

# TALLULAH FALLS SCHOOL

## Magazine

SUMMER 2017



### Senior Superlatives

Thomas Draper Smith  
co-valedictorian

Emma Peacock  
salutatorian

Michael Weidner  
co-valedictorian

Capstone projects

Natatorium groundbreaking

Higgins baseball complex

Class of 2017



*The beauty of  
Spring  
at Tallulah Falls  
School*

# Tallulah Falls School

Summer 2017  
tfs magazine  
VOLUME 40 • NUMBER 2

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ON THE COVER: Thomas Draper Smith (left) of Eastanollee and Michael Weidner of Clarkesville (right) were co-valedictorians for the Class of 2017. Emma Peacock of Clarkesville was the Class of 2017 salutatorian. Cover photo by E. Lane Gresham.

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*Tallulah Falls School Magazine is published by the TFS Office of Advancement*



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

LARRY A. PEEVY

### Invested community key to success



As we say farewell to another outstanding academic year, we are reminded of our strong community ties. At Tallulah Falls School, strong relationships are at the heart of what we do.

Everyday interactions with students by faculty and staff foster a connection to our school community. This extends to our partnership with our parents, guardians and community friends as we work together to prepare students for success in life. We are blessed with solid leadership at the board of trustees level providing administrative guidance and professional stewardship of our resources.

In this edition, every page showcases the Tallulah Falls School community at its best. Our academic success is exemplified by the accomplishments of the 61 members of the Class of 2017. Earning approximately \$5 million in scholarships and accepted to more than 100 colleges and universities, this group of close-knit seniors is poised to make a mark on the world beyond our 500-acre campus. Their memories of TFS will sustain them as they advance to the next level in their academic careers. Take a look at page 8 and 9 to see how our students' college acceptances are distributed throughout the United States and beyond.

To celebrate commencement with the Class of 2017, we were proud to have a member of our extended TFS family, U.S. Agriculture Secretary and former Georgia Governor George Ervin "Sonny" Perdue III, deliver remarks at graduation. Perdue's connection to this class is through his granddaughter Sunni Brett.

Hosting a graduation speaker of such prominence was certainly an honor but it was especially poignant to see him bestow Sunni's diploma along with a hug.

We also celebrated with our community of 60 eighth graders, the Class of 2021, during their graduation. These student-leaders were among the first group to embrace the Tallulah 12, a character and community-building initiative that will continue to influence this class as they advance to the upper school.

Like the graduating Class of 2017 and the upcoming Class of 2021, each class seems to inspire more leaders following a similar path as those graduates who have come before. Our alumni provide another highlight in this edition – this year's Alumni Homecoming event featured the unveiling of a new portrait of Ida Lee Hester Fitzpatrick, the "Duchess of Tallulah." Mrs. Fitzpatrick served the school community for many years as its resident trustee and director. TFS Alumna Comell Watts Moore ('56) of Cumming, impacted by her experience with Mrs. Fitzpatrick, made possible the donation of the portrait to the school – yet another example of the strong bond woven into the TFS experience.

Every day parents and those familiar with our school share positive comments with me about TFS and the family atmosphere present on campus and shared by our students, faculty and staff. This feedback is one of the most rewarding things in my day. We work hard to create this kind of environment – it is reinforcement that we truly are a community.

Sincerely,

Larry A. Peevy  
President and Head of School

### A community of learners

A group of upper school Presidential Scholars, students with a GPA of 4.0 with 15 or fewer demerits and no major infractions, are pictured. For the 2016-17 academic year, there were 110 upper school presidential scholars and 61 middle school presidential scholars.



## Making a big splash



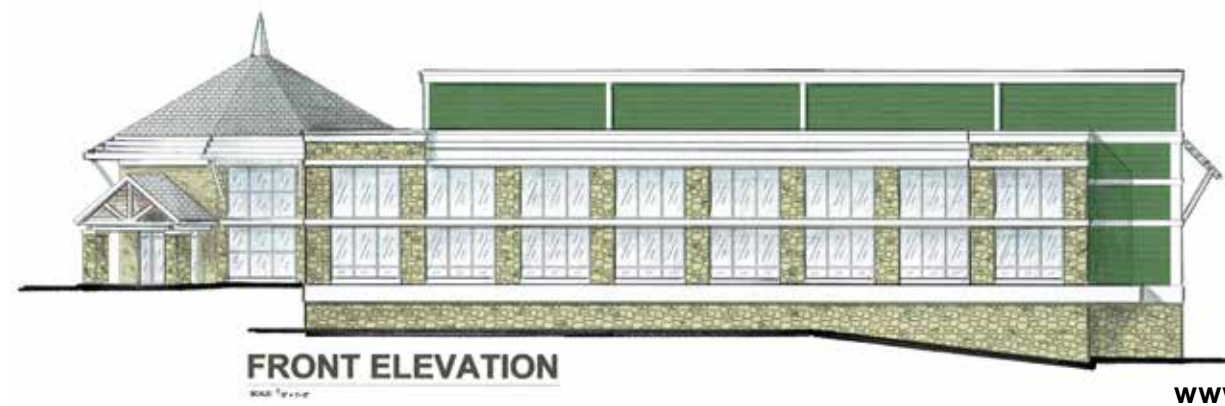
### TFS breaks ground for spectacular natatorium

The dirt was flying on April 19 as Tallulah Falls School broke ground for a spectacular new natatorium complex that will be home to the growing TFS swim program. This magnificent facility will quickly become an integral component of the school's sports and recreation program. The future facility will be a part of the Larry A. Peevy Upper School Academic Complex and will feature a competition-size pool with bleacher seating for 240 spectators. Construction is slated to begin on June 1 and the project is estimated to take approximately three years to complete. Ron Cantrell Construction, Inc. of White County will once again partner with TFS on the project. George Hlavenka of Hawaii is the architect/designer.

On hand for the groundbreaking were members of the TFS Board of Trustees, including Chairwoman Amy Atkinson, faculty and staff.

"This is a historic day for our school community," Peevy said. "Our swim program has grown tremendously over the past few years with many of our student-athletes competing at the state level. This facility opens up efficiencies for the swim team and expands overall physical fitness opportunities."

The natatorium will also be used for physical education classes and be open for recreational use for students, faculty and staff. The facility will offer locker rooms, concessions, offices for athletic staff and a hospitality room.



Shown above are members of the Tallulah Falls School Board of Trustees, faculty and staff and Julia Nichols, a six-year member and current captain of the TFS swim team. From left: Michael Rogers, Mark Rasmussen, Melody Henderson, Ron Cantrell, Peggy Pruett, Kim Popham, Sonya M. Smith, Scott Neal, Jeremy Pirkle, Julia Nichols, George Hlavenka, Elizabeth Chadwick, Amy Atkinson, Donald Wells, Elizabeth Wells, Larry A. Peevy, Gail Cantrell, Jimmy Franklin, David Chester, Gary Chapman, Lucy Willard, Wallace Dodd, Gewene Womack, Trey Crumley, Rev. James E. Turpen, Sr., Karen Thompson, Bryan Freeman, Dinah Peevy, Sandy Ahearn, Dale Reddick, Donna Foland.

# Class of 2017

an exceptional class leaves their mark



No matter how you slice it, Tallulah Falls School's Class of 2017 was an exceptional group academically, athletically and in terms of overall character. One of the characteristics most often noted was the bond that these students developed with each other over the years. The Class of 2017 included fifteen students who attended TFS since the first year of middle school. In short, they knew each other, they loved each other and they encouraged each other to succeed. Mission accomplished.

The Class of 2017 had several other accomplishments worth noting. This class of 61 graduates earned approximately \$5 million in scholarship offers (not counting Hope scholarship amounts available to students attending college in Georgia). The

\$5 million amount is the most in TFS history.

The Class of 2017 also contributed greatly to the most athletically successful year in the school's history. As you will see later in this publication, a number of these seniors will compete at the college level. The Class of 2017 was also rich in character and integrity, traits that the school has gone to great lengths to model, teach and instill.

"I am very proud of our seniors this year," Peevy said. "I truly believe they will all have very bright futures if they use their talents and skills learned at TFS and remember that the true secret to their success in life has everything to do with how they continue developing their character and maintaining a positive attitude."

Chibueze Ugochukwu Alfred-Igbokwe  
 Kaylee Madison Baker  
 Mykal Lynea Bly  
 Sunni Elizabeth Brett  
 Emma Grace Caldwell  
 Ronald William Cantrell  
 Jennifer Annette Conley  
 Jack Zander Ebanks  
 \* Anne Kathryn Edwards  
 \* Isaac Dylan Elias  
 \* Mark Igor Faingold  
 Thomas West Fisher  
 Renayre Schliah Forbes  
 Thala Gustav Freeman  
 Samuel James Griswold  
 Emily Amelia Hall

Camden Lynn Hames  
 Sean Michael Hayes  
 Rachael Ivy Jones  
 \* Josiah David Keene  
 Min Kwan Kim  
 Fanchong Li  
 \* Yuchen Lin  
 Montana Paisley Lloyd  
 Kobhe Daniel Macias  
 Collin Gareth Mickels  
 Jordan David Mincey  
 Eric Joris Murenzi  
 Simren Gaurang Naik  
 \* Sanson Navarrete  
 Julia Grace Nichols

\* member of the National Honor Society

Henrietta Odwaa Nortey  
 John Robert Oklapek  
 \* Emma Elizabeth Peacock  
 Zatrack Jajieh Pearce  
 Sydney Evadne Porter  
 Hongxing Qian  
 Juexing Qian  
 William Cody Reynolds  
 Rachel Ann Richardson  
 Aida Faith Roberts  
 \* Victoria Lizeth Sesam  
 Benjamin Josef Shabat  
 \* Shyam Vilas Shukla  
 Mary Katherine Smith  
 \* Thomas Draper Smith

Oyinkansola Adesola Sofela  
 Jeffrey Teng  
 \* Jordan Teng  
 Tegan Erin Thomas  
 \* Marcus Caleb Thompson  
 Michael James Van Hooser  
 Zhenyu Wang  
 Harry Jack Ward  
 Mary Katherine Vaughan Watson  
 \* Michael Shon Weidner  
 Stephen Andrew Whitson  
 Cecil Mark Wilcox  
 \* Xuan Yang  
 Tianqi Zhang  
 \* Yuting Zhang



