

The Blue Doors



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
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notes online at nightingale.org/sharenews.

Content & Design

The content and design of this publication
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communications team to bring our
community's stories to life.

Photography

All photography courtesy of subject,
unless otherwise noted.

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At Nightingale, thirteen years is more than just the time between Kindergarten and graduation—it’s a journey marked by growth, community, and enduring connection.

Each year, when our newest Kindergartners visit the school after admission, they receive a simple t-shirt: *Nightingale* on the front, and their graduation year on the back. This year’s shirts read: *Class of 2038*. As always, they were far too big. The shirts draped from shoulders to knees—a symbol of all the growth still to come.

We tell them, “Don’t worry. One day, this shirt will fit.” And it will. Because at Nightingale, growth is inevitable—of heart, of mind, of self.

This spring, we celebrated the graduation of the Class of 2025. Thirteen years earlier, they had begun their own journeys at our blue doors, welcomed on their first day by the Class of 2013. What none of us could have known then was just how full circle that moment would become.

This year, one of those 2013 seniors—Laura Plimpton—returned to deliver the Commencement address to the very class she had once welcomed as Kindergartners.

Laura is now pursuing a PhD, studying how viruses move through animal populations in urban environments like New York. Her work is complex and consequential, but it was the clarity of her presence that stayed with us—the way she reminded us that the connections formed at Nightingale are lasting, even as the world changes.

And change, of course, has come. Since the 2011-2012 school year, our student body has grown by over 30%, and our Schoolhouse has expanded to include two townhouses to the east. We’ve reshaped our curriculum to reflect a changing world. And now, we are building again: a new athletics facility, created specifically for girls. A space to run, to play, to lead.

And yet, as the NYSAIS visiting committee so aptly noted during this spring’s accreditation visit:

“Despite a significant increase in student enrollment over the past decade (from 580 in 2013–14 to 716 in 2023–24), Nightingale has actively worked to maintain its core identity.” Their words echoed what we know to be true: we evolve, yes—but we do so with intention, and always in service of what matters most.

What endures—what has always endured—are the relationships. The moments when an older student greets a younger one with a smile. The alum who returns, not out of obligation, but from a sense of belonging. The understanding that each child matters—as an individual, and as a member of a class, a community, a school that knows her and sees her.

I am consistently inspired by the ways Nightingale students and alumnae reach toward the future while remaining deeply connected—to one another, and to the mission that continues to shape who we are.

Paul A. Burke
Paul A. Burke,
Head of School

BRINGING LEARNING TO LIFE



On any given day, the Nightingale Schoolhouse is buzzing with curiosity and discovery. Whether it's listening to a thought-provoking guest speaker in the auditorium, conducting hands-on experiments in a science lab, or engaging in a live Zoom conversation with an artist on the other side of the globe, students are constantly immersed in dynamic and enriching experiences.

Learning at Nightingale extends far beyond textbooks and traditional classrooms—and beyond 92nd Street.

Situated in the heart of one of the world's most culturally and historically vibrant cities, Nightingale students enjoy unparalleled access to New York City's extraordinary array of galleries, museums, cultural institutions, historical landmarks, and immersive tours, bringing their curricula to life through firsthand experiences. Recognizing the educational potential of its surroundings, Nightingale created a visual education program in 2002, which has since evolved and expanded throughout the last 23 years to become an integral part of the student experience today.

"This year, collectively, our students participated in over 100 unique field trips and cultural partnerships, which means they were exposed to over 100 unique stories," Director of Museum Education and Cultural Partnerships Gabriella Kula said. "At Nightingale, we're committed to helping each student find her unique voice, while learning to appreciate the other unique voices in our community, and I hope each of our visual education experiences contribute to doing just that."

With a background in museum education, Ms. Kula, who joined Nightingale in 2023, has carefully scaffolded and reinvigorated the visual education program to specifically enhance students' visual literacy.

"Nightingale's visual education program is centered on connecting students' classroom learning with the world around us. To do this, we align field trips and cultural partnerships with as many subjects as possible across the K-XII experience," Ms. Kula said.

These experiences are far from the average "field trip." Months of careful planning occur in the background before trip day arrives. Prior to planning the excursion, Ms. Kula will collaborate with department and division heads to learn about the full scope of the curriculum across grades and subjects. After creating a few ideas in connection to students' studies, she will offer field trip and partnership ideas to teachers, in addition to creating pre- and post-experience materials and lessons for students. Finally, Ms. Kula organizes the logistics for safe student travel around the city.

From analyzing detailed artwork to exploring a wing of ancient artifacts, students are challenged to flex their mind and think in new ways through these experiences, practicing key parts of visual literacy: observation, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation.

"Museums and cultural institutions have a language of their own. Just like we would not step off of an airplane in another country and believe we could speak their language because our feet touched the ground, we cannot expect to speak the language of museums and cultural institutions just by entering their spaces. Like with all language acquisition, the earlier we start learning the language of museums and cultural institutions, the more confident we feel using it. We can also think of visual literacy as a sport. The more we play a sport, the stronger and better we become at it. So, too, it is true that the more we visit museums and cultural institutions, the more savvy we are at harnessing their power."

“There is no time more relevant, or more imminent, than today to show young people how powerful the arts can be, if we want to ensure a future for the cultural institutions in our country.”

— Gabriella Kula,
Director of Museum Education & Cultural Partnerships

This year, in addition to organizing field trips, the visual education department brought in guests for performances and workshops. For example, the puppet theatre Grand Pistachio performed their interactive show *Blown Away by Poetry* for Kindergarten and Class I during their poetry units, and dancer and choreographer Quenia Ribeiro visited Class III for a capoeira workshop when they were studying Brazil.

“This hands-on engagement invites even our youngest learners to actively explore, reflect, and challenge what they know,” said Head of Lower School Rebecca Urciuoli, PhD. “As our students get older, they develop and hone their critical thinking skills through thoughtful questioning, and build a foundation for discovery and lifelong learning.”

One class has been particularly immersed in the city this year. Only a few steps away from Nightingale lies the Museum Mile, a stretch of Fifth Avenue home to some of the world’s most renowned museums and cultural institutions. In recent years, Class V’s explorations have been streamlined into a program called “Journeys Along the Museum Mile,” which Ms. Kula highlights as a point of pride.

“Through this program, we take regular field trips to local museums in connection to each heritage month. For example, in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month, we visited El Museo del Barrio for their ‘Around the Block’ walking tour to illuminate the experience of the Latinx and Latin American community right in Nightingale’s own neighborhood. For American Indian Heritage Month, we visited the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum to see their triennial *Making Home*, where we looked at projects by American Indian designers and activists whose work revolves around the concept of belonging. In honor of Black History Month, we went to the Museum of the City of New York to see *Changing the Face of Democracy: Shirley Chisholm at 100* and learn about the impact of the first Black woman elected to Congress. For Women’s History Month, we explored the work of Sonia Delaunay, Natalia Goncharova, and Mainie Jellett, the only three female artists in the Guggenheim’s exhibition *Harmony and Dissonance: Orphism in Paris, 1910–1930*. Through these adventures, our students complete their Class V year having visited every single museum along Museum Mile, and understanding ways cultural institutions connect to contemporary issues and to our own lives.”

Class V student, Cornelia X. ’32 shared: “Field trips [build and expand] on topics we already know, in a fun way of course. We also frequently learn about new topics and ideas along the way.”

Ms. Kula remarked, “What could be more exciting for a student in Class II than riding Jane’s Carousel and seeing every angle of the skyline in celebration of an entire year’s study of New York City? What could be more eye-opening for a student in Class V than being in The Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Temple of Dendur when studying ancient Egypt? What could be more immersive for an Upper School student studying French than traveling to 19th-century France to meet Monet, Renoir, Morisot, and Degas through the VR experience *Tonight with the Impressionists*? In his 1916 book *Democracy and Education*, philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer John Dewey wrote, ‘Learning through doing is the most effective way to master a subject,’ and in venturing beyond the classroom, we are doing just that.” •

NIGHTHAWK EXPLORATIONS



Art Farm Visit

As part of Kindergarten’s math unit on counting and measuring, students counted insect body parts and measured their lengths.



United Nations

As part of their social studies curriculum, Class III visited the Kids Corridor and General Assembly Hall and learned more about the work of the UN.



Materials for the Arts

Class VI students visited MFTA to explore recycled materials and the link between art, sustainability, and memory.



The Metropolitan Museum of Art

In their philosophical inquiry minor, Upper Schoolers examined Isamu Noguchi’s “Water Stone,” and considered how art can deepen our understanding of self and world.



Whitney Museum

Class I students viewed a variety of wire sculptures by Ruth Asawa and Alexander Calder, while they were studying wire sculptures in Ms. Song’s art class.



Museum of the City of New York

Class IV’s *Activist New York* tour kicked off their capstone project by introducing them to different forms of activism.



Urban Glass

In connection to the Museum Studies unit “Art with a Function,” Class VII students watched glassmakers blow cups and created their own glass coasters.



Tonight with the Impressionists

Mr. Howell’s French students toured France in the late 1800’s via virtual reality, and attended the first Impressionist exhibition (1874) in Nadar’s studio. Students “met” artists like Monet, Renoir, Morisot, Cézanne, Pissarro, and Degas.



The New York Historical

In alignment with their social studies focus on the history of New York, Class II students visited NYH’s galleries to learn about what life was like for the Dutch settlers of New Amsterdam.



Journeys Along the Museum Mile

Class V students visited several institutions along the Museum Mile in connection with history and heritage months.



InStyle

During their Magazine Minimester, Upper Middle School students visited the *InStyle* offices.



Chelsea Gallery Hop

Upper School Painting and Drawing students visited galleries in Chelsea to view narrative work, ethereal landscapes, unique process combination painting and embroidery, and more.

