

Generations

A newsletter connecting past, present, and future students of St. Anselm School

Three Families, Sixty-Seven Years at St. Anselm

by Parker Fitzgerald

In 1924 the first Winter Olympic Games were played, KGO-AM in San Francisco began radio transmissions, and St. Anselm School opened. Many generations of families have attended our school since it was established, and some families have stayed for almost an entire generation. What made these families stay at St. Anselm's for such a long time? Let me tell you a story about three families—the Raskowskys, the Cincebeauxs, and the Vogelheims—and why they decided to continue to enroll their children at St. Anselm School.



The Raskowskys

Just last year, Jack Raskowsky, the Raskowskys' final child to enroll at St. Anselm School, graduated from eighth grade. The Raskowskys have five children—Kelcie, Chase, Tess, Cole, and Jack—who attended our school for a total of twenty-six consecutive years.

Tyler, the Cincebeauxs' final child to enroll at St. Anselm School, also graduated from eighth grade last year with Jack. The Cincebeauxs have three children—Emily, Maddie, and Tyler—who attended our school for a total of twenty consecutive years.

Simone Vogelheim, the Vogelheims' final child to enroll at St. Anselm School, is in eighth grade this year. The



The Cincebeauxs

Vogelheims have three children—Geneva, Berkeley, and Simone—who attended our school for a total of twenty-one consecutive years.

While there are many reasons that these families stayed at St. Anselm School for such a long time, there were three main ones that all the families mentioned: the school's traditions, community, and shared values.

All three families recalled many special school traditions. They enjoyed the Festival of Fun, the Blessing of the Animals, Salutes, the eighth-grade dinner-dance, the Baccalaureate Mass, the student school families, the May Crowning, and the annual concerts.

Not only did the parents love these traditions, but the children looked forward to them every year. These traditions made their years at St. Anselm School very special and gave them even more reasons to continue their generation-long attendance.

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The Vogelheims

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New Faces on Campus

by Danielle Machotka-Farley

Once again, the new school year has brought new faces to St. Anselm, and this year's group brings wonderful skills and experience to our children's school days. If you haven't already met the women below, please introduce yourself next time you see them!



Meghan Caldwell | 2ND-GRADE AIDE

San Anselm Meghan Caldwell has taught for twelve years—in places as close as San Francisco and Atherton and as far away as Chicago and Taiwan. She is excited to be part of a community where family, kindness, and hard work are valued, and is inspired by kids trying and doing their best. "At the end of the day, I always reflect on the honest effort I saw in kids that day—whether it's reading a challenging book, writing an explanation of a science experiment, or talking through social conflicts. The faces of students really working tell a great story."



Alexandra Dobbs | KINDERGARTEN TEACHER

Hailing most recently from Mark Day School, Alexandra Dobbs has already settled in with her happy kindergarten class, and is enjoying the familial feeling among staff and students here. She works on developing personal and lasting connections with each of her students, and enjoys teaching them new skills and watching them learn. Reflecting on a teacher's role, she says, "It is important to see the good in every child, and a teacher should be a student's advocate. Believing that every student has the ability to succeed is the best thing a teacher can do."



Gina Doyle | KINDERGARTEN AIDE

Gina Doyle taught preschool for many years before having her two boys, and loves working with and being inspired by children. Recognizing that each child learns differently, she always tries to find the right path to guide individual children successfully. She also loves creativity, spending time with her sons drawing, painting, working with clay, and creating fun art and science experiments together at home. In her words, "I feel that the best thing a teacher can do for her students is to make learning fun. Be creative, be caring, and encourage and motivate students with a positive attitude and praise."



Dina Fowler | 5TH-GRADE AIDE AND EXTENDED-DAY AIDE

Dina Fowler comes to St. Anselm from St. Rita's, where all four of her children went to school, and where she wore hats ranging from teacher's aide to extended day. Being an educator is an integral part of her life, and she believes in building and maintaining meaningful relationships with parents, staff, and children. When she reflects on the impact she'd like to have as a teacher, she says, "I hope to continue to inspire all my students to value who they are, to pursue constant learning, and to be thoughtful and caring, as well as becoming mindful, responsible students."



Marlee Marshall | MUSIC TEACHER

Marlee Marshall grew up in Los Angeles surrounded by performers of all types, and her interest in a career in music was born. She plays many instruments, but her focus in college was on classical voice and opera. With musical inspiration ranging from Brahms to Bob Dylan and Mozart to Tom Petty, her talents run a wide gamut, and you'll often find her singing and writing music outside school. In her goals for teaching at St. Anselm, she says, "I hope to aid my students' education as whole people, encourage a love of music, and foster an environment for exploration of self."



