

The Blue Doors

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We would like to hear from you!
Letters to the editor, story suggestions,
corrections, and questions may be directed
to bluedoors@nightingale.org. Submit class
notes online at nightingale.org/sharenews.

Content & Design

The content and design of this publication
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Cover
Lower School students working together on an activity,
Da Ping Luo

Table of Contents
Student athletes celebrating at Homecoming 2024,
Joseph Gómez; Isabelle C. '25 and Julia G. '25 working
with pipettes, Emily Effren; Students making pottery in
Colombia, Emily Peters

Head of School Letter
Mr. Burke reading to Kindergarten students, Emily Effren

Out of this World
Genes in Space winners Isabelle C. '25 and Julia G. '25
smiling in the science room, Emily Effren; All other images,
Courtesy of Mary Beth Spina, PhD, and Naomi Kohen, PhD

Caps Soar for the Class of 2024
Cap toss during commencement, Jenny Wallack;
All other images, Matthew Septimus

Memories & Moving Up
All images, Emily Effren

Dancing with Daisies
All images, Emily Effren

New Faces at Nightingale
Group photo, Emily Effren; New members of the
Board of Trustees, Images Courtesy of Sources

Future Ready
Rendering of facility facade, Rendering of dollhouse cut
of facility, Nightingale; Athletes smiling on the sidelines
during lacrosse game, Nightingale athletes competing
in indoor track, Athlete charging during lacrosse game,
Basketball players listening to coaches, Joseph Gómez;
Athlete swimming freestyle, Softball players congratulating
teammate, Da Ping Luo; Athlete playing soccer, Athlete
playing lacrosse, Carla Georgina Torres

Global Perspectives
All images, Emily Peters

A Spike in Spirit
Athlete spiking volleyball, students cheering with
balloons, alumnae with volleyball, students with
Nighthawk, Spirit sign at Homecoming, Joseph Gómez;
Athlete kicking soccer ball, Soccer players cheering,
Carla Georgina Torres; Students smiling in the bleachers,
Students posing in the photo booth, Student getting
temporary tattoos, Emily Effren

Honoring Athletic Excellence
All images, Carla Georgina Torres

A Place at the Table
All Images, Emily Effren

Class Notes
All images, Courtesy of Sources; Students hugging on
the roof, Da Ping Luo

The Nightingale Fund
Students dissecting computers in the Makerspace,
Christina Tobajas; All other images, Da Ping Luo

Voices: Sabrina Schackner '20
All images, Courtesy of Source

Back Cover
Middle School students dissecting computers,
Christina Tobajas



Contents

4 Out of This World!

8 Caps Soar for the
Class of 2024

14 Memories and Moving Up

16 Dancing with Daisies

18 New Faces at Nightingale

20 Future Ready

26 Global Perspectives

30 A Spike in Spirit:
Homecoming 2024

34 Honoring Athletics
Excellence

38 A Place at the Table

40 Class Notes

59 Voices: Sabrina
Schackner '20



Over the past year our professional community has engaged in an extensive self-study in preparation for our accreditation and an upcoming review with a visiting committee. I recently read a draft of the report and it makes one point very clear: the past decade at Nightingale has been characterized by growth and expansion. We grew our facility, increased student enrollment by forty percent, and now welcome students from over one hundred zip codes. Indeed, we are proudly woven of the same fabric as the great American city that is New York.


At the same time, we remain, as Joan McMenamin often said, “a small school that humanizes the vast city.” There is both beauty and tension in the desire to be a school whose blue doors both protect and open wide to the world beyond. Achieving this balance requires thinking hard about the timing and the means. This is at the heart of thoughtful curriculum development and excellent teaching. And seeking and celebrating excellent teaching is our time-tested strategy. Everything should drive toward that. Indeed, that is what really matters.

In 1925, Miss Nightingale encouraged her first graduates “to avoid crowding out things that really matter by things that do not matter.” In 2025, we find ourselves asking the same question: What really matters? This fall, we shared our answer with our professional community and with our families.

Nightingale is moving forward with unmitigated intent, focusing on three key priorities we’ve titled *Leading the Way*:

- #1. We will direct attention towards our **exceptional and distinctive K-12 academic program** with a unique divisional identity and precise vertical alignment.
- #2. We will promote and **protect belonging, wellness, and a community spirit** of authentic and joyful engagement.
- #3. We will build our institutional capacity for **financial sustainability and growth** with a clear-eyed focus on advancing a world-class girls’ education across all domains.

By investing in these three priorities, we will foster a stronger sense of shared purpose and establish a clear direction. At a time when schools can either lead the way or be led astray, Nightingale is choosing to double down on its core mission. These choices make our direction clear, and we share it proudly for all to see. The Nightingale of 2025 is crowding out all that does not matter by making a clear investment in our students and in the people who dedicate their professional lives to them. In a time that is unsettled and dynamic, we can either sit back and hope for the best, or we can be the girls’ school that leads the way. We are choosing the latter because we believe it will both model and empower our students to do the same.


Paul A. Burke,
Head of School



OUT OF THIS WORLD!

Launching into the realm of scientific discovery, Nightingale seniors Isabelle C. '25 and Julia G. '25 have achieved what many only dream about—their groundbreaking experiment is heading to space.

This past summer, their proposal was selected at the highly competitive International Space Station (ISS) Research and Development Conference, where they were named the winners of Genes in Space, a highly competitive, national science competition that invites students and teachers in grades seven through twelve to propose a DNA experiment for space. The duo's proposed experiment won out of 681 submissions from 231 schools across 38 states—945 total student participants, according to the Genes in Space press release.

During a biotechnology class last spring, Director of the Science Research Program and Science Faculty Naomi Kohen, PhD, introduced Genes in Space to her class. Fascinated by the thought of their experiment reaching space, Isabelle and Julia jumped at the chance to compete—and the extra credit Dr. Kohen offered to participants added to the motivation.

"I was really inspired by the opportunity for young people to have such an active role in scientific development and research," Julia recalled.

Isabelle and Julia began working on the project during the end of spring break, spending a couple of hours a day reading and writing the initial proposal. Isabelle recalled mulling through several ideas, before finally settling on the hypothesis of using phages—viruses that attack bacteria—as therapeutic agents to combat microbial infections in space. The young scientists had the topic of bacteriophages on the mind, as they had recently learned about them in their biotechnology class.

"Phage research in space is relatively new, so there were a lot of avenues to explore for a proposal. Due to the limited resources in space, a simple but informative experiment

would be beneficial, which led to the idea of using SYTOX Green,” Isabelle explained. “Essentially, the idea is to track when phages burst open (i.e. lyse) bacteria in real time using this fluorescent dye, because this dye cannot go through intact membranes. Later on, we added cell-free phage synthesis as part of our proposal, which has implications for phage therapy, a future possible treatment for bacterial infections. Both of these (the tracking of lysis with fluorescence and cell-free phage synthesis) have not yet been done in space...There are a lot of restrictions on what can be done in space, so we had to think of a ‘freeze and fly’ experiment that was limited to sixteen tubes prepared on Earth, since they can’t be opened in space. We also had to think of an ambitious experiment, which is what we would do if we had no restrictions.”

During their free periods, Isabelle and Julia would look for an empty classroom to use for their continued research. They explored a plethora of lists of bacteria and phage pairings until finding the perfect fit for their experiment.

Julia added: “Phage therapy itself is a unique approach to bacterial infection treatment that does not include the risk of antibiotic resistance, but I think the real genius of our proposal was the incorporation of SYTOX Green, a membrane impermeable dye, to measure the rate at which the bacteria was lysed.”

Isabelle and Julia’s experiment, titled *Real-time Tracking of Phage Production and Lysis in Space*, was selected as one of five finalists. Once chosen, they were paired with a mentor in early June. Isabelle and Julia worked with Kayleigh Ingersoll, PhD, a Harvard graduate and Genes in Space student mentor. Isabelle spent an average of an hour every other day developing the experimental details, such as the controls, more thoroughly. Isabelle and Julia met with Kayleigh on a weekly basis to refine their presentation.

“I found that Kayleigh was a big help to work with,” Julia said. “Often we would meet just to discuss what we were working on and to tweak the fine details of our proposal. When preparing the slides for our presentation I think I must have sent her at least five different drafts, but when we eventually settled on our final design (for both the presentation and experiment), I was so proud looking back at what we had accomplished. I found the actual presentation to feel like the natural culmination of all our hard work and honestly really enjoyed it. After all the meeting with Isabelle and Kayleigh, the Q&A afterwards felt simply like a nice discussion of all the details we missed in the presentation.”

In July, each finalist group attended the International Space Station (ISS) Research and Development Conference where they were tasked with presenting their proposal to a panel of space and science

professionals in Boston, Massachusetts. “Presenting in front of the judges was a bit nerve-racking, as I am someone who does not enjoy public speaking. Luckily, Julia is a natural!” Isabelle recalled.

“When we won I actually didn’t believe it for the first few seconds, but then of course I was so honored and excited...I think that our greatest tool was perseverance through the workload, the questions, and the actual presentation in front of an audience; the fact that we were able to acknowledge and conquer our challenges really got us through. I also think that our attention to detail while not making the proposal itself overly complex was a real benefit for Genes in Space specifically,” Julia said.

Dr. Kohen accompanied Isabelle and Julia to the conference, along with Science Department Chair Mary Beth Spina, PhD. Dr. Kohen and Dr. Spina recalled feeling incredibly proud of the seniors’ thorough research, unwavering dedication, and creative presentation.

“It is unbelievably inspirational,” Dr. Kohen said. “When Scott Copeland, the director of ISS research integration at Boeing, presented them with the award he said ‘it’s pretty unique, I don’t think we have done anything like that.’ It validated how creative their proposal truly is. It is amazing to see high school students use their STEM skills to solve real-world problems!”

Isabelle and Julia are both part of Nightingale’s Independent Study Research Program (ISRP), an application-based program open to highly skilled, motivated, and dedicated students of science in Classes XI–XII. In the program, students commit to at least six to eight weeks to intensive science research during the summer between Class XI and Class XII, as well as take two crucial courses: science seminar and biotechnology. It was in these courses that the young scientists cultivated a “STEM and communications foundation needed to have a competitive application,” Dr. Kohen said.

“They not only had a terrific idea, they were able to communicate their idea effectively,” Dr. Kohen explained. “To progress through the competition, they needed to make videos and a presentation [to be shown] in front of top scientists in academia and industry-spanning fields of biology and AeroAstro and convince them that their experiment was important and worth conducting. Multiple industry sponsors noted how well Isabelle and Julia conveyed their proposal, whether it was their amazing presentation slides with the terrific animations which they created themselves, or their ability to clarify and defend their proposal to a panel of judges during a Q&A session. Additionally one judge shared that they were particularly impressed with how well Julia and Isabelle complemented each other as teammates and how both contributed to the success of the project.”