This list is not comprehensive, but a small sampling of trips in each class.

Beyond the Map

Class IX's first-ever semester-long study interlacing math, biology, and computer science.

Prior to this past fall, Nightingale's STEM team had been exploring ways to design a semester-long, interdisciplinary unit that would meaningfully integrate science, mathematics, and computer science. They conducted extensive research, visited other institutions for inspiration, and brainstormed a range of possibilities, using a framework of goals for their students to achieve during the unit: data, problem solving, systems thinking, communication, and quantitative reasoning.

"A semester-long project allows the teachers and students to delve more deeply into a topic and explore different aspects, which we believe leads to an overall broader understanding," Science Department Chair Mary Beth Spina, PhD, explained. "Early on, we decided to center the unit around a broad, universal theme, such as water or air, that could naturally connect our disciplines. During one of our discussions, [Mathematics Faculty] Claire Lulow mentioned



the book *The Ghost Map*, which I had previously used in my Bioethics class. As we delved deeper into the book's themes, we grew increasingly excited by the potential for cross-disciplinary connections, and it quickly became clear that this would be a rich foundation for our unit."

And with that, the semester-long *The Ghost Map* project was born.

Analyzing The Ghost Map

Upon returning to the Schoolhouse in September, the Class of 2028 had just completed their summer reading of *The Ghost Map: The Story of London's Most Terrifying Epidemic—and How It Changed Science, Cities, and the Modern World*, which tells the story of the rapid spread of a cholera outbreak in London in 1854. During their opening days, students met in the Black Box Theatre for an in-depth review of the book and a discussion.

Later in the week, students were separated into groups for an immersive activity around the Schoolhouse. Working together, students were tasked with finding "water pumps"



"The *Ghost Map* project helped me understand how science and society are connected by taking us through the processes of scientific discovery, and how changes in society influence the need and demand for those scientific discoveries."

—Lakshmi G. '28



throughout the building. They then carried textbooks—representing the weight of the water—back to their homeroom. Each "batch" represented a different level of contamination. Students then made connections to how quickly the disease was able to spread during that time.

Exploring London

In November, Class IX students visited London for their annual trip. This time, however, students connected more deeply to their studies as they walked in the very footsteps of John Snow, the physician who traced the source of the 1854 outbreak to Broad Street. Students toured the sewers of London, explored Soho on a scavenger hunt to understand the neighborhood's geography, and collected data for a citizen science project focused on building sustainability.

"They followed the path of his investigation and even visited the site of the infamous Broad Street pump, bringing the historical narrative to life powerfully and tangibly," Dr. Spina said.

Lakshmi G. '28 felt like a historian, scientist, and researcher while locating spots in Soho connected to the book: "I felt like we were tracing back history while researching cholera at the same time—I felt like John Snow."

Becoming Experts: Final Presentations

Finally, for the culminating assessment, students created research posters that synthesized their findings in a clear, engaging, and visually accessible format. Students were challenged to display their explanations, data, analysis, and relevant visuals—and share their findings with their peers in a formal presentation. To showcase their work, the Upper School STEM team hosted the Class IX Symposium just before winter break, inviting faculty and administrators to attend.

On the morning of Winter Celebration, all Class IX students presented in groups, each taking turns to explain sections of their group poster. This event gave students an opportunity to practice their communication and presentation skills, while demonstrating interdisciplinary expertise.

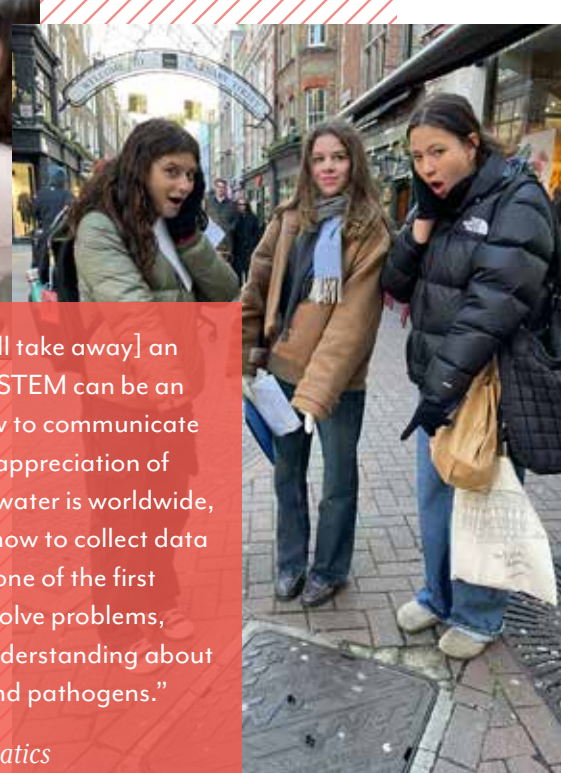
"Working on a real-world issue from history helped me see how important it is to link all those subjects together, and has helped me see how there is STEM in everyday life," Aima W. '28 reflected.

"We believe it's essential for students to understand that subjects like math, biology, and computer science are not isolated disciplines, but interconnected tools that, when combined, deepen understanding and problem-solving abilities," Dr. Spina said. "By working on a project that weaves these areas together and ties into a real-world experience like their London trip, students can see how knowledge from different fields comes together to make sense of complex issues. This interdisciplinary approach not only enriches their learning but also reflects how challenges are addressed in the real world, where collaboration across domains is key." •



"It allowed students to see the connections and intersections between the STEM subjects in a more intentional and ongoing way, as opposed to a one-off thing."

—Bryan Rosen, Director of Academic Technology



"[We hope students will take away] an appreciation for how STEM can be an investigative tool, how to communicate using technology, an appreciation of how important clean water is worldwide, an understanding of how to collect data and that it should be one of the first ideas when trying to solve problems, and some depth of understanding about the immune system and pathogens."

—Pete Prince, Mathematics Department Chair VI–XII

STATE
CHAMPIONS!

HITTING THEIR STRIDE

After seasons of steady growth, Nightingale's indoor track & field team found its footing—and crossed the finish line as state champions.

A championship season doesn't happen overnight.

This winter, Nightingale's varsity indoor track & field team captured its first-ever NYS AIS title with a commanding 29-point lead over a field of 26 schools. The win was historic—not just for the margin, but for what it represented: seasons of quiet, determined progress.

That kind of progress didn't just build skill—it shaped identity. For many athletes on the team, track hadn't always been the obvious path. But over time—through tough workouts, relay handoffs, and shared moments at meets—they discovered a love for running, jumping, and competing together. What began as something they tried became something they couldn't imagine giving up.

“We have always had a few athletes with a lot of talent who really buy into the sport, and by that I mean who really understand that being good in track and field requires commitment, consistency and hard work,” said Coach Hallie Nicoll. “So, since I’ve been coaching varsity, we have seen great individual performances, but not a ton of success as a whole team. I would say a big turning point was last fall, when I saw an influx of ninth graders join the team. Our cross country team was the largest it had ever been, and these athletes quickly formed a very strong bond with the more seasoned athletes already on the team. They loved running together. They all worked very hard together, but they were able to find joy in the sport, and out of this they saw tons of improvement, and we had our best cross country season in over ten years.”

Coach Nicoll added that this continued into both the indoor season and outdoor season last year, where the teams also saw great

“In running track, sometimes you can show up, feel 100% prepared, give it your all, and still not get the outcome you want. This can be incredibly frustrating, but I have come to learn that if you are patient and keep showing up for yourself, the hardwork will pay off. Even when the results aren’t immediate, I have learned the importance of trusting and believing in myself.”

— Vivian Y. '26

success. “The team was young, but they had already bought into the process. They saw their success as a team from the previous season, and understood what it takes to win. And most importantly, doing well as a team became something that was more important to many of them than individual success.”

The result this season was a record-breaking performance. Jada C. '25, a senior leader in the field events, took first place in the high jump and long jump and second in the triple jump. Her high jump of 5'4" broke both the Nightingale and NYS AIS records. Ashima B. '26 led the way on the track, placing first in the 1000m and second in the 1500m. The 4x800m relay team of Emma D. '26, Alexa C. '27, Lennon C. '29, and Audrey P. '26 shattered the school record and earned a third-place finish.

“I originally started running to help improve in soccer, but in ninth grade, after my first season of running at Nightingale, I realized that running was something I really loved and wanted to chase success in,” said Ashima B. “I was truly drawn to the competitive and aspirational aspect of running—it is really you against yourself—and also loved the supportive, welcoming environment of the team.”

For many, this season felt like a payoff—not just for the winter, but for years of effort. These were athletes who had put in the work, stayed with the sport, and discovered that they belonged on the track. That realization gave the team a sense of purpose that showed in the way they trained, competed, and supported one another.



“When I entered Nightingale in ninth grade, I tried out for JV volleyball to help me make friends and meet my new classmates,” said Vivian Y. '26. “I enjoyed the feeling of being on a team—gaining a built-in group of friends and coaches who all supported me—but I knew that volleyball wasn’t my thing.”

