

# Steel & Garnet



WINTER  
2019





*Letter from our President*

As you read this, the new year is underway, filled with the promise of beginning again. Hopefully your resolutions are going strong, but perhaps routine has started to creep back in. But with this issue of *Steel & Garnet*, I know you will be reenergized to contemplate the future and the boundless potential of our Girard College students. Our featured article provides a look at the Girard College Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025:

# Navigating The Future, Anchoring Our Impact

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## Restoring the Iconic Heart of Our Campus



## ABOVE

Taking place each October, Cavalier Day is one of Girard College's most enjoyable traditions. Students engage in friendly competition in mixed-grade teams, with senior students helping faculty to run the games. It's the perfect way to show school spirit!



**Dr. Heather  
D. Wathington**

**PRESIDENT**

My first year at Girard College was an exciting, whirlwind learning experience, as I embraced the traditions of this historic institution and got to know the many dedicated people who help steward the legacy of Stephen Girard. One of my most important goals in my first year was to put shape to the vision and plan for Girard College's future over the next five years.

In Navigating The Future, Anchoring Our Impact, you will see the recommendations that were gathered from our community through the strategic planning process. This plan will now be put into action by experienced, talented leaders to guide our academic and residential programs, to commit to fiscal responsibility in order to safeguard our future, and to invest in campus revitalization efforts that will showcase our unique assets to the citizens of Philadelphia and beyond.

The Strategic Plan is named in two parts for a reason — Like the mariner Stephen Girard, we must look ahead and identify potential opportunities so that we can navigate them with skill, and like Girard the philanthropist, we must anchor ourselves in our commitment to social impact and changing our world for the better. The plan is comprised of four pillars that, like the columns of our famed Founder's Hall, will support our vision for the school. I thank you for your continued support and encouragement and look forward to working with you in order to realize this shared vision.

Hail Girard,

**DR. HEATHER D. WATHINGTON**  
President, Girard College



A woman with dark hair, wearing a black blazer over a light blue patterned top, is leaning over a dark wooden table. She is looking down at a document. To her right, a young man with dark hair, wearing a maroon polo shirt with the Girard College logo, is also looking down at a document. They are in a library or study area, with bookshelves filled with books in the background. The text "NAVIGATING THE FUTURE" is overlaid in red capital letters.

NAVIGATING THE FUTURE

# Anchoring Our Impact

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The Girard College Strategic Plan  
2020 – 2025



# When she joined Girard College as President in August 2018, Dr. Heather Wathington knew that the community had undertaken a vigorous strategic planning process, and it would be her job to articulate that vision and to oversee its implementation.

**Throughout her first year, Wathington discussed, absorbed, and reflected on the plan and the community that would be shaped by it. As we come to the halfway point of the 2019-20 school year, the plan is already well underway, but it has not yet had its proper debut to the Girard community at large.**

That brings us to the cover story of this issue of *Steel & Garnet*, where we will learn about how our president and our community will be “Navigating The Future, Anchoring Our Impact.”

Before we lay out the key points of the strategic plan, let’s take a moment to get to know the person who will be guiding us through its actualization. Dr. Heather Wathington is a proven leader, a dedicated educator, and an analytical expert.

She knows what a good school looks like, and how to get there. She cares about the students at Girard, and knows the kind of supports and challenges they need to not only get to postsecondary education, but finish a degree or credential and proceed to careers or further education. Her practical education philosophy, data-driven tactics, and commitment to the Girard mission are exactly the skills our community needs to navigate the next five years and beyond.

In conversation on the topic, Wathington quotes author Bonaro V. Overstreet, and affirms that educational access for all is the scale that “shall feel the stubborn ounces of [her] weight.”

“Higher education,” Wathington explains, “has the potential to be a great equalizer, a catalyst of upward mobility. Girard College’s focus is to provide a quality educational and residential experience that lays a good foundation for success in postsecondary education and beyond.”



**ABOVE**  
Elementary Teacher Kimberly Zandy works with a student on a writing project.



Wathington's career has always focused on transition points where high needs, first-generation college students can either gain or lose momentum. In her previous position as the CEO of the See Forever Foundation and their Maya Angelou schools, Wathington carefully assessed these fulcrums of opportunity, gaining a keen understanding of the supports needed to successfully leverage a college-preparatory education through to completion.

Prior to her work at the Maya schools, Wathington approached this issue from the higher education side, as an assistant professor at the University of Virginia and a senior research officer at the Lumina Foundation. She contributed to the study of student access and postsecondary persistence through the lens of the available data, concluding that the K-12 experience is crucial to setting students up for future success, as is being practical about the cost of higher education.