Thomas Draper Smith (co-valedictorian), Emma Peacock (salutatorian), Michael Weidner (co-valedictorian)



**Extra Mile Award**  
 Zatrack Pearce  
 presented by Dean of Students  
 Jimmy Franklin



**Clayton Woman's Club Award**  
 Julia Nichols  
 presented by Lynette Burroughs

## Scholarships presented on Awards Night

### Mercer University Scholarship

Emma Caldwell, Josey Keene, Jordan Mincey, Jordan Teng

### University of Montevallo Scholarship

Sanson Navarrete

### Circle for Children Scholarship

Mary Katherine Watson, Zatrack Pearce

### Piedmont College Scholarship

Jena Conley, Khobe Macias, Aida Roberts, Stephen Whitson

### Rabun County Board of Realtors Scholarship

Emily Hall

### United Community Bank Scholarship

Mark Cecil Wilcox III

### Clarksville Kiwanis Key Club Scholarship

Yuting Zhang

### Habersham Rotary Club Scholarship

Sunni Brett, Isaac Elias, Simren Naik, Rachel Richardson

# Outstanding Seniors 2017



Michael Weidner needed some help carrying his end-of-year awards. In addition to being named **co-valedictorian**, he also received the **Outstanding Character Award**, **TFS President's Leadership Award**, the **H.M. Stewart Award** as top honor graduate, **Habersham County Chamber Award** and an **Outstanding Math Student Award**. Pictured from left: TFS Board Chair Amy Atkinson, TFS Board member (and Michael's father) Jim Weidner, President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy and Susan Weidner, Michael's mother.



**Outstanding Boarding Student**  
 Sola Sofela  
 presented by Dean of Students  
 Jimmy Franklin



**Perfect Attendance\***  
 Rachel Richardson  
 pictured with Upper School  
 Academic Dean  
 Kim Popham



\*Richardson not only had perfect attendance during her four-year high school career, but for all twelve years of her school career.

**STAR Student**  
 Mark Faingold  
 pictured with 2017  
 STAR Teacher Scott Davis

# COMMENCEMENT 2017

*A photo album from the class of 2017's special day!*



▲ TFS senior faculty member Linda Harris (left) delivers the official school mace to the platform as the 2017 commencement ceremony begins.



▲ Rev. James E. Turpen, Sr. '55 delivered the baccalaureate address.



▶ Graduation caps fly and the tears begin to flow as the Class of 2017 become the newest group of TFS alumni.

▶ Departing senior Tori Sesam, an accomplished vocalist, performed a soulful rendition of "Lean on Me" for her classmates and the assembled guests.



▶ Moving the tassel from one side to the other signifies the end of high school and the beginning of the college journey for graduates Jack Ebanks (left) and Anne Edwards (center).

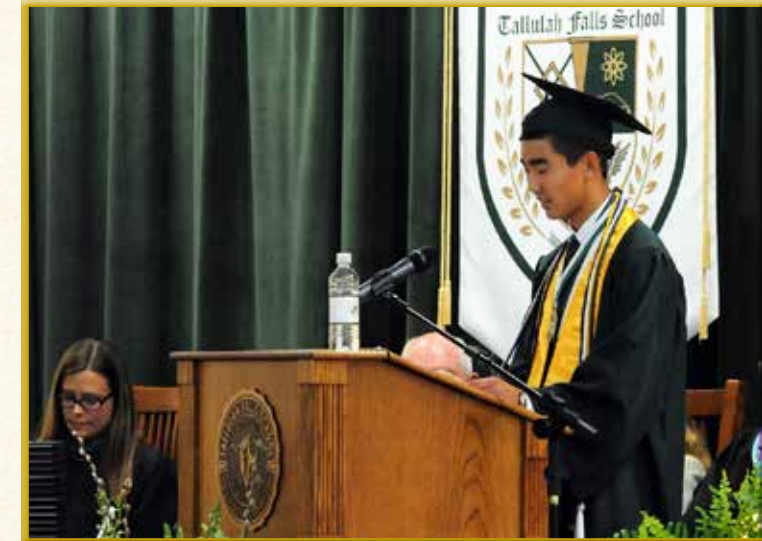
▶ Special guest commencement speaker U.S. Secretary of Agriculture and former Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue.

▶ Pictured from left: TFS Board Chair Amy Atkinson, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue, Mary Perdue, TFS President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy.

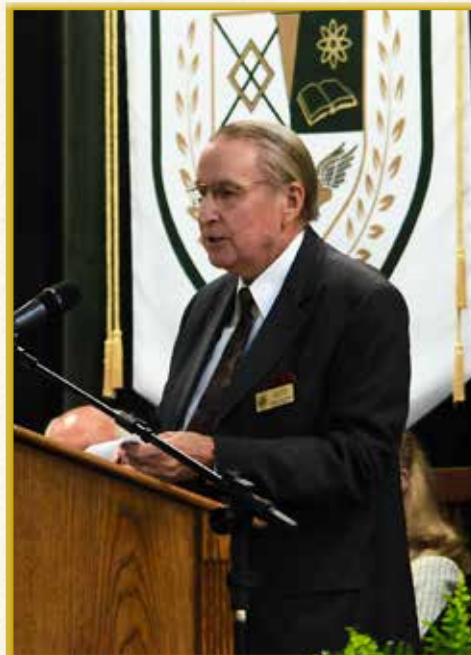
▶ TFS Board Chair Amy Atkinson delivers remarks to the Class of 2017.



▶ Emma Peacock of Clarkesville delivers the salutatorian address.



▶ Co-valedictorian Michael Weidner of Clarkesville delivers his address.



▶ This very special group of 15 seniors have attended TFS since middle school.

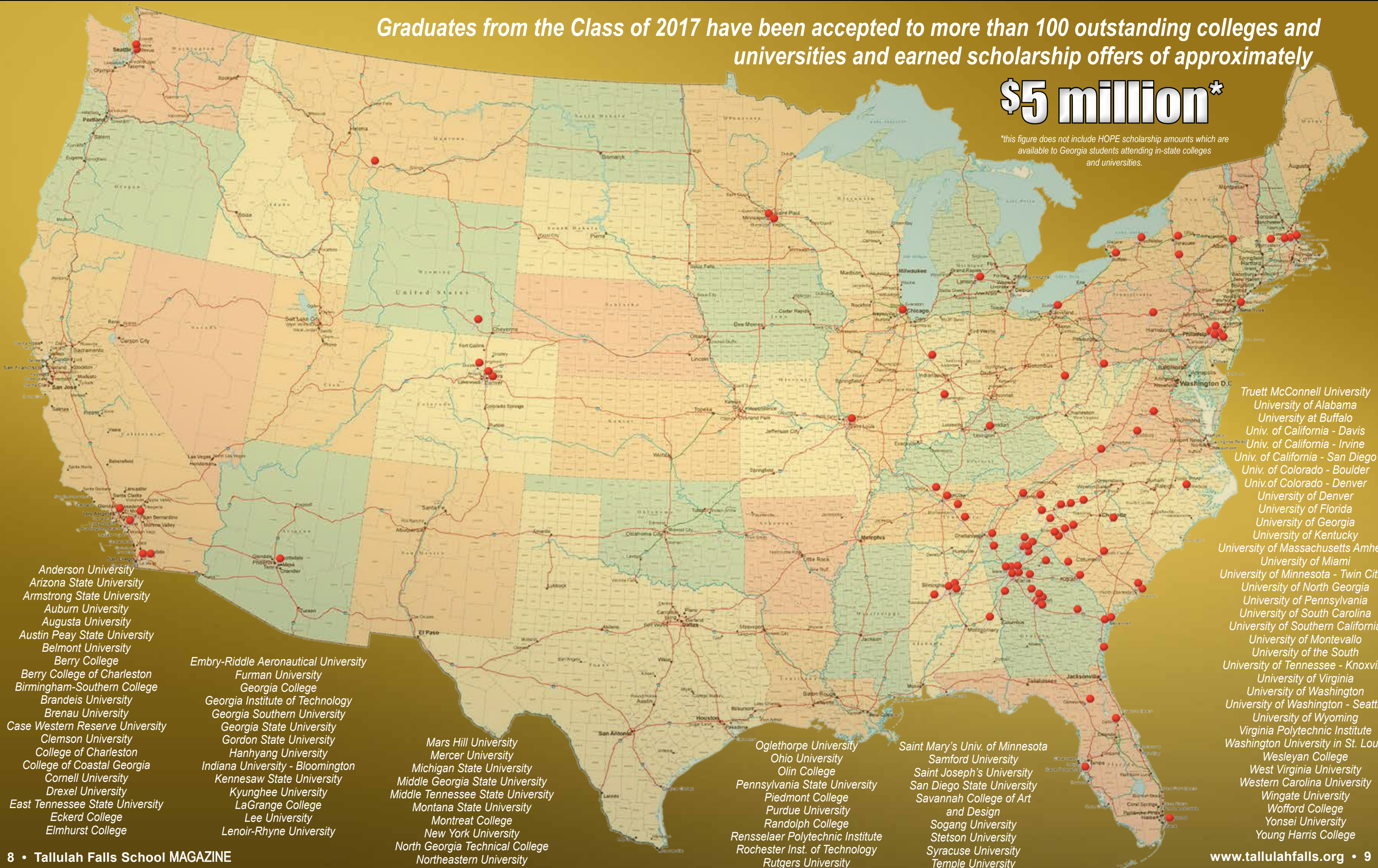
▶ Co-valedictorian Thomas Draper Smith of Eastanollee speaks to the crowd.