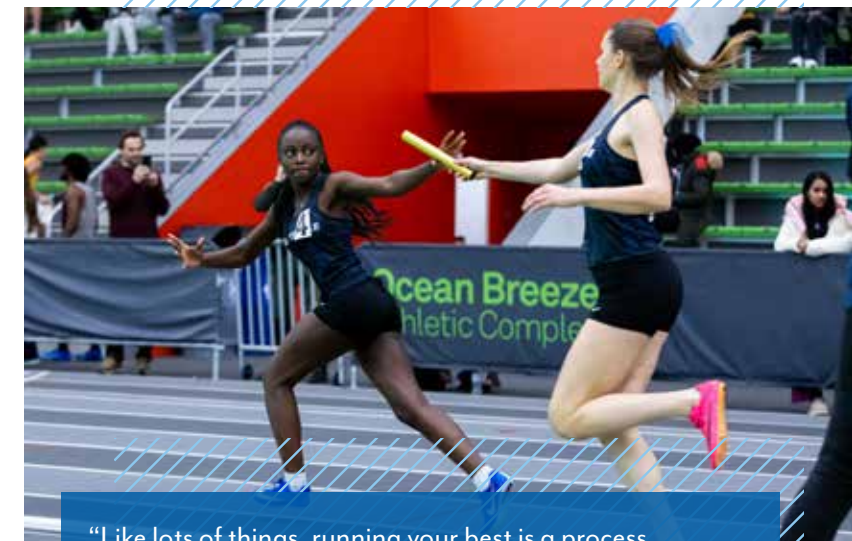
She joined track that winter and quickly realized it offered something unique. “When most people think about track, they see a very individual sport where every athlete runs alone. However, upon joining the track team, I quickly realized it is the exact opposite! During meets and even hard workouts, everyone is constantly cheering each other on and pushing them to give their very best. I think this raw, genuine, and unconditional support is so special and hard to find in any other sport.”

The team’s depth was a major factor. From sprint events to long-distance races, relays to shot put, Nightingale had athletes scoring in nearly every category. That range allowed the team to pull ahead early and maintain a commanding lead throughout the championship meet.

But the real story wasn’t just about points on a board. It was about a group of athletes who found confidence in their sport and in each other. At every practice and every meet, they built a culture of consistency and trust—a culture that carried them to the podium.

“I think that the more the team understands how each individual plays a role in the team’s success, the more successful we will be,” said Coach Nicoll. “We have lost league championships by just one point. Losses like that are just as powerful as the wins because it truly shows the athletes how every point scored matters... it’s not just about those first place points, it’s about those sixth, seventh, and eighth place points too.”

As the final results came in, it was clear this win hadn’t come out of nowhere. It was the result of steady progress, consistent effort, and a team that had been building toward this moment for a long time. They hit their stride—and finished strong. •



“Like lots of things, running your best is a process. As I have gotten older, I have learned to deal with the emotional ups and downs of performances throughout the season with optimism. This season, I learned to trust my preparation, stay positive through disappointing results, and remain balanced through great ones—not letting either affect me too much. Outcomes can vary so much week to week, so I try to simply focus on doing my best and having fun.”

— Ashima B. '26



Nightingale, Everywhere

This year, Nighthawks gathered across cities and generations in celebration of shared roots and lasting connection.

DEC

A Night to Remember in Brooklyn

On December 11, alumnae gathered for a festive evening of camaraderie and conversation. Mr. Burke, along with Nightingale faculty, offered a glimpse into life on 92nd Street, sharing updates and reflecting on the vibrant future of the school. The gathering provided a wonderful opportunity for alumnae to reconnect with old friends, meet new faces, and celebrate the spirit of the Nightingale community. Laughter and shared memories filled the room!



Alumnae Enjoy Private Tour of *Edges of Ailey*

On January 25, nearly 30 alumnae gathered for a sold-out, private, guided tour of the *Edges of Ailey* exhibition at The Whitney Museum of American Art, with Francesca Harper Cohen '87 P'29. Francesca is the artistic director of Ailey II at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, as well as a current Nightingale trustee, parent, and alumna. This event was a special opportunity to celebrate the life, dances, influences, and enduring legacy of visionary artist and choreographer Alvin Ailey.

JAN

FEB

Creating Community in South Florida

Whether near or far, the shared bond between Nighthawks continues to inspire and strengthen the Nightingale community. On February 26, a wonderful group of South Florida alumnae, parents of alumnae, grandparents, and professional community members gathered to celebrate the lasting friendships forged on 92nd Street. The evening was filled with energizing conversations and an outpouring of love for Nightingale—a heartfelt reminder of the incredible power of our community, no matter the distance.



Alumnae of Color Gather for Afternoon of Connection and Inspiration

Hosted by the diversity, equity, and inclusivity committee of the alumnae board, alumnae of color gathered for a beautiful afternoon filled with warmth, reflection, and community. Joined by Mr. Burke and Francesca Harper '87 P'29, alumnae across class years connected on Sunday, April 6, at Alvin Ailey Studios and enjoyed a special performance of Ailey II.

APR

MAY

Reconnecting at Reunion 2025

Nightingale welcomed over 200 alumnae back through the blue doors in celebration of Reunion 2025. From a 50th Reunion Kick-off Breakfast with the Class of 1975 to the Alumnae Cocktail reception, alumnae across generations reconnected in the spirit of truth, friendship, and loyalty.



A special thank you to our hosts whose warmth and hospitality make for unforgettable events:

Lauren Potters Horn '97
Elena Hahn Kiam '81 P'14 P'17
Francesca Harper Cohen '87 P'29
Ellen Kiam GP'14 GP'17
Tory Kiam P'14 P'17
Hillary Smith Ripley '86

From Carnegie Hill to Notting Hill

Alumnae and families of Nightingale gathered to join Director of Institutional Advancement Elizabeth "Oz" Oswald, incoming Director of Alumnae Relations Damaris Wollenburg Maclean '97, and Chair of the Classics Department Panayotes Dakouras for a regional reception in London in late November. They shared the latest news from behind the blue doors and connected with alumnae, parents of alumnae, and other members of the Nightingale community in the UK.

NOV

TEA, TOASTS, AND TIMELESS TIES

HIGHLIGHTS FROM REUNION 2025

We were thrilled to welcome over 200 alumnae back through the blue doors in celebration of Reunion 2025. From joyful hugs to heartfelt toasts, it was incredibly special to see alumnae connect and reconnect on 92nd Street.



CLASS OF 1975 AND CLASS IV PAR-TEA

During the morning of Reunion, ten members of the Class of 1975 gathered in the Joan Stitt McMenamin Library for a brunch in celebration of their 50th Reunion. Over croissants and coffee, the Class of 1975 reconnected whilst sharing stories from their time at Nightingale and life since then. They flipped through their senior year book, recounting memories of classes, classmates, and teachers.

In advance of Reunion, current Class IV students had written notes to the Class of 1975, sharing about their life at Nightingale in 2025, such as their favorite activities, the books they are reading, and what they want to be when they grow up. Following their brunch, the Class of 1975 journeyed up to the fourth floor for the Class IV Par-Tea, to meet the authors that had penned their previous letters. Each member of the Class of 1975 sat at a table with four to five students, and students then got to ask them questions about their time at Nightingale 50 years ago while enjoying tea and cookies.

NIGHTHAWK NETWORKING & MILESTONE MOMENTS

In the spirit of truth, friendship, or loyalty, alumnae connected with one another across class years and industries. Stationed in the library during Nighthawk Networking, alumnae had a chance to browse Nightingale's archives. They perused prints, yearbooks, and items from Nightingale's history—including Nightingale's first yearbook from 1925! A few Reunion classes even had a chance to open their ceremonial class letters, including the Class of 2015, who were celebrating their tenth reunion.



REUNION LUNCHEON & ALUMNAE INDUCTION CEREMONY

Alumnae from the Class of 1960 to the Class of 2020 gathered in the Susan Hecht Tofel '48 Gymnasium for the Reunion Luncheon and Alumnae Induction. After opening remarks from Alumnae Board President Terri Davis-Merchant '95, two alumnae were recognized for outstanding accomplishments in service to the school and in their professional life. Their exemplary contributions serve as an inspiration to the entire Nightingale community. Following their recognitions, the Class of 2025 led the room singing Nightingale's alma mater, "For Nightingale," as they were inducted into the Alumnae Association.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 2025 DISTINGUISHED ALUMNAE AWARD RECIPIENTS:

Louisa Conrad '00, Achievement Award
Amanda Potters Schumacher '95, Service Award



"The energy at Reunion 2025 was amazing! I most enjoyed alum connecting across class years and generations. From acknowledging our alum standouts during the lunch (and welcoming our newest alums, the Class of 2025) to affinity group spaces and a (always) spirited cocktail party, it was wonderful to see our alum community come together. Reunion offers the opportunity to come back to the Schoolhouse not only to reconnect with classmates and meet new people but also to learn how Nightingale is evolving as a school serving young women in the 21st century."

— Terri Davis-Merchant '95, Alumnae Board President

TOASTING THE 2025 REUNION CUP CHAMPIONS AT THE ALL-ALUMNAE COCKTAIL RECEPTION

We are delighted to celebrate the Class of 2000 as this year's Reunion Cup champions! With an impressive 33 donors, their spirit soared as the competition heated up—and in a thrilling finish, they secured the lead by achieving the highest number of donors among milestone reunion classes. Congratulations, Class of 2000! A heartfelt salute also goes to runners-up, the Class of 1985, whose remarkable show of support included 29 donors—tripling their class participation rate this year.

Special thanks to the over 150 Reunion year alumnae who joined the Race for the Reunion Cup, a spirited competition in which milestone year classes compete for the highest participation in the Nightingale Fund. If you didn't get a chance to participate and wish to make a contribution in honor of your milestone year, visit nightingale.org/donate Thank you for your support!



THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 REUNION COMMITTEE!

