

WE'VE COME A

Shorecrest Upper School ...Then *and* Now

Early leaders of Shorecrest, originally a humble outdoor school for young children, would likely be surprised by the School's 100-year transformation into a pre-eminent college preparatory school that serves more than 1,000 students from 3-years-old through 12th grade. The profiles that follow provide a chance to get to know Bruce Haskell, the man who created the 9th-12th grade Upper School; catch up with members of the first official graduating class; and meet a few students of the Centennial Class who received their diplomas this year. Despite the changes in teachers, leadership,

programs, and campus between 1976 and now, the Shorecrest experience evokes very similar feelings among its first class of graduates and the current one.



Photo: The 1976 edition of Crestviews Yearbook showcases the School's first official graduating class.

LONG WAY

By Mary Ellen Collins

Pat Lovell Dalrymple '76



Pat's entrance to Shorecrest in seventh grade came on the heels of an unhappy middle school experience. "I loved elementary school at Fairmount Park, but junior high was a disaster for me. I cried every night for two weeks, not wanting to go. My parents took me to a physician, who suggested Shorecrest. And that changed the trajectory of my entire life."

"If I felt anxious in class, they let me sit in the office. And Mr. Haskell, who was my English teacher, knew I was shy so he just told me, 'You're going to be the assistant editor of the literary magazine.' I don't know that I would have ever done that on my own."

As late as eleventh grade, Pat wasn't planning to go to college. "But when I told Elaine Collins, our biology teacher and the first feminist I ever met, that I wasn't going to go, she said, 'Everyone who graduates from Shorecrest goes to college.'" So, Pat did.

After graduating from Wake Forest University as a psychology major, she began an administrative career in the records office at Loyola University Maryland. Pat has been living in St. Petersburg with her husband, John, since 2015, where she works remotely as director of Loyola's Records Department. And her feelings about Shorecrest haven't changed. "The whole experience was transformative for me."



Clayton Phillips '76

When Clayton arrived at Shorecrest in eleventh grade, he quickly realized and appreciated the fact that he was easily accepted, despite a penchant for doing what he calls some crazy things. "I was a natural born leader and I liked to liven things up. I was never stifled at Shorecrest. They knew me, they knew my humor and character, and they embraced who I was. They encouraged individualism."

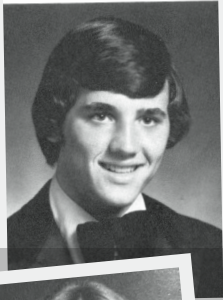
Although he says he wasn't a stellar student, he found a home in athletics, art, and drama at Shorecrest. And even though he was only there for two years, he says, "The school just felt like a family." He worked at his father's restaurant, Fisherman's Inn, from the ages of 12 to 26, and took classes in business and hotel and restaurant management at St. Pete College and USF. That led to a 40-year career in the restaurant industry, which included attending culinary school in Italy to become a chef; opening 20 restaurants; and running Seeds For Life Catering in more than 40 countries.

Married with three grown children, Clayton now lives with his wife, Lesleigh, in the Gainesville area and is doing Christian missionary work and humanitarian community development in third world countries through his foundation, Seeds for Life International. His humanitarian projects are focused on food, water, nutrition, and agriculture.



Photos: (Above, left) Patsy Lovell's senior portrait. (Left) Pat Lovell Dalrymple photographed in 2018 in Seattle, WA. (Above, right) Clayton Phillips' senior portrait.

Jimmy '76 and Sue Biddison Rowe '76



Their relationship is a love story that started in eighth grade and developed into a quintessential romance between the homecoming queen and the captain of the football team. The pair was also active in theatre director Mary Christian's variety shows and plays; and made many lifelong friends through their extracurricular activities and their classes.

"I started to take my education more seriously when I came to Shorecrest in fourth grade," says Sue. "This was 'for real school,' and the teachers were very good at letting us know that education was really important." She had a particular fondness for math teacher Gene Dressler, saying, "He was funny, he made me love math, and he helped me teach my own kids to love math."

Jimmy adds, "I have such great memories of high school.

Our teachers were so young – we got to be so close to them and each other. Brad Moore, who had been teaching at North Carolina State University before coming to Shorecrest, brought an interesting perspective. With us being the first graduating class, we didn't have upperclassmen to show us what to do. He came at things from a different angle than most people did."

Sue studied secondary math education and marketing at Auburn University while Jimmy majored in business and history at Vanderbilt University. They got married soon after graduating. He worked in PR and promotions before attending Stetson Law School, and has been in-house counsel for RKM Development since 2004. Sue started a career in marketing before becoming involved in art by taking classes and working in a gallery. At St. Pete College she earned the credits necessary to become a Lower School art teacher at Shorecrest, a position she held and loved for 16 years. The couple raised three Shorecrest graduates, Billy '02, Tyler '06, and Chelsea '11; and have two grandchildren.

