



OAKDALE ACADEMY

CHARACTER • TRUTH • WISDOM



PATRIOT CHRONICLE



Celebrating 15 Years of
Classical Christian Education

The Oakdale Academy Patriot Chronicle

Oakdale Administration

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Mr. Lou DiAntonio
Athletic Director

Mrs. Lindsay Hanselman
*Grammar School
Department Head*

Mrs. Allison Hopersberger
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Ms. Rachel Rivera
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*Logic & Rhetoric School
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Letter from the Head of School

Dear Friends of Oakdale Academy,

Welcome to the second edition of the *Patriot Chronicle*.

We are thrilled to share with you the exciting things that have been going on in and around our campus since last fall.

Your support of our mission to “*instill Character, Truth, and Wisdom in our students in order to prepare them for a life of service to God, family, community, and country through classical Christian education*” allows us to continue offering exceptional education in our 15th year and moving into the future.

Oakdale is making a kingdom impact. We have launched thirteen graduating classes. We have seen alumni graduate from college and graduate school, get married, and welcome their first little ones; your prayers and generosity have made this legacy possible.

We hope that you find joy in reading about the work that we are privileged to take part in - shepherding our students in virtue so that they may glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

Enjoy.

Blessings,



Mrs. Valerie Bredow
Head of School





Upcoming Dates 2025-26

October

16 - 15th Annual Walk-a-thon

25 Logic School Parent/Student Square Dance

November

11 Veteran's Day Ceremony

December

3 Christmas Chapel with Special Musical Guests
Randy & Marli Brown

12 Christmas Concert

January

6 - 9 "J" Term for Rhetoric School

12 - 16 Spirit Week

16 Homecoming Game

17 Homecoming Dance

March

14 Mother Son Bowling

April

23 Grandparents/Special Persons Day

25 Daddy Daughter Dance

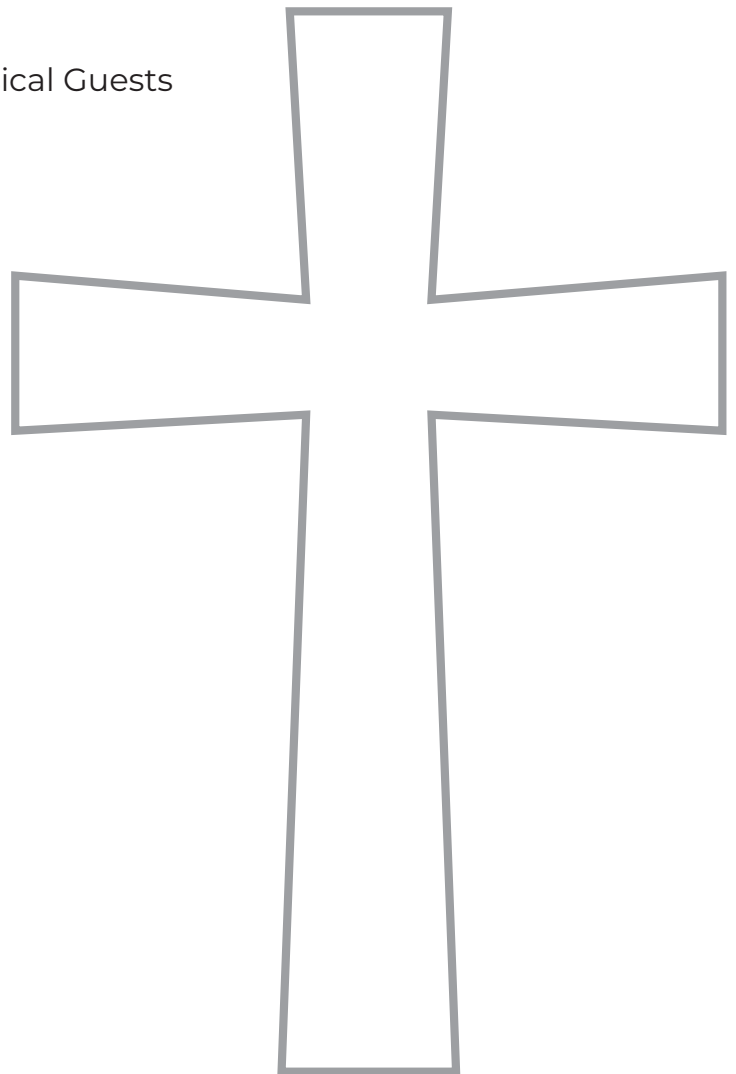
May

4 OA Golf Outing Fundraiser

9 Convivium

13 Baccalaureate Chapel

14 Awards Ceremony and Commencement Exercises





Cultivating Community



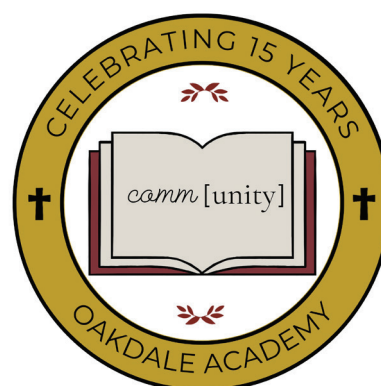
As Oakdale celebrates its 15th anniversary this year, I'm reminded by what those who wander our halls say about this special place - it's like family - it feels like home - it has such a community feel - the teachers love the students - and other wonderful phrases.

We take special care in cultivating the culture here - one of service, love of God, love of country, love of neighbor, and love of family. Our special focus this year is on Community, but not just in being together with one another, but in being united together as the body of Christ. We begin each day by asking the Lord to make us beacons of light in our homes and communities. We seek to accomplish this inside our building, as well as outside. As believers in Christ, we are able to come together to wonder at our Creator and in His creation within