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS Mary Hyde Ottaway '55, Phoebe Sherman Sheftel '60, Karen Oberlaender Oertley '70, Marina Hahn '75, Karen Scanlan Mangan '75, Carley Rand Weatherley-White '80, Tina Addison '85, Sarah Jacob Beyrich '85, Anne R. Mickle '85, Monica Illich Vogelstein '85, Sheharbano Ali '90, Charity Guerra-Luna '90, Shyama Patel '90, Rachel Zweighaft '90, Terri Davis-Merchant '95, Amy Gilkes Loe '95, Amanda Potters Schumacher '95, Ellen K. Warfield '95, Louisa Conrad '00, Johanna Cohen Fleiss '00, Elizabeth S. Niemiec '00, Jessica Taylor Allen-Arney '05, Olivia W. Colson '05, Daphne M. Schmon '05, Adrienne Glascock Graves '10, Stefanie Spanfeller '10, Katharine G. Stillman '10, Isabella Beroutsos '15, Traciann V. Celestin '15, Catherine Fleming Gray '15, Stella B. Porter '15, Madeleine Ganz '20, Annika N. Gottfrid '20, Sabrina Schackner '20, Gwynne Wolgemuth '20 •

Petals & Possibilities



As she concluded, Eleanor B. '33 and Isabel H. '33 stood up quickly and announced that Class IV had something to say. As a familiar tune started playing, Dr. Urciuoli beamed while finding a spot in the crowd. A surprise to everyone in the audience, the Class of 2033 performed a Nightingale-ified version of Natasha Bedingfield's "These Words" and signed a heart during the chorus of "I love you" to show their appreciation for their Head of Lower School. They had secretly practiced in advance of the ceremony to share how much they appreciated Dr. Urciuoli.

Each Lower School grade then stood to sing a song they had selected for the ceremony. In each song, students imparted words of wisdom to their Class IV peers—some even with a few choreographed dance moves. Kindergarten sang "I'm Not Perfect," Class I sang "Lean on Me" by Bill Withers, Class II sang "You've Got a Friend in Me" by Randy Newman, and Class III sang "I'll Be Riding Shotgun" by George Ezra.

After Head of School Paul A. Burke addressed the Class of 2033, underscoring the messages in these performances, Class IV sang "Be a Light" by Thomass Rhett and a mashup of "Roar" by Katy Perry and Journey's "Don't Stop Believin'."

The Class of 2033 took turns picking up a daisy as they made their way off stage. In pairs and side by side, they rose the daisies overhead, forming an archway. Kindergarten through Class III students made their way through until finally it was time for Class IV. They took turns passing under the arch, radiating joy as they made their way through, each emerging as Middle Schoolers. •

Each spring, the Daisy Ceremony celebrates both tradition and transformation, and this year was no different. As processional music played, Kindergarten through Class III students filed into the auditorium and found their spots around the room. Once seated, they turned toward the entrance to welcome Class IV, the guests of honor, who began their own walk into the space. As the soon-to-be Middle Schoolers looked up to the balcony and saw friends and family smiling back, the room seemed to glow with pride. Class IV students took their places onstage, joining the rest of the Lower School community for the celebration ahead.

The Daisy Ceremony is one of Nightingale's most beloved traditions, celebrating Class IV's ascension from Lower School to Middle School. Each division at Nightingale marks this kind of milestone with a special ceremony: the Daisy Ceremony for Lower School, the Moving Up ceremony for Middle School, and, of course, Commencement for Upper School.

Head of Lower School Rebecca Urciuoli, PhD, kicked off the ceremony by reflecting on each class and their growth over the last school year. She turned to Class IV, reflecting not only on their year as leaders of the Lower School, but their entire time in the division. She noted how they started Kindergarten in September of 2020 and, while they began at Nightingale in pods, the Class of 2033 grew to be closer than ever.

"Class IV, I can tell each and every one of you that we will always remember you and the magic you have brought to the fourth floor these past five years," Dr. Urciuoli said. "You have been strong leaders of the Lower School, and we know that your joyful, kind spirit and intellectual curiosity and drive will travel with you to Middle School. Congratulations, Class IV. We are all so proud of you."



**CELEBRATING
YEARS OF GROWTH
AND THE JOY OF
LOWER SCHOOL**

Moving Up

with Mind and Heart

With strong voices, open hearts,
and sharp minds, the Class of 2029
is ready for Upper School.



On Wednesday, June 11, community members gathered in the auditorium to honor the achievements of the Class of 2029. Joined by loved ones and their Middle School peers, Class VIII processed into the ceremony from either side of the room. As each pair reached the center of the stage, they struck a pose before taking their seats.

“Class of 2029, you are thoughtful,” Class VIII Dean Kristin Webster said in her introductory remarks. “You are genuinely and wholeheartedly celebrators of each other’s successes, whether it’s kindness call outs, varsity sports wins, debate championships, or dramatic performances—you are each other’s greatest champions. You look after one another and show continued gratitude for the unique gifts that each of you brings to our community. Being women who champion other women will take you far in life, and it’s one of the greatest rewards of an all-girls education.”

Ms. Webster also highlighted the class’s humor, resilience, and passion, reflecting on the year’s adventures—including a few mischievous moments. After a brief address from Head of School Paul A. Burke, Middle School Co-president Olivia T. ’29 took the stage to share a poem she had written, reflecting on the class’s journey at Nightingale, beginning with their Kindergarten Walk-Up with seniors in 2016.

“Through chaos and change, we’ve learned to survive. Together, our class is bound to thrive, because: our grade? We’re impossible to ignore—loud, bold, and ready for more...So here’s to the Class of 2029, to our past, to our future, to you. To the lessons learned and friendships so true. We’ve made it this far, together we’ll grow, into our next adventures, with our bright, Nightingale glow,” Olivia said.

She then welcomed her Co-president, Summer P. ’29, to the podium. Summer also reflected on the class’s many memories on 92nd Street, emphasizing how their recent trip to Alabama brought them even closer. “Our recent trek to Alabama I believe, truly embodies the Class of 2029. After long days, we all actively participated in class discussions regarding what we learned that day and supported each other on hard nights. We came back to New York closer than we had ever been. This year we conquered so much, from tackling the memorial project head on when it seemed impossible, to difficult language tests, and so much more. I know myself, along with all of the teachers and adults in the building who helped

support us through it all, are so incredibly proud of everything we have accomplished.”

Following a short video montage in which Class VIII members shared messages of appreciation for one another, Avery O. ’29 and Eliza G. ’29, selected by their class, addressed the audience.

“We ask ourselves, how do we feel about the future? What does high school have in store for us? If the past four years have taught us anything, we know whatever the future may bring, we have the support that we will need to get through the challenges we will face,” Avery said. “We will have the coaches to push us beyond our limits, the creative outlets we need to explore and free our minds, and, last but not least, we will be able to laugh about embarrassing moments with our friends. Congratulations to the Class of 2029—we made it!

Eliza recalled when she first learned the alma mater “For Nightingale” and connected the Class of 2029 to the lyrics: “minds, and hearts, and voices strong.” Eliza spoke specifically to the growth of her peers’ voices, hearts, and minds during their time at Nightingale and how those words came to life: “We are all always a part of the voice, mind, and heart of the Class of 2029,” she said.

Head of Upper Middle School Martha St. Jean shared: “Class of 2029: you are real. You are capable. You are ready. We love you. We are proud of you. And we can’t wait to see what you build next. As you move up and onward, I find myself doing a bit of the same. This moment is a milestone for all of us, for you, a step into high school; for me, it’s a quiet shift as I prepare to take my next steps too. You were the first class I began Middle School with, and that will always hold a special place in my heart. We’ve been through a lot together: some big, some small, some messy, some joyful. But through it all, you’ve reminded me what’s possible when young people are given the space to lead, to question, and to become.”

Finally, each member of the Class of 2029 received a rose as their name was read, signifying the end of their Middle School years, and the beginning of their next adventure: Upper School. ●

CAPS OFF!

TO THE CLASS OF 2025

They arrived with curiosity and left with courage. **The Class of 2025** has been shaped by challenge, strengthened by community, and is ready to shine beyond the blue doors.



On Thursday, June 12, over 900 community members gathered at the Church of Heavenly Rest to celebrate the Class of 2025's Commencement. Class VIII Co-presidents, Olivia T. '29 and Summer P. '29 led the professional community processional, officially formalizing the tradition in Nightingale's history, and honoring late Associate Head of School and Head of Middle School Claire du Nouy. Once Classes IX–XI and the Class of 2025 processed, community members turned their attention to Head of School Paul A. Burke, who welcomed guests to Nightingale's 101st Commencement ceremony, before turning it over to Senior Class Co-president Sophia Oshrin '25 to present the Class of 2025.

“We actually made it,” Sophia began. “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 the Nightingale community and the world around us in our own way.”

To share just how much the Class of 2025 accomplished during their time at Nightingale, Sophia asked her peers a series of questions, asking them to each stand if the question applied to them. Student leaders, varsity athletes, study abroad-goers, and more all took turns standing, most of them doing so multiple times. By the end of the questions, all students were standing, representing their extraordinary involvement in Upper School during their time at Nightingale.

Student Council Vice President Eloise Jones '25 honored the successes of outgoing leaders and recognized the incoming leaders signifying the centrality of student leadership at Nightingale. Each new leader received a medallion of honor, designed by Daria de Koning '98. As each name was read, outgoing leaders exchanged a hug with incoming leaders, and congratulations on their new roles.

Each year, the graduating class elects their student speaker for Commencement. Senior Class Co-president Stella Anderson '25 introduced her peer, Jada Clarke '25, and shared why she was nominated for the role.

“For the past 13 years at Nightingale, Jada's infectious smile, contagious laugh, and unwavering confidence have radiated within the blue doors. Some of you may know her for her unbelievable talent on the track field. This year, she led the Nightingale team to become the AAIS and NYSAIS Champions, earning the GOAT Award—greatest of all time—in her final season this spring. Others for her role and leadership in the Ladies of Color Stand Club. No matter the activity, Jada truly exemplifies Nightingale's values of truth, friendship, and loyalty. Grounded in her faith, she leads by example. She is the first person to volunteer to help, whether it is setting up materials for an integrated bonding activity, spontaneously helping someone in the



“To quote a line in our school song, ‘the little steps, the longer strides.’ It was in the little steps, the daily routines, the small wins, [and] the conversations after class that we found our foundation. And in the longer strides, taking risks, speaking out, [and] failing and trying again, that we became who we are today. Three words: truth, friendship, loyalty. Words we hear at Nightingale hold near and dear to our hearts—words I believe the seniors truly embody.”

