthropy that we can give back and make a difference beyond ourselves." One of Batten's favorite quotes is from Winston Churchill, "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

Batten grew up in Southern Idaho and graduated from Walla Walla University. She has worked in radio, publishing and education. She has a master's in public relations from Webster University. She has also served on the board of the Society of Adventist Communicators. Batten is currently an adjunct instructor in communications at Carrington College as well.

Batten officially joined the Gem State Adventist Academy family on September 1, 2017. She can be reached by email at nbatten@gemstate.org.

ALUMNI EVENTS | 2018

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Meet the principal, learn about what God is doing at GSAA, and reconnect with fellow alumni at a location near you:

- » January 25 | Portland
- » January 28 | Walla Walla
- » March 30-April 1 | Homecoming Weekend & 100th Anniversary
- » May 20 | GSAA Golf Tournament

For more information or to RSVP email nbatten@gemstate.org or call the alumni office at 208.459.1627 ext. 146

\$75,000

GSAA MATCHING CHALLENGE

The \$75K Matching Challenge for the Annual Fund has been met!

From our hearts to yours, thank you so much for your generous and faithful support. We couldn't have done it without you.

If you haven't given yet to the Annual Fund, there is still time. Mail your gift today or give online at www.gemstate.org.

THANK YOU!

CAMPUS UPDATE

KIMBERLY MITCHELL, '82

As we start a new school year it is with fresh coats of paint on several classrooms and two construction projects in the works. The Chapel is being renovated with a new “rustic modern” look, complementing the new stone platform. Due to the

generosity of several donors, the small gymnasium is being retrofitted with new workout equipment, new flooring and a climbing wall. The new space will also have a spin cycle room. Todd Driver, athletic director at GSAA, says he hopes the space will be a draw for students and alumni alike, and that it will help to promote a healthier lifestyle on campus, especially during the winter months when it is harder to exercise outside.

The music building also boasts fresh paint and inspirational art along with the library that now showcases a wall mural based on Psalm 19:1, painted by Glen Wahlman, GSAA science teacher, and his wife Tatyana.

Other much needed capital improvements that are pending funding include repairing the roof of the music and guild building, renovating the bathrooms in the dormitory, updating the heating and plumbing systems on campus, and the purchase of a new commercial riding lawn mower for grounds upkeep. If you would like to make a contribution to help with any of these capital improvement

projects, please contact our Development and Alumni Director, Nicole Batten at nbatten@gemstate.org for more information, or give online at www.gemstate.org/donate.



NEW STAFF



**JEFF
KLUCHESKY'95**
CONTRACT
MAINTENANCE



**ANDREA
STARR-
TAGALOG,**
CAFETERIA
ASSISTANT



**SAMMY
SCHNELL'12**
ASSISTANT
GIRLS DEAN



DANIEL JENKS,
ASSISTANT
BOYS DEAN

ALUMNI PROFILE

ANDREW MCCHESENEY '90

What is a favorite memory from your time as a Gem State Adventist Academy student?

My junior and senior years, which also were the first two years of my life in the United States, were a struggle. I felt like the least popular student. I often ate alone in the cafeteria.

However, the lessons taught at the academy went far beyond Bert Williams' junior Bible class and David Gouge's senior English. I learned empathy, perseverance and love. Teachers extended grace that allowed me to graduate, seeing a potential that I didn't see in myself.

Little did I know that the values and compassion learned at the academy would help lay the foundation for my career as an adult.

What you have done since graduating from Gem State Adventist Academy?

The day after graduating from college in 1996, I flew to Russia on a one-way plane ticket with \$700 in my pocket for food and rent and a one-year visa in my passport. I had no job, but I was determined to work as a journalist. I also arrived without God. I was determined to succeed through hard work.

Perseverance learned at Gem State kept me pushing forward. In just four years, I became the deputy editor-in-chief at the only daily, English-language newspaper in Russia.

Five years passed, and I hit rock-bottom. I still was the deputy editor-

in-chief and, by all appearances, thriving professionally and personally. But I remained angry and disobedient, and I felt miserable. In utter despair, I began to seek God for the first time in my life.

Big changes soon occurred. I was baptized and named the newspaper's

editor-in-chief. Opportunities opened up to share Jesus with presidents, prime ministers, ambassadors, and billionaires. Every day for the next eight years I prayerfully sought to lead a newsroom team of 70 people with empathy, perseverance, love, and grace.

