

# ITINERA

TRINITY SCHOOL AT RIVER RIDGE ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

## *International Educators*

By Rachelle Wind

We all remember what it was like at Trinity, whether you were trying to maneuver through all 300+ students down one hallway or navigating multiple stairwells and trying not to get turned around in the science wing. At Trinity, you know the people in your class. All the people in your class. You know the people in the 2 or 3 classes surrounding you. And then you graduate. You stay connected with some, and keep tabs on others via social media. And then, slowly, those familiar faces become less familiar. You have stepped into an alumni community of 1,200+ people. That's a lot of people to keep tabs on! After the Alumni Survey I sent out Fall of 2017, I discovered that one of our alumni who was in my oldest brother's class (1999) is the principal at an international school in Brazil. I was shocked! How cool! I wanted to learn more. How did David Esch go from getting a B.A. in Philosophy from the University of Notre Dame to the principal at a school in Brazil (with many of the government's highest ranking employees' children attending)? Then, I remembered my friend, Mike Chalberg (class of 2005), had also taught abroad. Mike taught English in Korea for a year after graduating from Hillsdale College in 2009. And while he was there, Judith Brummer was also teaching there, and she, like David, is an international education lifer and is currently in Saudi Arabia. More and more people kept coming out of the international educator woodwork, whether abroad for one or two years, or there for a career. So how did they get there? What drew them in? Graciously, David Esch, Judith Brummer, and Mike Chalberg gave me a glimpse into their life abroad.

It started out for the three of them

quite similarly: a love of traveling and experiencing other cultures. For Mike, this is something he grew up with as a kid "with plenty of painful cross country road trips" where brotherly fights nearly wreaked total havoc but somehow they returned home always wanting more. Judith was bit by the travel bug after studying abroad in India through Carthage College. Prior to studying abroad, she would have never thought of "uprooting [her] life and moving to another country," but, she says, "those 3 weeks in India were so full of shock, adventure, and mind opening experiences that I knew I had to travel more." David studied abroad in Rome, Italy with the University of Notre Dame and loved assimilating with the



culture and living as the locals do. He craved more of this and knew he had to figure out how the foreigners he observed in Rome did it. David quickly settled on teaching, and went on to complete the ACE program (Alliance for Catholic Education) with Notre Dame. He went to a job fair and found a job in Colombia teaching Social Studies to 6th graders, where he stayed for 4 years. Colombia quickly stole

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TRINITY  
SCHOOL  
AT RIVER RIDGE



# SAVE *the* DATE

## NOVEMBER

### **The Trinity High School Experience**

Thursday, November 8th, 2018 at 7:30 pm

### **Alumni Fall Visit Day**

Wednesday, November 21st, 2018

11:00 am - 3:00 pm

## DECEMBER

### **Enrichment Workshop: Computer Coding**

Saturday, December 1st, 2019 at 9 am

### **Christmas Fest**

Thursday, December 6th, 2018

5:30 pm Dinner | 7:00 pm Concert

### **Junior Drama Performances**

Wednesday, December 19th, 2018 at 7:30 pm

Thursday, December 20th, 2018 at 1:00 pm

### **Alumni Games**

Wednesday, December 26th, 2018

## JANUARY

### **Enrichment Workshop: Simple Machines**

Saturday, January 26th, 2019 at 9 am

### **Open House**

Sunday, January 13th, 2019 at 1 pm

## FEBRUARY

### **Winter Classic Gala**

Saturday, February 2nd, 2019

### **Parent Information Night**

Tuesday, February 12th, 2019 at 7:30 pm

## MARCH

### **Enrichment Workshop: Art Workshop**

Saturday, March 2nd, 2019 at 9 am

### **Senior Drama Performances**

Friday, March 15th, 2019 at 7:30 pm

Saturday, March 16th, 2019 at 7:30 pm

### **Open House**

Thursday, March 21st, 2019 at 7 pm

### **Enrichment Workshop: DaVinci Day**

Saturday, March 30th, 2019 at 9 am

## APRIL

### **Parent Information Night**

Tuesday, April 9th, 2018 at 7:30 pm

## MAY

### **Fine Arts Festival**

May 6th - 25th, 2019

### **Senior Drama Performances**

Friday, May 17th, 2019 at 7:30 pm

Saturday, May 18th, 2019 at 7:30 pm

## JUNE

### **Commencement**

Saturday, June 8th, 2019 at 1:00 pm

\*Questions? Contact: [Sarah Serdar](#) or register  
online: [Enrichment Registration](#)

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his heart.