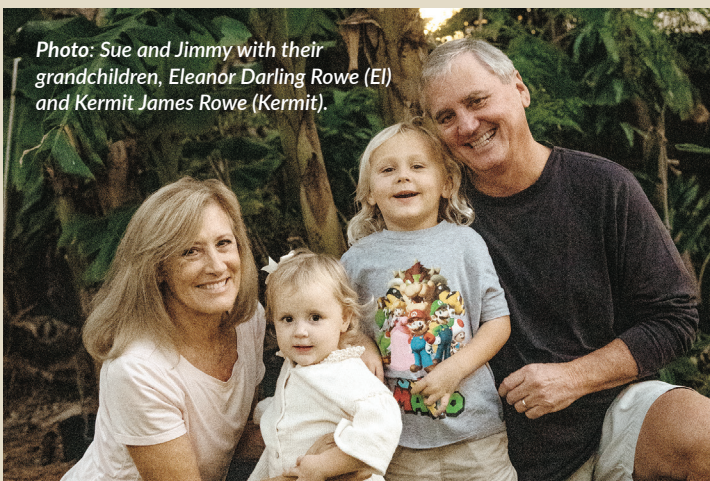
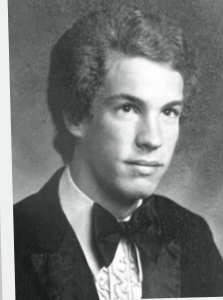


Photo: Sue and Jimmy with their grandchildren, Eleanor Darling Rowe (El) and Kermit James Rowe (Kermit).

Carl Meyer '76



Carl came to Shorecrest in eighth grade after moving from a New Jersey prep school, church, and community that he loved. "I felt very disoriented here at first, but I found Shorecrest a very warm and welcoming place." He excelled in activities including Junior Achievement and singing in variety shows, and says, "Shorecrest gave me the confidence to do those things."

He is grateful for the support of

numerous teachers, including Mary Christian, who encouraged him to get involved in Clearwater community theatre; and Patsy Harden, who was a helpful coach when he was student council president.

After graduating from the College of William and Mary, he met with a Shorecrest classmate's father at Merrill Lynch in St. Petersburg, who suggested he apply for the company's very selective corporate intern program. "When he showed me the list of people who'd gotten in, I didn't think I had a chance, but he said it was worth a shot." Meyer got into the program, spent 25 years with the company as a financial advisor and ultimately led their Washington, D.C. office. He was married to Kay Jones, the love of his life, for 42 years until her death last September. The father of three and grandfather of three (with another on the way) now coaches financial advisors.



Betsy Thomas Rook '76



Betsy started at Shorecrest in tenth grade after moving from Oklahoma. "My parents had divorced; I was adjusting to a new school in a different part of the country and going through all the typical teen stuff. But despite all of that, I had so much support from all these teachers, the positive actually overtook the negative." She counts Brad Moore, Patricia Zyk, and Patsy Hardin among her favorites.

"They all cared about us academically, but they also cared about us as people. I really liked lunchroom time when the teachers would come in and talk to us – it was like a family. They instilled confidence, and made you feel you could do anything once you left Shorecrest."

Betsy was involved in theatre and took great pride in her academic achievement. "Shorecrest is where I learned how to study. I had never been a good student, but by the time I graduated, I was very happy to be able to graduate with honors."

Betsy earned a bachelor's degree in theatre arts at Oklahoma State University and moved to California where she did a lot of live theatre. She has written two books about members of her family: "My Grandmother Was From Wales," and "Senator: 1876 – 1965 The Life and Career of Elmer Thomas." Betsy married a fellow actor, Roger Rook, raised two children, and would like to return to acting. She has secured a commercial agent and is actively auditioning.



Kim Heistand Horstman '76



Starting Shorecrest as a seventh grader, Kim was an active student who participated in cheerleading, basketball, and softball. "I loved cheerleading, and we had an excellent football team – our boys went to state and won!" On the academic side, she has very positive memories of English teacher

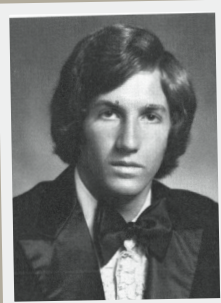
Marian Russell because "she took an in-depth interest in her subject and really cared about her students." Kim feels honored to have been a part of the first graduating class and says, "The School had been an icon in St. Pete for a long time – well-known and well-respected for years. It was just a special place [because of] the interest that every teacher took in us, and I was blessed to have gone there."