—Jada Clarke '25



hallways, or wisely making decisions on the student hiring committee, her thoughtfulness for her community is contagious, and she inspires those around her to be better—a true leader.”

With a round of applause, Jada made her way to the podium and began by reflecting on the Class of 2025's senior year and their entire time at Nightingale. She highlighted where truth, friendship, and loyalty showed up in their experiences—on field days, class trips, peer groups, and more.

“This class has shown me what loyalty looks like and the way they show up for each other. Every single time, our teachers saw us grow from wide-eyed students, unsure of our voice, to seniors using them to lead, advocate, and create. Faith is the belief in something even when you can't see the outcome. It's trust, not in perfection, but in possibility and throughout our time at Nightingale, our teachers, parents and mentors, have had faith in us...They say the way to test the quality of a diamond is to put it under



pressure—immense, unrelenting pressure—the kind that could break something weak. But a real diamond...it doesn't crack. It endures. And under that pressure, it shines. That's exactly what we've been through. We've been tested by challenges we didn't expect. By long nights, hard goodbyes, and the pressure of growing into ourselves. But we didn't crack,” Jada said. “We were shaped by that pressure. Every late night study, every hard conversation, every risk we took, refined us. We are not just students. We are not just the graduating class. We are diamonds, pressed by time, shaped by challenge, and now shining brighter than ever.”

Student Council President Lucy Farman-Farmaian '25 introduced the Class of 2025's commencement speaker, noting the characteristics of the speaker they had been searching for; someone who is bold, wise, inspiring, and empathetic, and familiar—in addition to embodying what it means to be a Nightingale student.

“That's what makes the school special,” Lucy explained. “Here, greatness isn't measured only by awards or accolades. It's measured by the quiet moments of courage, the shared joy of discovery; the hands we hold literally and figuratively as we grow. And that brings me to the extraordinary person we welcome today. She once walked through these same blue doors, not as a guest, but as a Nightingale student. In fact, she walked us in through those doors on our very first day of Kindergarten. It was 2012. We were nervous holding tightly to the hands of seniors who seemed so tall and so confident. One of those hands belonged to today's speaker.”

With that, the Class of 2025 welcomed Laura Plimpton '13 to the podium, who is preparing to graduate with her PhD in ecology, evolution, and environmental biology from Columbia University. There, she studies how raccoons, skunks, and possums navigate city streets and how disease travels between their world and ours. Prior to her PhD, Laura graduated from Bowdoin in 2017 with a degree in biology before earning her master's at Columbia in 2020.

In her heartfelt address, Laura reflected on her own journey and how a formative summer in Botswana—filled with self-doubt, spiders, and cheetahs—taught her that growth often comes from discomfort. Drawing from her experience, she encouraged graduates to embrace the uncertainty and awkwardness that often come with change. She reminded them that challenges like loneliness, fear, or feeling out of place are not signs of failure but



“As individuals and as a class,
you embody the qualities
that Nightingale parents
dream about for their girls.”

— KATHLEEN McCARTHY BALDWIN P’31 P’33



“Nightingale has taught you how to stretch every time you raised your hand, even though your voice shook. Every time you rewrote a paper, because your teacher said you can do better. Every time you stood up for someone or stood up for yourself. Every time you decided to be a little weirder, a little bolder, a little more you—that was a stretch, and it’s through those stretches that you’ll figure out what you’re meant to do and where you’re meant to be today.”

— Laura Plimpton ’13

opportunities to evolve. Laura also highlighted the idea of “the stretch”—the uncomfortable, in-between space where real transformation happens—and urged the Class of 2025 to lean into it. She assured them that they are more prepared than they think, thanks to their time at Nightingale.

“That summer didn’t cure my fear of spiders or the fear of not belonging, but it taught me that I could live alongside both,” Laura shared. “That, like the cheetah, discomfort isn’t a sign you’re in the wrong place. Instead: an opportunity to evolve, and that is what I want to leave you with today. Whether it is loneliness, awkwardness, not being sure what you want to do next, or a very bold arachnid. Challenges come in many forms, but they often lead to growth... [The stretch] is not something to run from. It’s something to lean into, because when you stretch, you’re reaching for something just beyond what you thought you were capable of.”

After a round of applause, President of the Board of Trustees Kathleen McCarthy Baldwin P’31 P’33 spoke, expressing deep gratitude and admiration for the graduating class. She praised the Class of 2025 for embodying the core values Nightingale strives to instill—kindness, curiosity, poise, resilience, and ambition—which serve as powerful role models for younger students, like her own daughters. Highlighting their diverse achievements, from athletic excellence to scientific innovation, she emphasized that true excellence at Nightingale is defined not just by accomplishment but by integrity, empathy, and collaboration. Kathleen referenced the 10,000 hours theory, and explained that the graduates have mastered the art of balancing brilliance with compassion. She affirmed that the skills they’ve developed—clear thinking, empathy, inclusion—set them apart in today’s world.

“All over the country, graduating classes are hearing about how they are special,” Ms. Baldwin said. “I promise you, sincerely and based on my own experiences, that the competencies you have gained at Nightingale put you in a highly differentiated position relative to most humans on Earth. Today, the excellence you have co-created with each other and with your teachers inside the blue doors will flow out into the wider world, and we are so excited to see all of the ways that you will use what you have learned to have a positive and powerful impact for all of us.”

Head of Upper School Nichole Foster-Hinds then read the names of each graduate as they walked across the front of the hall, shaking hands with Mr. Burke and Ms. Baldwin, each receiving their diploma. As each row made their way back to their seats onstage, they turned their tassels, signifying the transition of student to alumna.

As the final graduate found her seat, Ms. Foster-Hinds congratulated the class, and a sea of navy caps and tassels were tossed into the sky.

“Nightingale remains for you, forever,” Mr. Burke said. “You are ready. Here we sit for one more moment, in our spots, by ourselves, joined together by you. Nightingale’s 2025—singular in spirit and enduring in memory—down that aisle and out that door, beyond all barriers, clearing paths of mind and heart. Congratulations to our 101st graduating class, the Nightingale Class of 2025!” •



Amelia Adams
Orli Eleanor Mead Adamski
Stella Kathryn Anderson
Lily Caroline Arcella
Valentina Assaf
Caroline Bednark
Clara Steel Bliwise
Camille Botts
Alexandra Sofia Brodsky
Katherine Anna Buckhurst
Charlotte Jeffrey Casdin
Isabella Hunter Castano
Isabelle Chuang
Jada Simone Aiesha Clarke
Killian Adlersberg-Coutelle
Lorena Ellis-Sáenz
Katherine Margaret Fandrey
Lucy Sholeh Farman-Farmaian
Sophie Gwen Gardiner
Olivia Glazer
Morgan Hailey Goldsmith
Kisnell Gonzalez
Lillian Scarlett Rose Greene
Julia Eve Gross
Emma Guo
Dakota Harris
Mia Brilliant Hougie
Lucy Elizabeth Iselin

Flora Jansche
Eloise Amelia Iris Jones
Eleanor Margaret Payne Karr
Emily Kim
Kameryn King
Hannah Rain Krauss
Norah Lin
Sylvia Lipsyte
Lillian Rose Magee
Charlotte Carroll Barker McKeon
Carolina Purdy Mendez
Isabella Grace Modisett
Amaya Kailee Moise
Emily Sophia Morris
Hannah Grace Morris
Sophia Eva Oshrin
Elizabeth Ivy Parachini
Tess Ai Cahill Peress
Violet Catherine Ruberti
Ciara Sydelle Rumpfelt
Mira Kamla Sethi
Lucy Shapard
Lea Gross Silverstein
Sophia Simmons
Carson Urness
Kai-Ling Daisy Vann
Claire Ingrid Whitehouse
Sienna Wiggins

COLLEGE DESTINATIONS FOR THE CLASS OF 2025

Amherst College (2)	Georgetown University
Bard College	Lafayette College
Barnard College (2)	Lehigh University
Boston College	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Brown University	McGill University
Colby College	Middlebury College (2)
Columbia University	Northwestern University (2)
Cornell University	Rice University
Dartmouth College	Skidmore College
Denison University	Syracuse University (2)
Duke University	Tufts University (2)
Emory University (5)	Tulane University
	University of Chicago
	University of Miami
	University of Michigan—Ann Arbor (2)
	University of Minnesota—Twin Cities
	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (2)
	University of Pennsylvania
	University of St. Andrews (3)
	Vanderbilt University (3)
	Villanova University
	Wake Forest University
	Washington & Lee University
	Washington University in St. Louis
	Williams College (3)
	Yale University





In her eleven years at Nightingale, Director of Counseling Jenny McFeely didn't just support students—**she helped redefine what school-based mental health could be.** Her work, though often quiet, reshaped the student experience.

As she prepares for retirement, Ms. McFeely leaves behind a structure and spirit that will guide the Schoolhouse long after she walks through the blue doors for the final time.

Known & Cared For

How Jenny McFeely helped Nightingale become a leader in student mental health and wellness.

"I feel so lucky to have come into the work as it transformed," Ms. McFeely says, reflecting on a career that began not in schools, but in community mental health. With 15 years of experience supporting clients outside the classroom, Ms. McFeely first encountered the power of school-based counseling by chance. "I instantly loved how creative you could be in support of mental health for young people, when you were working with them in the place they spend so much time."