In 2014, my Russian friends expressed shock when I announced that I had accepted a job at the *Adventist Review* and *Adventist World* magazines at the General Conference in Silver Spring, Maryland.

"Why would you take such a huge demotion?" they asked.

But two months after I left Russia, the government cracked down hard on the media, forcing the sale of the newspaper and, three years later, the dismissal of nearly all its staff. Friends who had questioned my judgment now exclaim, "Your God really looked out for you!"

God did look out for me — and He still does. Today, I have the best job in the world! I travel the world to hear people's

conversion stories — and I get paid for it! I work for the General Conference's Office of Adventist Mission, and my stories are published every weekday at adventistmission.org. I am responsible for writing mission stories for the adult and

children's *Mission* quarterly magazine and the *Inside Stories* in the Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide. My stories also appear in various other church media.

Empathy, perseverance, love, and grace are crucial in every part of my work. As I write this, I am in Russia and taking a five-week trip that also includes

Germany, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Indonesia. Interviewing a legless woman who led 40 people to baptism or a man who converted an entire church as an eighth grader is more satisfying than speaking with a prime minister or billionaire. My newspaper stories



about world leaders were popular for a few hours. But stories about God's transforming power are being read today, a week later, and even after a year. These stories have the power to change hearts!

What would you tell a student or parent who is considering whether Adventist education is important and worth the investment?

Ellen White repeatedly emphasizes the value of a solid Adventist education. Also, no one else can teach empathy, perseverance, love, and grace — key ingredients for success in this life and the next.

What is the best advice you've ever been given?

Business leaders from PepsiCo chair and chief executive, Indra Nooyi, to Russian billionaire, Pyotr Aven, have graciously shared with me their secrets for their success. But the best advice that I have been given comes from Solomon in Proverbs 3:5-7: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and depart from evil" (NKJV).

"Every day for the next eight years I prayerfully sought to lead a newsroom team of 70 people with empathy, perseverance, love, and grace."

WITH GOD, I CAN SET **STUDENT ESSAY** GREATER EXPECTATIONS

JAMIE JANSEN, '18

As the rain softly falls outside and the leaves turn brown and smushy, it seems that the sun has ceased to shine as our senior year opens with the crushing realities of late nights and alarms clocks. I have so much to do with semester projects, senior project, regular homework, workouts, and leadership positions. Yes, I'm busy. So is every senior. And yes, a lot of it is self inflicted. Yet I wouldn't give this up, and neither would my fellow seniors, especially as we look back at how it has made us grow.

I was not the most social freshman. I was fighting a lifelong tendency to be introverted and very shy. I did nothing but pour over my school books and talk to a small, tight circle of friends. The same thing happened

my sophomore year. But by this time I knew I wanted things to be different. I considered switching schools. But God had a different plan, for nothing good in life comes without a fight. I needed to learn some things about facing your past, your present problems, and your future. There isn't much more difficult than going against a precedent, yet God was with me.

I have never done anything more difficult than learning to talk to people. But as I started meeting people, I became comfortable doing it. I discovered other Gem State students don't bite. By the end of my junior year I ran for the Student Association. And at the beginning of my senior year, I became yearbook editor. I would never have dreamed that I was capable of leading when I first set foot inside this school as a shy freshman. But as God's

workmanship, I am no longer chained to my comfort zone.

As my time at Gem State draws to a close, I realize that I have grown here in ways not possible anywhere else. Sure, I'm not the life of the party, and I'm still becoming more outgoing, but I now realize something: I love people. The more I'm around people, the more extraverted I become. I'm done staying in my comfort zone. I'm ready to step up and lead for God, and with His help I'll survive senior year with all the extra work of leading. When the spring rains come and the flowers lift their wilting heads from the long winter, I will know God has lead me through my last year at Gem State. As this journey draws to a close, I know that, with God, an end only means another beginning.



"As my time at Gem State draws to a close, I realize that I have grown here in ways not possible anywhere else."

JOIN THE SYRINGA SOCIETY

You can make a difference all year long when you make a monthly gift to the Annual Fund. For just \$10 a month, you can provide a month of meals for a dorm student.

Provide textbooks for an entire school year for a student with a monthly gift of \$25. You will impact a student's life and make sure they have the resources they need to learn.