Peggy Struck | CHOIR TEACHER

Fairfax native and St. Rita's graduate Peggy Struck has directed choral groups from the San Francisco Girls Chorus and San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and her singers have performed for Queen Elizabeth II, the San Francisco Opera, and the San Francisco Giants. She comes to us most recently after spending thirty years as the music instructor, choral director, and bell choir director at San Domenico School. At the end of the day, she says, "The clear, resonant singing voices of my students echo in my mind, and uplift me."

Alumni Corner

by Riggs McGrath

When I decided last spring to attend boarding school in Massachusetts, I had no idea what lay in store for me. I knew I was prepared academically, but I also knew that I wanted to explore new areas of interest where I had little or no experience. This was a little scary. After having attended a Catholic school all my life, I was also a bit nervous about attending a secular high school with students of many different faiths. September came quickly. I hugged my family goodbye and set my mind to my new adventure.

As classes began, I soon realized that St. Anselm had not only prepared me for my academic classes but it had also given me the courage and self-confidence to try new things. One of the first new areas I ventured into was acting, and I eagerly signed up for Theater 101. I found myself in a black-box theater learning to share my feelings with total strangers. But what started as an uncomfortable experience became one of my favorite classes. St. Anselm had clearly given me the confidence to step forward and express myself.

The courage to try new things also helped me jump into the school's student-run clubs. One club that immediately interested me was Model United Nations. During MUN conferences each person is assigned a role in a debate about a controversial, geopolitical topic. Our first conference was debating other local schools on the resolution of World War III! When the day came for the conference and I entered the auditorium, my stomach tightened. I calmed down by relying on my preparation but also on the confidence I had gained at St. Anselm through the many opportunities to practice public speaking.

Another gift from St. Anselm is my Catholic faith. I was bit uncertain as to how my faith would be affected by a secular school. The good news is my faith has grown and has been a source of strength, comfort, and direction. St. Anselm School and Parish made me proud of my faith and helped teach me to be a good witness no matter where I am in the world. One of the challenges facing my generation is a lack of faith in daily life. This deprives teens of many benefits, such as quiet reflection and the ability to be confident in who we want to be, with a focus on kindness and acceptance. Every day, we are bombarded by new information, which is important, but information is useless without time to process it. I am grateful to St. Anselm for instilling a sense of faith and need for reflection in me.



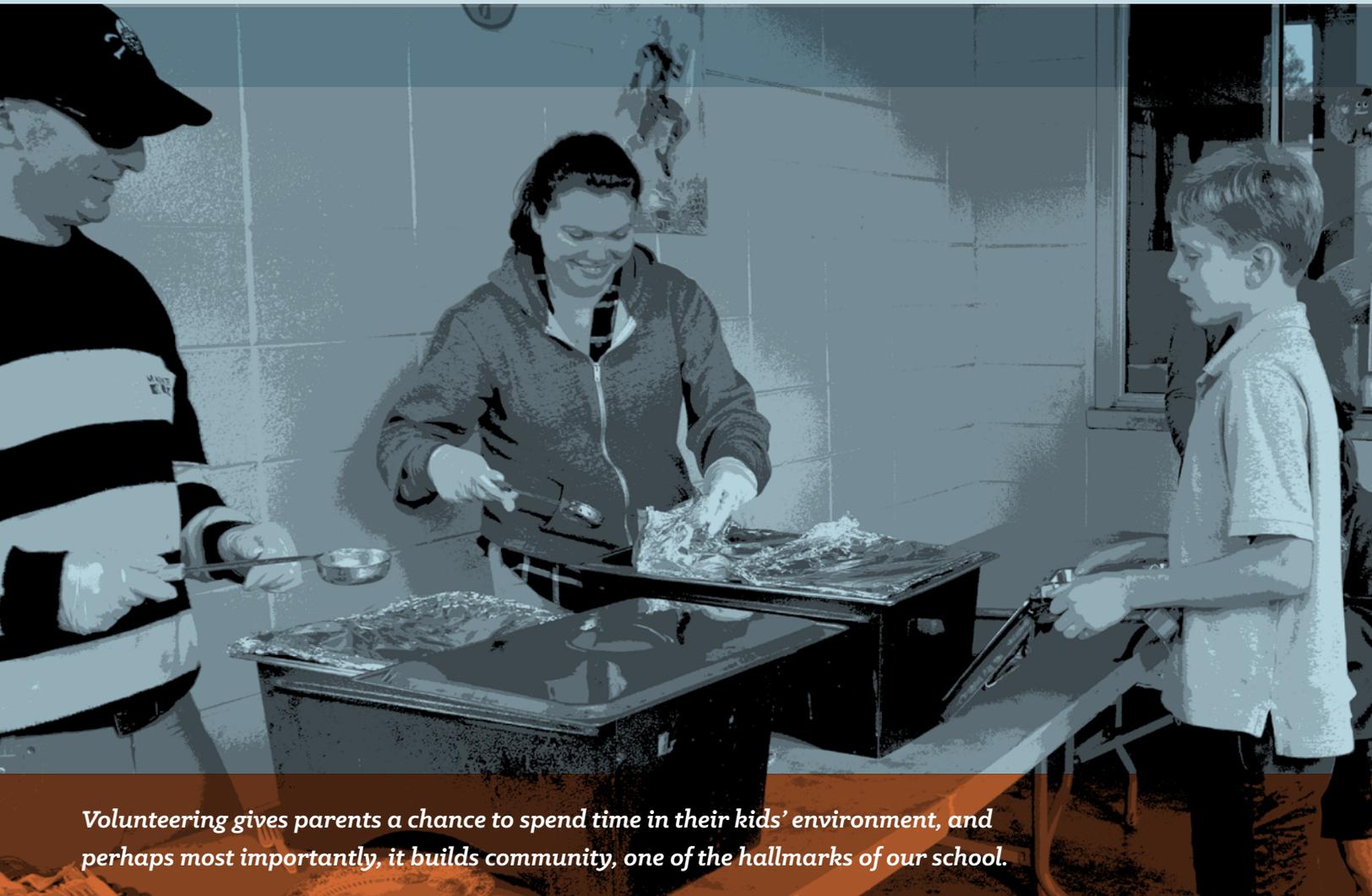
Some people are surprised that someone coming from a school as small and family-oriented as St. Anselm could succeed at a large school or at a boarding school. I tell them that it is because of such an experience that I was able to make that leap and am able to navigate confidently. I believe that if you have the right foundation, anything is possible! I encourage all St. Anselm students to reach for their dreams and goals, try new things, and remember that their St. Anselm foundation will carry them far no matter where they may be or their lives lead.