the walls of Oakdale. We come together to learn because of what unites us. We don't all come from the same backgrounds, churches, denominations, or faith traditions, but when the Lord is at the center of what we do, we can unite in our desire to glorify Him in learning together. As it says in Proverbs 27:17, "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another." When others see that Protestants, Catholics, and Orthodox believers can joyfully unite to learn under the umbrella of Christ, we will truly be beacons of light in our homes and communities.

— Mrs. Bredow

*Behold how good and how pleasant it is
for brethren to dwell together in unity!*

Psalms 133:1





The juniors and seniors, along with their parents enjoyed a 10-day guided tour of Rome, Pompeii, and Florence.



The Patriots Wrestling Team took home another state championship! We are grateful to Coach Benninger for his dedication to coaching these young men.



The annual Daddy Daughter dance was another well-attended success, with the theme of Ties & Tiaras.

School NEWS



Last fall, the Logic School students enjoyed their annual Square Dance, complete with a caller and hay bales!



The drama club students hosted two performances of Oscar Wilde's comedy "The Importance of Being Earnest" to a packed house. Students even performed in British accents for effective authenticity!



The Logic and Rhetoric School band students participated in the Society for Classical Christian Schools of Michigan's inaugural Music Festival. Our students joined with more than 100 other students to perform pieces each band prepared individually, and some they prepared to play as a large group.

Your Gifts Support Oakdale Academy

This past year your gifts made a significant impact for our students, faculty, programs, and in our building. Your giving makes a difference! Your annual fund gifts:

- Completed sod installation on the Spencer Real Estate Athletic Field
- Provided for wooden lockers throughout the building, along with wooden cabinetry in the art room
- Funded the installation of a pirate ship on our playground
- Funded new books, toys, and games in our classrooms
- Allowed for interior painting of seven classrooms, and the purchase of 22 pieces of classical artwork that has been installed in those classrooms
- Supported faculty training, education, and continued development in classical Christian education
- Enhanced marketing materials
- Purchased prizes for the Walk-a-thon Prize Cart
- Sponsored events, including the Walk-a-thon, Liberty Society Dinner, and Daddy Daughter Dance
- Provided support to our athletic program
- Supported teachers' needs in our faculty/staff lounge
- Met the greatest needs of our school community

Philanthropy at Oakdale

We are grateful for each of you who have chosen to bless Oakdale Academy with your philanthropic support. Simply stated, your gifts allow us to create an exceptional learning environment that goes beyond tuition support alone. Many of these opportunities wouldn't have happened without the generous support of people like

you. Thank you for making our community extraordinary!