Graduates from the Class of 2017 have been accepted to more than 100 outstanding colleges and universities and earned scholarship offers of approximately

**\$5 million\***

*\*this figure does not include HOPE scholarship amounts which are available to Georgia students attending in-state colleges and universities.*



- Anderson University
- Arizona State University
- Armstrong State University
- Auburn University
- Augusta University
- Austin Peay State University
- Belmont University
- Berry College
- Berry College of Charleston
- Birmingham-Southern College
- Brandeis University
- Brenau University
- Case Western Reserve University
- Clemson University
- College of Charleston
- College of Coastal Georgia
- Cornell University
- Drexel University
- East Tennessee State University
- Eckerd College
- Elmhurst College

- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University
- Furman University
- Georgia College
- Georgia Institute of Technology
- Georgia Southern University
- Georgia State University
- Gordon State University
- Hanhyang University
- Indiana University - Bloomington
- Kennesaw State University
- Kyunghee University
- LaGrange College
- Lee University
- Lenoir-Rhyne University

- Mars Hill University
- Mercer University
- Michigan State University
- Middle Georgia State University
- Middle Tennessee State University
- Montana State University
- Montreat College
- New York University
- North Georgia Technical College
- Northeastern University

- Oglethorpe University
- Ohio University
- Olin College
- Pennsylvania State University
- Piedmont College
- Purdue University
- Randolph College
- Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- Rochester Inst. of Technology
- Rutgers University

- Saint Mary's Univ. of Minnesota
- Samford University
- Saint Joseph's University
- San Diego State University
- Savannah College of Art and Design
- Sogang University
- Stetson University
- Syracuse University
- Temple University

- Truett McConnell University
- University of Alabama
- University at Buffalo
- Univ. of California - Davis
- Univ. of California - Irvine
- Univ. of California - San Diego
- Univ. of Colorado - Boulder
- Univ. of Colorado - Denver
- University of Denver
- University of Florida
- University of Georgia
- University of Kentucky
- University of Massachusetts Amherst
- University of Miami
- University of Minnesota - Twin Cities
- University of North Georgia
- University of Pennsylvania
- University of South Carolina
- University of Southern California
- University of Montevallo
- University of the South
- University of Tennessee - Knoxville
- University of Virginia
- University of Washington
- University of Washington - Seattle
- University of Wyoming
- Virginia Polytechnic Institute
- Washington University in St. Louis
- Wesleyan College
- West Virginia University
- Western Carolina University
- Wingate University
- Wofford College
- Yonsei University
- Young Harris College

*On the move...* **Eighth Grade commencement**



**The Class of 2021**

photos by E. Lane Gresham

May 16 was the night for 60 excited middle school students as they began their long-awaited transition into high school. At the conclusion of eighth grade commencement this impressive group destined to become the Class of 2021 became the newest members of the TFS upper school. Congratulations. Your adventure awaits.

- |                     |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Selah Anderson      | Collin Kelly       |
| Anna Barrett        | Dahyun Kim         |
| Grant Barron        | Grace Kim          |
| Grey Bourlet        | Andrew Kivett      |
| Allie Kate Campbell | Mia Kwarteng       |
| Abby Carlan         | Alan Lan           |
| Baylor Carnes       | Seunggyun Lee      |
| Caleb Carter        | Josh Llanas        |
| Cain Chitwood       | Baylee MacBeth     |
| Chathan Clouatre    | Kally Momoh        |
| Sydney Coffey       | Chaz Mullis        |
| Alyssa Cone         | Sydney Murdock     |
| Maddie Cope         | Janki Patel        |
| Gianna Diaz         | Simeon Respress    |
| Aaliyah Doddridge   | Olivia Rogowski    |
| Hagan Eubank        | Shepherd B. Roland |
| Ben Fisher          | Mary Sanders       |
| Emily Gay           | Jordan Seamon      |
| Jack Greene         | Eli Sims           |
| Joe Griswold        | Yuze Sui           |
| Peyton Gunn         | Billy Tang         |
| Brinson Hall        | Iy Tilley          |
| Eli Higbie          | Zyan Turk          |
| Evan Hogan          | Caroline Turpin    |
| Shawn Huebner       | Anna Waites        |
| Camden Hughes       | Morgan Webb        |
| Logan Huling        | Charlie Wei        |
| Maggie Jackson      | Gigi Welch         |
| Fendi Jean-Louis    | Tate Whitfield     |
| Rebekah Jennings    | Megan Zimmerman    |



**Eighth Grade Address  
Maggie Jackson**



**Eighth Grade Address  
Collin Kelly**



Science and Spanish teacher Zach Roland poses with (from left) Selah Anderson, Caroline Turpin, Gigi Welch, Maggie Jackson and Brinson Hall after commencement.

**Middle School Awards Night 2017**



**Boarding Student of the Year  
Cain Chitwood**  
presented by  
Dean of Students Jimmy Franklin



**Indian Athletes of the Year  
Chathan Clouatre and Maggie Jackson**  
presented by Athletic Director Scott Neal



Administrative assistant Jonathan Roberts fires up the middle school before the awards night proceedings.



**Outstanding 5th Grade Student  
Brooke Hayes**  
presented by Stacie Besier (left)  
and Chrissy Van Hooser



**Outstanding 6th Grade Student  
Sarah Jennings**  
presented by Annette Shirley  
and Zach Roland



**Outstanding 7th Grade Student  
Sophie Herrera**  
presented by Nancy Almoyan



**Outstanding 8th Grade Student  
Brinson Hall**  
presented by (left to right): Bill Coldren, Killeen Jensen,  
Hannah Gibson, Jane Shoemaker



**Middle School "House of the Year"  
The Ravens**

visit the TFS website and check out the "News and Events" section for a complete listing of middle school awards.  
[www.tallulahfalls.org](http://www.tallulahfalls.org)

# senior CAPSTONE projects

This multifaceted assignment serves as a culminating academic and intellectual experience for TFS students during their senior year.

During their final year at Tallulah Falls School, seniors are engaged in a class which provides highly practical applications for life. The class is called Capstone and is taught in tandem with a Life Skills component.

TFS seniors rotate between the two classes every two weeks. For the 2016-17 academic year the Capstone class was taught by Sara Roberts ('04) and the Life Skills component was taught by Dallas Barron. Each class is worth one-half credit toward graduation. Beginning in the 2017-18 academic year Life Skills and Capstone will combine into one class simply called Capstone and will be worth one full credit. Next year's class will be co-taught by Roberts and Barron.

Throughout their Capstone experience TFS students engage in a wide variety of projects designed to encourage critical thinking and problem solving, develop oral communications skills, public speaking skills, media literacy, teamwork, planning and goal setting.

In most cases, Capstone projects are interdisciplinary in the sense that they require students to apply skills across different subject areas or domains of knowledge. Several of the Capstone components spill over into other academic classes as well, such as a research paper which students will later defend or writing a letter to a public or government official.

In preparation for Capstone, each student chooses a research topic during their junior year. Once they become a senior, Capstone requires each student to thoroughly research and explore their topic. Their work culminates at the end of the year where they display their results at the Capstone Fair and defend their topic in a final speech before a panel of judges composed of community and business leaders.



Thala Freeman of Liberia at the Capstone Fair held at the end of the academic year.

## practical preparation for success in life



Mark Faingold of Russia (far right) explains his project to TFS math teacher Jacquie Earp (center) and a group of her students.

The Capstone project pays immediate dividends for seniors as students regularly review skills needed to successfully interview with colleges or prospective employers. Students also practice filling out employment applications and applying for various scholarships.

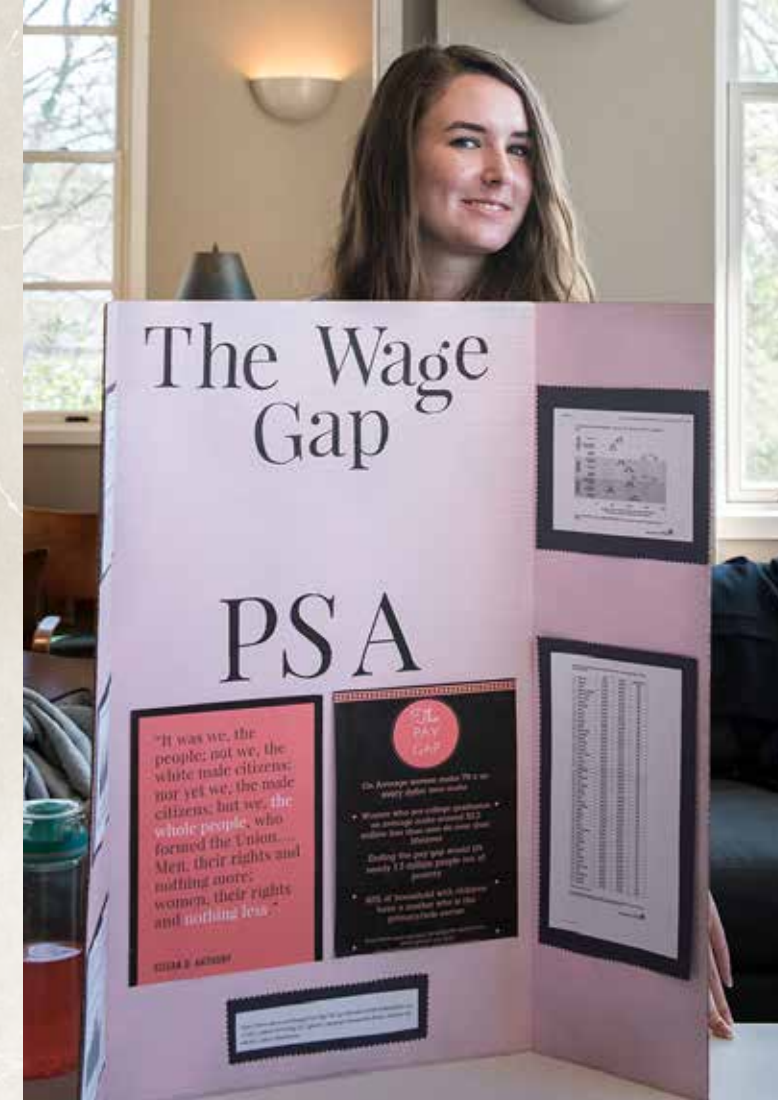
Capstone also prepares seniors for the 'real world' of life after high school and college by requiring mandatory job shadowing as well as completion of school and community service hours. In addition, students learn to properly fill out an employment application and solicit letters of recommendation, skills that will be critical in their very near future.

Developing excellent interviewing skills is also a critical component of Capstone. Students learn the importance of interviewing for college admissions, scholarships, and current and future employment. They learn how to listen and properly answer questions and how to interact with an interviewer and present themselves in a positive, professional manner.



Draper Smith of Eastanollee demonstrating confidence in defense of his Capstone project.

photos by E. Lane Gresham



Mary Kate Smith of Clarkesville with her Capstone project exploring the wage gap between men and women in the United States.