Judith got into international education by way of a slightly different path. As she neared graduation and weighed her substantial amounts of college debt with her newfound desire to travel and see the world, she quickly began to explore ways she could travel for free. After ruling out the military and the Peace Corps, she looked into



teaching English in Korea, where she had friends already doing it. "It all sounded too good to be true: free airfare, free housing, cheap health care, no education degree required (just a Bachelor's degree), the opportunity to teach young children, the thrill of living in a fast-paced modern city of 10 million, opportunities to travel throughout Asia, and a salary that was big enough to live on and still make loan payments!" The decision was quick and easy. She planned to do one year, satisfy the travel bug, and then move home and settle down. Oops. The travel bug had different ideas.

Similar to Judith, Mike was nearing graduation with no idea how he would make money or what he wanted to do, when a chance conversation with a

friend of his at a wedding revealed to him that a history major could in fact get a job teaching English in another country. His friend was set to go to Korea to teach English after graduation, and it quickly became Mike's "dream option for the start of (his) post-college life." After going home and googling it, he "quickly found out just how possible it was. Korea, and just about every non-English speaking country, desperately wanted native English speakers who were willing to teach abroad." After graduation, Mike took an online course giving him an optional certification teaching English and contacted a headhunter in Seoul. Mike reflects, "Here, I had been terrified of applying for 40 different jobs, going through lengthy interviews, and shopping for a five day rotation of tired button-ups. Everything seemed so competitive and stressful and boring. Do I really have to find the thing that I want to do for the rest of my life? But now, I had this stranger 6,000 miles away calling me every day with new job opportunities... I accepted a job in Daegu, a city of a few million in the heart of the country. I would be teaching K-12 with four Korean women in a small private academy. They would reimburse my one-way ticket upon arrival, pick me up from a bus station and show me to my apartment. I would have a few days



to settle in before reporting for my first day of classes. I remember feeling both desperately terrified and utterly exhilarated."

The year sped by for Mike. "It

was filled with the most wonderful and generous people. I experienced the art of hosting and discovered what it was like to be truly welcomed. I ate the best food I've ever tasted. I learned that I loved teaching. I also learned how difficult it is. I was forced to embrace karaoke and choreographed club dances. I got to travel all over the country and the rest of east Asia. It was the best year of my life. And I wanted more." The year wasn't without challenges - Mike also remembers that he was underprepared for the loneliness and isolation, and if it hadn't been for his new family he had at school and his parents, he probably wouldn't have made it through the whole year. But all in all, "it was the greatest opportunity I've had and the thing I'm most proud of saying yes to."



Judith, during her first year in Korea, had fallen in love with teaching and with living abroad. She stayed there for more than seven years, and during that time got her teaching license online. Judith says, "once certified, the whole world opened up to me. There are international schools all over the world looking for American teachers! I started interviewing (via Skype) at international schools in Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. I decided to accept a second grade teaching position at Saudi Aramco Expatriate Schools in Saudi Arabia. This is now my third year in Saudi Arabia, and I absolutely love my job!" One of the things Judith loves about international education is the diverse body of students she teaches every year. She says, "This year I have

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# Welcome back, Dr. Beane!

After a 10 year hiatus, Dr. Jon Beane returns to the Trinity Faculty as TSRR alumni everywhere whoop and holler with glee. He answered some questions for us, but stop in to say hi and make his day!

## Where have you been?!

I never wanted to leave Trinity, as I felt so at home with the students, families and the approach to education. My wife and I felt the call in the winter of 2006 to bring that approach to other regions of the world. So, in the summer of 2007 we moved to Ave Maria, Florida and were co-founders of Ave Maria Grammar and Preparatory School (now Donahue Academy). I was the Academic Dean, responsible for curriculum development and teacher mentoring, as well as (thankfully!) doing a great deal of teaching; my wife was the Business Manager extraordinaire (as well as Nurse, Receptionist, Accountant, etc.).

In June of 2014 our eldest daughter Monica graduated from the school, and enrolled at Ave Maria University just down the proverbial street. She graduated this past May with a B.A. in History. In June of 2015 our daughter Clare graduated from Donahue, enrolled at Ave Maria University for two years, and then transferred last fall to St. Catherine's University in St. Paul, because Ave Maria does not offer a degree in Nutrition Science.

In 2015, after eight delicious years in Florida, we all moved to the Chicago area (my hometown) to start up a Chesterton network school (Chesterton Academy of the Holy Family). In May of 2017 our son John Paul graduated from there. Being a young graduate he wisely decided to take a gap year, worked diligently, and will be enrolling this fall at the University of St. Thomas.



We are all happy to be back home in Minnesota!

## What brought you back to Trinity? What do you love most about Trinity?

The only thing I am certain of is that it was God's manifest will that brought us back here.

What do I love most about Trinity? Clearly it is the students first and foremost! A very close second place is the very real and palpable sense of Trinity being a community of learners. I am also looking forward to teaching for the first time in the "new" building. (May the Gynette rest in peace.)