This isn’t the first time Nighthawks have excelled in the Genes in Space competition. In 2021, Ilana Propp ’22 and Sophia Tully ’22 won an Honorable Mention award for their proposal on the effect of microgravity on protein folding. Misfolded proteins are responsible for diseases such as Alzheimer’s, which has been shown to occur at a greater frequency in astronauts. They focused specifically on chaperone proteins, which themselves are responsible for folding proteins. Ilana and Sophia made it to the semifinalist round out of 630 applicants that year.

According to this year’s press release, “this will be the 12th Genes in Space student experiment performed by astronauts aboard the orbiting laboratory, in addition to two program technology demonstration missions. Genes in Space was founded in 2015 as a collaboration between Boeing and miniPCR bio. Since then, the ISS National Laboratory and New England Biolabs have sponsored the program. Previous contest winners have explored phenomena ranging from DNA repair to immune dysfunction and have achieved significant experimental milestones, including the first use of CRISPR/Cas9 gene editing in space.”

“I really hope that our experiment can advance the way that people can be medicated and fight off bacteria in space,” Julia shared in the press



“This is easily the most impressive STEM achievement of our students since I have been at Nightingale, and I would argue possibly ever...Girls and women are still very underrepresented in STEM fields, so this achievement really merits highlighting, beyond just the current community at Nightingale.”
—Naomi Kohen, PhD,
Director of the Science Research Program



release. “As we look into long-term space travel and the risks that astronauts are already under in enclosed environments, it’s a really important field to be putting our focus into.”

Reflecting on Isabelle and Julia’s impressive achievement, Dr. Spina shared, “from the Lower School onward, our program emphasizes critical thinking, data analysis, hypothesis formation, and the support of ideas with well-developed scientific facts. Julia and Isabelle have exemplified these skills by designing an experiment set to be conducted on the ISS in 2025. Their remarkable accomplishment underscores our commitment to STEM education and preparing students to lead in this field. It is particularly inspiring to see these two young women excel in a traditionally male-dominated arena.” •



Caps Soar *for the* Class of '24



With the Class of 2024's commencement, Nightingale celebrated a historic milestone—its **100th graduating class.**

A century of excellence culminated in joy and tradition as the Class of 2024 walked through Nightingale's iconic blue doors one last time. With tassels and caps ready to soar, this remarkable class not only marked their own achievements but also carried forward the legacy of 100 years of Nightingale graduates. From poignant tributes to cherished traditions, the commencement ceremony honored the past, celebrated the present, and looked toward the future with hope and pride.

The ceremony commenced with the traditional procession of the professional community, traditionally led by the late Ms. du Nouy, Nightingale's former associate head of school and head of middle school who died this past January. In a poignant tribute to her, Middle School co-presidents Ryan A. '28 and Beatrice K. '28 assumed her role, gracefully leading the procession.

As the familiar notes of "Pomp and Circumstance" filled the air, all eyes were on the senior class as each student processed down the aisle, one by one.

After words of welcome from Head of School Mr. Burke, Senior Class Co-president Lexie Berggrun '24 presented the Class of 2024.

"This is your time. Build and honor your communities that inspire and lift others. Be bold, be courageous. Know that your failures shape you, define your character, and establish your ethics."

—Francesca Harper Cohen '87 P'29

"This day, until recently, seemed as if it would never come, but here we are. We actually made it. For some, it took 13 years and for others it took less. But regardless of the amount of time spent at Nightingale, each of us have left our mark and contributed to Nightingale and the world around us in our own way."

Lexie then asked her peers a series of questions, and requested that they stand if the question applied to them. Her classmates rose if they participated in an internship, served as a leader on a board or club, played a varsity sport, performed at a concert or musical, and more—highlighting their significant involvement in and dedication to extracurriculars and remarkable achievements while at Nightingale. By the end of the presentation, all seniors had stood several times.

After singing along to the tune of "America the Beautiful" by Katharine Lee Bates, Student Council Vice President Olivia Yim '24 honored each outgoing senior board officer, and recognized the students who would



serve during the next school year. Each incoming leader was presented with a medallion originally created by Daria de Koning '98 to honor their new roles—each inscribed with the words “Veritas, Amicitia, Fides.”

Mr. Burke took a moment to acknowledge members of the Nightingale professional community—who had been part of the community for over ten years—and who would be departing in June, with special recognition to Mrs. Linda Field P'14 P'16, with the longest tenure of 42 years. Mr. Burke also initiated a moment of silence to remember Ms. du Nouy.

As tradition calls, the Class of 2024 student speaker is selected by their peers. Senior Class Co-president Isabella Robertson '24 then introduced her friend and Class of 2024 Student Speaker, Allyson Kahne '24.

“Some of you know her for her undeniable love for all things Nightingale. From her devoted participation in basketball and volleyball every year since fifth grade, to the pride and energy she brings from the sidelines as an athletic sport representative, she has always amplified school spirit to its fullest...The Class of 2024 knows her as one of our very own; an integral part of our proud, outspoken, and close knit group of 57. I speak for our entire class when I say there is no one better suited to represent us today. And with that, I am so proud to welcome one of my dearest friends, Allyson Kahne, to the podium.”

With a round of applause, the two exchanged hugs and Allyson began her speech, by thanking the families, friends, loved ones, and professional community members, for being there for the Class of 2024's special moment, specifically Ms. Guimaraes, Mr. Burke, Mr. Montenegro, Ms. Beveridge, and former Head of Lower School Mrs. Mansfield.

“At the beginning of each school year, Mrs. Mansfield would stand tall on the auditorium stage and preach ‘All you ever need is a pocketful of friends.’ Although I didn’t know it then, I consider this to be one of the greatest pieces of advice I have ever received,” she said.

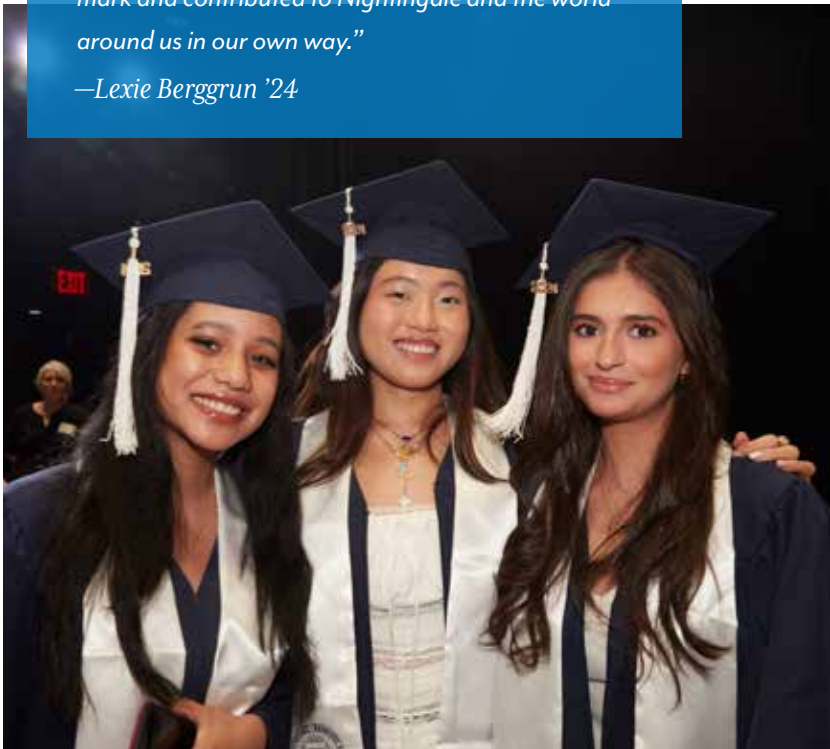
Allyson proceeded to reflect on her Nightingale experiences alongside those of her classmates, and how their pockets deepened with each new addition to their class that came along the way.

“This is the Class of 2024. You all have been a crazier family than I could have ever dreamed of, but also everything I could have hoped for. And today, as we say goodbye and leave these comforts—the comfort of each other—behind, know that this chapter doesn’t have a conclusion, because this isn’t the end. We’re simply turning the page and closing this pocket of friends to make room for the next one, but you can always reach in and grab whatever you need. So don’t be a stranger. Reach in and reach out. Continue to lean on and grow from each other, knowing that your classmates will catch you if you fall.”



“We actually made it. For some, it took 13 years and for others it took less. But regardless of the amount of time spent at Nightingale, each of us have left our mark and contributed to Nightingale and the world around us in our own way.”

—Lexie Berggrun '24



THEIR NEXT NEST COLLEGE DESTINATIONS

Bard College	Rutgers University
Barnard College	The George Washington University (3)
Bennington College	Trinity College (3)
Brown University	Tufts University
Case Western Reserve University (2)	University of California Los Angeles
Columbia University (4)	University of Colorado Colorado Springs
Cornell University (3)	University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
Dartmouth College	University of Pennsylvania (2)
Duke University (3)	University of St. Andrews (4)
Georgetown University (4)	The University of Virginia
Harvard University (2)	Vanderbilt University
Macalester College	Wake Forest University (2)
McGill University (2)	Washington & Lee University
Middlebury College	Washington University in St. Louis
New York University	Wesleyan University (2)
Northwestern University	Yale University
Princeton University (2)	



THE CLASS OF 2024 Kiran Agarwal, Frida May Alexander, Olivia Jane Bayer, Eden Renner Beech, Mya Darinn Joy Bembury, Alexandra Jenna Berggrun, Lena Jacobson Berlinski, Carolina Carrington Cali, Nathalie Cardozo, Alexis Jean Carr, Chloe Danielle Crist, Ria Dangayach, Emily Abigail Dashefsky, Isabella Grace Dexter, Lucy Krista Donie, Zoey May Egan, Norah Elrafei, Sofia Lauren Fonseca, Lilly Fridlyand, Annabelle Helene Gallo, Esme Celeste Gonzalez, Ella Marianna Gonzalez, Tamsin Rain Gorvy, Leena Campbell Gowrisankaran, Clementine Mary Hall, Alaina Haroon, Carlota Maria Hidalgo Perea, Sasha Allegra Hurowitz, Hannah Irfan, Carolina Grace Jordan, Allyson Emma Kahne, Jiya Krishnaswamy, Emma Lambert, Olivia Noll Lassner, Emmanuelle Dugot Linden, Alessandra CasaPao Mallari, Pearl Betchen Marks, Apostolia Katherine Artemis Pritchard, Grace Eleanor Pritchard, Isabella Robertson, Cooper Ly Rodgers, Gabrielle Frances Saft, Geo Piero Schechter, Grace Hug Schuringa, Penelope Avery-Marie Segerdahl, Eana Shah, Abigail Silver, Sofia Elena Slade, Roya Pearl Statler, Ella Wang, Vivienne Marie Weinberg, Alexandra Blair Wolf, Olivia Yim, Sarah Zhao, Avi Esther Zimmerman, Anna Zorzi

After the community sang “Simple Gifts” by Elder Joseph Brackett, Jr. and Justin Warner, Student Council President Mya Bembury ’24 introduced this year’s commencement address speaker.