Capstone also provides an opportunity for seniors to address one of the issues that most students, and many adults, list as one they fear most - public speaking. Students have ample opportunity throughout their senior year in Capstone to develop and refine their public speaking and presentation skills.

Capstone projects also encourage students to connect their projects to community issues or problems and to integrate outside-of-school learning experiences, including interviews, scientific observations, or internships.

Assembling a Capstone portfolio is a requirement of the class. The portfolio includes a collection of their best works from across their high school experience. During the spring semester seniors must present their portfolios along with research and experiences to peers, teachers, and evaluators.

The Capstone class continues to be improved and strengthened to provide for the best preparation possible for graduating seniors to become successful and productive in their post-TFS years. ♦





# Batter Up!

story by E. Lane Gresham/ photos by Brian A. Boyd

## Newly-named facility honors Higgins family contributions

Saturday, March 4 was a rebirth of sorts for the TFS baseball program as a large, enthusiastic crowd turned out for the dedication of the recently-completed Higgins Baseball Complex.

Higgins Construction of Cornelia donated a tremendous amount of both labor and materials toward the complete renovation of the field and facilities, according to President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy.

A beautiful late winter morning provided the perfect backdrop for the brief ceremony held prior to the middle school game naming the complex for the Higgins family, which includes Don Higgins, owner of Higgins Construction Company.

The upgraded complex bears little resemblance to the dated facility constructed in the 1990s. The upgrades included re-grading of the site, creation of additional parking areas, grading of the road between the baseball and soccer fields and construction of a two-story building to include a concessions area, two restrooms, press box, locker room and coaches area.

Tallulah Falls School contributed to the project by building a new indoor training facility featuring batting and pitching cages, and the construction of a three-foot safety wall and backstop behind home plate. The playing surface received several upgrades in addition to new fencing around the field and a beautiful new TFS-themed scoreboard in right-center field.

"The spectator experience at the field has been greatly en-

hanced with new bleachers adjacent to both dugouts," Peevy said.

"We very much appreciate the solid relationship we have with the Higgins family and look forward to showcasing this project as part of our ongoing efforts to enhance our campus," Peevy added.

"We especially appreciate the detailed oversight of the project by D Higgins."

The pregame naming ceremony was led by Peevy and TFS Board Chair Amy Atkinson. The ceremony focused on the partnership with Don Higgins with his family, including wife Sally, children and grandchildren.

Peevy praised the significant contributions by the Higgins family to create the spectacular venue. Atkinson, speaking on behalf of the TFS Board of Trustees, followed with additional remarks praising the family's generosity. The board had previously approved, by unanimous vote, the naming of the complex to honor the partnership with the Higgins family.

With the tug of a rope, large letters high up on the press box proclaiming the "Higgins Baseball Complex" were unveiled to the cheers of the appreciative crowd. Higgins also drew loud applause as he threw out the first ball officially opening the facility. Appropriately, Higgins' grandson Aubrey, a TFS seventh grader, took the mound for the Indians in the middle school game following, making it a true family affair.

"We very much appreciate the investment this family is making in the Tallulah Falls School community," Peevy added.

## Higgins Baseball Complex



Left: Don Higgins, owner of Higgins Construction and grandfather of TFS seventh grader Aubrey Higgins, threw out the first ball at the TFS middle school baseball game following the dedication ceremony.



Family affair: Members of the Higgins family join TFS Board Chair Amy Atkinson (third from right) and TFS President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy (second from right) for the naming ceremony.



The varsity baseball team is shown training in the new indoor facility that was part of the renovation project. The facility includes batting and pitching cages.



From left: Mark Wilcox, varsity baseball coach, Don Higgins, Amy Atkinson, TFS Board Chair, and Larry A. Peevy in front of the beautiful new building featuring a press box, concessions, restrooms, lockers and coaching offices.



The view from the press box of the newly renovated field.



# Celebrate the ARTS

April 27 was a night to celebrate excellence in the arts at TFS. The occasion was the second annual *Evening of the Arts* which transformed the Circle building lobby and Gertrude Long Harris Theater into a fine arts center showcasing the work of TFS upper school students in culinary arts, visual arts, music, drama, chorus and video production.

An enthusiastic and appreciative crowd of parents, family, friends, faculty and students were treated to an art show, refreshments, student videos and a wide range of quality live performances which included drama, handbells and chorus.

Top right: Sophomore Tamuna Khelashvili serves a tray of delicious hors d'oeuvres prepared by students in culinary arts.

Top left: Parent Kristina Crosby pauses to admire and take a photo of student artwork on display.

Right: Guitar I students perform for guests in the Circle building lobby. From left: Noah Metcalf, Eli Clouatre, Patricio Casamitjana Lemus, Faith Kellar, Maria Whitson and Sierra Alley.



photos by E. Lane Gresham

## Presenting TICKET TO BROADWAY TFS on BROADWAY



The Tallulah Falls School music program presented "TFS on Broadway," a concert featuring classic Broadway tunes. The performance was held in the Gertrude Long Harris Theater and featured popular selections from *Seussical: The Musical*, *Annie* and *Phantom of the Opera*. The production was under the direction of choral instructor Memrie Cox and handbell instructor Curt Frederick.



TFS senior Sam Griswold as private eye 'Nick Noir' in his last performance as a veteran member of the TFS Players.

# tfs players present Death by Chocolate

a deliciously funny production

The TFS Players had a murder mystery on their hands in their latest production, *Death by Chocolate*, presented March 24 and 25 in the Gertrude Long Harris Theater.

*Death by Chocolate* is the story of Nick Noir, an 'ace private eye' who is down on his luck until contacted to investigate the mysterious death of 'Vinnie the Leech' at a local coffee shop, Precious Perks. The shop is owned by the Purvis twins and is famous for its signature drink, Death by Chocolate. This humorous play boasts a colorful cast of suspects that keeps the audience guessing until the very end.

*Death by Chocolate* featured TFS senior Samuel Griswold in the lead role of detective Nick Noir. Griswold has attended Tallulah Falls School since the seventh grade, and began acting in the eighth grade. *Death by Chocolate* marks the drama veteran's last show at TFS.

Carrie Elrod, TFS drama teacher, was "very pleased" with the outcome of the production. "The actors put in many hours rehearsing dialogue and blocking," Elrod said, "while the tech crews worked to create a fully realized and cohesive world onstage through the costumes, props, sets, sound and lights."

"The results of all this hard work was a very entertaining production that was truly enjoyable to watch."



Above: senior Emily Hall (left) as 'Bobbie Sue Cash' and sophomore Ara Belk as 'Juniper Berry.'



Top center right: Sophomore Taylor Huling as 'Selma' and senior Max Teems as 'Francois LePew.'



Above: Freshman Rylan Pugh as 'Henry Higgins Hickenbottom.'

Bottom center: Sophomore Julia James (left) as 'Bonbon Purvis' and Sidney Butikofer (right) as 'Coco Purvis.'

# Elachee Adventure

photos by E. Lane Gresham



Henry Rickman

Fifth graders ventured to the Elachee Nature Science Center in Oakwood on April 27. The academic trip featured an opportunity for the inquisitive young students to use skills they honed throughout the year in a variety of practical scientific applications.

Students deciphered mathematical clues to identify animals native to Georgia, hiked through the woods using measuring skills and toured the animal room to practice using a tally system to count species.

“We chose this field trip because we thought it would be good for the students to see a link between science and math. I think they showed it well at the Elachee center,” said Chrissy Van Hooser, fifth grade teacher.



Lawson Fulbright, Keygan Antosiak, Henry Rickman



Joseph McGahee



Grace Docsol



Austin Ball

## Students serve on local chamber junior board of directors

TFS President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy is pictured with eight TFS students selected as members of the 2016-17 Habersham Chamber of Commerce Junior Board of Directors. Junior board members must be either a junior or senior, have a high grade point average, demonstrate proven leadership abilities and have a desire to learn more about Habersham County and its local businesses. As junior board members, students learn how to develop their own leadership styles in high school and college and hear from local community leaders regarding the importance of the local chamber.

Peevy, who is currently serving as the president of the Habersham Chamber Board of Directors, expressed his pride in the dedication that his students demonstrated as members of the junior chamber board.



front row, from left: Grace Brewer, Perry Gresham, Larry A. Peevy, Olivia Little, Reagan Bates. Back row, from left: Reece Bates, Kayley Pugh, Cody Reynolds, Eli Cloutre.

## Journalism trio earns NSPA honors

Three TFS journalism students have been named to the National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA) Honor Roll of Student Journalists. Grace Brewer, Abby Hulsey and Julia Nichols were selected for their work on an NSPA member publication for two or more years while maintaining a grade point average of at least 3.5 on a four-point scale. The trio of young journalists are shown here presenting a preview copy of the 2017 yearbook, *Legend*, to President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy.

“All three of these students are leaders and have special strengths and talents,” said Shelby Day, journalism teacher. “We could not have made such a great yearbook without these outstanding young ladies.”



President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy proudly accepts a copy of the 2017 yearbook, ‘Legend.’

## Middle school’s un-bee-lievable spellers

Mary Ellen Sanders and Nafis Rahman represented Tallulah Falls School in the Georgia Independent School Association State Spelling Bee. Round one was held Feb. 9 at Cumberland Academy in Sandy Springs. Rounds two and three were held at the Atlanta Academy in Roswell. Both venues provided an opportunity for competition against dozens of independent school students from North Georgia.

Sanders, an eighth grader from Hartwell,

and Rahman, a seventh grader from Mt. Airy, both performed well. In the end it was Sanders who advanced into round three before finally bowing out of the competition.

“Mary Ellen swept the TFS spelling bee in all three years she attended the middle school,” said Nancy Almoyan, world history/world geography teacher. “She has been a wonderful representative of Tallulah Falls School and has left a tremendous legacy in this event.”



Mary Ellen Sanders



Nafis Rahman



## Stock market club soars

Five TFS students may just have a career on Wall Street waiting as their team was the region winner in the Georgia Council for Economic Education Stock Market Game. (From left) Yuting Zhang, Emma Caldwell, Tommy Fisher, Rachel Richardson and Tegan Thomas competed as a team in the contest hosted by the GCEE. The class was taught by TFS social studies teacher Dallas Barron.