"We're not changing lives if we're not helping people finish what they start," Wathington says. "Getting people in the door is really, really great. At this point, 88% of high school graduates nationwide

will enter into a postsecondary institution at some point. But what percentage of that 88% actually graduates?"

The trends about who is finishing a postsecondary degree or credential are becoming clearer. If a student returns for their second year, they are more likely to finish. If they have a certain GPA in high school, or have the benefit of strong math support, they are more likely to finish. By applying these lessons to the students at Girard, Wathington combines research and passion to best ensure their success.

With that knowledge in hand, it then becomes about finding the right fit. While top students at Girard will always have the ability to earn acceptance into excellent colleges and universities, it would be doing students a disservice to not counsel them on institutions that are the best fit for them and their family. Does a college have the resources and material to support them? Is there tutoring, counseling, and financial aid available? What is that college's graduation rate? If an institution is not helping their students finish, then maybe it's not the right place for Girard students to go.

With that goal of college persistence as a backdrop, Wathington embraced the challenge of leaning into the school's strategic plan while simultaneously getting to know the community.

"It was a good challenge," she admits. "But it was really great to see that the community had been galvanized, the stakeholders engaged. Students, faculty, alumni, all weighed in on the state of the college and what should come next."

Gathering the information to decide what comes next was the lion's share of Wathington's work in her first year at Girard. It was easy to gain an appreciation for the school's history and admire the commitment to the mission, but there was also the difficult task of measuring perception against reality, conducting quality and needs assessments to determine what areas could gain traction over the next five years. Implementing the strategic plan will largely come down to what the community should stop, start, or continue doing to successfully navigate our future.

#### BELOW

*President Wathington meets with 9th grade students to get their feedback on the new high school curriculum.*





NAVIGATING THE FUTURE,  
ANCHORING OUR IMPACT IS  
COMPRISED OF FOUR PILLARS

# Academic Excellence

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# Residential Excellence

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# Financial Vitality

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# The Campus for The City

On their own, each facet follows what any responsible institution would embrace for its constituents, but together, they align to forge a path toward a vital, prosperous future for Girard College.



## PILLAR 1

# Academic Excellence

**Navigating The Future, Anchoring Our Impact compels us to ask ourselves, does our curriculum do enough? Is it supporting our students with everything they need to fully participate in the world today?**

"A lot has changed," Wathington says, "in terms of what students need to do to be able to shape the world and compete in it."

The strategic plan calls for a focus on growth and achievement, which requires closing gaps and improving alignment throughout the school. In the Elementary and Middle School, new curricula such as Eureka Math has been introduced for the 2019-20 school year.

"The students have responded well to Eureka," says Stan Bobowski, Managing Director of Education. "They are gaining a better conceptual understanding of how and why mathematics 'works.'"

The English and Language Arts (ELA) curriculum is also being restructured. This year, teachers are piloting Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading, which is a curriculum used to scaffold students to proficiency in the area of literacy by 4th Grade. To prepare faculty for ELA curriculum changes in 2020-21, the Elementary and Middle School leadership

team is dedicating time to observation, feedback, and additional staff trainings to support upcoming initiatives.

Girard College High School has implemented an innovative curriculum developed by the Quest Forward Learning Network in order to empower students with 21st century skills that will allow them to succeed after graduation and add value to the world. The curriculum is designed to apply students' natural curiosity in a way that requires them to think critically and solve problems that span multiple subjects.

"Real-world problems rarely fit into distinct categories," Bobowski explains, "and by applying content knowledge to hands-on scenarios, students learn how to approach complex issues from a variety of perspectives."

In this model, teachers mentor students rather than lecture as the students take an active role in their scholarship. By developing and practicing habits of analysis and comprehension, students will be able to synthesize the things that they learn and apply them in a project-based environment.

As students master academic content, they develop personal responsibility for their education. Small class sizes and individuated learning journeys help students gain independence and agency. As students pursue their own academic interests, their learning will increasingly take place beyond the classroom, through partnerships with universities, businesses, and nonprofit organizations.

In order to fulfill this vision of student-led learning, Girard College High School is also pioneering a social impact curriculum that elevates service-learning through

system analysis and entrepreneurship. The first-year pilot program with Eastern State Penitentiary has allowed students to deepen their knowledge of the criminal justice and mass incarceration systems.

A student remarked: "This is my favorite class because we get to talk about what's wrong and how can we make it right. We talk about the real truth. I talk about this class with such enthusiasm and I feel this fire in me that burns with curiosity."