## Did you visit any place memorable in the past 11 years?

Every summer we spent a month or so in Minnesota, which included a week or so at my favorite place on the planet, my wife's family cabin on Eagles Nest Lake #2 near Ely. It is so good of God to share his personal home with us mere mortals.

A couple of other memorable places we visited were Hannibal, Missouri, Mark Twain's hometown, and Flannery

O'Connor's farm (Andalusia) in Milledgeville, Georgia. The latter visit I considered a quasi-pilgrimage, as I long ago got electrocuted by the divine fire that runs through her writing. I instantly recognized the "front porch floor" upon which Sarah Ruth was "snapping beans," the barn in which Hulga lost her innocence as well as her leg, and many other scenes as well.

## Has your time at different schools impacted your teaching style and/or educational philosophy?

I don't think so. A thing that got confirmed, though, was the absolute superiority of the single-sex educational approach. I tried to implement this approach at Donahue Academy whenever feasible, and the students were always genuinely amazed at how much more fruitful those classes were.

## What's a favorite book you reread often? Any books from the last few years make it into your favorites?

I read from the New Testament every day, in a variety of languages, because that helps me to see new things in those texts. I try to read either *The Brothers Karamazov* or *Les Miserables* every summer. Some new books I have discovered and often recommend since I left for Florida are Graham Greene's *The End of the Affair*, Mark Twain's *Joan of Arc*, Shelby Foote's *The Civil War*, *The Song of Roland*, and *The Niebelungenlied*. Moreover, I have been transported to strange and wonderful places by many mathematics books over the past eleven years.

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**Have you learned any new languages or picked up any new hobbies or interests while you were away?**

I have worked hard to get my reading level of Old English prose to a proficient level – the syntax is an unspeakable joy! I also spent a couple of summers nailing down Italian, but I haven't worked on that much over the past several years. I have also spent some time on Old Norse, Hebrew,

and Russian but those projects are still in their early stages.

My hobbies are simple and the same as they always were: playing golf and praying for the White Sox.

**What's a favorite memory from teaching at Trinity during your first 10 years?**

In all honesty every minute I spent in every class is tied for first place as a fond memory. If I had to pick the most bizarre one, however, I would have to say it was when Gabby Pease (and her classmates)

brandished a mangy and smelly foreleg of a deer and pursued me down the hall.

**Are you going to go around to the sophomore classes and tell them how to say 'butterfly' in the different languages that Trinity offers to juniors and seniors?**

I am so touched that you remember me having done this. I probably won't do it anymore, as it is best to retire certain traditions.

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19 students in my class and they come from 14 different countries. They come from different cultures, they speak different languages, they have different religions,



and different skin colors, and I get to come to work every day and see them love and respect one another wholeheartedly.”

She was, however, surprised that international education came with so many goodbyes. Like Mike, many teachers only

stay for a year or two, or they move to a new school. “International teachers are quite transient. I never realized that living abroad meant I would be going to so many going away parties,” Judith reflects.

David, unlike many who start out their post-college life teaching abroad, has found his life calling. It has been “a vehicle to see the world,” and an outlet for his sense of adventure. He feels that there's always the opportunity to learn something new and feel alive. Teaching is a great way to experience a culture because you get connected with the community - teaching the children, talking with their parents, drinking coffee and having meals with the locals. David has found the people in South America to be the kindest, because they live life in the present, and they are joyful and appreciative regardless of economic hardships. David also appreciates how international schools truly support their educators and the educators

support each other by protecting each other, encouraging each other, and living life together. David looks forward to seeing where in the world his work takes him.

If you want to teach at an international school as David and Judith currently are, you need to have, as a minimum, your bachelor's degree with a teaching license and 2+ years of teaching experience. But, as Judith and Mike discovered, if you are looking for a year or two (or 7+) of adventure and new life, thousands of schools all over the world are looking for native English speakers to teach in their schools. All three of these alumni are open to talking with anyone interested. Look them up on LinkedIn or Facebook, or contact the Alumni Office and I can put you in touch. As Mike says, “It turns out that there is kindness and love to be found everywhere you go.”



*Who's That Class?*

Hey class of 2014! Making that class graduation picture look fun. This was taken four years ago—I bet life is looking a bit different these days!



**TRINITY SCHOOL**  
AT RIVER RIDGE



FALL 2018  
**A L U M N I**  
**V I S I T D A Y**  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 21

Remember when you surprised yourself year after year at Trinity with your hidden art skills and how much you enjoyed art? Or remember how yesterday you were still super good at art? No matter which you identify with, we have something for you...

## Alumni Art Club



For more information or if you're interested in helping, please contact [Rachelle Wind](#).



### DESIGN THE NEW ALUMNI T-SHIRT!

Coming soon: an amazing Alumni t-shirt. Help us to design it!  
Submit your ideas to [Rachelle Wind](#) by Monday, Nov. 5th.  
**What do you want to wear?**



**TRINITY SCHOOL**  
AT RIVER RIDGE

Take the adventure of learning  
beyond the classroom.