For ten weeks the team invested \$100,000 in ‘game money.’ Following the live stock market, the team held a diversified portfolio and researched current events to determine an investment strategy. At the conclusion of the ten weeks the team had an overall portfolio value of \$110,983.60. Among Northeast Georgia Independent School region, the TFS team secured first place and a 14th place ranking among 3,066 teams in the state.

## 2017 Prom King and Queen

The 2017 prom was held on Saturday April 1 at the beautiful Chota Falls facility in Tiger. Around 8 p.m. parents and friends of TFS seniors gathered around the dance floor to witness the recognition of the Class of 2017 as seniors and their dates descended a grand staircase.

Dean of Students Jimmy Franklin revealed the results of a secret, peer-selected vote, naming Michael Weidner of Clarkesville as Prom King and Sola Sofela of Nigeria as Prom Queen. Immediately after the announcement, President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy and TFS Board Chair Amy Atkinson had the honor of enjoying a ‘first dance’ with the newly-minted royalty.



From left: Michael Weidner, Amy Atkinson, Larry A. Peevy and Sola Sofela.



### Leadership expertise

Dr. Judy Taylor, President of the Habersham County Chamber of Commerce, spoke to TFS upper school students in Tom Tilley's leadership class on March 28. Dr. Taylor spoke about the differing types of leadership and the importance of good leadership to the success of any organization. Under Dr. Taylor's direction the Habersham County Chamber of Commerce has grown to include more than 500 business members and more than 900 member representatives and provides leadership programs that groom the future leadership for Habersham County, including the STAR Student/STAR Teacher and partners in education.

### Shakespeare with a twist



A group of young thespians from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts performed a contemporary one act version of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for middle school students on May 8. The students formed their own touring company and received a grant to present their show to schools across Georgia. President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy and TFS drama instructor Carrie Elrod pose with the troupe just before showtime. After the performance the troupe met with Elrod's upper school drama classes, answering questions about college and their drama experiences.



### Forging a strong bond with Tallulah Falls

Tallulah Falls newly-sworn in mayor, Teri Dobbs, met with President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy on campus recently. Keeping a strong relationship between the town and the school was the primary reason for the meeting, according to Peevy.



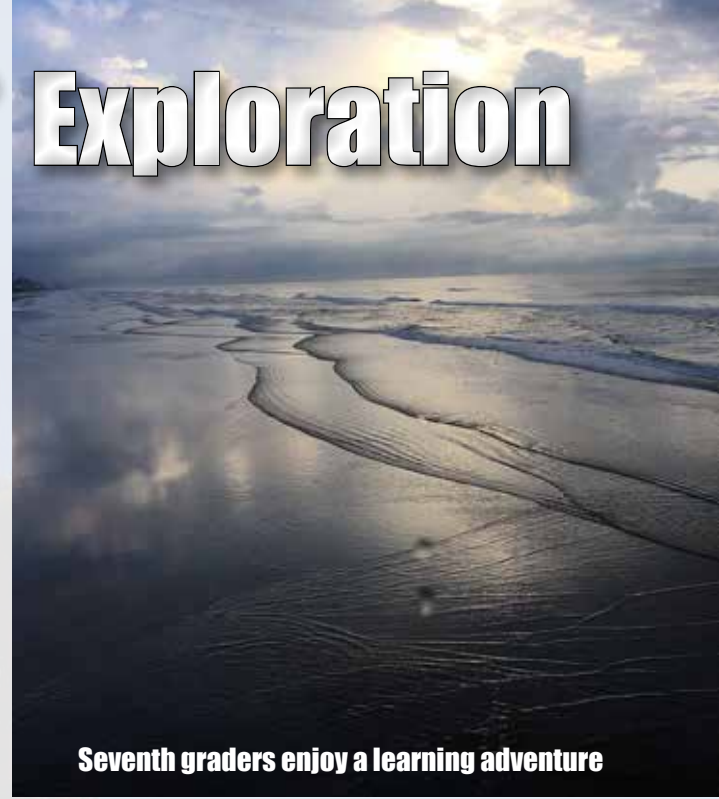
"We appreciate our connection to all local governments," he said. "But our closest neighbor is Tallulah Falls. The school enjoys a strong partnership with the town, with our students enjoying the lake throughout the year and the annual Christmas celebration. We also maintain regular communication with the police and fire departments; we appreciate having public safety personnel so close to campus."

### Combat veteran shares experiences with students

Lt. Mike Moraigh (U.S. Army retired) spoke to Tom Tilley's social studies class about his experiences in the Vietnam war and in Operation Desert Storm. Moraigh, who lives in Clayton, enlisted in the army in 1967 and served as a tank driver, gunner, loader and tank commander during his tour. After years as a civilian Moraigh re-entered the military in 1990 where he served in Operation Desert Storm. Moraigh operated the sophisticated Abrams tank weapons system and was part of the historic force which raced across the Iraqi desert to help topple Saddam Hussein. Moraigh guided Tilley's students through a discussion on current world events and challenged them regarding the role that the United States plays in world conflicts.



# SPACE COAST Exploration



Seventh graders enjoy a learning adventure

It's become a rite of passage for TFS seventh graders - the annual week on the Florida coast to end the school year. Seventh graders were able to expose their naturally inquisitive nature to an environment rich with fascinating learning opportunities.

On the very first full day in on the coast the group paid a visit to Kennedy Space Center, the home of America's pioneering space program. Here they were taught a lesson by a NASA instructor on aeronautics research. They also participated in a flight simulation ride and were even able to eat lunch with an astronaut.

One of the trip's special moments took place as TFS President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy spoke to the group about his father's work on the project Apollo Saturn V launch vehicle while working with IBM in Huntsville, Alabama.

Kim McClurg, seventh grade English teacher said, "The students were enthralled with Mr. Peevy's stories about his childhood and memories of his father working on this very important project that sent men to the moon."



"Maybe I want to be an astronaut," said Reagan Brode, seventh grade student. "Today I became really interested in space. Visiting the Kennedy Space Center made me consider space as an occupation."

Another highlight of the trip was the annual visit to Marineland near St. Augustine. TFS students were able to learn about dolphins by interacting with these playful creatures. While in historic St. Augustine the students explored America's oldest city as they enjoyed a trolley tour.

Other adventures included a visit to the Marine Science Center on Daytona Beach. Throughout the week students ate incredible local fare including restaurants such as Racing's North Turn Restaurant, the site of the first Daytona 500.

A tired group of seventh graders returned to campus on Friday afternoon with an equally exhausted group of teachers/chaperons, led by the indomitable TFS Dean of Students, Jimmy Franklin, a veteran of the seventh grade Florida trip.

Brinna Docsol of Toccoa put a nice finishing touch on the trip as she said, "There were certain things about this trip that made it the best week of my life!"



Top left: Josh Jackson of Alto experiences an astronaut's perspective as he dons a space suit from the space shuttle era.

Bottom left: President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy talks to the seventh graders about the role his father played in the development of the massive Saturn V launch vehicle from the Apollo program.

Right: A group of seventh grade boys interact with a playful dolphin.



## Shirla "Bitsy" DeMore 2017 Outstanding Former Student

A graduate with deep family ties to Tallulah Falls School, Shirla "Bitsy" Ivester DeMore, was named the 2017 Outstanding Former Student. DeMore, a 1970 TFS graduate, received the award at this year's Alumni Homecoming luncheon on April 22. DeMore's TFS connection does indeed run deep as she was the last of nine children from her family to graduate from TFS.

Following her graduation DeMore continued her relationship with Tallulah Falls School, working in the school's business office from 1973-74. She then later became involved in The Light of Tallulah Woman's Club which supports the school.

DeMore attended business classes at Gainesville Junior College before beginning what has become an extremely successful career in business and banking. She is currently the owner of DeMore Financial Services in Clarkesville where she is responsible for managing more than 600 accounts in wealth management and estate planning.

DeMore's professional credentials include membership in the Prudential Annuities Master Council, AIG Platinum Advisor, Met Life Platinum Circle and she is a Million Dollar Round Table Earner.

DeMore is heavily invested in her community and is active in the Clarkesville Rotary Club, Clarkesville Business Association and the Habersham Chamber of Commerce.



She is a two-time recipient of the Robert S. Stubbs Guardian of Ethics Award (2013 and 2015) and is a past recipient of the American Cancer Society Relay for Life Rookie Team of the Year Award.

In addition to her many professional and community distinctions, DeMore and her husband, Michael, have been married for 46 years and have three children and four grandchildren, two of which attend TFS. She also takes great personal pride in her work with Shirley Grove Baptist Church.

DeMore continues to be involved in TFS student activities and has attended numerous Alumni Homecomings over the years. She continues her involvement with her high school alma mater through her involvement in various civic organizations.

Congratulations to Shirla "Bitsy" DeMore, the TFS Outstanding Former Student for 2017. ■

DeMore enjoyed a long and successful career in business and banking before launching DeMore Financial Services in Clarkesville where she currently manages more than 600 accounts in wealth management and estate planning.

## Class of '56 alum shares TFS recollections with Covington Woman's club

Eighty-year-old Delano Harper, a member of the TFS Class of 1956, spoke to the Covington Woman's Club on April 11 as part of their program, "Heritage and History of Tallulah Falls School." Harper is a lifetime Newton County resident but left home for three years in order to attend TFS.

Harper entertained the Covington Woman's Club ladies with stories and recollections about his life and adventures at TFS, including stories from his classroom experiences and life as a boarding student in the 1950s.

He is shown here with club member Vickie Henry holding a photo from the TFS Class of 1956 senior trip to Washington, D.C. In the photo Harper is the tallest person pictured in the center of the photo. Harper could not only name each person in the photo, but told stories about each of his classmates. Harper concluded his presentation by sharing stories from last year's 60th reunion of the Class of '56.



## Malcolm Jones '11 Young alum speaks to middle schoolers about college and life

Class of 2011 graduate Malcolm Jones recently returned to TFS and spoke to a group of eighth graders about his college experience. Jones, who is a student at Emory University, was joined by Hugh Hunter, a career counselor at Mercer University. The pair led a discussion of goals and dreams, selecting a college, the college environment, fields of study and creating a successful team.