She brought that creativity—and clinical depth—with her when she joined Nightingale in 2013. At the time, counseling departments in independent schools were just beginning to expand beyond referral systems. Ms. McFeely envisioned something more: a proactive, integrated, deeply human approach. "With consistent, intentional leadership support, we built out our program to include a dedicated counselor for each division," she says. "This allows us to both identify critical concerns early, destigmatize mental health support, and most importantly, begin to educate our students for skills and experiences that support good mental health all the way through."

Ms. McFeely's work helped position Nightingale as a leader in wellness and student support among girls' schools. What began

as a single role expanded into a comprehensive, departmental structure: full-time counselors in each division, a deeply rooted advising system, integrated wellness education, and peer leadership models. These weren't just programs—they were values in practice. Her efforts made mental health feel visible, supported, and essential to the student experience.

Her approach was shaped by her training as a social worker and her belief in meeting students not just where they are emotionally, but physically—in the place they already spend so much of their time. She helped establish frameworks that addressed anxiety, trauma, and depression while also nurturing joy, laughter, and connection. She brought research to life, embracing the concept of 'mental health nutrition' to highlight the vital role of play, creativity, and community care. "There is just about nothing I could do as a counselor that would provide as much benefit as that joy and sense of relationship in community."

A key part of Ms. McFeely's work was supporting the Upper School advisor program. As the demands on students and advisors increased, she saw an opportunity to create structure and shared purpose. "Out of these conversations, *Wise Guides*, the US advisors handbook, was born," she explains. "It seeks to provide a practical

and supportive map to the process of advising and, most importantly, to help advisors find support for their work from others working to support students."

Ms. McFeely's legacy is also deeply imprinted on the Peer Leadership program—one of her favorite parts of Nightingale life. "I 'heart' Peer Leadership!" she beams. "My absolute favorite secret about Peer Group is that the seniors get as much out of it as the ninth graders. The opportunity to connect and be of service to others is a huge mental health 'vitamin.'"

It's clear that Ms. McFeely's gift lies not only in her clinical skill, but in her deep belief in possibility. "To get to be a part of changing this experience has been a huge privilege," she says. "I deeply love working by a student's side to put the puzzle pieces together for a recalibration towards peace and a return to the engagement they seek with friends, family, and school."

Ms. McFeely's tenure makes one thing unmistakably clear: Nightingale doesn't treat counseling and wellness as an afterthought. Under her leadership, Nightingale has become a model for how to approach student well-being with intention, depth, and joy. Her work helped embed these priorities not only into programming, but into the culture itself—ensuring that every student is known and supported.

As she prepares to retire—though not to slow down—Ms. McFeely will continue her work in mental health through online therapy and may eventually build a private practice. But first: "a long vacation," time with her sons, and a visit to the cold waters of Cape Cod, where she'll dive in, as she says, "with a bit of abandon."

What she leaves behind is more than structure—it's belief. "I hope that I will have encouraged a sense of hope around the mental health of all of our students, even at the hardest of times," she says. "I think of Nightingale as a place of hope and I would love to have contributed to an endowment of hope for all the Nightingale students to come and for the community that teaches them and cares for them." •



"School counselors typically respond to children in need. Ms. McFeely did that. They don't necessarily respond to school's in need, and Ms. McFeely did that too. She saw the key to a healthy Nightingale was to create and recreate an environment grounded in relationships that caught kids when they fell, but also worked to make sure they didn't fall in the first place. I always loved standing next to Ms. McFeely at divisional assemblies. When a girl did something hard and was applauded for doing so by her classmates, she would turn to me and say, 'that's how you build a healthy school.'" She understood the interconnection between a healthy school and a healthy child as much as anyone I have ever had the chance to work with. Her contributions will long outlast her physical presence here."

—Paul A. Burke
Head of School

CHAMPIONS IN THE FAST LANE

With grit, talent, and a team-first focus, Nightingale's varsity swim team captured its first-ever state championship—and redefined what's possible in the pool.

It was a championship weekend unlike any other in Nightingale history.

This February, the varsity swim team made waves at the NYS AIS Championships, earning the program's first-ever state title in a stunning display of teamwork and resilience. Facing off against 17 competitive schools from across New York, the Nighthawks delivered standout performances across the board, winning with a 36-point lead.

The victory was the culmination of a season marked by steady progress, big goals, and a shared commitment to one another. While individual wins and record-breaking swims made headlines, it was the cohesion of the team—the way they prepared, competed, and supported each other—that carried them to the top.

"This year's team was truly driven by the desire and determination to win both the AAIS and NYS AIS championships. Even before the season began, I believed we had what it took to win, thanks to the leadership and relentless drive of our veteran players. Our team captains, Stella A. '25 and Isabella C. '25, made sure every teammate felt welcomed, seen, and heard," said Coach Kat Hickey.

The season had already taken a historic turn weeks earlier, when the team swept the AAIS Championships, placing first in every single event. That win made a statement—not only about the team's potential, but about the program's long-term trajectory. The NYS AIS meet was an opportunity to cement that progress on an even bigger stage. The Nighthawks didn't flinch.



From the first whistle, the energy on deck was electric. The team set the tone early, breaking the NYSAIS record in the 200 freestyle relay—one of eight school records they would reset that weekend. But it wasn't just the fastest swimmers who carried the team. Every heat, every point, every swim mattered. From Class VIII students making their NYSAIS debuts to senior leaders anchoring the relays, it was a full-squad effort.

“Winning NYSAIS this year was an amazing way to end my swimming experience at Nightingale,” said Stella A. '25. “Having been a member of the varsity swim team since seventh grade, I have seen the team evolve in ways we never thought possible. The win was not only a product of the amazing, driven team we had this year, but a culmination of years of Nightingale spirit, student leadership, and coaches.”

The roster—dubbed the “Lucky 13”—was stacked with talent and depth: Stella A. '25, Isabella C. '25, Sienna W. '25, Laura S. '26, Malena G. '27, Ali W. '27, Emme S. '28, Camille A. '29, and Halina H. '29. Together, they represented five grades and a range of competitive experiences, from seasoned club swimmers to rising Middle School talent.

Coach Hickey, who has led the program for four years, reflected on what it meant to see the team come full circle. “I started coaching the team four years ago, when the seniors were freshmen. I was able to see them grow as swimmers and end their Nightingale careers as champions,” she said.

She added, “The team's unity was the foundation of our success. Each swimmer consistently showed up for one another and pulled their weight. During the AAIS championship meet, several swimmers weren't feeling their best, yet they pushed through and helped secure first place in every event. At every meet, they cheered with intensity and heart as if it were their last. When we reached NYSAIS and they realized they had won, the emotions overflowed as they embraced one another. This team became like a small family, willing to do anything for each other.”



That sense of camaraderie didn't come out of nowhere. It was cultivated intentionally over time, through shared experiences both in and out of the pool. They encouraged one another to reach new goals, and when setbacks arose, they lifted each other up.

“I would definitely say that being part of the team was more than just swimming fast,” said Isabella C. '25, who will be swimming for Williams College next year. “We worked a lot on our team culture this year, both by cultivating an environment where we support each other during practices but also by just focusing on team bonding. I remember one of the mornings where we didn't have the pool. We talked about our team values and then got to play sardines in the lower lobby. I think we went into the season with a very positive mindset, and we were able to maintain that through supporting each other.”

Four swimmers hit personal records at NYSAIS: Camille A. in the 200 IM and 100 butterfly; Stella A. in the 500 freestyle; and Malena G. in the 100 backstroke. Several of those times would have stood alone as a major accomplishment in any other season. This year, they were part of a larger story—one that blended personal achievement with team momentum.

Eight school records fell. One NYSAIS record was set. But perhaps the greatest takeaway from the season was how it shifted the culture and expectations of the program itself. With a team-wide commitment to growth, support, and shared success, Nightingale swimming emerged not just as a contender, but as a team with staying power.

“With such a diverse and successful team this year, including two eighth graders who qualified and competed at NYSAIS, I have high hopes for the future of this program,” said Coach Hickey. “I'm excited to welcome new athletes to try out next season and to keep building on the strong bond and winning tradition we've started.”

In the weeks after their historic win, the team took time to reflect on everything they'd accomplished. From record-breaking relays to hard-fought individual races, it was a season they'll remember for a long time—not just for the results, but for the experience they shared along the way. •



“This historic win—our first-ever swim championship—is a powerful reminder that excellence comes not just from talent, but from heart, resilience, and belief. These student-athletes proved that when skill meets school spirit, anything is possible. Our coaches invest in the individual and the team, and this victory sets a new standard for success: not just winning, but growing, pushing, and showing that they belong at the highest level.”

—Mandy Cecil, Director of Athletics and Physical Education





TOOLS FOR LEARNING, TOOLS FOR LIFE

If you visited Nightingale’s fourth floor this year—the home of the Lower School—you may have overheard a teacher say, “Let’s remember our Empathy Tool,” or “It’s time to use our Listening Tool.” With just those words, the tone of the classroom would shift, students would refocus, and the lesson would continue. No physical objects in hand, no materials on desks—just shared language and a common understanding guiding behavior and connection. This is the heart of the Toolbox Project.

The Toolbox Project is the brainchild of Mark A. Collin, MA, MFT, who created this unique social emotional curriculum while working as a counselor at a K–8 school in Northern California. The students he worked with faced particularly hard personal and familial challenges, and they struggled to identify their feelings and process them in a productive way. To help his students find the words to express themselves, manage conflict, and approach each day with confidence and agency, he leaned on the metaphor of a toolbox. What are the skills and practices—in other words, the “tools”—that we already hold within us and that we can wield to tackle the ups and downs of being a human in the world today? Together with his students, he came up with 12 tools, each accompanied with a short instructional phrase—as seen in the image on page 39.