“As you all may know, the Class of 2024 means business. In our class’s unique platter of interests, we serve as leaders in every field. When our class met to discuss what we wanted from a commencement speaker, our class only had one guideline. We found it imperative that this person be established and successful in their career choice.”

With a round of applause, the class welcomed Director of the Ailey II Company and Nightingale Trustee Francesca Harper Cohen ’87 P’29. As Ms. Cohen began her speech, she acknowledged this particularly profound moment, as her mother had been her own commencement speaker 37 years prior. She shared her own journey to Nightingale, which began with her mother’s dream to become an artist, which resulted in moving her family to New York City.

“I followed her lead to define my own path and my own dreams as I encourage you all to follow yours. On that very day of commencement, she stood before us and she said, ‘You are about to take one of the greatest leaps in your life. You are about to assume one of the many mantles of adulthood and independence. This is your time. Having the courage to explore, to continue to learn how your minds function—entering a time to explore without the pressure of feeling like you have to produce as the next step. Exercising your own internal parental voice that sometimes pressures you and, on the other hand, steadies you. To read widely, not to protect yourself from the barbed questions of history requirements, but to satisfy your own curiosity about a world that you will soon be a part of. This is your time.’”

Ms. Harper Cohen continued: “You are now those humans who will inspire others because of the honest work you poured into your practice through the investment that you have made. This moment is truly an achievement; a milestone. You have been working arduously. You stand unique in what has been driving you and what you have achieved—not only academically, but personally, and despite all of the challenges, you are here. This is your time...Build and honor your communities that inspire and lift others. Be bold, be courageous. Know that your failures shape you, define your character, and establish your ethics. Remember your worth, look around, breathe in the moment and relish in all that you have accomplished. Know that the vastness of these accomplishments will impact generations to come. This is your time.”



After a round of applause, the Class of 2024 welcomed President of the Board of Trustees Kathleen McCarthy Baldwin P’31 P’33 to present their diplomas.

“I don’t think anyone could have imagined this day 100 years ago: a cathedral full of people bursting with pride at the academic, athletic, artistic and humanistic accomplishments of 57 remarkable young people,” she began. In her speech, Ms. Baldwin outlined three core beliefs supported by Nightingale’s Board of Trustees, including their mission to ‘future-proof’ Nighthawks, and to ensure Nightingale graduates students with an adaptable skill set that is relevant both now and in an unknown future.

“Today, let’s recognize and celebrate that Nightingale graduates are extraordinarily skilled at the things that cannot be replicated by microchips, and are actually pretty challenging for most human beings,” Ms. Baldwin said. “Nightingale graduates know how to pursue things that they are curious about. They know how to take on challenging work with courage and joy. They think critically about what they hear, read, and see. They know how to seek the truth. And finally, they know how to build relationships, friendships, even across difference. Graduates, as you celebrate this milestone day, I hope you feel the confidence in yourselves that we have in you. Today is such a joyful day for the entire Nightingale community, because we know we can look to you as leaders for a world well beyond the blue doors.”

Head of Upper School Ms. Foster-Hinds then read the names of each senior as they made their way to the stage to receive their diploma from Mr. Burke and Ms. Baldwin. After each row received their diplomas, they turned toward the audience and moved their tassels to the left. Once the final member of the Class of 2024 received their diploma, the Class of 2024 tossed their graduation caps up high, and a wave of applause erupted from the audience.

Upper School Chorus members then sang “Lift Thine Eyes,” followed by closing remarks from Mr. Burke. He spoke of the Class of 2024’s senior video and pages



in the 2023-2024 yearbook—both filled with baby pictures of the Class of 2024.

“Admittedly, I find this to be curious. This doesn’t happen at all schools. It’s a Nightingale thing, fully embraced by our seniors, as a Class of 2024-thing. We are all familiar with the good feeling that surfaces when we view baby pictures. We pause and allow ourselves to be pulled into seemingly easier days. Photo collections can do that; bring back the good stuff and downplay or delete the hard stuff. This happens in celebratory moments as well—moments like right now, when we tend to accentuate the good times. This is natural and probably should go unchallenged. Dear 2024, when you look back at your Nightingale years, I hope you remember the good stuff disproportionately: the shorter steps, the longer strides, the laughter in the hall. I also hope that you don’t delete the hard things. It is worth noting that this class excelled at the hard stuff of school.

Through your studies in our classrooms, you sought truth in a world when truth can be decidedly and dangerously out of fashion. In doing so, you’ve come to embody academic excellence at Nightingale.”

He continued: “When Miss Nightingale spoke to your counterparts 100 years ago this month, she implored them to put ‘first thing’s first’; to ground their lives in the school’s newly coined motto of truth, friendship, and loyalty. 100 years later, I stand behind Miss Nightingale’s latest graduates, and I can attest to the fact that you have already heeded her call. You have repeatedly put first thing’s first, and you will now walk down this aisle together and—one by one—you will go out those doors onto a sun-splashed Fifth Avenue and into the broader world. And you are ready..You are both those baby photos from yesteryear and the representation of the promise of a better day. All of us here today are grateful for both.” •



Memories & Moving Up

Looking back on milestones and ahead to new adventures, the Class of 2028 embraces their next chapter.

As the Class of 2028 gathered for their Moving Up Ceremony this past June, the atmosphere was filled with both nostalgia and anticipation. This annual tradition, marking Class VIII's transition from Middle to Upper School, celebrated their resilience, growth, and the bonds forged within the blue doors—a journey shaped by challenges, triumphs, and enduring friendships.

Class VIII Dean María Tovo welcomed the Class of 2028 with applause. “Class of 2028, this moment is a testament to your dedication, perseverance, and resilience. You walked into Middle School in the middle of a global pandemic, wearing masks and separated by pods. You navigated complex math assignments, Latin homework tests, science exams, so many sports games; a memorial project. You composed operas and performed in musicals. You engaged in debates to discuss complex world issues. You even overcame your fear of skydiving and reached terminal velocity, as well as many other challenges—emerging stronger and wiser each time.”

She continued, “As you stand, about to begin a new chapter, recall the invaluable lessons cultivated in the blue doors. During your time in Middle School, you not only received an exceptional education but also discovered the joy of learning. You forged enduring friendships and learned to go beyond barriers. These experiences formed the bedrock of your future. As you head into the Upper School, carry them with you. For they will continue to guide your path forward.”

Head of School Mr. Burke reflected on the class's resiliency, acknowledging the loss of former Associate Head of School and Head of Middle School Ms. du Nouy. “Some of the events of your Middle School years taught you that there are aspects of life well beyond your control and yet, here you are...Understanding that parts of life are beyond your control can be helpful in many ways and this morning I would like to just share two. Number one, when you understand that there are factors beyond you—like truly know it—you become more grateful. No one gets anywhere in life without help...Number two, when you understand that there are factors beyond you, I believe that you can find greater

peace. Things come, and things go. You cannot control the actions of others, but you can control how you understand them. You also can't control how others respond to you, but you can take back all that lost time that you spend worrying about how others are thinking about you, and you can spend it on how you can compassionately respond to them. Gratitude and inner peace: two keys to a good four years of high school and really good practice for all that waits beyond it.”

Middle School Co-president Beatrice K. '28 reflected on her Nightingale journey, recalling field trips, class trips to Washington, D.C. and Alabama, and beginning Middle School during COVID-19. “As a Kindergartener, I never would have guessed that our little Class of 2028 would flourish into our grade, filled with the smart, compassionate, and loyal Nightingale students that you all are today...I want to thank you all for your friendship, and kindness. As you all begin to explore new adventures inside and outside the blue doors this summer and in the coming years, I hope you treasure these memories as much as I do.”

Beatrice embraced Co-president Ryan A. '28, who then shared her thoughts. Through tears, Ryan reflected on her emotions at the start of the year, her personal growth, and the people who supported her. “As the Class of 2028 exits, and makes way for the upcoming eights, the Class of 2029, my advice is to continue to branch out. Branching out can mean sitting with new people or even playing a new game; it all counts,” she said. “And once we exit the blue doors and go our separate ways, some of us for the next three months and some for the rest of our lives, I want us to always remember that they aren't just doors. They represent a place. A place where we treasure the friends we have seen grow up since we were five.”

Students watched a heartfelt video in which faculty and staff shared why they are proud of the Class of

2028. Head of Upper Middle School Martha St. Jean then addressed the class, weaving in Taylor Swift lyrics. “Class of 2028, you have been steady in your grace, fortitude, resilience, and in another word, you have been faithful. You have lived veritas, amicitia, and fides...Even on our worst days, as a community, Class of 2028, you made it the best place.”

She reflected on Ms. du Nouy's impact. “With the passing of Ms. du Nouy, we lost a person who can only be described as a beautiful sunshine ray. Her death meant seeing parts of our world in gradations of gray. She exuded strength and joy, and though you were not aware of it at the time, she taught us how to live in a space in between; a space of before and after, beginning and end, joy and pain. In life there are things that appear to be in conflict, but oh, my dear eighth grade, I promise you they can coexist. Love can be present where there is pain. Joy can coincide with grief and there are hard truths. Confidence can co-mingle with double and, dear hearts, if you haven't yet discovered this, strength walks with weakness.”

Class speakers Devon S. '28 and Cate B. '28 shared reflections. Devon recalled a cherished tradition from her first day, when a senior guided her to the Lower School floor. “It all flew by so fast. This taught me to value the precious gift of time—something that can never be given back to us. Through time, the bonds of the Class of 2028 only grew stronger.”

Cate reflected on the Nightingale community. “Nightingale is more than a school; it is a community that holds people who we love all together. That was what Ms. du Nouy's mission was: to hold together a community of love in a very evolving time.”

Finally, each student received a red rose as their names were read. With applause, the Class of 2028 stood before families, friends, and peers, officially marking their transition to Upper School. ●



“This school will stay with me as well, in my voice, in my heart, and in my mind.”

—Ryan A. '28,
Middle School Co-president



“We have grown so much in these past years and I owe my growth to my teachers and advisors who helped me develop into the person I am today. And for that, I want to say thank you.”

—Beatrice K. '28,
Middle School Co-president



DANCING WITH DAISIES



With daisy arches and bright smiles, the Class of 2032 begins their Middle School adventure.



In a heartwarming celebration of growth and new beginnings, the Class of 2032 walked through the iconic daisy arch this past June, officially marking their transition from Lower School to Middle School. Families and faculty gathered in the H. Dale Hemmerding Auditorium to honor their achievements and celebrate the vibrant community that has shaped their journey thus far.