After earning degrees in English and finance from the University of South Florida, she launched a 36-year career in banking that included 13 years as director of marketing and sales for SouthTrust. A St. Petersburg native, Kim played an active role in the community. She broke a glass ceiling to become the first female president of the 100-year-old Downtown Kiwanis Club; and was one of the first female members of the Suncoasters.

Mother of Shorecrest graduate, Troy '13, Kim is now retired and living with her husband, Skip, in Homosassa.



Steve Kelly '76



Shorecrest sports helped to smooth the way for Steve, who came to the School in eighth grade after his family moved from Savannah. "That age is a tough time to move kids, but after a very short time the adjustment wasn't too difficult. I immediately got into football, basketball, and baseball." He has great memories of going to the state championship on his 18th birthday;

throwing a few no-hitters; the competitive basketball rivalry with Admiral Farragut; and playing against Gene Dressler and Bruce Haskell in the student-faculty basketball games.

Like many of his classmates, he cites the personal connections he made as one of the most memorable aspects of his Shorecrest experience. "Besides getting a tremendous education, the relationships with the teachers and the other kids stood the test of time. I couldn't have imagined having better relationships, and I'm still probably closer to many people from Shorecrest than I am to people from college. "

Steve graduated from Southern Methodist University with two degrees – one in business and one in economics; and went

on to a 38-year career focused on leading high-tech sales and marketing teams. Now retired, Steve mentors, coaches, and advises people on business, faith, and other life issues and says, "The Lord gave me a purpose and an assignment to make positive and lasting differences in the lives of other people in a way that glorifies Him." He is the father of two grown sons and lives in Oregon with his wife, Margot.



Photo: Steve (second from left) with his youngest son, Garrett (far left), wife, Margot, oldest son, Ryan (far right) and a friend in Florence, Italy.



...and Now

Sofia Ayrall-Hutton '23



Sofia says one of the most important things she's learned since coming to the School in fifth grade is how to speak up for herself. "I have a learning difference, and Tracie Belt was a huge help in advocating for me and helping me learn how to advocate for myself. I had to overcome my fear of doing that, and if I hadn't, I wouldn't have

the grades or the work ethic I have now."

A student ambassador since freshman year, she says, "It helps me help the School, and it gives me the chance to talk with families about my experience." She also works in The Learning Center to help younger students.

Sofia's passion is theatre; and spring of her senior year she took a leave of absence to appear in an off-Broadway show, "According to the Chorus." Former musical theatre instructor Cheryl Lee is another staff member who's made an impact on her. "She's an amazing woman. She taught me that it was ok to have weaknesses; and not to focus only on what you're good at; and that academics come before everything. She made me a better person."

Sofia considers being able to get the grades she wanted as one of her biggest personal achievements, and she plans to major in drama and global business in New York City. "I never would have thought I'd be doing that!" She will attend NYU Tisch School of the Arts this fall.



Photo: Sofia as Iago in the Middle School production of "Aladdin, Jr." in 2017.



Sean Sheikholeslam '23



Sean's introduction to Shorecrest came via the "awesome" summer camp program in second grade. He started at the School the next year and remembers Mrs. (Renee) Hensler as a teacher who was a "wonderful advisor" as he was coming into a new environment. He also considers Anne Michelle Frey '02 and Jessica Thorn as impactful

teachers in his chosen field of mathematics.

He's the co-president of Key Club, an organization he credits for introducing him to community volunteering. "Freshman year we would go to Ronald McDonald House and cook, and it was the most fun I've ever had. Service was something I would otherwise never have known was such a rewarding opportunity."

As a participant in the STEAM certificate program, Sean's project involves developing an all-in-one financial management system for businesses. He also works on projects and software development for a cryptocurrency network; and is doing software development for his parents' real estate management company. He plans to study or double major in computer science and finance.

Sean values both the social and academic aspects of his Shorecrest experience and says, "I think the friends you make in high school really, really stick with you ... especially since Shorecrest is such a tightly woven community. Academically, I've realized that the community here really drives students to try and excel at any level. I think I received a phenomenal education that pushed me way beyond what I could have achieved anywhere else." Sean has been accepted into the UF Honors Program as a Lombardi Scholar, the premier undergraduate scholarship at the University of Florida.



Victoria D'Agostino '23



Starting at Shorecrest in kindergarten, Victoria is grateful for the support she received in helping her overcome dyslexia and auditory processing disorder. "I worked a lot at The Learning Center and met a lot of wonderful people there," she recalls. "Overall, I think Ms. (Natalie) Updike and Ms. (Melissa) Estremera have

been the most impactful teachers for me. Ms. Updike is so patient and understanding; she really takes time to help her students. And Ms. Estremera, I just love her. She's always encouraged me to take academic leaps and not only supports my ideas and opinions, but has tried to lead me in the best direction as well."