The success of this educational experiment was instantaneous. His students finally had the language to access their emotions, their resilience, and their capacity to collaborate with one another as peers. From there, Collin formally wrote up a curriculum to be used in schools far and wide. And thus, the Toolbox Project was born. Officially founded in 2006, the program now runs in 200 cities in 38 states serving over 265,000 students.

The subtle genius of the Toolbox Project is that the 12 tools are completely innate. Every child and every adult possesses them—it’s just a matter of identifying, practicing, and then learning what moments to use them. Within the 12 tools, it’s important to note the distinction between “me tools” (tools used individually and focused on

internal regulation) and “we tools” (tools used interpersonally and focused on building social skills or resolving conflict). Every tool is designed to empower the individual to get in touch with their emotions and manage them in a constructive way—ultimately helping to build stronger cognitive, social, and executive functioning skills.

The 2024–2025 school year marked the initial rollout of the Toolbox Project in Nightingale’s Lower School. Committed to educating the whole child, when a student steps inside the blue doors, she will encounter not only academic rigor and exploration, but also individual character development and relationship building skills. The latter, commonly known as social emotional learning—or SEL—is an essential component of education today. In order to become a positively contributing member of society, students must be taught and practice self-awareness and self-control, which in turn encourages empathy and responsible choices.

The decision to bring the Toolbox Project to Nightingale was a collaborative effort led by Head of Lower School Dr. Rebecca Urciuoli and the Lower School Leadership Team. The program came at the recommendation of the SEL committee that had been chaired by Director of Lower School Music Mary Beth Alexander and Lower School Reading and Learning Specialist Lucy Lobban-Bean, after researching a variety of programs and selecting three finalists.

Lower School Counselor Haley Collins was particularly drawn to the Toolbox Project because of the ownership it provides students over their own experiences. “[It’s] empowering because it places the onus on students rather than the adults in their lives. Students learn that they already have these skills within them and need to practice how and when to use them just like any other skill. The program is helpful at all stages of life because it can be tailored to meet individual and developmental needs, which allows for students to feel a sense of agency over their own learning,” Ms. Collins shared.

Class III Homeroom Teacher Christina Milbourne echoed this sentiment as well. She shared, “Class III students learned to use the Using Our Words and the Please and Thank You Tools to navigate group projects. They know that we all have equal responsibility to explain our perspectives clearly, or ask each other clarifying questions when we don’t understand a classmate. We can use words like ‘excuse me,’ ‘please,’ and ‘thank you,’ to speak to one another respectfully, diffusing the tension of a difficult project with many cooks in the kitchen!”

Training the Lower School teachers in the Toolbox Project began in June 2024, with two additional training sessions throughout the last year. Rollout of the Toolbox Project began right away at the start of school in September in Kindergarten through Class IV. A new tool was introduced each cycle and after every four tools, students and teachers would spend the next cycle reviewing what they had previously covered. By the middle of April, all of the tools had been covered, which gave way to a full scale review of the 12 through the end of the year. Lower School families were also included, receiving “home connection” handouts every time a new tool was introduced.

While there is a central curriculum, teachers also had the flexibility to tap into their creativity and taylor their approach to the tools, whether through reading stories, role play, or simply weaving the tools into everyday instruction or moments throughout the Schoolhouse. This flexibility allowed for a seamless integration, as the Toolbox Project felt like a natural extension of the work Lower School teachers were already doing in the classroom. The most significant benefit, however, has been the consistent,shared language across all grades. For Ms. Milbourne, having this common language among teachers, students, and families has been transformative.

“Communication has become far more equitable and efficient,” Ms. Milbourne noted. “Teachers often start class with the Breathing Tool to set the expectation that



we are all calm, focused, and present. It's not all seriousness either! It's a very powerful thing when teachers and students can joke or have a funny memorable moment, and a student can independently signal the taking time tool to take a walk down the hall and back to calm themselves down. There's room for work and play and kids have the ability to bring themselves back.”

Incorporating the Toolbox Project into assemblies this year has also been an essential part of the rollout, which was overseen by Lower School Librarian Megan Westman. Her goal was two-fold: for students to gain a greater awareness and understanding of how the tools can function at all times and not just in challenging moments and so that students could appreciate how tools have shown up throughout history (even though Toolbox Project language didn’t exist in that moment of time, of course).

To put this into practice, every assembly would include a highlighted tool that connected to the overall assembly topic. A moment this year that illustrated this connection beautifully was the Native & Indigenous Heritage Month assembly in November. In this instance, as students learned about the concept of a Land Acknowledgement, their Toolbox Highlight was the Personal Space Tool—“I have a right to my space. You have a right to yours.”



“As adults working with children, the hope is always to make a positive impact and teach them life skills, but you never know for sure what they are absorbing and taking in so hearing them use the language is evidence of that impact. To them, they’re just learning but to us, those moments are what make this work so joyful!”

— Haley Collins, Lower School Counselor

“After reading *This Land: The History of the Land We’re On* by Ashley Fairbanks and Bridget George and introducing a Land Acknowledgement we could use as a Lower School, we asked students what they thought the Personal Space Tool had to do with Indigenous history. Students of all ages were able to see the connection between the Personal Space Tool and our obligation to the Tribal Nations who had their land stolen through colonization in the United States. This seamless transition between understanding how the Personal Space Tool can help us ask a friend to scooch over and give us more room and how it can lead us to understanding historical injustice was incredibly powerful,” Ms. Westman recalled.

When asked if there was a tool that the students found particularly helpful, Ms. Collins answered the Garbage Can Tool—“I let the little things go.”—with zero hesitation. “It is the only tool that targets thoughts. This tool is especially helpful for Lower School students because it teaches them that humans don’t need to give into every fleeting feeling and have the ability to challenge thoughts.”

At the end of year one, Ms. Collins asserts that the Toolbox Project was a positive contribution to the life of the Lower School. She’s found it especially rewarding when she’s in conversation with students and they will bring up a tool organically—a testament to the incredible hard work that the Lower School teachers have put into teaching the program this year.

“I met with a student that was feeling really disappointed with herself for not getting an answer right in math. She identified that she was using her Using Our Words tool by talking to me about it. She then chose to use the Garbage Can tool by writing her negative self-talk down on paper before throwing it away, which naturally led to a conversation about growth mindset and positive affirmations,” Ms. Collins shared. ●



Lectures *with* Meaning

Throughout the academic year, Nightingale celebrates the legacy of its extended community through a series of named lectures. These events honor individuals who have shaped the school's history and values. Each lecture gives students and faculty the chance to engage deeply with complex ideas. Topics range from classical studies and American politics to lived histories and faculty-led research. These talks illuminate, inspire, and invite the Nightingale community to consider the world with greater curiosity and compassion.

The Joan Stitt McMenamin Lecture in American History and Politics

Established in 2005, The Joan Stitt McMenamin Lecture in American History and Politics honors the legacy of Nightingale's fifth head of school, who served from 1971 to 1992. The lecture celebrates her passion for history and, more specifically, American politics and government.

The 2025 McMenamin Memorial Lecture was delivered by Melissa Chua, co-director of the Immigrant Protection Unit at the New York Legal Assistance Group. In her lecture, she detailed her experience supporting migrant families during the crises of the last few years and her history with this work.

"I know largely in the US and around the world we associate country music and cowboys as 'White American' cultural practices, and through this lecture I was able to smash stereotypes and break down how we even began to associate that so largely...I learned so much myself about the rich history of African-American's contributions to the development of country music and cowboy culture, and the brilliance of *Cowboy Carter* in how it tied in legendary country musicians, origin stories, symbolism, and histories together."

— *Samantha Spiridellis, Featured speaker at the 2025 Catherine M.S. Gordan Nightingale Mind Lecture Series*

The Catherine M.S. Gordan Nightingale Mind Lecture Series

The Catherine M.S. Gordan Nightingale Mind Lecture Series celebrates intellectual life at Nightingale. Established in 2013, the lecture honors the myriad contributions made to Nightingale by former Associate Head of School and History Faculty Member Catherine "Kitty" Gordan in her more than 42 years at the school. The annual series focuses on the scholarly pursuits and interests of our current teaching faculty, both inside and outside the classroom.

The 2025 Gordan Lecture was titled "Black Country Music & the Black Cowboy: How Black People Shaped Country and Cowboy Culture and Identity in the United States," and was delivered by Performing Arts Faculty Member Samantha Spiridellis. In her address, she explored the history, cultural impact, and connections of Black cowboys and country music as she examined the impact of slavery on ranching practices, the music genre of hip hop and the connection to Black country culture, and the history of the banjo. She tied it all together in her conclusion, showing Beyoncé's Christmas Day NFL Halftime performance, which included a medley of songs from her Grammy Award-winning album, *Cowboy Carter*, and references to many of the details that were shared during the lecture.

"There is no day in my life when I don't count my blessings. There is no day in my life where I don't remember my history and the history of not only my parents, but really all the people who had this experience and how miraculous it is that not only I survived, but my whole family survived...So you are more grateful and you realize that the precious thing in life is to have a life, but then to make that life worthy, and generous, and kind. It gives you a sort of responsibility."

— *Marion Ein Lewin, Featured speaker at the 2025 Werner Feig Holocaust Memorial Lecture*

The Werner Feig Annual Lecture Series on the Holocaust

The Werner Feig Holocaust Memorial lecture was established in 1999 by former trustee Patti Kenner P'94 and is named in memory of Werner Feig, a Holocaust survivor who taught history at Nightingale from 1991–1997. The lecture honors the legacy he left within the Nightingale community.

This year, Nightingale was honored to welcome Marion Ein Lewin. Born alongside her twin brother Steven Hess on January 14, 1938 in Amsterdam, their once happy childhood was shattered in 1943 when they were torn from their home with their parents and sent to Westerbork, a Nazi transit camp, before enduring the horrors of Bergen-Belsen. Against all odds, her entire family survived the Holocaust and moved to America in 1947.