# ENRICHMENT

**Free Saturday Workshops**

Learn more about our free  
One-Day Workshops at [TSRR.ORG](http://TSRR.ORG)



The class of 2003 celebrated their 15 year reunion on October 12th.

**Back Row** (L to R): Eva Christopherson, Bethany Olander, Kevin Olander, Anna Coyne, Baby Joey Coyne, Alex Coyne, Dan Ryan;  
**Front Row** (L to R): Joe Doran, Nathaniel Fox, Rayna Fox, Gabby (Pease) Doran, Josh Miller, Sydney Hanson, Karen (Coleman) Xenakis, Baby Luke Xenakis, Kasi O'Hare, Jonathan O'Hare, Stephen Dymond, Will Hanson, Lindsey Gay, Geoffrey Serdar, Kip Hanson;  
 Not pictured: Gretchen (Klein) Newman, Matthew Newman



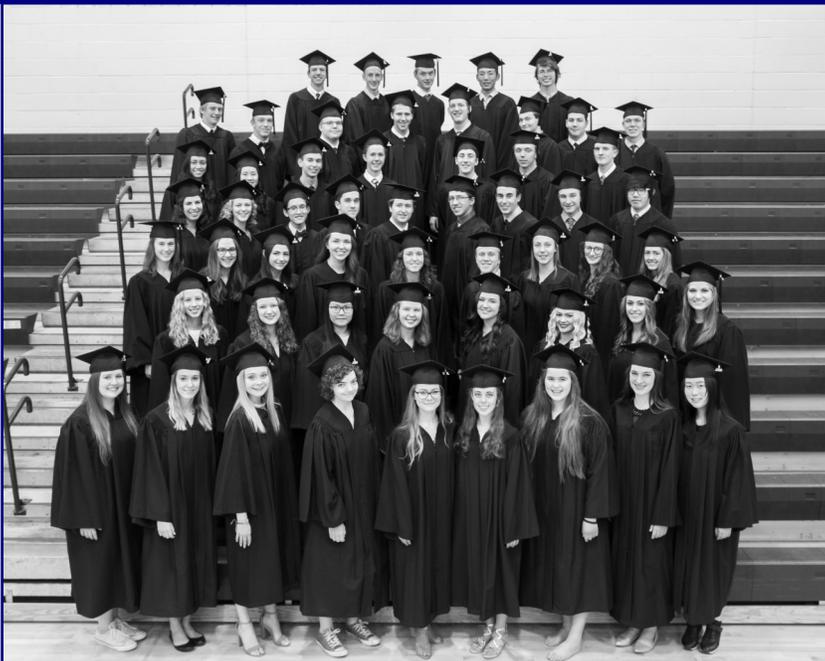
The class of 2013 celebrated their 5 year reunion on September 2nd.

**Back Row** (L to R): David Gapp, Nathan Gaworski, Maggie Griffith, Matt Hagen, Luke Gerdes, Noah Pehrson, Nick Stone, Ryan Shumacher, Light (JK that's Caleb Dahl), Gabriel Soriano, Jonathan Frank;  
**Front Row** (L to R): Richard Larkin McLay, Tanisha Ronnie, Anna (Harris) Bishop, Karli Kisch, Julia Dourgarian, Mary Naughton, Fiona Lotti, Josiah Johnson



The class of 1998 celebrated their 20 year reunion on June 15th.

From left to right: Sofia Ardalan, John and Jeanne ('99) Stauble, Emily (Wind) Bowar, Elizabeth (Limberg) Hursh, Katherine Chlebeck, Andrew Gaylord, and Sam Bisciglia



*Congratulations and Welcome,  
Class of 2018!*

### PICTURES NEEDED!

Do you have any pictures from your time at Trinity? We are looking for pictures, especially from the years 1987 - 2004. If you have any you'd be willing to share, please email them to [rwind@trinityschools.org](mailto:rwind@trinityschools.org) or copy & mail them to:

Trinity School at River Ridge  
Attn: Rachelle Wind  
601 River Ridge Parkway  
Eagan, MN 55121

## 2019 Class Reunions

Class of 2014—5 years

Class of 2009—10 years

Class of 2004—15 years

Class of 1999—20 years

Class of 1994—25 years

Celebrate your time at Trinity by planning your class's milestone reunion! If you are interested in volunteering contact Rachelle Wind at [rwind@trinityschools.org](mailto:rwind@trinityschools.org). TSRR is happy to help you promote your event!

## STAY CONNECTED

Moved recently? Changed your email address? Have a class note to share?  
Keep us updated by filling out this [Google Form](#) or sending us an [email](#).



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