You can help fund our music program with a sponsorship



of \$100 a month. Music not only ignites all areas of young person's mind—intellectual, social and emotional—but it is a wonderful way to honor God with praise.

Monthly gifts are an easy way to make a big impact. Your \$50 a month becomes \$600 a month over the course of a year. Sign-up today for monthly giving, either online at gemstate.org/donate, or by calling our office at (208) 459-1627. Become a member of the Syringa Society! Thank you in advance for investing in our students and our mission.

GSAA Link

The GSAA Link is published by Gem State Adventist Academy for its alumni, student families and supporters.

Editor

Nicole Batten

Graphic Designer

Sammy Schnell '12

Photography

GSAA staff and students

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

It through the prayers and financial support of alumni and friends that Gem State Adventist Academy is able to continue its 100-year tradition of providing quality Adventist education. Our goal is to train students for leadership and service, gaining knowledge and experience that will help them be successful leaders in their families, churches and careers. Above all else, we strive to prepare our students for eternity, encouraging them to develop a personal relationship with Jesus. You can be a part of this mission and assist us in enriching the lives of our students. Through your philanthropy you can make a difference.

Winston Churchill once said, "We make a living by what we get, we

make a life by what we give." When you give to Gem State Adventist Academy, you invest in our students, staff and mission. We invite you to partner with us in fulfilling this worthy calling.

Whether it is giving to worthy student scholarships, helping fund mission trips, funding new equipment or building improvements, your gift will have a huge impact on what we do here.

Please consider a giving to one of the following areas of greatest need or contact the Development and Alumni Office to discuss a restricted gift for a specific purpose of interest! Thank you for making a difference.

AREAS OF NEED

ANNUAL FUND

These are dollars that can be used wherever they are needed most, such as covering high heating bills during a cold winter.

WORTHY STUDENT FUND

Donations to this important fund assure no student is turned away. Many families struggle with the cost of obtaining an Adventist education for their children.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND

Supporting this fund helps provide a quality environment for our students to learn in. Funds are needed to maintain and upgrade existing buildings and equipment.

ENDOWMENT FUND

This fund makes sure GSAA will be around for future generations. The principal is invested and never spent, only the interest can be used; thus, the larger the endowment, the better we provide for the future.

PRINCIPAL'S NOTE

Walking is a complicated balancing act, but its complexity pales when compared to balancing life. Defining what balance is for a place like Gem State Adventist Academy sometimes seems to be an impossibility. I recently received an email with the following story which sheds light on the problem.

"A father wanted to read a magazine but was being bothered

by his little girl. She wanted to know what the United States looked like. Finally, he tore a sheet out of his new magazine on which was printed a map of the country. Tearing it into small pieces, he gave it to her and said, 'Go into the other room and see if you can put this together.

After a few minutes, she returned and handed him the map, correctly fitted and taped together.

The father was surprised and asked how she had finished so quickly..

"Balance:
A never-ending endeavor we spend our waking time pursuing."

'Oh,' she said, 'on the other side of the paper was a picture of Jesus. When I got all of Jesus back where He belonged, then our country just came together.'"

My prayer is that we continue to seek balance by putting Jesus back where He belongs...right in the center of all we do.


Marvin Thorman
MARVIN THORMAN, PRINCIPAL

**UPDATE YOUR
ALUMNI RECORD**

Have you moved? Are you not receiving the alumni newsletter? Then be sure to update your alumni record to make sure you continue to receive GSAA news and alumni event invitations. You can update your record quickly and easily on our website at gemstate.org/alumni.

We are also looking for alumni to profile in the GSAA Link newsletter. We would love to hear about what's new with you. If you are willing to be profiled and share what God has done in your life and what GSAA has meant to you, then please email nbatten@gemstate.org.



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FRIDAY		
	Veteran's Recognition	1948
	Dinner with Former Faculty	1958
	Vespers	
SABBATH		1968
	Prayer Breakfast	1978
	Church Service & Awards	1988
	Class Reunions & Photos	1993
	Classical Concert	1998
	Alumni vs Student Games	1998
	Alumni Business Meeting	1998
SUNDAY		2008
	5k Fun Run/Walk	

Honor Classes

Alumni Homecoming Weekend

March 30-April 1, 2018

For more information visit www.gemstate.org/alumni/alumni-homecoming-2018