As music began, Kindergarten students processed in, followed by Class I, Class II, Class III, and finally Class IV, dressed in spring colors. Each class sat together, while Class IV took their seats on stage, smiling and waving at their families in the audience.

“What a journey you have had these past five years,” began Head of Lower School Dr. Urciuoli, addressing Class IV. “You were all in from the start of Kindergarten. No one could have expected that you would complete your Kindergarten year from your homes on Zoom. Or that in first grade you would be in pods six feet apart from each other, wearing masks all day and face shields while you ate lunch. But you faced these challenges and showed resilience and strength.” She praised their leadership, achievements, and connections with their Kindergarten buddies, highlighting their creativity and hard work displayed in the capstone gallery.

Dr. Urciuoli shared reflections from Class IV students about their fondest Lower School memories, including Camp Reimagined, bowling trips, Winter Concerts, and receiving buddies in Class IV and Kindergarten. Students also spoke about lessons they learned, such as being themselves, being good friends, embracing challenges, and not fearing failure.

“On behalf of all your teachers, thank you for adding so much energy and life to the fourth floor these past five years,” she continued. “We know your positive energy, curiosity, fearless karaoke, and kindness will carry you into Middle School. Congratulations, Class IV—we are so proud of you!”

Each class performed a song to honor Class IV: Kindergarten sang “Count on Me” by Bruno Mars, Class I performed “Vivir mi Vida” by Marc Anthony, Class II chose “Choose Your Fighter” by Ava Max, and Class III sang “Try Everything” by Shakira.

Head of School Mr. Burke then addressed the Class of 2032, reflecting on the themes in the songs. “If you listen closely, the best truths in life come from the youngest among us,” he said. He emphasized the importance of friendship from Kindergarten’s song, kindness and perseverance from Class I, self-acceptance from Class II, and courage from Class III. “Class IV, you have put first things first for five years...and it is your time, and I’m glad to turn it back to you so that you can share your wisdom and your thoughts with everyone here.”

The Class of 2032 then performed three songs: “Are You Proud of Me” by Mark Burrows (with new lyrics by the class), “Unwritten” by Natasha Bedingfield, and the school song, “For Nightingale.”

Finally, it was time for the long-awaited daisy arch. Each Class IV student received a daisy and formed an arch on the auditorium floor. Lower School students, from Kindergarten through Class III, walked through the arch before Class IV followed to complete the tradition. As they emerged, smiles of joy lit up their faces—they were now officially Middle Schoolers. •



One of the best parts of a new school year is welcoming new students and families to Nightingale. Equally delightful is welcoming our new professional community members.

This year, we are thrilled to welcome 31 new professional community members to Nightingale. Coming to 92nd Street from a variety of different backgrounds, these new professional community members bring with them years of real-world experience and are excited to continue Nightingale's mission of inspiring students to be joyful learners who have the intellectual depth and the courage to be critical thinkers, compassionate citizens, and agents of their own lives.

Please join us in welcoming this exceptional group. Meet our new professional community members! •

Pictured: Some of the newest members of Nightingale's professional community.

NEW FACES AT NIGHTINGALE

- Adam Alsamadisi**, Computer Science and Mathematics Faculty
- Elizabeth Anoff**, Director of Auxiliary Programs
- Matthew Cardona**, Physical Education Faculty
- Delfin "Del" Cintron**, Dir. Building Operations & Capital Mgmt.
- Noelle Comyn**, PE/Athletics Leave Replacement
- Jaidyn Cook**, Lower School Faculty
- Sameera Asad Cooper**, Science and Mathematics Faculty
- Juliana Covarrubias**, Robotics Coach
- Shakeem Dawkins**, Security Officer
- Anton Dedvukaj**, Facilities Manager
- Louise "Lulu" Dipaolo**, Assistant Kindergarten Teacher
- Charlotte-Luella Durkee**, Visual Arts Faculty
- Jameel Freeman**, Director of College Counseling
- Audrey Gavitt**, Lower School Aide
- Idara Hansen**, English Faculty
- Camille Hayes**, Lower School Faculty

- Margaret Herrity**, Mathematics Faculty Leave Replacement
- Micah Krajca**, Lower School Faculty
- Ashok Kumar-Wairawen**, Maintenance Mechanic
- Jennifer Lane**, Lower School Faculty
- Sarah Madaus**, Associate Librarian
- Kelly Myers, RN**, School Nurse
- Noah Reinhardt**, Interim Director of Academic Affairs
- Candace Rembert**, Performing Arts Faculty
- Anyi Rescalvo**, Lower School Aide
- Rachel Rodriguez**, Science Faculty
- Samantha Smart**, Lower School Aide
- Jiwon Song**, Visual Arts Faculty
- Christina Tobajas**, Computer Science Faculty
- Isabel Velazquez-Acero '14**, IT Support Specialist
- Anna Marie Wong**, Upper School Admin. Assistant
- Betsy Wray, RN**, School Nurse

Meet the New Members of the Board of Trustees



KATHRYN BHIRUD P'33
PARENTS ASSOCIATION
PRESIDENT, EX OFFICIO
Kathryn is the mother of Eleanor '33 and George. Originally from outside Boston, she has learned to root for the Mets for the sake of her marriage, though she prefers

Fenway Park to all NYC stadiums and arenas. Kathryn has been a part of the Nightingale community and an enthusiastic volunteer since Eleanor started Kindergarten in Fall 2020. She holds a BA in English from Trinity College, as well as an EdM in language and literacy from The Harvard Graduate School of Education. In her past life, she worked in School & Library Outreach for Penguin Young Readers, marketing books to educators and librarians nationwide. She is still an avid supporter of children's publishing and can often be found wandering the Nightingale Libraries for new book recommendations.



NIHARIKA CABIALLAVETTA
P'32 P'34
Niharika is the proud mother of Maya '32 and Ava '34. Niharika is a partner at Goldman Sachs, where she is responsible for coverage of Financial Sponsors and Alternative Asset Managers. She joined

Goldman Sachs in New York in 2005 and relocated to London later the same year where she spent 14 years. In London she co-headed the European Credit & Structured Products sales team. She and her husband Beat (also partner at Goldman Sachs) moved back to New York in January 2020. Originally from New Delhi India, Niharika first moved to the U.S. for undergrad at Northwestern University (Class of 2003) where she pursued a BA in economics with a concentration in learning and organizational change from the School of Education & Social Policy. Niharika serves on the global board of America India Foundation and sits on the India chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC). Niharika enjoys golf, skiing, and spending time with their families in India & Switzerland.



IAN SANDLER P'23 P'34
Ian is the proud father of Riley '23, Ruby '34, and Brody, and husband to Mackenzie. He is the chief operating officer of Insight Partners, where he oversees the firm's operations and leads Insight Partners Public Equities (IPPE), expanding Insight's technology

investing into public markets. Ian's career spans leadership roles in top-tier financial institutions, including COO of Global Equities at Citadel, partner at the Carlyle Group (serving as COO and CLO of Global Market Strategies), and Global COO for the technology and modeling division at Morgan Stanley. Earlier in his career, he worked in Morgan Stanley's loan and high-yield business and practiced as a bankruptcy attorney at Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel. Ian and Mackenzie co-founded Riley's Way Foundation, a non-profit dedicated to empowering young leaders to create meaningful connections, foster kindness, and drive positive change. Through national programs, Riley's Way inspires teens to lead with empathy and build a movement of connection and compassion. In addition to serving as a Nightingale trustee, Ian is a member of the Board of Trustees at The Browning School, and he serves on the University of Michigan's College of Literature, Science, and the Arts Dean's Advisory Council. He holds a bachelor of general studies from the University of Michigan and a JD from the University of Pennsylvania.



RAYMOND SVIDER P'26 P'29
Raymond is the father of Chloe '26 and Elle '29. He is a partner and chairman of the Management Committee of BC Partners, a \$40+bn AUM global asset management firm involved in private equity, private credit and real estate in Europe and North America. Raymond

also chairs the investment committee of private equity at the firm and focuses on investing in media and telecom in North America. Raymond and his family relocated from London to New York in 2008. Raymond grew up in Paris, France and earned an MS from Ecole Polytechnique in Paris and an MBA from the University of Chicago Booth.



FUTURE READY

**A bold new space for Nightingale athletics
will redefine opportunities for girls in
sports and inspire the next generation
of leaders to *go beyond*.**

Nightingale is proud to unveil plans to construct a groundbreaking athletics facility located just minutes from its East 92nd Street Schoolhouse. The state-of-the-art center will redefine girls' athletics in New York City, creating an environment where students build confidence, resilience, and leadership skills that will serve them throughout their lives. This announcement represents an ambitious step forward in the school's commitment to providing a world-class education that expands opportunities for personal growth through sports and wellness.

Pictured: Conceptual rendering of Nightingale's planned athletics facility.

A FACILITY DESIGNED TO MEET THE MOMENT

The importance of athletics in shaping young women's futures is undeniable. Research from the Women's Sports Foundation highlights that participation in sports fosters critical life skills, providing girls with the tools to challenge societal barriers and thrive as leaders. Research also identifies the connection between athletics and wellness, showing how sports participation can significantly enhance mental health, foster social connectedness, and encourage lifelong healthy habits. These insights underscore the necessity of creating an environment where girls can fully realize the transformative benefits of athletic participation.

Yet, despite these benefits, access to athletic spaces in New York City has become increasingly scarce. Field shortages and growing competition for gym space present ongoing challenges for schools across the city. Recognizing these barriers, Nightingale launched its first-ever athletics strategic plan last year, which identified the need to expand access to high-quality spaces for student-athletes. The results of that work have underscored the importance of creating an athletics facility dedicated to meeting this critical need.



"We are building an urban athletics center—that emphasizes girls' team sports—like you'll find nowhere else in the world. This initiative comes at a time when girls' and women's athletics are more recognized than ever for the transformative role they play both in the lives of the players and in the broader society they shape."

— Paul A. Burke, Head of School

SETTING A NEW STANDARD FOR GIRLS' ATHLETICS

Nightingale's athletics facility will be the largest of its kind among independent schools in Manhattan, providing year-round access for training, practice, and competition. Situated on 108th Street between Lexington Avenue and Third Avenue, the facility's centerpiece will be a high-performance indoor turf field—an unparalleled resource that will provide daily access for both team training and physical education. Measuring over 15,000 square feet, this expansive space will support nearly 200 Middle and Upper School field sport athletes in soccer, lacrosse, and softball, as well as countless students from Kindergarten through Class XII for other sports, PE classes, and activities. Unlike outdoor fields subject to seasonal limitations and unpredictable weather, this indoor field will be available year-round to Nightingale students, providing athletes with a consistent, high-quality training environment. It will also serve as a central resource for physical education, cross-divisional activities, and open play, enhancing not just athletic performance but also fostering collaboration and wellness throughout the school community.