Jones was the valedictorian for the TFS Class of 2011. He is scheduled to graduate from Emory University in June and plans to attend the University of Southern California to pursue a postgraduate degree. He has been awarded the prestigious Bill and Melinda Gates Scholarship which is worth approximately \$250,000. He is shown at left with his former middle school teacher, TFS veteran educator Killeen Jensen.



## FURY at the FARM adventure/obstacle race

### Alumni Homecoming 2017

### OFFICIAL RESULTS:

**Individual (Male)**  
Overall winner  
Michael Weidner - 20:35  
Masters division winner  
Marty Moore - 26:06

**Individual (Female)**  
Overall winner  
Bailey Aderholt - 23:14  
Masters division  
Jennifer Dunlap - 24:55  
Alumni  
Sara Roberts-27:54

**Team winners (male)**  
Overall winners  
Eli Sims/Collin Kelly  
46:19 combined time  
Family winners  
Tony Whitener/Barrett Whitener  
60:48 combined time  
Student winners  
Riley Barron/Sam Dunlap  
47:29 combined time

**Team winners (female)**  
Brandi Lott/Sherry Lott  
62:28 combined time



Overall winner Michael Weidner high-fives Alumni winner Sara Roberts '04.



One of the obstacles along the course



Fury at the Farm has proven popular with participants of all ages.



A young participant scrambles up the final hill.



## Portrait of 'The Duchess' comes home

*A new portrait of one of Tallulah Falls School's grand ladies was unveiled at this year's alumni homecoming luncheon.*

Mrs. Ida Lee Hester Fitzpatrick, the "Duchess of Tallulah," resident trustee and TFS director from 1932-1951, provided steady leadership during a period of early growth at the school. For many years a large portrait of Mrs. Fitzpatrick hung in the Willet administration building. Some years back the painting was improperly restored and had deteriorated beyond repair, according to TFS President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy. After seeking professional advice on restoration of the painting, TFS alum Comell Watts Moore ('56) of Cumming graciously offered to commission a reproduction.

"We are grateful to Mrs. Moore for making this possible," Peevy said. "She wanted to ensure Mrs. Fitzpatrick's legacy would be

remembered."

Prior to her time at Tallulah Falls School, Fitzpatrick served in leadership with the Georgia Federation of Women's Clubs. During her tenure, in 1937, the word "Industrial" was removed from the school's charter, and the school became known simply as Tallulah Falls School.

Fitzpatrick continued to live on campus after her retirement in 1951. She originally lived in the trustees cottage but later moved into a private suite in the Willet Building. Fitzpatrick died in August 1958 at the age 93. The school's first swimming pool, formerly located across from present day Giddings Cottage (TFS museum), was named for her in 1927. In 1963 the boys dorm was named Fitzpatrick Hall.

## Lowder perpetual 'pays it forward'

A perpetual scholarship has been established by Bill Lowder ('64) in honor of his brother, Sam, who graduated from TFS in 1961. Bill shared a few words about his brother and the impact the school played on his life at this year's alumni homecoming luncheon.

"My brother, Sam Lowder, passed away this past July. It was always a joy for him to come back to TFS to reminisce with returning classmates and to make new friends. He graduated from TFS in 1961, the year he captained the Indians football team. He met his wife, Jackie Land Lowder, during the four years he attended here."

"Through his time here he learned the discipline of hard work, consistent study habits and achieved significant growth in confidence. He went on to college and obtained both undergraduate and graduate degrees."

"To honor Sam and help continue the successful impact on student lives that occurs at TFS, we would like to establish the Sam Lowder Memorial Scholarship Fund. He and I both attended here on full scholarships. We view this as an avenue to encourage family and friends to pay it forward."



Alumni Homecoming 2017 marked the 50th anniversary for the TFS Class of 1967. Several members of the original 36 were able to make the trip back to TFS to reminisce on this special occasion. Pictured here are alums from the Class of 1967 (and a few of their friends). From left: Wes Nolan '67, Ralph Daniel '67, Jerri Lanier '67, Rosemary Flippin Waters '67, Joyce Miller Hardeman '67, Peggy Sue Smith Lanier '67, Rita Watson Smith '67, Rev. James E. Turpen, Sr. '55 (former TFS Dean of Students), Catherine Turpen (TFS teacher from 1962-65), Randall Cowart '66, Tommy Smith '67.



## A special year in TFS athletics ATHLETIC DIRECTOR • SCOTT NEAL



Dear TFS family and friends,

The mission of TFS athletics is to develop GREAT character, competence and competitiveness, to host GREAT events and to create a Season of Significance. These traits have thrived during our 2016-17 sports year.

TFS athletic teams performed at a record high and overall had some of the highest numbers of participants ever. Our girls volleyball squad advanced to the state playoffs for the second year in a row; cross country had the strongest team in the last 25 years; varsity girls basketball tied for the most wins in a season and finished ranked highest in school history; JV and varsity boys basketball finished with record wins and earned their way into the state tournament "Sweet 16;" and our cheerleaders, whose motto is "Loud, Proud, and Positive," clearly outshine other spirit squads in their basketball support. The swim team's seasonal and state success, including a TFS record number of state finalists, reflect a well respected and highly competitive program.

The baseball program was quickly rebuilt with eight wins and a new culture; golf continues to thrive with the girls finishing as Area Runner-up and the boys team featuring the Area individual champion; tennis was highly competitive throughout the season and had a top Area competitor; and both boys and girls track & field teams finished in the Elite 8 at the State Championships, including a state champion and four state runner-up places.

Other notable accomplishments include numerous school records set in various sports and individual athletes earned All State, All Area/Region, and High Point awards. Four of the five spring middle school sports won the Tri State Conference championships and five high school and five middle school teams demonstrated the GREAT concept by receiving conference sportsmanship awards. In addition, our teams sought to be GREAT TFS and community members by volunteering for assorted and myriad causes.

Two Indians signed to compete competitively in college following graduation and two others were invited as preferred walk-ons. We provide signing celebrations, end-of-season team parties, and seasonal banquets that provide an uncommon and memorable experience for

our athletes and families.

Dr. Stuart Sanders, a renowned local doctor with various Olympic and elite level physician experience, will become our team doctor. Additionally, we will implement a full-time certified athletic trainer (ATC), an athletic medical professional who will help prevent, rehabilitate and guide TFS athletes in increased safety, nutrition, recovery and performance.

For the 2016-17 year, athletic revenue increased approximately 25% – concessions were stocked with fan favorite foods and passionate volunteers to improve significantly the overall fan experience. We also implemented half-time contests, player and contest music, enhanced announcing and a square reader for credit card purchases. Contest streaming, Tribe meetings, GREAT Tribe Moments, Facebook Live, increased media coverage, photo galleries (including cultivating parent photographers) improved the promotion of TFS athletics.

Whether providing impressive snacks/food for officials, themed contests, culinary arts cooked dinners, inter- and intra-squad cookouts, team bonding activities, hosting playoffs or championships or celebrating our athletic seniors with flair, hosting GREAT events promotes TFS as unique, memorable and "the place" to be a student-athlete.

Our coaches are highly-respected in the region and in the state by their colleagues. Most importantly, our coaches continue to be GREAT role models and mentors for our young people and leaders of education-based athletics. TFS recently hosted a college athletic recruiting seminar in order to educate parents and athletes regarding the process of competing at the next level.

TFS student-athletes lack for nothing in regards to equipment. The new Student Activity Center and the Higgins Baseball Complex have been incredible additions and are representative of the quality we envision. Planning is underway for a new natatorium and construction will begin over the summer. This magnificent new facility is being constructed with the same vision of functional and aesthetic prominence in mind.

The 2016-17 sports year has distinctly been GREAT. We look forward to 2017-18, sure to be a year of athletic excellence!



One of highlights of the year was the 19-0 start by the varsity boys basketball team and a trip to the Sweet Sixteen.

## Nichols named a finalist for Dooley scholarship honors



Julia Nichols - Dooley Award finalist

TFS senior Julia Nichols of Clarkesville was selected as one of 10 female finalists for the 10th annual Vincent J. Dooley Scholarship Award. This prestigious award is presented by Athletes for a Better World, an organization that promotes character, teamwork and citizenship through its Code for Living - Life Principles Learned Through Sports. Every high school in the state of Georgia is encouraged to nominate one male and one female athlete. Nichols' TFS classmate Michael Weidner was the male nominee from TFS.

By virtue of being one of the ten finalists Nichols was invited to attend an awards luncheon with other finalists held April 29 at the College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta.

"Since sixth grade Julia has balanced rigorous academics, athletic involvement and significant school and community influence," said TFS athletic director Scott Neal. "She has been instrumental in the character, competitiveness and lasting memories of her TFS sports teams."

"Julia presently holds four school swimming records and has qualified for state the last three years," Neal added. "She has also helped the team to qualify for state in golf and has left a tremendous legacy as a cross country manager."

"She also takes the initiative, has the ability to influence in a positive manner, demonstrates skillful organization and loves her teammates so much that she was appointed captain in cross country, even though she does not compete."

"Julia is outgoing but not the center of attention, highly organized but not a perfectionist, a people person who is equally adept behind the scenes creating excellence and an achiever unafraid to fail."

"I have participated in six sports during my time at TFS," said Nichols. "They are golf, swimming, cross country, tennis, cheering and track & field. Showing up on time, talking to your team and thinking about what is best for your team is something that I try to do every day whether we are at a meet, match, game or practice."

Julia is a highly-decorated athlete and in addition to lettering in multiple sports she is the senior class vice president, editor of the TFS yearbook, serves as a TFS Ambassador, and is a member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

*"I've coached her the last seven years and observe maturity well beyond her age; she is deeply respected and admired by her peers and she influences them in ways only a positive peer can."*

Scott Neal  
TFS Athletic Director

## TFS garners Region 8A and Tri-State Conference sportsmanship awards

**VARSITY • girls cross country • boys cross country • girls basketball • girls track & field • boys track & field**

*"It is an honor for our athletes to be recognized by high school region and middle school conference coaches for positive competitive interactions, poise and purposeful acts of sportsmanship."*

Scott Neal  
TFS Athletic Director

**MIDDLE SCHOOL • girls track & field (tie) • boys track & field • girls cross country • boys cross country • coed soccer (tie)**

Tallulah Falls School continues to build on a foundation and legacy of sportsmanship. The school recently received Region 8A sportsmanship awards in the following varsity sports: girls cross country, boys cross country, girls basketball, girls track & field and boys track & field. In addition, the middle school received Tri-State Conference sportsmanship awards in track & field, cross country and coed soccer.

