SPOTLIGHT on Faculty

The faculty and staff at St. Andrew's Episcopal School bring a variety of talents and experiences to their profession. Learn a bit more about them in this spotlight series.

Where are you from?
I was born in Austin, Texas, right behind St. Andrew's at Seton Hospital.

Where did you attend college and what degree(s) did you receive?
I attended Southwestern University at Georgetown and obtained my degree in musical theatre. I obtained a master’s degree in childhood education from Hunter College in New York City.

How long have you been teaching? Were you in another profession before teaching?
I'm in my eighth year of teaching. I've taught Kindergarten, first (in NYC public schools), second, and fourth grades. I was a stage actor before becoming a teacher.

What accomplishments, honors and/or certifications have you achieved that you're proud of?
I'm very proud of my time spent in various training classes and workshops. I have been a part of the Lucy Calkins training at the Teachers College in NYC. I have participated in various workshops at the Number Lab in Austin. I have also attended a responsive classrooms workshop which focuses on social and emotional learning (SEL).

What is your favorite part of your job at St. Andrew's?
I am a performer at heart and do not see teaching as hugely different from performing. The performer in me enjoys teaching and enjoys the relationship between the passage of knowledge and the methods used to transmit that knowledge.

What is the most challenging part of your job?
Making sure that the learning needs of every student are met, given the fact that there is such a wide range of learning styles and needs in any classroom.

Do you have any St. Andrew's trivia you'd like to share?
After participating in the SAS history project with last year's fourth graders, I learned that there is a swimming pool buried underneath the field. There apparently was an apartment complex where Crusader Hall now lies, and the pool was a part of its grounds.

What organizations are you active in?
Outside of the classroom, I am most active in being a mother to my two young daughters (Lillian, 4, and Alice, 1). I also attend church, yoga classes, and Mr. Eleby's Friday CrossFit group.

Growing up, what did you want to be?
I wanted to be a performer. In high school, I participated in my school's choir and in a theatre group outside of school called Austin Musical Theatre (it has since folded.)

Describe how you became inspired to be a teacher.
I was lucky to have consistent work as a stage actor, in particular being a part of Sesame Street Live for 14 seasons, but the nature of that type of work is that you are constantly going from job to job. At one point I decided I wanted to be more grounded and have more of a steady job. I thought that teaching would be the closest thing to performing, so I decided to pursue a masters in teaching. Upon completing my masters, I began as a teacher in NYC public schools.

If you were stranded on a deserted island, what one band or musician would help keep your sanity?
The Beatles

If you could travel anywhere, where would you go?

Greece (I and my husband decided to go to Thailand for our honeymoon, but Greece was a close contender.)

Which authors or books have influenced you the most?

I like to read plays, and I remember how influential “Where the Red Fern Grows” was when I read that. I particularly liked some of the books I read in graduate school such as “Lies My Teacher Told Me,” by James W. Loewen.

If you could work in another profession or career field, what would it be?

Voice-over actor

What's your favorite restaurant in Austin?

Cafe Malta, near the intersection of William Cannon and Brodie, which has southern Italian food.

If you had plenty of extra time to volunteer, who would you serve and why?

I would like to be a volunteer at a hospital. I also enjoy volunteer work at the Capital Area Food Bank. If I had all the money in the world, I would donate a significant amount to the Heather McGaughey Children's Theatre Company, which is dedicated to the memory of my friend and provides scholarships for musical theatre students.