The new facility will also be anchored by two modern gymnasiums and state-of-the-art strength training and conditioning spaces, designed to support students of all ages and athletic abilities. A competition gym will serve as the stage for major events like Homecoming games and conference tournaments. A second gym will provide a dynamic space for physical education classes, team practices, and other activities.



"Our mission is to provide a world-class education that inspires girls to go beyond barriers, and this facility is an embodiment of that promise. This is a huge opportunity for Nightingale to take an athletics program that is already good and make it exceptional. This space will give our students the resources they need to grow both as athletes and as leaders."

— Kathleen McCarthy Baldwin P'31 P'33
Board President

These spaces will be complemented by a multipurpose studio with a sprung floor and training areas equipped with specialized equipment, dedicated workout spaces, and resources grounded in the latest research on girls' strength and injury prevention. These resources will empower students of every sport to build strength, enhance flexibility, and develop endurance—preparing athletes to excel on and off the field.



PLAY YARD

Basketball
Golf
Pickleball
Tennis
Track & Field

FITNESS

Cardio
Crossfit
Cross Training
Circuit Training
Free Weights
HIIT
Stretching
TRX
Walking

STUDIO

Dance
Pilates
Yoga
Zumba

PRACTICE GYM

Badminton
Basketball
Batting Cages
Gymnastics
Martial Arts
Volleyball
Wrestling

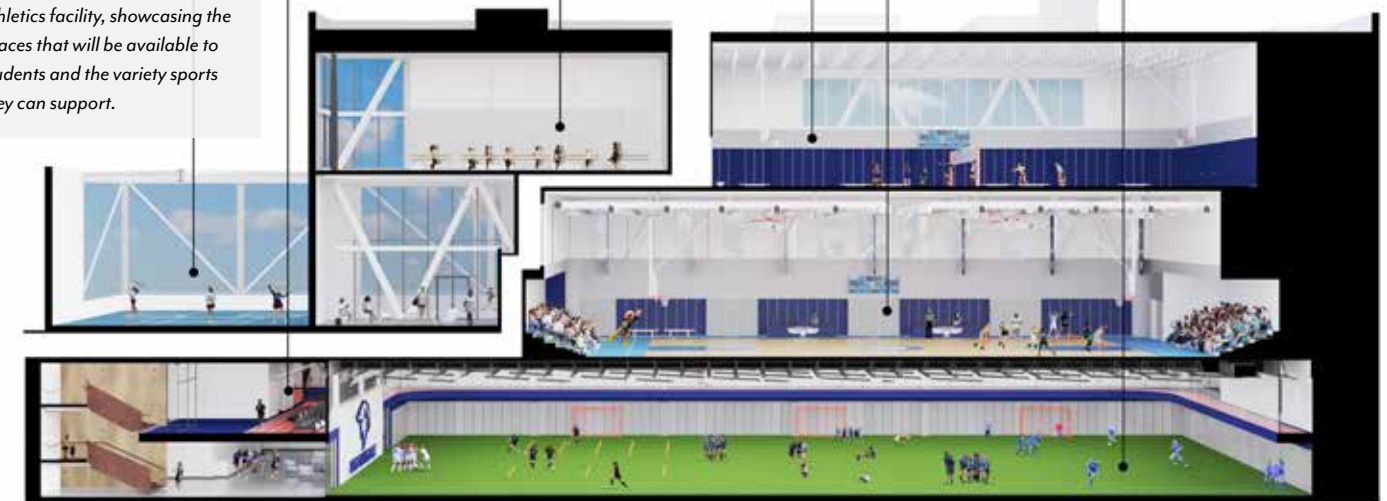
COMPETITION GYM

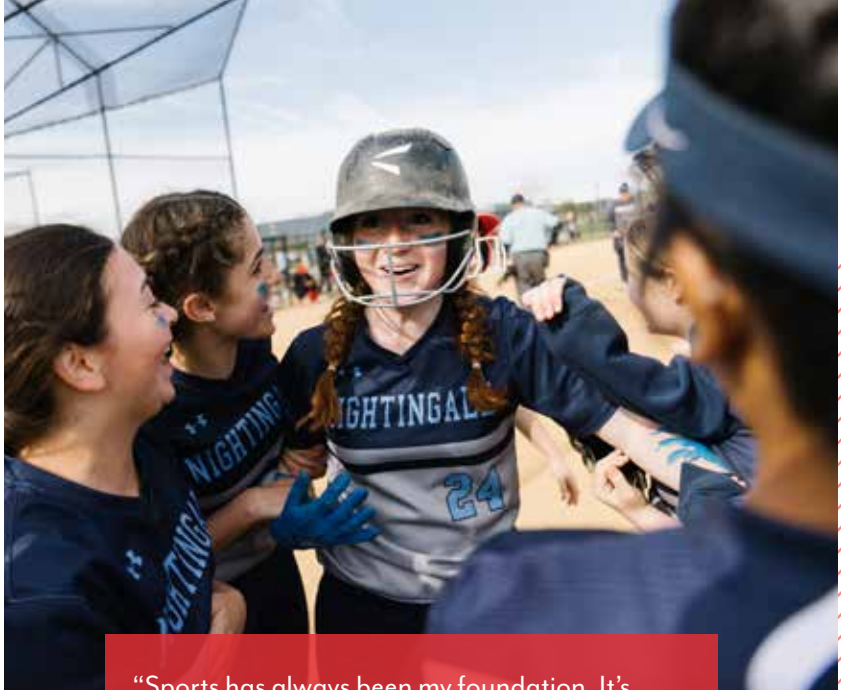
Badminton
Basketball
Gymnastics
Volleyball

MULTI-SPORT TURF & TRACK

Flag Football
Frisbee
Lacrosse
Soccer
Softball
Squash
Track & Field

Pictured: A vertical cut-through of Nightingale's planned athletics facility, showcasing the spaces that will be available to students and the variety of sports they can support.





“Sports has always been my foundation. It’s where I’ve met the most people, it’s where my community’s really started. You have to start somewhere. Being the leader of a sports team, that’s the foundation, and then you go out and you can do bigger things in the bigger world.”

—Jada C. '25, Varsity Athlete

A COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY

As Nightingale expands into East Harlem, this initiative reaffirms the school’s commitment to building meaningful connections beyond its blue doors on 92nd Street. For years, Nightingale has engaged in community outreach efforts designed to foster collaboration and shared opportunities for growth. With the creation of this new facility, Nightingale has an opportunity to deepen those efforts and create lasting relationships that benefit both its students and the broader neighborhood.

A recent report by the Aspen Institute titled State of Play Harlem underscores the critical lack of access to reliable athletic facilities in East Harlem, highlighting barriers such as limited school spaces, competition for public fields, and safety concerns. By partnering with local organizations, Nightingale’s new facility presents a meaningful opportunity to serve as a permanent, dependable resource for the neighborhood’s youth—a space where they can also play, grow, and thrive.

This facility stands as a testament to Nightingale’s belief in the potential of every girl. It also reflects a commitment to creating a space that can inspire and provide opportunities for children in the broader community.



A CAMPAIGN FOR NIGHTINGALE’S FUTURE

Nightingale looks boldly toward its future and will embark on a capital campaign to bring this transformative facility to life. Over the course of the campaign, every member of the Nightingale community will be invited to join in a shared vision that celebrates progress, possibility, and the enduring impact of athletics and wellness. The community’s collective efforts will leave a lasting legacy for generations of Nightingale students. To explore philanthropic opportunities to support this historic project, contact Director of Institutional Advancement Elizabeth “Oz” Oswald (eoswald@nightingale.org).

“Nightingale’s emphasis on the importance of leadership and team building really sets it apart from other schools. Athletics can’t really teach us a lot of important qualities that are required to be a leader.”

—Ashima B. '26, Varsity Athlete



LEADING THROUGH SPORTS

This transformational project marks a defining moment for Nightingale as it continues to step confidently into a second century of excellence. At its heart, this new athletics facility is more than just a building—it’s a rallying cry for the power of sports to shape lives. From the roar of the crowd in the gymnasium to the first kick on the indoor turf field, this facility will be a dynamic hub where students push boundaries, build resilience, and celebrate the camaraderie and spirit of competition. By creating a space designed specifically for our Nighthawks to thrive as athletes and as teammates, Nightingale is setting a new standard for excellence in sports education that will inspire generations to come. ●

Construction of the facility is slated to begin in 2025. As the project moves forward, Nightingale will continue engaging with students, families, and the East Harlem community to ensure the facility reflects shared values and aspirations.

For questions or more information, please contact us at gobeyond@nightingale.org.



GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES



Nightingale students are exploring new cultures, expanding minds, and embracing global connections.

Throughout a Nightingale education, students of all ages are frequently transported to worlds beyond the familiar streets of New York City. Class IV travels to the streets of Chennai, India in Padma Venkatraman's *The Bridge Home*, Class VIII explores Iran during the Islamic Revolution in Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*, and Upper School students find themselves in the rural south at the start of the Great Depression via William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*.

The opportunity to inhabit these worlds through written text widens student perspective and enhances their understanding of the world around them. And yet, there will always be a certain limit that exists within the four walls of classroom discussion. It is at this crossroads where Nightingale's commitment to global education expands the student experience tenfold.

The mission of global education at Nightingale states:

Nightingale educates girls to go beyond barriers and borders as purposeful global citizens who consider the social, environmental and economic factors that make up the complex issues of our interdependent societies and create positive changes for a more inclusive, secure, and peaceful world now and for future generations.

To better understand how this mission lives and breathes within the Nightingale experience, seven Upper School students attended the Round Square International Conference this fall in Colombia. Round Square is a consortium of 250+ schools from 50 countries all committed to character education and experiential learning built around six themes—the Round Square IDEALS: International Understanding, Democracy, Environmental Stewardship, Adventure, Leadership, and Service.

An incredible 662 students from 118 schools in 27 countries were in attendance at the 56th annual international conference which began in Bogotá. The theme of the conference, “Blooming from the Past,” encouraged attendees to consider how a deeper understanding and acceptance of the past, can lead the way to a better future.

This year's Nightingale conference delegates included Bintou S. '26, Lexie J. '26, Laura S. '26, Amaris F. '26, Venus H. '26, Lily T. '27, and Ashani A. '27 with chaperones Director of Global Partnerships and Community Engagement Damaris Maclean and Associate Director of Communications Emily Peters.

All Nightingale students in attendance are members of the global planning committee—a small group of dedicated students in Classes X–XII who are committed to issues of global importance and wish to be a part of planning for a more just, peaceful, and sustainable future.

The group meets during lunch once a cycle to plan events and talk about current events around the world. It is always evolving and the continued activities of the committee are shaped by the individuals who are a part of it.

New members are welcomed every spring through an application process which includes written responses to the following questions: What do you consider to be the most important issue affecting the world right now? How might you and others take action to improve this issue? What experience at Nightingale (or a previous school) has had the greatest influence on you? Why are you interested in joining this committee?