This year, we have an ambitious goal to raise \$400,000 to cover the costs of replacing our more than 60-year old roof, and replacing the attached heating/cooling systems. This is a critical need for our school so that we can continue to offer exceptional classical Christian education in

Oakland County. We are hosting two fundraisers this year — our 15th annual Walk-a-thon on October 16th and our inaugural Oakdale Golf Outing on May 4, 2026 at Westwynd Golf Course in Oakland Township. Please see the enclosed insert for more information on how you can be an integral part of this year's initiatives.



Thank You

to our 2024-2025 Annual Fund Sponsors

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Humilitas in Arte: Humility in Art

By Mrs. Lindsay Hanselman

The Good, the True, and the Beautiful are hallmarks of a classical education. Not only do classical educators desire to love these tenets; we desire to surround our students with beauty. To that end, we are making concerted efforts to curate what our Oakdalian gaze upon daily. We are swapping out bulletin boards for Rembrandts and phonics posters for Vermeers. This year, we have added 22 paintings to our school to foster *ordo amoris*, ordering of loves.

From Junior Kindergarten to eighth grade, each class memorizes a virtue and teachers weave that virtue into their lessons. The eighth grade students are focusing on the virtue of humility, or *the habit of overcoming the desire for personal greatness and instead placing oneself in comparison with Heaven, not with another*. Clearly, this is no small feat. Pride is one of the greatest vices. The artwork of this classroom was chosen specifically with the virtue of humility in mind.

Overheard at Oakdale

Students are frequently contemplating art in hallways as well as classrooms. A few weeks ago, the first and second graders were studying "The Storm on the Sea of Galilee" by Rembrandt; Mrs. Johnson mentioned the painting had been stolen in a famous art heist in 1990. There was a collective gasp in the classroom as students realized they recognized this stolen painting - at the end of the Grammar School Hallway. They were relieved to discover that ours was merely a reproduction.



Dictatorship Offered to Cincinnatus
by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo

In the spirit of Plutarch, the Roman historian who wrote parallel biographies of ancient Grecians and Romans, two exemplars of leadership adorn the walls in our north end. The first painting, by Giovanni Tiepolo, an eighteenth-century Italian, is of Cincinnatus, the Roman farmer turned statesman who turned down the dictatorship of Rome in the late Republic era. He is depicted with a gathering crowd while he works his plough. He has resumed his farmwork after a swift and successful military victory and yet he does not cling to power, desiring only to return to his farm. Historically, he is praised for this singular act of humility.



Crossing the Delaware by Emanuel Leutze (1851)

Our second example is George Washington, America's first president and national hero. Emmanuel Leutze paints the audacious campaign across the Delaware on that fateful Christmas morning in 1776. Noted for his humility, Washington commands the respect of his troops. Rather than becoming a de facto dictator, he understands the implications of his actions and resigns from his presidency after two successful terms in his stirring "Farewell Address," setting a peaceful transitional precedent.

Although the first two paintings of historical figures are heroic and worthy of emulation; they are but fallen human beings. The final artwork represents the ultimate exemplar of humility, Jesus. Peter Paul Reubens, a Flemish artist in the sixteenth century, depicts Jesus washing the disciples' feet. In John, Jesus humbles Himself by choosing the lowliest task, reserved for the lowliest member of the household. Here, Oakdale students are reminded daily of Jesus' acts of humility, and of

His ultimate act of humility, His salvific work of dying on the cross.

These paintings serve not only as beautiful works of art but are symbolic of the virtues we are prayerfully seeking to cultivate in our students. Humility is often scorned in this world, but the Lord instructs us that "when pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with the humble is wisdom." (Proverbs 11:2)



Jesus Washing the Disciples' Feet by Peter Paul Reubens (1632)



Lindsay Hanselman serves as the Grammar School Department Head and as the Latin teacher for Kindergarten through eighth grade. She loves classical Christian education and is passionate about the study of Latin. Lindsay and her husband Dan, a pastor, reside in Highland with their three children, Celia, Jude, and Iris. She enjoys reading old books, drinking cappuccinos and spending time with her family.

Athletics

By Mr. Lou Diantonio

I am excited to announce the opening of the Spencer Real Estate Athletic Field for the 2025-26 school year. The soccer field has been a much anticipated addition to the Oakdale campus, and well worth the wait. Our boys' soccer team played the inaugural game on September 15th against Rochester Hills Christian School. Oakdale is part of the Southeast Michigan Athletic Conference (SMAC), and competes in the Michigan Christian Schools Athletic Association (MCSAA) state tournaments at both the junior high and varsity levels. Oakdale was one of the founding schools for both organizations and is well respected at both the conference and state levels.