Future classes will expose students to other social issues like hunger (which they may have faced themselves), climate change, or water access, as the curriculum pulls from the framework developed by the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals.

By developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills and applying them to socially relevant projects, Girard College students will be more than ready to succeed in an economy that increasingly relies on automation, computer programming, and artificial intelligence. As they progress through high school, students will connect with postsecondary education earlier and have a better understanding of what fields of study they want to pursue.

As outlined earlier, Dr. Wathington believes that it is imperative to make the pathways to higher education extremely clear from an early stage. A strategic plan that directly addresses this concept will ensure our students' academic success. Through experiential learning and intentional partnerships throughout their high school career, students will achieve a more complete transition to postsecondary education and be better equipped to finish.

BELOW

3rd Grade Teacher Genevieve Kelly leads a reading circle.



**"Students learn how to approach complex issues from a variety of perspectives."**

—  
**STAN BOBOWSKI,  
MANAGING DIRECTOR  
OF EDUCATION**





ABOVE

Residential Advisor Richard Perdomo helps a student with their homework in the dorm's study lounge.

## PILLAR 2

# Residential Excellence

**Girard College's residential program has made the school unique since its inception. By creating a home environment for students, education goes beyond the classroom and speaks to the whole person. To prepare our students to navigate their future, Girard will foster a living learning community that addresses the social and emotional needs of its students.**

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is crucial to developing young people who are self-aware and can manage themselves through responsible decision making and relationship skills. Girard College's Vice President of Operations, Jon Tucker, has worked with staff to implement an SEL framework through trainings and curriculum.

"The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) gives us a framework to help our students and adults understand and manage emotions," Tucker explains. "Positive, caring relationships are at the heart of what makes our community successful, and the CASEL framework guides our approach to educating the whole child."

All of Girard's residential, instructional, and counseling staff are committed to a restorative approach to discipline. Setting clear expectations and helping students when they fall short of those expectations is crucial to building a caring community. Tools like Suite360, which is a sequenced digital curriculum that all students use to learn about character development skills, and Kickboard, which is a tool that tracks interactions related to student behavior, supplement the school's philosophy of personalized attention and support.

"Research shows that positive feedback is much more powerful than discipline," Tucker says. "By talking with students and showing them we care, everyone benefits."

A community's physical spaces also impact the way students learn and interact. Being intentional when updating communal spaces like Banker Hall and the study

lounges in the dorms will help solidify a sense of community and optimize learning and peer support. And with a new student center as a key goal for the strategic plan, the look and feel of the campus will reflect the family feel of the community.

"Every living thing has a center, a heartbeat," says Wathington. "A new student center will be a place where everyone can convene, and through thoughtful design, we can reimagine a vibrant 21st century space within our historic and beautiful campus."

The educational experience at Girard does not end at 3:00 p.m. With a robust extended day program, regular community-building activities, and structured study periods, student learning takes all shapes and forms. Whether it's competing in a chess tournament, increasing athletic options for middle school students, or training lifeguards so they can get a summer job, Girard's residential life program is crucial to the school's mission of preparing young people for the future.





ABOVE

*Increasing public access to Founder's Hall will be key to the success of the Girard College Strategic Plan.*

### PILLAR 3

## Financial Vitality

**Nowhere has there been more challenging navigation than through the turbulent financial sector in recent years. The Board of Directors of City Trusts has done a marvelous job in diversifying the estate's asset base so that the college does not suffer at the mercy of the markets.**

The college, however, is more than 90% dependent upon the interest generated by the endowment, which is managed by the Board. "Girard College is fortunate

to have benefitted for more than 170 years from the incredible philanthropic gift made by Stephen Girard. In that tradition, the College is now seeking how to best generate additional resources to propel us into the future," says Wathington.

Key to this effort is the restructuring of the school's Advancement Office, which will work to increase contributions and develop strategic partnerships to provide income to support school programs. Sylvia V. Bastani, CFRE, CPC has led this office for a year now as the Vice President of Advancement and Strategic Partnerships, joined by Adam McGrath as the Director of Marketing and Brand Communications, Kathy Haas as the Director of Historical Resources, and Taylor Cobb as the Assistant Director of Development.

"Our founder Stephen Girard was an exemplary philanthropist," says Bastani, "whose vision has provided thousands of young men and women with a great education and a nurturing home. I'm

proud to be a part of a wonderful team of professionals who are leading Girard College into achieving new levels of support and strategic partnerships with organizations that will enhance the lives and learning of our students."