“To see hundreds of people gathered for the purpose of understanding more about Colombia’s history and culture and through that, informing us about the world we live in as a whole, proves to me that there is a curiosity, and a desire to achieve understanding is the first step to change...In a time where I’ve seen many young people struggling to grapple with the decisions that we have no choice in, my optimism is fueled by the reminder that through the help of other people my age, I have learned new things over the course of five days that will stick with me for the rest of my life.”

— Bintou S. '26



Lexi J. '26 knew she wanted to be a part of the global planning committee because she firmly believes that young people can make a difference, contrary to the popular belief that her generation either can not or does not want to make any significant contribution to the world. “The global planning committee at Nightingale recognizes this and gives us the tools, resources, and platforms to share our voices and expand our perspectives. I saw the conference in Colombia as a unique, eye-opening opportunity, and I’m glad to say it truly broadened my outlook,” she said.

After a five hour flight that took off from JFK as the sun rose over New York City, the Nightingale contingent arrived in Bogotá and traveled by bus directly to The English School, one of the five host schools of the conference. After collecting their conference materials, students met their host families who graciously opened their homes to the weary travelers for their first night in Colombia.

“I was definitely most nervous about staying with a host-family. I couldn’t help feeling like I would be intruding, even though this was obviously something they signed up for. I was quickly proven wrong, because by the end of that first night, I felt so comfortable with my host-parents and brother. The little sister took a little longer to acclimate to me, but by the end of my time in Colombia, we spent a lot of time talking about our favorite Disney princesses and foods we liked. My brother, who was closer to my age, made for very good conversations and my host parents did everything they could to make me feel comfortable,” Bintou S. '26 recalled.

The following morning, the conference officially began with all 650+ delegates—the majority dressed in their formal school uniform—gathered on the sprawling athletic fields of Colegio Los Nogales, another conference host school. From there, each school was called in alphabetical order to process down the welcome walkway

into the gym for the opening ceremony. Flags from every attending school lined the way while the Nogales marching band played in the background.

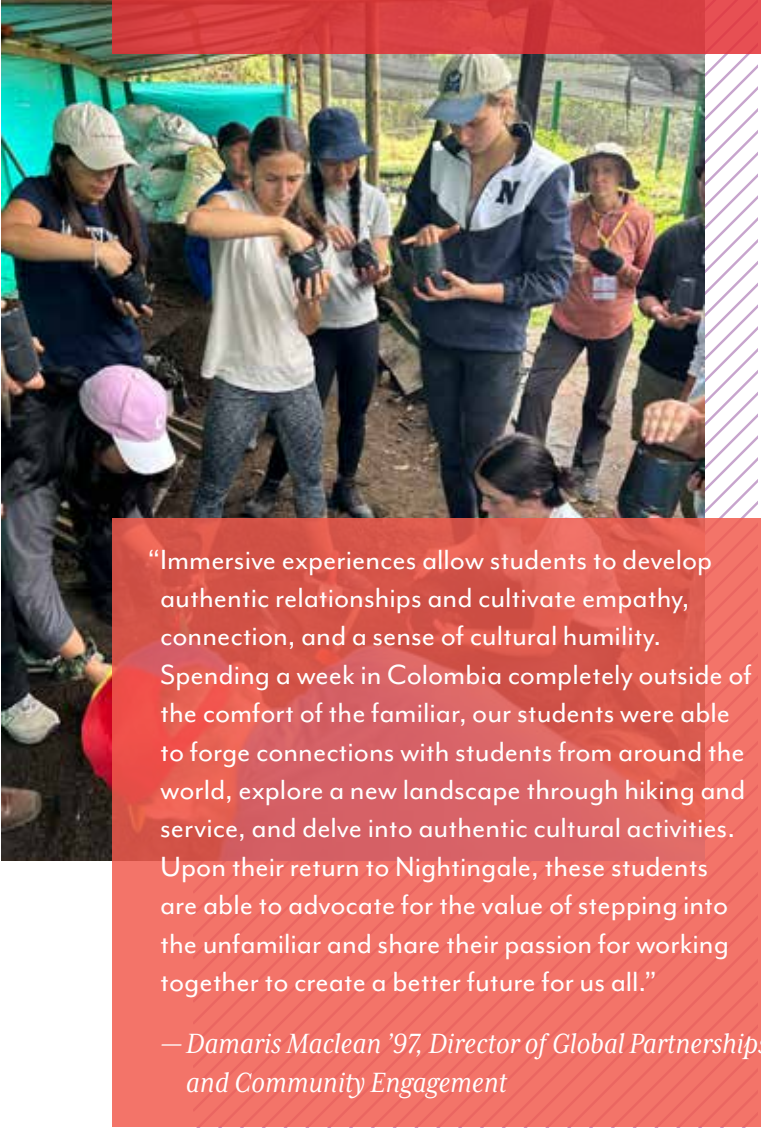
“It was so rewarding to see young people from all over the world excitedly chatting with each other, exchanging school pins, and making immediate connections with people they had only just met. Our Nightingale students embraced the experience right from the get go and I knew we were about to have an incredible and eye-opening week,” Ms. Peters shared.

After welcome remarks from Round Square student leaders and representatives, Americas Director at Human Rights Watch Juanita Goebertus Estradas delivered her keynote address. Inspired by the theme of the conference, Ms. Estradas took the audience on a journey through Colombia’s troubled past and how it has persevered through decades of conflict to grow into one of the most culturally and biologically diverse countries in the world. Her takeaway message focused on how communities can find commonalities to bridge gaps, which in turn builds a more inclusive and rights respecting society.

It was at this point that the conference split into two groups to travel north for the next three days. The Nightingale group boarded the buses for the small mountain town of Villa de Leyva along with 200 of their fellow conference attendees. They arrived three plus hours later, and after a brief orientation, students were slotted into their “Baraza” groups. Baraza, which means “the coming together of different people” in Swahili, is a key component of the conference. Each group has two Baraza leaders, students from host schools who have been essential in helping to plan the conference and who have undergone extensive leadership and facilitation training.

The Baraza groups hold two functions at the conference. First, they served as the students’ travel groups, which dictated the schedule they would follow for any given day. Second, the Baraza groups would meet at the end of every day to reflect on the days’ activities, discuss the keynote speaker’s presentation, and connect over topics of global and social relevance. Student delegates from the same school were divided up among the Barazas to encourage cross-cultural connection with the ultimate goal of making new friends.

For Ashani A. '27, being able to meet and collaborate with students from all over the world was a deeply rewarding experience.



“Immersive experiences allow students to develop authentic relationships and cultivate empathy, connection, and a sense of cultural humility. Spending a week in Colombia completely outside of the comfort of the familiar, our students were able to forge connections with students from around the world, explore a new landscape through hiking and service, and delve into authentic cultural activities. Upon their return to Nightingale, these students are able to advocate for the value of stepping into the unfamiliar and share their passion for working together to create a better future for us all.”

—Damaris Maclean '97, Director of Global Partnerships and Community Engagement

She shared, “It was fascinating to hear their perspectives, learn about their cultures, and realize that we all share a commitment to making a difference. It really expanded my understanding of the world and showed me just how powerful diverse viewpoints are. It also let me see how New Yorkers (and Americans in general) are perceived by people from other countries.”

Over the course of their three days in Villa de Leyva, Baraza groups rotated through a series of activities that emphasized service, cultural understanding, and embracing a sense of adventure. These included a hike and reforestation project in hills of Iguaque National Park, a ceramics and basket weaving workshop with local pottery and artisan craft professionals, a scavenger hunt through the historic center of Villa de Leyva, a challenging ropes course and zipline, and team building activities immersed in the beauty of the Colombian landscape. Every day posed new opportunities for camaraderie, teamwork, patience, and stepping outside of one’s comfort zone. The days were long—12+hours—but full of insightful and enriching moments that required students to be fully present and a world away from their everyday lives.

When asked what her favorite day was on the trip, Lily T. '27 instantly recalled the combination community service and

hike—and specifically the return hike down the mountain in the pouring rain with her 10-person group. She shared, “With all our visible and lived diversity, situational and life differences, me being the only one from North America, we had a commonality—cold and frozen feet, backpacks and clothes soaked through, and a mission to make it down without falling with complete fog and zero percent visibility. Our inner strength infused with laughter came out as we shifted from survival mode to jamming to my speaker. We blasted music and sang songs to distract ourselves while taking funny photos. This shared experience has left an indelible mark on my Round Square conference experience.”

On the final full day in Colombia, all conference attendees returned to Bogotá for the closing ceremonies and a final keynote address from Mauricio Cárdenas, Colombian economist and politician, at Colegio Anglo Colombiano. His presentation, titled *Progress Unsettled*, addressed the tension between Colombia’s past and present, and the massive economic and social disparities between the different regions in the country. And yet, he was proud to share that the tourism industry is the strongest it’s ever been. A true success story in a post-pandemic world.

And then, just as the trip began, students returned to their host families for their final night in Colombia. This time though, it was like watching old friends reconnect and the Nightingale students couldn’t wait to share their stories and insights from their time in Villa de Leyva.

Though the conference may have only been a week-long, upon the return to 92nd Street, it became abundantly clear that the impact on the Nightingale students would last a lifetime. Lily T. '27 reflected, “Attending the Round Square conference provided a sense of what’s possible, both within Nightingale and as a global citizen. It showed me the strength of collaboration across cultures and perspectives by bringing together students and educators from all over the world which highlighted what can be achieved when people unite with shared values and a common vision. At Nightingale, the conference is a reminder of the importance beyond academics including leadership, service, and global awareness. Should we have more global exchange programs, sustainability initiatives, or community service projects that align with the Round Square principles of adventure, leadership, service, and environmental education?” ●



“It was fascinating to hear about the differences in everyone’s daily lives, from educational and social experiences to political views and cultural norms that differ from country to country. Having people from so many backgrounds in one place allowed us to honor our differences while connecting over the shared experience of being there together.”

—Lexi J. '26



A Spike in Spirit

Homecoming 2024 celebrated fierce competition, school pride, and unforgettable moments on and off the court.