"I am proud of our athletes who demonstrate that the process in which we pursue excellence together is critical to relationships and performance," said TFS athletic director Scott Neal.

"It is a privilege to participate in interscholastic sports at Tallulah Falls School so we want to utilize those opportunities to Be GREAT!"

## Pearce signs track & field NLI with Augusta University

Senior Zatrack Pearce of Decatur signed a National Letter of Intent (NLI) to compete in track & field for the navy and gray Jaguars at Augusta University (NCAA Division II-Peach Belt Conference) in Augusta.



Shown, front row, from left, are Zainab Pearce, Zatrack Pearce, Patrick Pearce; back row, from left, Ephraim Davis, assistant coach, Kim Popham, Upper School Academic Dean, Larry Peevy, President and Head of School, Scott Neal, Athletic Director and Jay Moss, dorm counselor.

"Zatrack commands respect and appreciation because he sets the principles of team first and genuinely shows love for his team while pursuing performance excellence (he holds five school records)," said coach Scott Neal, who praised Pearce's leadership, work ethic and maturity.



Michael Van Hooser

A three-time captain of the varsity boys basketball team, senior Michael Van Hooser will join the Tennessee State University Blue Raiders as a preferred walk-on for the 2017-18 season.

Van Hooser was a key factor as the TFS basketball program improved from eight wins in the 2014-15 season to 24 wins and a "Sweet 16" state tournament appearance this past season.

## Van Hooser headed to Middle Tennessee State University

Van Hooser led the team to 19 consecutive victories to open the season while earning Region 8A Player-of-the-Year runner up honors. In three years at TFS Van Hooser scored more than 1,000 points.

"We are happy to have Michael join the MTSU family as a preferred walk-on," said Coach Kermit Davis of MTSU, who is coming off a second consecutive run in the NCAA Tournament.

## Ward to take soccer skills to Anderson University

Senior Harry Ward of Toccoa on April 4 signed a National Letter of Intent to play soccer for the gold and black Trojans at Anderson University (NCAA Division II-South Atlantic Conference) in Anderson, SC.

According to Anderson University Head Coach Michael Zion, Ward will be on scholarship and is one of four incoming players, including two other freshmen and one transfer.

"We are very excited to welcome Harry to the Anderson University soccer program. Harry is a skillful player with a great mind for the game. He will undoubtedly be a strong addition to our team for the fall," Zion stated. "We look forward to seeing Harry contributing to Trojans soccer on the field, in the classroom, and in the community."



Harry Ward, front row, center, flanked by parents Jayne and Andrew Ward; back row, from left, are Upper School Academic Dean Kim Popham, President and Head of School Larry A. Peevy, soccer coach Jonathan Roberts and Athletic Director Scott Neal.

## Roberts to play at Piedmont College

Tallulah Falls School senior girls basketball captain Aida Roberts of Clarkesville will join the Piedmont College Lady Lions next season. Roberts finished her TFS basketball career as the fourth leading scorer in school history with 969 points. Roberts also finished second in assists (215) and earned two consecutive All Region 8A 2nd Team honors.



Aida Roberts

**Track & field joins the elite with state meet performance**

Senior Zatrack Pearce entered the TFS record books and brought home a state championship in the 400 meter event at the Georgia High School Association state championships held May 11-13 at Berry College in Rome. Pearce became only the fourth state champion in TFS track & field history. Pearce also became the first TFS athlete to earn the High Point Award which is the pinnacle of the high school team experience, according to track & field coach Scott Neal. Pearce scored 27.5 points at the meet. Pearce's time of 48.14 seconds broke his own school record by more than two seconds and he ran the seventh fastest time of all eight classifications in the event finals. Pearce finished the season ranked 147th in the nation in the event.

Pearce, who was the team MVP, recipient of the GREAT Leadership Award and the Blitz track & field athlete of the year, was also the runner-up in the long jump (21'-7" a personal record) and in the 200 meters (TFS record time of 21.85); Pearce also brought the team from sixth place to third place in the 4x4 relay.

Other accolades went to sophomore Aaron Hughes of Demorest who finished eighth in the 800 meters (2:10.75) while freshman Chris Geiger of Sautee Nacoochee placed 13th in the 1600 meters with a time of 4:54.10. The boys 4x4 relay team of Aaron Hughes freshman Ajani Knowles, senior Thala Freeman and Zatrack Pearce placed third with a time of 3:31.08. Senior Thala Freeman also qualified for the finals in the high jump and triple jump but did not compete because TFS graduation conflicted with the field event schedule.



Zatrack Pearce - 400 meter state champion



From left: Anna Davis, Sunni Brett, Perry Gresham and Sydney Spivey.



Coach Neal offers encouragement to his athletes.

Junior Anna Davis of Clarkesville also had an outstanding state meet, scoring 18 points with school record, runner-up performances in the 100 meters (15.14 seconds) and 300 meter hurdles (44.72 seconds). She also scored a seventh place finish in the pole vault (8'-6") and anchored the 4x4 relay with a 58.5 second split. Davis' 300 meter hurdle time was the 17th best of all eight classifications run at the state meet and good enough to earn a ranking of 167th nationally.

Other girls team highlights included sophomore Damali Danavall of Jonesboro finishing sixth in the discus with a 97'-11" heave, her second best ever. Freshman Briana Docsol of Toccoa placed eighth in the triple jump (33'-3-1/2"). Junior Perry Gresham of Clarkesville finished twelfth in the 1600 meter (5:46.86). The 4x4 relay team of Sydney Spivey, Perry Gresham, Sunni Brett and Anna Davis ran a school record 4:11.64 to place fifth.

The TFS girls and boys finished in the elite 8; the girls were 8th of 31 scoring teams and the boys were 8th of 27 scoring teams. The boys were also only three points from bringing home a fourth place trophy.

**U.S. Army Reserve National Scholar/Athletes**

Senior Michael Van Hooser (left) and junior Jenny Wang were recipients of the U.S. Army Reserve National Scholar/Athlete Award for academic and athletic excellence. The award was presented by Staff Sergeant Norman.



**Whitson's five goal game sets TFS soccer record**



Maria Whitson

Freshman Maria Whitson of Alto entered the TFS record books in a March 24 soccer match against Oakwood Christian School. Whitson set a school record for the fastest goal in a game scoring just 32 seconds into the contest. That was just the opening act as she went on to score a TFS record five goals in the contest.

**TFS baseball 2017: A year of transformation**

**SENIOR moment**



Five baseball seniors went out in style as they defeated highly regarded Washington-Wilkes by a 5-4 score in the final game of the season. From left: Stephen Whitson, Trey Wilcox, Jordan Mincey, Harry Ward, Michael Van Hooser and coach Mark Wilcox.

Transformation is the word that coach Mark Wilcox says best explains the 2017 varsity baseball program. The transformation did not stop with the renovations to the baseball complex (see pages 14-15). Rather, the entire team was transformed as well.

Veteran baseball coach Mark Wilcox assumed the reigns for the 2017 season and immediately upgraded from 2016's non-region schedule to playing in one of the toughest regions in the state. According to Wilcox, the team wholeheartedly accepted the challenge and worked hard to meet the new expectations.

The team finished the year with eight wins and 14 losses in a very tough region 8-A region. Highlights included the program's first region win since 2012 (an 8-7 victory over Lakeview Academy) and a 5-4 win in the last game of the season as the Indians defeated a powerful Washington-Wilkes squad on Senior Night.

The Indians were represented on the 8-A First Team All-Region team by senior shortstop Trey Wilcox (.522 batting average) and senior Harry Ward (Honorable Mention, .308 batting average).



**Outstanding individual performances highlight varsity golf season**

The TFS varsity girls finished their regular season undefeated and earned a second place finish in the Area 2A Private tournament. Junior Jenny Wang was the low medalist in all of the regular season matches and holds TFS records in nine-hole, 18-hole, season and career scoring average. The team competed in the GHSA state tournament for the third year in a row. Wang has made the finals in all three of her years at TFS, but her 2017 appearance is her first as an individual. All of the other team members, junior Chloe Turpin and Grace Brewer, senior Julia Nichols and freshman Laney Dunn posted personal best nine-hole scores this season.

The boys team were not able to secure a birth in the state tournament, but still had a respectable year finishing 4-5 for coach Allen Campbell. Senior Michael Weidner graduates holding school records for nine-hole, 18-hole, season and career scoring average. He also won the Area 2A Private tournament and qualified for the state tournament two years in a row. Other team members set personal best marks during the season: senior Arthur Yang, juniors Cade Bramlett and Patton Strong, sophomore Will Jackson, and freshman Reeves Cody also set personal best marks during the season.



Michael Weidner

Senior Michael Weidner of Clarkesville shot a one under par 70 as he won the Area 2A golf championship. The 70 is a TFS school record. Weidner was named the Blitz Golfer of the Year.



Jenny Wang

Junior Jenny Wang finished second in the Area 2A tournament and holds nearly every record for female golfers at TFS.

**Tennis program developing future competitors**

The TFS varsity boys team was loaded with senior talent and played their way to a respectable 8-6 record in 2017. Leading the way at the No. 1 singles position was multi-sport star Trey Wilcox. Wilcox closed out his senior year of tennis with a stellar 10-1 record (41-2 over last three years) and was named the Blitz tennis player of the year. According to coach Randy Morris, freshman Jack Zhang will be one to watch as a new crop of young players take center stage.

Unlike the boys team, the girls team only loses one senior and next year's team will be experienced and deep with a mix of upper and underclassmen. Morris singled out rising senior Sophie Burke, who is returning at the No. 1 singles position. Morris also noted this year's most improved player, sophomore Mandy Santana, who has only been playing a few months and sophomore Emily Wonders, who played 2017 at the No. 3 singles position. Look for the TFS girls team to turn a few heads next year.



Trey Wilcox



Sophie Burke



# Middle School Spring Sports

## Middle school teams add Tri-State Conference titles in spring competition



Coach Lisa Wilcox's middle school tennis team overcame an injury to their number one singles player but still claimed the Tri-State Conference championship by defeating Rabun-Gap Nacoochee School 3-2 on April 19.