Victoria is getting her STEAM certificate in engineering; is co-president of STEAM Club for Girls; and president of Red, White, and Blue Club, which does projects for veterans.

She calls her ninth grade participation in the Student Diversity Leadership Council with 1,500 students

from U.S. private schools, "one of the most amazing opportunities Shorecrest gave me." That experience led to her creation of the Hispanic Heritage Union, an accomplishment of which she is very proud. "HHU is something I'm happy to leave the School," she says.

Victoria will be attending The Ohio State University where she intends to study psychology or design and architecture.



Kevin Tang '23



In his 13 years at Shorecrest, Kevin counts Mrs. (Jen) Hobbs from third grade, Dr. (Patti) Bullock in Math, and Mr. (Steve) Gende from ninth grade English among his most memorable teachers. Kevin shares, "I always felt behind in English class, and Mr. Gende was the first teacher who made English enjoyable for me, and where I could finally catch up with the rest of my class. That meant a lot to me."

Kevin is a pianist and chess player with a passion for robotics. "I remember all the times in robotics tournaments that our robot would break, and we'd have five minutes until the next match. Those times are stressful and painful in the moment, but you look back and you're so grateful because you made it right. You also learned from that experience and will do better next time ... and you'll have better skills to adapt when something goes wrong. Those are the best memories for me."

He plans to study mechanical engineering in college and says, "I love robotics and I also love working with 3D

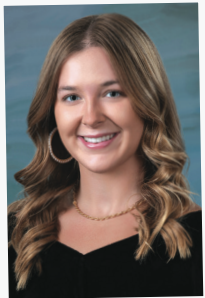
printers, and math and science. I'd like to come back to Shorecrest next year to help my robotics team from time to time." Kevin will attend the University of Florida.



Photos: (Above, left) Sean with his parents at a Track & Field meet. (Above, right) Victoria teaches Lily H '36 a coding activity. (Far left) Sean and Victoria during Service Week 2023 at Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. (Left) Sean and Victoria on their winning Battle of the Books team in fifth grade.

Photos: Among Kevin's many talents are chess and piano. Here he performs during the Fall Music Showcase. He frequently entertained friends and staff in the Raymond Center playing piano between classes.

Rose Leary '23



Rose, one of seven siblings to attend Shorecrest, has a special fondness for some of her earliest teachers, including Mrs. (Gaye) Whitecage. "All of my older siblings had her for first grade, and it's like seeing a member of my family when we see her now. She was kind of no-nonsense, but she didn't treat us like we couldn't learn new things. And Mrs. (Renee) Hensler in third grade ... she

made me really start liking reading and writing, and that's where my writing skills developed. Whenever I see her, I run up and give her a big hug."

Rose currently serves as Student Council president, Guardian ad Litem club president, and vice president of Mental Health Matters. She considers being elected president of Student Council a big personal accomplishment and says, "I've wanted this role since freshman year, when my sister was president. I really like being in a leadership role and being able to organize groups." She is confident that her Shorecrest experience has provided an excellent foundation for future pursuits. "Shorecrest has completely formed me into the person I am. I've been allowed to be who I am, and the rigor of the School has really set me up for college. I know I'm going to be super prepared." She plans to study criminal justice and psychology at Northeastern University and envisions a future in law or mental health. Rose was named the Outstanding Senior for the Class of 2023 at Commencement.



Jaylon Coad '23



Jaylon has been at Shorecrest since 9th grade, and the busy senior successfully juggles classes, cross country, track, serving as vice president of Honor Council, and working a part-time job 20 hours a week. "Track and cross country have helped with my time management; and my job helps with that and my work ethic." A chess player since the age of 12, he also found time to start a chess club this year.

He's very proud of achievements that include receiving the Outstanding Citizen Award as a 9th grader; being inducted into National Honor Society in his sophomore year; and receiving the Core Values Award for Respect at the end of his 11th grade year. At the time of this interview, he was also proud of his "seven for seven" college acceptance rate; and he credits Ms. Natalie Updike, his eleventh and twelfth grade English teacher, for her help with his applications. He plans to study something related to computer science—perhaps video game design or programming.

"Shorecrest has taught me the benefit of having a community – having teachers that help and mentor you and having good friends all around you. I feel like I'm a better person than I was before. I've grown a lot, and I'm more future oriented. I love the School – I would tell anyone to come here." Jaylon will attend Florida State University in the University Honors Program, the oldest four-year Honors program in the state.



Photos: (Left) Rose Leary welcomes volunteers and visitors to the Special Olympics hosted at Shorecrest in 2022. Rose and her Student Council colleagues were instrumental in organizing volunteers to support the athletes. (Left, lower) Rose Leary with Mrs. Gaye Whitecage in 2013. (Above) Jaylon and the Mr. Spirit Court at Homecoming 2022.