In addition to boys' and girls' soccer, Oakdale also offers volleyball, boys' and girls' basketball, wrestling, golf, and baseball. Students are encouraged to participate in these sports not only



for the physical benefit, but also for the teamwork, endurance, and mental stamina athletics offers. Student athletes are coached to do their best, to strive for victory, and to win and lose in a godly manner. Oakdale is not only proud of State Championship titles in wrestling, soccer, and volleyball, but also of its astounding group of godly men and women. Our coaches and athletes play hard, while adhering to the virtues of Character, Truth and Wisdom. For more information about our athletics program or ways in which you can make a difference, please email me at athleticdirector@oakdaleacademy.com.



Coach Lou DiAntonio has served as Athletic Director and Coach at Oakdale since 2012. He has a passion for athletics and raising up virtuous athletes. He

is a husband and father to two daughters, both former college athletes. He owns a printing company, TLC Printing, and in his free time, he enjoys traveling and spending time with family and his beautiful granddaughter, Ainsley.

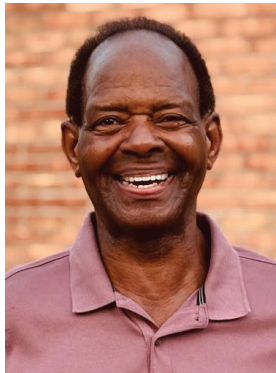


Meet Some of Our Outstanding Faculty & Staff



Mrs. Dawn Burnett

Mrs. Burnett recently relocated to the area to be near family. She brings with her decades of service in ministry, serving youth, and teaching in various subjects. Mrs. Burnett holds a Bachelor's degree in literature from Wheaton College, an M.Div from Princeton Theological Seminary, and has a deep love of middle school students. She joins our faculty this year in the Logic School, teaching literature and math, and serving as homeroom teacher to our 7th and 8th grade students. Mrs. Burnett and her husband, Dr. James Burnett, served in ministry together and they are parents to two grown daughters.



Mr. James Jackson

Mr. Jackson is a beloved treasure at Oakdale. He has faithfully and prayerfully served as our Custodian and Caretaker since we opened our doors in 2011, but his connection to Oakdale and our building runs even deeper.

When our founding families were praying about opening a school in June of 2011, unbeknownst to them, Mr. Jackson was praying that the Lord would bring students back to the vacant building at 3200 Beacham Drive so that they could know and love Jesus. Prior to housing Oakdale, our building was a public elementary school, and then a Christian school, owned by Mt. Zion Church in Clarkston. Mr. Jackson lives next door and he would come and lay his hands on the building inside and out.



Mr. Eddie Taber

Mr. Taber joined Oakdale in the fall of 2024, bringing with him almost four decades of teaching experience in music and band. He is a graduate of Evangel University, with a degree in Music Education. In addition, he holds a Master's degree in Music Education from McNeese State University. Mr. Taber leads our 4th Grade - 12th Grade music and band students. He is also enjoying teaching medieval history this year in Logic School, a history buff himself.

He and his family were former missionaries to India. He is privileged to work alongside his wife, Mrs. Rosemind Taber, Logic & Rhetoric Department Head. He is father to four grown children, and grandfather to two beautiful grandchildren. Mr. Taber serves on the Deacon Board of his local church.

This past spring, Mr. Taber led the Logic and Rhetoric School bands in participating in the Society for Classical Schools of Michigan's inaugural Music Festival. More than 100 students from various classical Christian Schools met in Owosso, Michigan.

Conditioning the Whole Person **ILIAD**

ATHLETICS

By Mrs. Jill Fox

I grew up in a family where my parents encouraged us to be active. We would play outside all day long – ride bikes, swim, play sports in our yard, and go boating as a family. My dad refereed several sports and my sister and I would tag along and watch. We were raised to know how to play many sports. Although I was never an expert, I had a love of being active and knowledge of how to play sports.