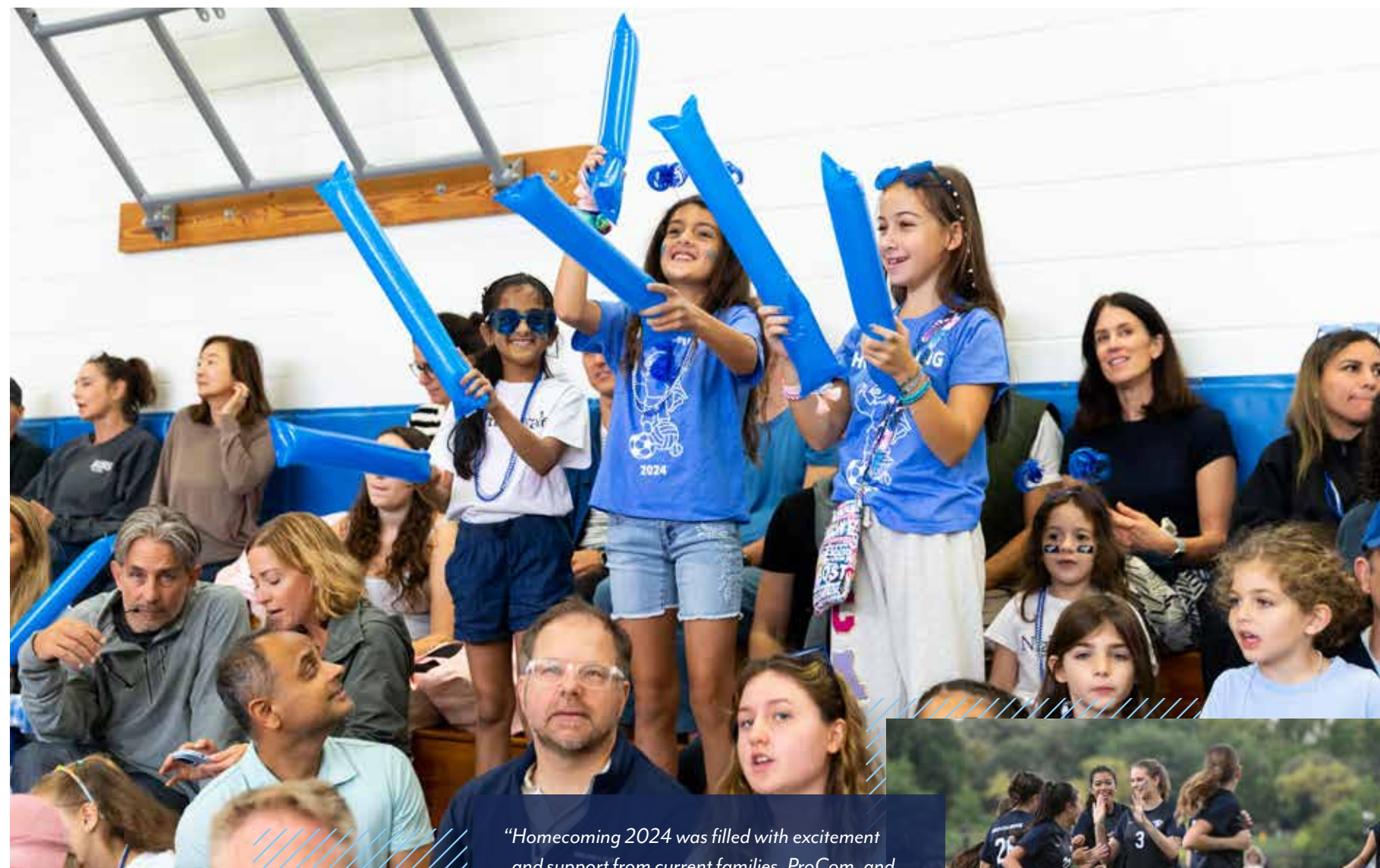




CELEBRATING NIGHTHAWK PRIDE

On Friday, September 27 and Saturday, September 28, the entire Nightingale community celebrated Nighthawk pride at Homecoming 2024. On Friday, community members came out to Randall's Island to cheer on varsity soccer, who defeated Friends Seminary. On Saturday, the community rallied for JV and varsity volleyball as they also took on Hunter in competitive games. Varsity volleyball took home a win for Nightingale! Soonafter, alumnae and professional community members took to the court to compete in the annual ProCom and Alumnae volleyball game!

On 92nd Street and in the auditorium, community members enjoyed food trucks, a DJ dance party, grafts & games, a photo booth, General Store shopping, singing with Ms. Alexander, and more throughout the day. •



"Homecoming 2024 was filled with excitement and support from current families, ProCom, and alumnae. This was a special year as we also hosted a Hall of Fame induction, where current students led the celebration of each individual athlete and team. The following day, the Schoolhouse was packed with Nighthawk spirit; students were even cheering, singing, and dancing their way into the gym to support our varsity and JV volleyball teams! Homecoming is always a wonderful community-building event to kick off the school year."

AMANDA CECIL,
DIRECTOR OF ATHLETICS AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION





HONORING ATHLETIC EXCELLENCE

Alumnae and former athletics all-stars were inducted into Nightingale's Athletics Hall of Fame during Homecoming weekend in September.

After Nightingale's varsity soccer game on Friday, September 27, alumnae, coaches, and families gathered in the Sue Tofel '48 Gymnasium to honor the newest induction class into Nightingale's Athletics Hall of Fame. Each inductee was inducted by a current member of the Upper School athletics board, who spoke of their accomplishments. Each honoree was then bestowed their awards by current and former directors of athletics Mandy Cecil and Jenny Smith.

Congratulations to the 2024 Hall of Fame inductees: Lara Rubin Constable '85, Amy Lasser '86, Stephanie Golden Thaler '87, Rosanna Jones Anderson '90, Aabye-Gayle Francis-Favilla '97, and the 2012 varsity cross country team.

LARA RUBIN CONSTABLE '85

During her time at Nightingale, Lara was an all-around athlete, participating in a wide range of sports including volleyball, basketball, swimming, softball, and soccer. However, volleyball was her true passion, where she not only served as captain but also earned the MVP award for her outstanding performance. Lara's athletic journey continued at Yale, where she played varsity volleyball for four years and even joined the novice crew team for one season. Her favorite memories from Nightingale revolve around the time spent with her teammates, many of whom she still keeps in touch with today. Looking back, Lara described the Nightingale athletics program during her years as fun, determined, and ground-breaking. She emphasized how being part of a team at Nightingale had a profound impact on her life, teaching her the importance of teamwork and how individual skills can come together to support the success of the whole team. Hall of Fame member Odette Cabrera Duggan '83 accepted this award on behalf of Lara.

AMY LASSER '86

Amy was a dedicated and talented student-athlete while at Nightingale, participating in gymnastics, track and field, and soccer. While she finished at the top of the league in the 200m dash and long jump in track, it was gymnastics that truly captured her heart. In gymnastics, she won the AAIS gymnastics floor exercise and consistently placed in the top 10 for all-around performances throughout Upper School. Her leadership shone through as she captained both the gymnastics and track teams, and as a member of the athletic board. Amy continued her athletic journey at Dartmouth College, where she was a four-year letter winner as a heptathlete on the track and field team. She achieved top 10 finishes each year as a heptathlete in the Ivy League and was named captain of the team in her senior year. Amy reflected on her time in Nightingale athletics as familial, competitive, and gritty.



"We were athletes at the cusp of real change for women's athletics. I will never forget Miss Bennet, Miss Smith, and Miss Fernald—and realizing how different their paths must have been. I am grateful for the teams they led, the friendships that were formed as a result of those teams, and the competitive drive fostered in all of us to compete on the court, as well as to do our best off the court."

—LARA RUBIN CONSTABLE '85



"Competing on teams in high school and college has made me a team player for life. I continue to be amazed and inspired by the talents and fortitude of others."

AMY LASSER '86

STEPHANIE GOLDEN THALER '87

Stephanie was a three-sport varsity athlete at Nightingale—excelling in soccer, basketball, and softball. Her athletic talents were recognized early, earning MVP honors in softball and soccer during her junior year. As a senior, she continued to shine as she was named MVP in all three sports and served as captain of each team for all three seasons. Stephanie's leadership extended beyond the field and court; she was vice president and later president of the athletic board in her junior and senior years, exemplifying her commitment to both athletics and her school community. Her love for sports followed her as a college athlete at Goucher, where she played soccer as a freshman and continued with club soccer and basketball throughout her remaining years. Stephanie reflected on her time in Nightingale athletics as exciting, competitive, and character-building.





"[In athletics,] I developed life long friendships with students in other grades as well as my own. I learned the importance of being a good teammate both on and off the field. I gained leadership skills and always tried my hardest. I learned how to deal with loss and how to stay mentally strong. Interestingly enough, as a parent, I often discuss with my kids how important a role athletics played in my life and encouraged them to find a sport or sports that made them feel good, and want to work hard. I gained so much confidence playing and enjoyed every minute. I also believe that the dedication and hard work that it takes to become a stronger player positively affects other aspects of one's life."

—STEPHANIE GOLDEN THALER '87

"There's a lot of talk these days about the importance of belonging. I think that may have been one of the most important feelings from being on a sports team at NBS and beyond."

ROSANNA JONES ANDERSON '90



AABYE-GAYLE FRANCIS-FAVILLA '97

Aabye was an outstanding student-athlete, a key member of both the volleyball and track and field teams during her time at Nightingale. Her remarkable dedication and leadership were recognized through the Coaches Award, highlighting her commitment to the team and her role as an exemplary teammate. Aabye was also named an AAIS All-Star, demonstrating her high level of performance and sportsmanship. Aabye went on to compete in volleyball at Wellesley College where her team made an impressive run, finishing third in the Division III Final Four. She fondly recalls her preseason experiences at Nightingale, where the team not only practiced hard but also forged strong bonds, creating memories that lasted a lifetime. Volleyball, in particular, brought many rewarding experiences and deep relationships into her life, allowing her to focus on what her body could achieve and learn through athletics. She cherished her time here so much that she returned to give back, serving as a coach for the JV volleyball team, helping the next generation of Nightingale athletes create memories of their own.

ROSANNA JONES ANDERSON '90

Rosanna was a versatile and passionate athlete, excelling in basketball, volleyball, and softball at Nightingale—but it was volleyball that truly captured her heart. Rosanna's leadership was exemplified when she captained the basketball, volleyball, and softball teams. She also earned MVP honors in softball as a standout catcher. Her love for athletics continued into her years at Kenyon, where she played volleyball and discovered a new passion for rugby. She described her experience in Nightingale sports as inclusive, team-oriented, and fun. Her passion for sports didn't stop after graduation. Rosanna used the leadership and teamwork skills she developed through athletics to become the founder and manager of women's recreational sports leagues, continuing her commitment to building strong, supportive communities for women.

"[Participating in athletics] helped me learn how to be on a team and support others in their successes, offered avenues to both push and trust myself in new ways, and has given me an outlet for physical release...I run almost every day [now] as a meditative practice."

—ISABELLA B. '15

2012 VARSITY CROSS COUNTRY TEAM

Paola Idrovo '13, Sasha Whittle '13, Emma Chesley '14, Isabella Beroutsos '15, Graciela Garcia '15, Anna Jurew '15, Rebecca Lin '15, Wayan Buschman '16, Nicole Lopez '16, Carolina Beroutsos '17, Coach Marilina Kim, and Coach Chimé Wangdu.