Riggs McGrath graduated from St. Anselm in 2017 and began his new adventure at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, this past fall.

Volunteering

YOUR WAY INTO THE Community

by Danielle Machotka-Farley



Volunteering gives parents a chance to spend time in their kids' environment, and perhaps most importantly, it builds community, one of the hallmarks of our school.

Do you remember your first months at St. Anselm? Maybe you knew a few people already, maybe you were making friends fast, or maybe you just felt like there was a big group of people who all knew each other already and you were going to be on the outside forever. If you started volunteering right away, chances are that feeling passed quickly.

St. Anselm has a wonderful parent-volunteer program that accomplishes several goals for the school. It helps keep tuition low (have you looked at the cost of private schools around here lately?!), it gives parents a chance to spend time in their kids' environment, and perhaps most importantly, it builds community, one of the hallmarks of our school.

Kim Hancher, whose twins are in third grade, says, "Volunteering has given me an opportunity to meet and get to know people whom I might not have met otherwise. It builds a great sense of community when everyone is pitching in to get the task at hand done. It's always in the name of something good and for the betterment of our children."

Emily Leonard, whose son is in fourth grade, has gotten involved in almost every activity possible in her time at St. Anselm, and has a broad perspective on what it means. As she says, "I like being involved in the school and knowing what is going on. I feel like I have a good grasp not only of my son's class but I also get a little bit of a peek at what is to come. It is great to be around the students and so many other involved parents—it really does give you a strong sense of community."

There are almost as many ways to volunteer as there are parents at the school. Do you like events? The Bash is our annual fall fundraiser and the biggest revenue generator of the year. If festivals are your thing, the Festival of Fun in May has options to get more deeply involved than the four hours you are required to volunteer on the day of the event.

There are other, smaller special events like the book fair, gingerbread houses at Christmas, and the father/daughter and mother/son dances. You could join the PTG (Parent Teacher Guild) or Boosters (the mighty dads of St. Anselm). The front office periodically needs help with copies, filing, and weekly envelopes. And serving hot lunch is a sure way to make friends with parents in other grades you might not otherwise get to know.

When you signed the school contract, forty hours might have sounded like a lot, but once you get going and realize what a great community you are part of—largely because we all get to spend time together volunteering for our kids' school—you'll probably fill that time before you know it, and make the school a better place in the process.

Thank you for all your hard work!

Serving hot lunch to hungry students is a great way to meet new parents.

ENRICHING MIDDLE-SCHOOL MINDS

by Elise Brinck

St. Anselm's middle school is well known for preparing students for the rigor of high school. And while the core subjects are the primary focus of middle school instruction, St. Anselm offers a unique and fluid enrichment program that taps the sometimes secret talents of our middle school faculty.



Home economics

Each Friday afternoon, middle school students break into multi-grade groups and participate in the Encore Program, which includes seven different electives designed and hosted by each of our middle school teachers. This year, the Encore Program includes drama, home economics, Claymation, gardening, media/maker, yoga, and Hispanic culture. The students get to participate in a total of three different electives throughout the year with new assignments posted each trimester.