In 2018, I was blessed with the opportunity to teach PE at Oakdale Academy. I brought my love for being active and the desire to expose students to a variety of physical activities and sports to the classroom. As I began attending different classical continuing education classes, conferences, and other opportunities, I started to look for a classical Christian PE curriculum. Unfortunately, there was nothing to be found, until this past summer.

Enter, Iliad Athletics. This program was created and is being perfected by two gentlemen who have a love for classical Christian education, physical education, and the blending of the two. This was the program that I had been looking for, a program that encourages students to be well rounded in their physical education, have a love for nature, use the outdoors as their life-long playground, and encourages striving to always do one's best while having a Christ-like attitude and character.



Mrs. Jill Fox

I am excited to implement this program at Oakdale this year. The program will focus on four different training blocks; athleticism, gymnastics, field fitness, and olympics. Within these training blocks are seven weekly lessons. The lessons are designed to complement material that is being taught school wide such as self-discipline, character, and Christ-like behavior and implement them through physical education. These training blocks and lessons will be used in tandem with certain skills that are taught unique to Oakdale such as square dancing, historical period-themed games (in line with our history curriculum), as well as exposure to different games and sports.

Throughout the year, the students will also go through benchmarking three times. This process will be used to encourage the student to “beat himself” as he or she strives to continually improve in his overall fitness. This will also help the students understand that fitness is a lifelong process where you should continually strive to improve.

During each class period, the students have already been excited to see how much they have improved as they strive to “beat themselves”. It is a true blessing to have the opportunity to implement a classical Christian PE program at Oakdale Academy.



Mrs. Fox joined Oakdale in 2017. She teaches JK-12th grade PE. When Mrs. Fox is not teaching, she enjoys spending time hiking, kayaking, swimming, and being outside with her husband and two sons (a graduate and soon to be graduate of Oakdale). She is a member of First Baptist Church of Rochester where she serves the Lord in various ministries.

Faculty Spotlight

Meet Chad Lewis: Renaissance Man

By Mrs. Valerie Bredow

Early in the morning, behind a closed door, wafts the sounds of classical music. You will find inside Chad Lewis already hard at work. Sometimes, he's leaning back in his chair pondering the deeper meaning of something. Other times, he's working at his desk and, when he's missing, he can be found walking the perimeter of our beautiful campus.

While Mr. Lewis may appear to keep to himself, this has more to do with his subject expertise than a disinterest in talking with others. Folks may find it intimidating to relate to Mr. Lewis on his level - discussing philosophy, ancient languages, ancient and Old Testament history, and the Bible. When one knocks, though, and opens the door to meet and talk with Mr. Lewis, one finds a friendly and endearing teacher, who loves students, enjoys teaching, and prioritizes his love of the Lord.

Mr. Lewis graduated from Wayne State University with degrees in Philosophy and Literature, before heading to Brandeis University to pursue a graduate degree in Ancient Near Eastern and Judaic Studies. He declined admission to Harvard Divinity School, upon learning that he needed to care for a near relative in declining health, and when his first child was born.

Mr. Lewis joined Oakdale in 2021 in the Rhetoric School Humanities Department, after serving at Classical Leadership Academy (now Bloomfield Christian School) for 16 years, and at William Tyndale College for two years. He has taught many subjects, including Greek, Latin, Hebrew, Rhetoric, ancient and medieval literature, history, and Bible.



Mr. Chad Lewis

He also enjoys sponsoring Oakdale's after-school chess club, an avid player himself.

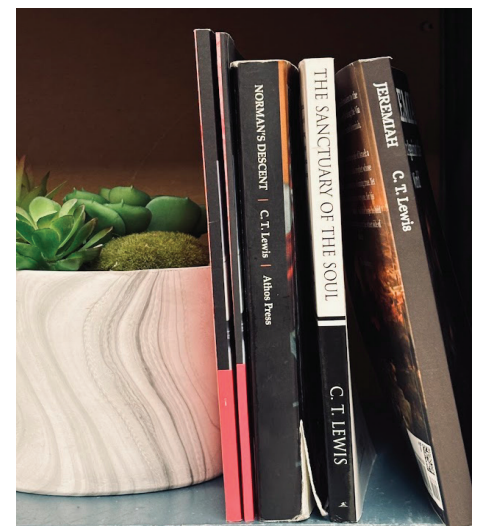
Clearly marked by a life of service, in addition to teaching full-time at Oakdale, Mr. Lewis is the senior pastor of New Temple Evangelical Church in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, and serves as a Chaplain for Lily Hospice. When not engaged in these activities, Mr. Lewis is a busy husband and father of four grown children, two of whom are Oakdale alumni.