Eighth grader Baylee MacBeth of Clarkesville led the way with a win at the number one singles position by a score of 8-3. TFS eighth grader Hagan Eubank of Tallulah Falls was victorious at the number two singles position 8-2. The Indians closed out the match and claimed the championship banner by winning at the number two doubles slot where teammates Rebekah Jennings and Gabe Keene combined for an 8-5 win.

### ✓ Tennis Tri-State Champs



MS tennis Tri State champs

### ✓ Baseball Tri-State Champs



MS baseball proudly displays their 2017 banner

According to coach Bobby Hammond, the middle school baseball team played its best ball of the season as it closed out the 2017 campaign with two consecutive victories over conference foe Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School. The final 7-1 win gave the Indians the Tri-State Conference title.

The winning pitcher in the conference championship game was eighth grader Chathan Clouatre. Seventh grader Aubrey Higgins turned in a strong performance in relief by tossing a seven-pitch inning. Aiden Gragg closed out the game by striking out the side in 10 pitches.

### ✓ Track & Field Tri-State Champs



Both TFS squads had strong performances at the Tri-State Conference championship meet.

In an extremely close championship meet the TFS middle school boys track & field squad claimed the Tri-State Conference championship at an April 19 meet at Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School. The boys edged out RGNS by a score of 74-72. The boys won the 4x4 relay to seal the two-point victory. Event winners included Simeon Respress (high jump, second in triple jump), Grey Bourlet (100m, 300m hurdles, second in long jump), and Collin Kelly (800m).

The TFS girls came in a close second in their competition. Event winners included Abby Carlan (shot put), Macy Murdock (long jump), Brinna Docsol (triple jump), 400m relay (Carlan, Carmen Sotunde, Olivia Rogowski, Murdock), and 1600m relay (Carlan, Sotunde, Rogowski, Murdock).

## helping those in need

### Track & field team sprints to raise funds for Gatlinburg wildfire relief



Shown, from left, are Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries (SMRM) board member Rev. David Lambert, SMRM Executive Director Bill Black, student Sydney Spivey, TFS Athletic Director Scott Neal and SMRM board member Eric Spivey.

A desire to help the residents of the Gatlinburg area in the aftermath of the November 2016 wildfires prompted members of the Tallulah Falls School varsity track & field team to "make change."

The team collected spare coins from students, faculty and staff, generating \$500 to help those affected by the fire. Sophomore Sydney Spivey lead the initiative, "Change the Smokies," with donations going to Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries.

According to TFS Athletic Director Scott Neal, generosity is one of the GREAT attributes the school seeks to develop in the athletic program.

"With Sydney's empathy and enthusiasm leading the way, the team jumped in to show support for our Smoky Mountain neighbors in a time of need," Neal said.

"The Smoky Mountains have been a part of me my whole life," Spivey said. Her father, Rev. Eric Spivey, worked previously as a minister in Gatlinburg.

"My Dad always taught me to love the mountains and to show God's love throughout the mountains," she said.

Smoky Mountain Resort Ministries has actively been working with and ministering to workers, employers, community leaders, guests, residents of Gatlinburg and national disaster relief agencies since the fire.

For more information about SMRM, visit <https://smrm.org/>.

## General Federation of Women's Clubs - Georgia • recent club visits



Macon Woman's Club



Dunwoody Woman's Club



Stone Mountain Woman's Club



Lawrenceville Woman's Club



Covington Woman's Club



Atlanta Woman's Club



# Totally awesome

*TFS students will have a front row seat for a rare total solar eclipse in August*

It's coming on August 21, and it's going to be TOTALLY awesome! 'It' is a total solar eclipse, an extremely rare astronomical event that is rarely visible from the same geographical region more than once in a lifetime. What makes this particular solar eclipse even rarer is that it will be visible only from the continental U.S. within a narrow 70-mile path that will race from northwest to southeast across the country in the early afternoon hours of August 21.

Fortunately, Tallulah Falls School lies well within the narrow path of totality. Beginning at 2:35 p.m. on Monday, August 21 the school will plunge into darkness for just over two minutes as the moon passes in front of the mid-day sun. The darkness which ensues will roughly approximate the level of illumination that occurs during a full moon.

TFS students received a briefing in March from a world-renowned expert Dr Stuart Jefferies, professor of Physics and Astronomy at Georgia State University. Jefferies spoke to middle and upper school students in separate assemblies.

Dr. Jefferies credentials are impeccable. He recently led a multi-institutional team to establish the South Pole Solar Observatory in Antarctica. The facility records high-resolution images of the sun and is located 4 kilometers from the U.S. Amundsen-Scott South Pole Station in Antarctica.

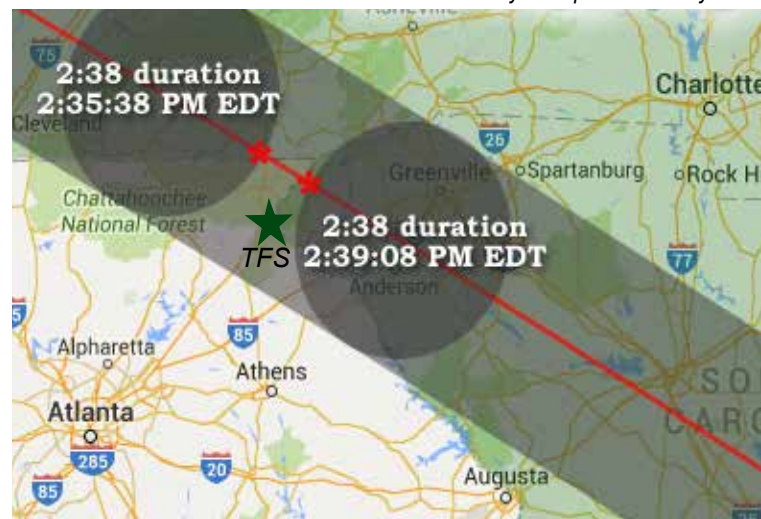
Dr. Jefferies gave a detailed presentation about this extremely rare celestial event and how it presents unmatched opportunities to study the inner and outer workings of the sun.

Jefferies stressed the importance of having the proper glasses to view the event. Normal polarized sunglasses do not offer protection from the damaging rays of the sun that occur during an eclipse, Jefferies said. Tallulah Falls School has purchased 700 pairs of special 'eclipse glasses' for use by students, faculty and staff for the event. Let's all hope for clear skies on August 21.



*Dr. Stuart Jefferies, a recognized expert in the field of solar studies, speaks to TFS upper school students in March about the upcoming eclipse.*

*Tallulah Falls School is well within the seventy-mile path of totality.*



## TFS Board Chair reflects on progress

The saying goes, "change is inevitable, but progress is optional." From the boardroom to the classroom under the leadership of the Tallulah Falls School Board of Trustees, working closely with President and Head of School Larry Peevy and senior staff, the school has experienced non-stop progress over the last decade.

The most visible and recent changes include the opening of the redesigned and expanded upper school academic building and the new student activity center on the middle school campus. One upcoming project is the construction of a natatorium [see related story on Page 3].

"These beautiful facilities have allowed expansion of both academic and athletic opportunities for our students," says TFS Board of Trustees Chairwoman Amy Atkinson.

According to Atkinson, creating an environment for student growth is at the heart of every board decision. Atkinson, on campus for a recent post-planning event, observed one commonality among the faculty and staff audience.

"There was one common thread – these individuals are devoted to Tallulah Falls School and bring a passion and excitement that is infectious," she says. "The environment created by this atmosphere is one where students thrive both in and out of the classroom. I once overheard a student comment that instead of two parents, he had two dozen! It is this commitment that challenges as well as encourages every student at Tallulah Falls School."

Atkinson says every decision as a board member is framed by her perspective as a parent.

"In raising our three (adult) sons, I know the challenge of navigating the middle school through high school years," she says. "Decisions made during this time can be pivotal and far-reaching. Every day the faculty and staff at Tallulah Falls School work to ensure our students have the skills necessary to be not only successful but competitive at the next level of education. In recent years, TFS has increased class offerings to include 21 college courses taught on campus. I find it reassuring as a parent and as a board member to know the next step our students take will be on firm ground."

She says her fellow board members are passionate about TFS and its students, faculty and staff.

"Their work and commitment is not just attending meetings, it involves so much more," she says. "The school is fortunate to have a board with a wide variety of skills and experience from the private, public and community service sectors. Board members are always available to give their time and counsel when needed. For me, it has been a blessing to work with such a talented and devoted group."

She has witnessed many changes during her tenure on the board, serving as chair since 2014.

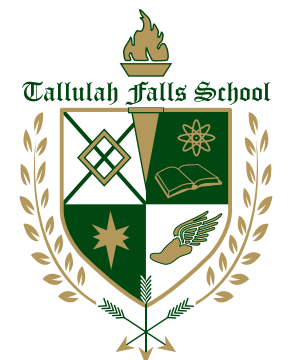
"We will continue to grow and move forward as we meet the needs of our students. Yes, change is inevitable, even to the casual visitor it is evident," she says. "But, we at TFS are knocking the top off of progress! As I enter my fourth year as chair, I am filled with a renewed sense of purpose and dedication as we look to the 2018 school year. We are Tallulah!"



**Amy Atkinson**

*"Every day the faculty and staff at Tallulah Falls School work to ensure our students have the skills necessary to be not only successful but competitive at the next level of education... I find it reassuring as a parent and as a board member to know the next step our students take will be on firm ground."*

- Amy Atkinson  
TFS Board Chair



*This is the first in a series of articles about the Tallulah Falls School Board of Trustees. Look for more articles in upcoming issues of the TFS Magazine.*



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# face *the* FUTURE

2017 TALLULAH FUND

You can still make a difference in the lives of TFS students by making an online donation at [www.tallahulahfalls.org](http://www.tallahulahfalls.org)

or mail your donation to:  
2017 Tallulah Fund, P.O. Box 10  
Tallahulah Falls, GA 30573

or call Sonya M. Smith,  
Executive Director for Advancement,  
at (706) 839-2021



## There's still time!

*Donations for the 2017 Tallulah Fund are accepted through June 30, 2017.*

**Thank you for your generous support**

[www.tallahulahfalls.org](http://www.tallahulahfalls.org)