Mrs. Pryor's home economics class gets the kids cooking in the kitchen. Mrs. Pryor says "I try to think of practical things like 'five healthy breakfasts you can make in a hurry,' but sometimes I make it seasonal like corned beef

sandwiches for St. Patrick's Day." The students enjoy eating the food they prepare and she also teaches other useful skills like party planning, sewing on a button, or napkin folding.

Spanish teacher Señor Ware teaches a Hispanic cultural class where the students research and do a presentation on key figures in the Spanish-speaking world. These might include Hispanic artists, politicians, intellectuals, and athletes. The class also explores special feast days and popular tourist destinations.

Sixth-grade teacher Stephanie Bull is a certified yoga instructor for adults and youth. Her yoga class focuses on



Claymation

Three Families, Sixty-Seven Years at St. Anselm | *continued.*

“St. Anselm does an excellent job with the sendoff of the eighth-graders, culminating with the Baccalaureate Mass. The part where the eighth-graders’ school families come up one by one to say goodbye to the eighth-grader is a great tradition. There’s not a dry eye in the church,” Mr. Vogelheim explained.

The families also loved the St. Anselm community. They felt special bonds between the families in the school and always helped each other out in times of need. Mrs. Raskowsky remembers the time when rain caused the San Anselmo Creek to overflow and flood Saint Anselm School. The school needed help getting the water out and cleaning up. Many families gathered together and assisted. The Cincebeaux considered St. Anselm “a big family.”

The community has changed a little over the years but not drastically. The staff has also changed over the years, but they still see familiar faces. Some of the staff has stayed at this school for almost twenty-five years. “Mrs. P. and Señor Ware are two teachers at the school that have taught all three of my children,” said Mr. Vogelheim. The Raskowsky family appreciated, “the unique situation of having an opportunity to spend time with the same people for such a long time.”

All the parents at St. Anselm School want their children to have a great education but they also want them to develop values. They want the school to teach their children respect and manners. All three families said that Mrs. Pisciotta inspired all of their children with her tough love. Not only does St. Anselm teach the children respect and manners but it also teaches them discipline, hard work, and faith. “I went to St. Anselm for my children to learn respect and to be involved in their faith. St. Anselm creates the ‘whole person,’ a person who is well-rounded academically and has good values,” said Mrs. Cincebeaux.

All the families that I interviewed discussed that community, traditions, and values were the reasons for continuing enrolling their children at our school. They all want future generations at St. Anselm School to have the same wonderful experiences that they had. Mrs. Cincebeaux said, “My favorite thing is knowing that I made the correct choice on where to send my children.” They all hope the school continues to have a supportive community, great traditions, and special values for years to come.

Parker Fitzgerald is an eighth-grader at St. Anselm.

strength and flexibility, as well as increasing balance and body awareness. Ms. Bull says, “I teach breathing techniques with guided meditations to help the students relieve tension and stress.”

The drama class is taught by eighth-grade teacher Allison Skinner. The students warm up with improv games, and then work on skits or short plays in groups. The subject matter of the plays might include history relevant to the middle school curriculum or current events and issues.

Math teacher Diane Johnson oversees the Claymation studio, where students fashion figures out of clay and then bring them to life with stop-motion animation using iPads.

Students can literally get their hands dirty in Mrs. Pisciotta’s gardening class, where they cultivate the school garden. They plant and harvest seasonal crops—weeding, watering, and trimming plants as needed. Occasionally, students will prepare and enjoy a small feast with the harvested garden bounty.

Technology teacher Felipe Dunn says “The media/maker Encore is an amazing opportunity for students to experience the ‘maker’ spirit of collaborative and explorative learning.” Students learn about circuits, coding, and digital audio production using ChromeBooks and iPads. They also learn about real-world applications for technologies like 3D printing and engage in discussions about media types and ideas for designs and inventions.

The Encore Program is just one of the ways that St. Anselm continues to challenge students as they progress through the school. We are grateful to the teachers for being willing to share their varied interests and talents through this unique enrichment program.

CLASS OF 2013 GOES TO COLLEGE

The St. Anselm class of 2013 headed off to college this fall, ready to tackle life without daily parental influence. Here are a few of the places they will be attending.



Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo
California State University, Sonoma
Chapman University
College of Marin
Elon University
Emory University
Georgia Tech
Kenyon College
Northeastern University
Reed College

Santa Clara University
Savannah College of Art and Design
School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Syracuse University
Texas Christian University
UC Berkeley
UC Davis
UCLA

UC Merced
UC Santa Barbara
University of Colorado, Boulder
University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
University of Oregon
University of San Diego
University of Wisconsin
USC

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