In his little remaining free time, Mr. Lewis enjoys drawing, music, building sand castles, and in the past, dabbled with break dancing and skateboarding. He is currently publishing a Bible commentary series, having recently completed books on Titus and I and II Timothy. He authored a biographical series on Jeremiah, Isaiah, and Ezekial, and in 2013, authored *The Sanctuary of the Soul*. When not authoring books on biblical perspectives, Mr. Lewis enjoys writing in the philosophical horror genre. He believes that this genre is missing stories with a redemptive

perspective, and he hopes to narrow this gap. His book *Norman's Descent* ties in classical themes, with a re-telling of the Orpheus story, drawing on Dante's *Inferno*, while presenting the dark side of the human condition, in light of a redemptive end.

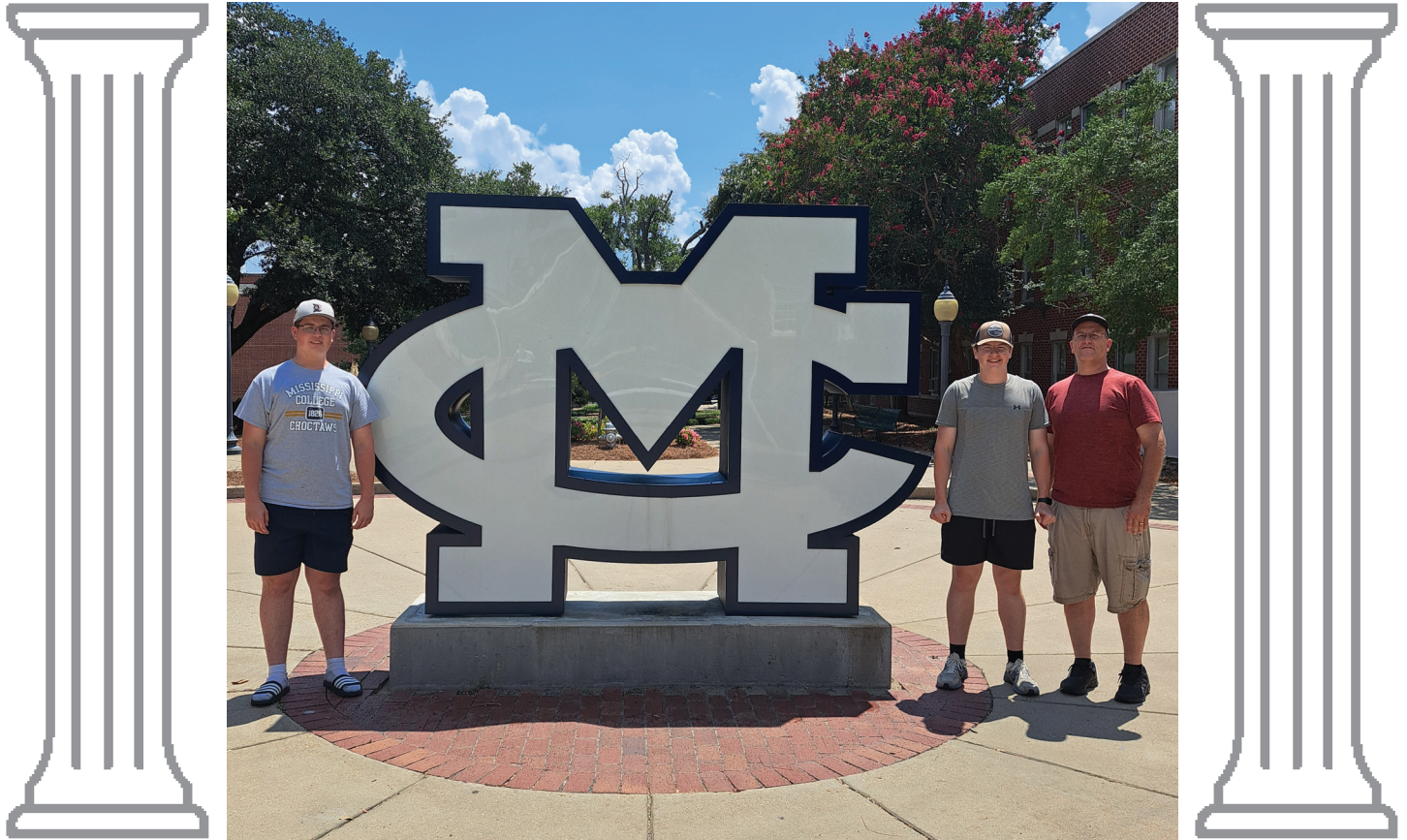
While it may seem that Mr. Lewis is best-suited to teaching the oldest students, he is a treasure to all of our students. When speaking at chapel, he brings ancient artifacts from his collection. He can be found teaching cuneiform to our Grammar School students in their study of ancient civilizations. He leads lively scavenger hunts for our students in Grammar, Logic, and Rhetoric to the ancient artifacts gallery of the Detroit Institute of Arts, where he spent much of his childhood, learning from his parents who served as docents. He enjoys talking to students of all ages at his lunch table about any subject on which they choose to engage. Oakdale is blessed to have Mr. Lewis as part of our community.