In her powerful address to the community, Ms. Lewin recounted her memories of Westerbork and Bergen-Belsen with unflinching detail, drawing stark images of what she had lived through. Despite starvation, abuse, and grave uncertainty about the future, her parents always held out hope that their family would survive. In telling her story, she honors their courage and determination.

The Shirley Bennette Lecture in Classics

The Shirley Bennette Lecture in Classics honors Shirley Bennette, who came to Nightingale as a part-time Latin teacher in 1968 and retired as Chair of the Classical Languages Department in 1990.

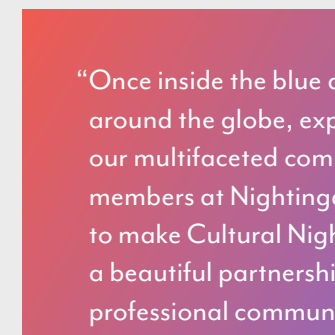
The 2025 Bennette Lecture was delivered by Professor of Classics and Ancient Studies at Barnard College Kristina Milnor. Her address, titled "More than a Maidservant: Dark-Skinned Women in Pompeian Wall Painting," examined the representation of race and gender in Pompeian wall painting and suggested alternate ways of 'seeing' Blackness in ancient art.

CULTURAL NIGHT '25

Cultural Destinations Around the World

Held annually, Cultural Night invites families into the Schoolhouse for a special evening, where the building transforms into a global hub of cultural destinations. Students and families enjoy a wide range of activities, performances, and an international potluck dinner.

This year's theme, "Cultural Destinations Around the World," gave Nighthawks the chance to embark on a journey with passports in hand, exploring more than 17 spaces representing different destinations. Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's Cultural Night spectacular!



"Once inside the blue doors, our families journeyed around the globe, experiencing the richness of our multifaceted community. So many community members at Nightingale contributed meaningfully to make Cultural Night 2025 a success and it was a beautiful partnership between our families and professional community. The co-chairs, room hosts, potluck contributors, and volunteers each worked their magic, representing so many cultures, countries, and communities from around the world. It was an immersive experience, and an unforgettable night. While our theme was cultural destinations, 20 East 92nd Street became the top destination for 2025!"

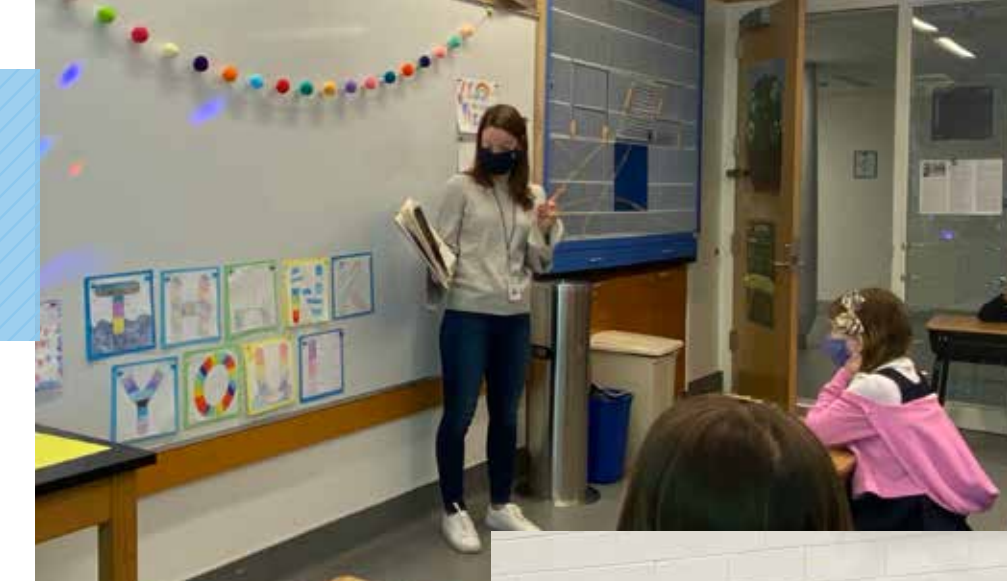
— Kathryn Bhirud P'33, Parents Association President 2024–2025

Voices

Karen Joseloff '11

1998-2011. Easy enough to remember as it is engraved on the ring I have worn since my graduation. When I think back to those formative years, the big moments come to mind—the daisy ceremony, the Class VIII Moving Up Ceremony (at the time, “The Rose Ceremony,” before The Bachelor/Bachelorette franchise took the name from us) and graduation. I remember dressing as Michelle Kwan for Famous Women’s Day, finally getting to scream “five golden rings,” playing a duckling in our Class VI grade production of *Honk Jr.*, the silver team winning field day in Class VIII, joining the varsity soccer and swim teams, being elected athletic board co-head and, soon after, convincing Mr. Burke and Ms. du Nouy to dance with us on stage to Katy Perry’s “Firework.” I think about the trips we took to Greenkill, Cooperstown, Washington D.C., London, and Vermont. Above all, I think about the community, the friends that have been by my side since I was five years old and the teachers who have become life-long mentors, confidants, and cheerleaders.

Nightingale felt like home, a comfortable rhythm of classes, friends, familiar hallways, and steady support. I always felt like I belonged. Stepping outside the blue doors and onto a college campus felt enormous and a little daunting at first. Yet, surprisingly quickly, I found my footing at George Washington University. My time at Nightingale had equipped me with the confidence to speak up in large lectures, advocate for myself, and pursue leadership roles on campus. It also gave me the courage to explore new academic interests without the fear of failure, and the foundation to put years of French study into practice during a semester abroad in Paris. I joined a sorority, was a tutor, and taught after school math classes to elementary school students in the greater D.C. area. I graduated from GW with a B.A. in communications and French language/literature. I also graduated without a clue what I wanted to do or be.



The summer before my senior year of college, the first D.C. SoulCycle studio opened up the street from my apartment. I was no stranger to SoulCycle—in high school, we left class at 11:55 a.m. on Mondays to book our bikes in the nearest computer lab. We had swim team outings to the original 72nd Street studio. We had our own clip in shoes. With a lightened class load senior year, my extra free time was spent tutoring, babysitting, and taking classes at SoulCycle. When I graduated, unsure of what to do, I figured I would move back to New York and continue tutoring, babysitting, and taking classes at SoulCycle.

I started working at the Upper East Side SoulCycle studio in June of 2015, a part-time summer job (or so I thought). By 2017, I had worked in three different studios and returned to the Upper East Side as a manager overseeing marketing, operations, and



retail. I loved the fast-paced environment and I loved the community. After two years in the studios, I was offered a position at SoulCycle HQ managing their VIP client relations program. In this role, I had the opportunity to collaborate with multiple departments—from experiential marketing and PR, to talent, programming and new studio openings. I traveled to LA, Las Vegas, Palm Beach, and London in our efforts to “spread the soul.” Though I loved my time at SoulCycle, I never saw it as a career. For years, I knew I loved working with kids—in addition to my years as a counselor at Sunny Days, I was a counselor at a sleepaway camp during my summers in college, I was a French tutor and a frequent babysitter.



Members of the Class of 2011 celebrating Alina Zemor's wedding in May.

It wasn’t until I took a step back from my previous job and reflected on what truly motivated me that I realized education was a path where I could combine my strengths and my passion. So what did I do next? I set up an advisor meeting with Mr. Burke.

In October 2019, I joined the communications department at Nightingale. I was excited to be back in a school environment, eager to learn and grateful to get to work with some of my old teachers. It was an exciting time, celebrating 100 years of Nightingale. We were planning the centennial logo design competition, centennial homecoming, centennial concert, and the big one—centennial gala at The Metropolitan Museum of Art. On March 16, 2020, the message went out, “we will move immediately into a remote learning environment when we return from spring break on March 30.” The leadership and administrative teams navigated the transition with unwavering steadiness and clear purpose. Their thoughtful communication and confident decision-making not only provided a sense of stability but also deepened the trust of the students, families, and staff during an incredibly uncertain time.

When we returned to the Schoolhouse in September 2020, it was all hands on deck. Like many others, I took on multiple roles, supporting communications in the afternoons and assisting in Kristen Healy’s Class I and Class II reading classes each morning. It was there that I witnessed first hand the challenges students faced in returning to a routine and rebuilding the foundation that remote learning had disrupted. For years, as a tutor, I quickly recognized the need to adapt my instructional methods, often significantly, to meet each student’s unique learning needs. Despite the progress I saw, I still felt unprepared to support all types of learners. It was clear how ongoing struggles were undermining students’ confidence and self-esteem. My time in the classroom at Nightingale deepened my awareness of these challenges and ultimately solidified my decision to pursue a degree in special education. I was driven by a desire to gain a deeper understanding of learning differences so I could better support the students who need it most.



Karen and her teammates during Homecoming 2010.

I graduated from Vanderbilt University in May 2023 with my M.Ed. in special education and uncredited concentration in country music. Now, as a teacher myself, I often find myself drawing upon the wisdom and guidance of my mentors at Nightingale. When I face a difficult conversation with a parent, I think how would Mrs. Hutcheson handle this? Conflict with another teacher? What would Ms. du Nouy do? A frustrated student reaching out for help? What advice would Mr. Burke give? Another run-on sentence? How would Mr. Whitehurst punctuate and clarify? Trouble conjugating irregular verbs? A question for Mr. Howell. Need an unwavering source of compassion, support and inspiration? Email Dr. Urciuoli. And yes, I do still struggle to call my teachers by their first names. Nightingale has played a defining role in shaping who I am, instilling values and lessons that continue to guide me every day. I am forever proud to be a Nighthawk, class agent and member of the Class of 2011! •

Nightingale

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