With just 10 athletes, this team was truly mighty. They were a close-knit group of athletes who shared a genuine love for running, many of whom also competed in both cross country and track and field. This team's foundation was built long before their high school years, dating back to their days in Middle School, when they won the track championship. As they grew, so did their strength, focus, and determination. In 2011, the cross country team was crowned league champions—a significant achievement, but one that only motivated them to aim higher.

Then came the unforgettable 2012 season. The team finished the year undefeated, becoming not only AAIS League Champions but also the 2012 NYSAIS Cross Country Champions. Their dedication, perseverance, and bond carried them through grueling hill workouts, long runs in Central Park, and memorable race day traditions like enjoying oranges from Coach Wangdu.

Reflecting on that incredible season, team members recall the growth they



experienced, both as runners and as individuals. Preseason practices, which began with casual conversations about their summer, soon evolved into what Emma Chesley '14 described as "a rhythmic symphony of healthy breathing"—a testament to their growing discipline and focus.

The team learned valuable lessons about how to handle both success and adversity, how to push themselves beyond their comfort zones, and how to trust in their abilities. For many, running has remained a constant in their lives, a source of release and balance. Some of their fondest memories of Nightingale are rooted in their experiences as athletes, and many of their closest friendships today are with former teammates. •

"I loved my time at Nightingale. I had incredible teachers, coaches, classmates, and teammates who encouraged, challenged, and supported me. For all that and more, I'll be forever grateful."

—AABYE-GAYLE FRANCIS-FAVILLA '97





“I enjoyed reading about the main character Sara, who is very similar to me. Like her, I am also a Pakistani-American girl who switched schools and had trouble finding the right friends. And just like Rabia and Sara, I found it easier to hang out with my parents' friends' kids because we all belonged to the same culture and I felt they understood me. But, as I moved schools, I found people of very different cultures who ended up being my best friends. This was the same thing that happened with Sara and Elizabeth. Sara was a Pakistani-Muslim girl, while Elizabeth was a British-Jewish girl, but even though their backgrounds were so different, they were able to connect in different ways.”
—SOFIA M. '31

A Place at the Table

Class VI explores belonging through *A Place at the Table* by Laura Shovan and Saadia Faruqi.



“Food is essential to our humanity. It's how we nourish ourselves, but it's also how we connect with each other. So many great conversations happen at the dinner table. I think to recognize the role food plays in our lives and in all humans' lives is to recognize and celebrate our unity with all other humans. And when we can share in the joy of eating foods from other cultures and countries, we expand our palette, thus expanding our connection to people from around the world.”

—SARAH WHALEN, ENGLISH DEPARTMENT CO-CHAIR

During Nightingale's opening days this school year—a time for ProCom (professional community members) to reconnect, plan for the year, and engage in professional development before the school year commences—ProCom were split into groups and tasked with unique roles, all aimed at the same goal: constructing a table using various crafting materials. Each group dove into the task and created a variety of tables, each singular in their design, structure, and meaning. While the tables each served a purpose in their own way, one common theme arose from the construction: belonging, and ensuring that all guests would have “a place at the table.”

Inspired by this theme, English Faculty Jenny Cooley had an idea to introduce the book *A Place at the Table* by Laura Shovan and Saadia Faruqi to Class VI. Originally one of the English faculty's book group choices, Ms. Cooley felt that the story was too good not to share with students. This inspired a full-grade unit around the book.

“We thought that was a really lovely idea to open the sixth-grade year with, since it's a year that brings so many new kids into the community,” Head of Lower Middle School Rebecca Oshins explained.

In the fall, Class VI explored the story about two students, similar in age to them, who form a friendship during a cooking class.

“Class VI is all about ‘discovery.’ In *A Place At The Table*, our protagonists, Elizabeth and Sara, discover their differences but also their similarities. Ultimately, it is in learning about each other's cultures that they are able to form a lasting friendship. We discovered, together, how to build a stronger, more diverse community,” English Department Co-chair Sarah Whalen said. “It starts, we learned, with curiosity and generosity of spirit.”

The book prompted thoughtful discussion about cultural identity, racism, mental health, friendship, and bullying.

“A few key takeaways from *A Place at the Table* is to respect everyone's foods, ethnicities, and religions,” Class VI student Sofia M. '31 said. “It is also about friendship and how everyone, even the most different people can become the closest friends if only they learn to respect each other's differences, just like Sara and Elizabeth did.”

Eager to bring students' learning to life in a new way, the Middle School English team collaborated with Director of Museum Education and Cultural Partnerships Gabriella Kula to search for a Pakistani chef to host a cooking class, which later evolved into the Pakistani Food Fest. Ms. Kula connected the team to Chef Zia Sheikh, a Pakistani-American chef who focuses on Southeast Asian cuisine.

“Our goal in English class, always, is to bring students together to learn about themselves and their relationship to other humans through the books we read. There is nothing more potently human than sitting across a table from someone and sharing a meal,” Ms. Whalen said. “In trying Pakistani food with each other, students are practicing what the book preaches: friendship, like food, takes a lot of hard work. But ultimately, it's delicious, nourishing, and necessary to our survival.”

After weeks of planning, Class VI arrived to the Lauder Black Box Theatre in early November, which had been transformed into a temporary dining hall. Tables were set with tablecloths, plates, cutlery, handmade placemats, and floral arrangements inspired by the flag of Pakistan.

Once students were seated at their tables, Chef Zia Sheikh began by sharing various ingredients and spices used in famous Pakistani dishes. He also discussed Pakistani agriculture, culture, history, and geography. Students then heard from guest speaker Sabeeha Rehman, who spoke about her childhood growing up in Pakistan, and meal traditions in her family.

Students engaged in conversation as they began passing the food around their tables, served family-style. Students had the chance to try traditional dishes like chana masala, chicken kebab, chicken tikka, kheer, and samosas.

“A meaningful moment from the Pakistani food fest was being able to see people learning about my country during the slideshow and everyone trying out Pakistani food,” Sofia M. reflected. “It made me feel like I was different, but in a good way, when everyone was respecting and enjoying the food. It also reminded me of how I eat

samosas at home with my family and eat kheer on very special occasions.”

“I had so much fun trying every new food, expanding my palate,” Class VI student Kate P. reflected. “I also enjoyed seeing some students engaging in conversation with our chef who led the presentation.”

Ms. Oshins shared, “Anytime we can get the kids to make connections between the text and real life I consider it a win...These moments not only build critical readers and thinkers, but also empathetic citizens.”

Looking to the future, Ms. Whalen shared that the Middle School English team is hoping to replicate the experience with their next book, Julia Alvarez's *Before We Were Free*, which is set in the Dominican Republic. The unit would then culminate with a Dominican Food Fest.

“I hope students take away the same lesson from both [the book and the feast]: when something is different, it is not bad. When we meet people who are different from us, we should learn as much as we can to get to know them better. In doing so, we can forge powerful friendships. When we eat food we've never eaten before, it's important to approach it with curiosity, humility, and kindness,” Ms. Whalen said. “Always keep your heart open to new things!” ●

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Voices

Sabrina Schackner '20

My Nightingale story began in 2007 when I walked through those iconic blue doors for the very first time on my first day of Kindergarten. At the time, I was the smallest girl in the Class of 2020, and I clearly remember feeling both thrilled *and* intimidated. Any reservations I may have had were quickly replaced by a realization that this place would become my second home. The friends I would make became some of my closest confidants, and the teachers who guided and inspired me became mentors who left lasting marks on my life.

A particularly cherished early memory is attending my first spring musical. I vividly recall turning to my mother and exclaiming, “I want to do that someday!” Theatre and music became integral parts of my life at Nightingale, and I was fortunate to study under Ms. Davis and Mr. Goede, both of whom instilled in me the value of hard work and precision. Through the music and theatre programs, I not only found my voice but also my passion for storytelling, which has shaped so much of my life.

Opportunities to lead and develop my creativity at Nightingale were equally transformative. As a senior, I served as musical director for Bassless Accusations, our a cappella group. I poured my heart into everything we did, organizing Nightingale’s first-ever Acapellooza, arranging for us to sing (for pay!) at Bloomingdale’s in SOHO during the Holiday Season, and adapting music for the group. I also had many opportunities to act onstage, which ultimately allowed me to develop a unique senior Independent Study Project (ISP).

With the support of my academic advisors, I proposed to produce a musical as my ISP, serving as casting director, rehearsal coordinator, and music arranger. But it wasn’t meant to be—the pandemic shut everything down. No in-person classes,



no graduation, and no live performances. Still, I refused to abandon my dream. With video editing software, I pieced together a virtual digital production using at-home recordings from our cast. The process taught me adaptability, perseverance, and unexpectedly served as an introduction to digital storytelling. In my bedroom, during countless hours of editing, I realized production wasn’t just a hobby, it might be my calling.

Following graduation, I attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where I majored in communication arts, focusing on radio, television, and film, and minored in French and sports communication.



I directed short films, produced music videos, and even developed business proposals for original TV concepts. One of my most exciting experiences was working as a production assistant for Wisconsin Athletics, where I filmed Big Ten sports and collaborated with the production team in a fast-paced control room. The time management skills and creative leadership I’d honed at Nightingale undoubtedly provided a leg up in navigating the challenges that came with being part of one of the country’s top athletic programs.

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Sabrina performing *Into the Woods* at Nightingale.

As I reflect on my very young career, it is clear that the decision to pursue media and entertainment was not made in haste. It is the culmination of years of nurturing a love for storytelling. From theatre rehearsals at Nightingale to editing film projects at Wisconsin, I realized that production was more than a passion. It is the thread that connects my creativity with a love for sharing stories with others.

Professionally, I am now a production assistant at NBC Sports, where I create highlights for *Football Night in America* and *BIG College Countdown*. I'm also an on-site member of the *Thursday Night Football* team, supporting Prime Video's in-game production and operations in the Northeast. Recently, I served as a digital production assistant for NBC during the Paralympics.

One of the most gratifying aspects of my young career has been the ability to bring personal and professional passions together. As a long-time competitive figure skater, the Olympics always held a special place in my heart, exemplifying passion, discipline, and excellence. The opportunity to join NBC Sports in Paris for the Olympics this summer combined my love for the Olympics, my production



Sabrina in front of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, while she was there with NBC Sports for the Olympics this past summer.

skills, and my French language abilities, all honed at Nightingale (shout out to Madame Anderson!). Being on the ground as part of this once-in-a-lifetime event and knowing that my work contributed to the inspiration of millions around the world is an experience I'll treasure forever.

Nightingale continues to shape my life in many ways. The confidence I gained from an all-girls education has been invaluable, particularly in an industry often dominated by men. Nightingale taught me to speak

up and share my thoughts, essential skills in any work environment. Perhaps most important, the friendships I forged at Nightingale are a vital support system in my personal and professional life.

Nightingale never truly leaves me. It is woven into the fabric of everything I do. As I navigate my career in media and production, the lessons, friendships, and passions that were nurtured behind those blue doors continue to guide me. •

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