More information about Mr. Lewis's projects can be found at: <https://chadneylewis.wordpress.com/>



Through the Looking Glass: Alumni Reflections

By Mr. J.C. Fox (Class of 2025)



Left to right: J.C., Jonas, and Jamie Fox at Mississippi College.

When I look back on my years at Oakdale, I realize how deeply it shaped not only what I know, but how I think. The experience was more than a set of courses; it was a formation of habits, habits of questioning, reasoning, and learning that continue to serve me well in college.

The emphasis on rhetoric meant constant essays, speeches, and debates. As a perfectionist, I dreaded corrective marks on my papers. Now, I see how much that practice sharpened my ability to form and defend an argument, a skill I lean on constantly in college. The substantial work load has proven to train me, not only for college but also for a rigorous schedule in the “real world”.

At Oakdale, the focus on faith and emphasis on moral and intellectual virtue has allowed me to have the tools to live the good life.

The transition to college has been both smooth and surprising as I have seen my classical training pay off dividends in the classroom. While others complain and struggle through papers, abstracts, and annotated bibliographies, Oakdale’s having required these projects from me at the high school level and my classical training to think for myself has served me well.

J.C. Fox is a 2025 alumni, currently attending Mississippi College, a Christian liberal arts university in Clinton, Mississippi.

Alumni Update

Oakdale alumnus **Ethan Greb** ('15) caught the vision for classical Christian education after finishing his time at Oakdale. He is launching a classical Christian school in Charlotte, North Carolina - The Anselm School. Visit theanselmschool.org for more information.

Alumni sweethearts **Tim** ('18) and **Emily (Rumbuc, '19) Benninger** are expecting a baby girl this fall. Congratulations!

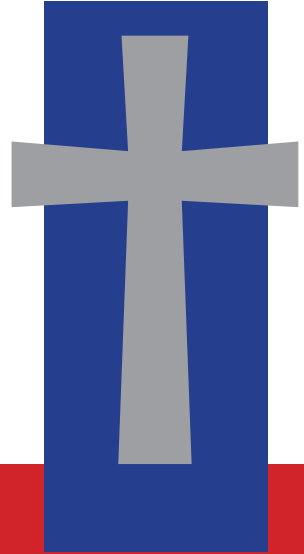
Cameron Spencer ('25) enlisted in the United States Air Force and is expected to report for basic training in March.



If you have alumni news you'd like to share with us, please send an email to office@oakdaleacademy.com and mention "Alumni News" in the subject line.

Schools our students have attended:

Boyce College | Calvin College | Cedarville University | Ferris State University
| Grace College | Grand Valley University | Grove City College | Hillsdale College
| Hope College | Kettering University | Liberty University | Mississippi College
| Oakland University | Rochester Christian University | University of Michigan
| Wayne State University



The mission of Oakdale Academy is to instill Character, Truth, and Wisdom in our students in order to prepare them for a life of service to God, family, community, and country through classical Christian education.



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3200 Beacham Drive
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