Financial vitality means securing and extending the legacy of Stephen Girard's gift, and that means thriving, not just surviving. That means thinking differently about where the resources for our students come from, and soliciting support for the college in a variety of ways. Things like STEM labs and arts spaces come at a cost, and our students deserve the very best.

There is always a balance, including a cost-benefit analysis when it comes to growing enrollment, adding staff, and updating spaces. By weighing responsibility and risk, the school will be able to ensure that the Girard experience continues to be available to more and more students.



## PILLAR 4

# The Campus for The City at Girard College

**Perhaps the most visible and exciting aspect of the Strategic Plan, The Campus for The City at Girard College seeks to share the legacy of Stephen Girard by positioning Girard College as a premiere educational resource and a willing partner for community initiatives throughout the city of Philadelphia and beyond.**

“Girard College and Philadelphia are both in very interesting growth periods,” says Wathington. “We want to allow more people to enjoy our campus the way that we have.”

Exploratory plans are currently being developed for Founder’s Hall and the Chapel that will revitalize these two iconic

spaces in order to make Girard College’s treasures more easily accessible for educators and students, as well as provide a world-class destination for conferences, special events, and performances. By engaging strategic partners that align with our mission, we create a more dynamic community for everyone.

Already this year, hundreds of people have come to campus for the first time, and more opportunities for education and collaboration will develop as these plans move forward. In addition to hosting Texas Instruments for their STEM Conference and partnering with the arts nonprofit Philadelphia Contemporary on a film installation, the school also sponsored the Beyond the Wall 5K, bringing in neighbors to run, volunteer, and support student activities.

Stephen Girard realized something when he set up Girard College, something that hasn’t changed in 171 years. Helping young people to succeed requires a living community, a support system for intellectual, emotional, and civic development. This community is a gift, a promise, a responsibility. Girard students must be encouraged to use their gifts in order to honor a legacy while making their own. Navigating The Future, Anchoring Our Impact — this is how we get there.



**ABOVE**  
Students and faculty enjoy the updated dining room and fresh, healthy menu.

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**ABOVE**  
Students participating in the Family Fun Walk on the school’s track.



## Alumni Notes

# To my fellow Girardians:

I am excited to share the news of the Alumni Association with you. It has been a great year of events (with more on the way!) plus new developments with our personnel and communications platforms.

First, I'm happy to report that the Association has once again been provided an opportunity to lessen the financial burden of our brothers and sisters seeking graduate and undergraduate degrees. This year, we have granted more than \$50,000 in graduate scholarships to Girardians seeking graduate degrees in a variety of fields. Additionally, we were able to commit \$25,000 to recent graduates seeking assistance with their undergraduate studies. This support is truly important for these young people continuing their education.

Next up, the Alumni Association is in the process of developing a brand new website. This new website will stand alone from the school's website, although we will continue to link and share information. Although still early in the development phase, it is anticipated that the new site will have several features, including links to past Board of Governor's Meeting Minutes, links to important calendar events, and an updated News and Information section. We will be seeking out content in the hope that the website is updated regularly.

Looking back for a moment, Founder's Day 2019 provided the first good weather in years. This year, the day was documented by over 300 photographs on the Girard College Alumni Association Facebook page. We celebrated the class of 1969 for their 50th anniversary and honored Vincent Cavacini '65 as the Stephen Girard Award winner for his service to the school and the Association. This year also marked the first year that Founder's Day activities included

a softball game along with a baseball game, recognizing the athletic achievements of the sisters of Girard. Despite the wonderful weather, Founder's Day attendance was markedly light.

Finally, the Association will be going through an administrative change. Joe Garbarino '71 has stepped down as Director of the Association. William Gallagher, a recent Award of Merit winner, teacher, houseparent, and baseball coach (along with several other titles) has been chosen to replace the irreplaceable. Although historic, as Mr. Gallagher will serve as the first director who did not attend Girard as a student, there can be no doubt that he is Girard through and through. He will truly be an asset to the Association.

I thank Joe Garbarino for his tireless service as Director of the Association. Not only did he volunteer his time to the Association, he did so without ever seeking credit for it. He served as Director during the tumultuous time when the Board of City Trusts was petitioning to shut down the high school and the residential program and was able to foster our partnership with the school and its administration while we were facing off on opposite sides of a courtroom. He was often the face of the association to students on campus or to Alumni Chapters outside of the Philadelphia area. Because Joe believes that his "Deeds must be his life," the Association will forever be in his debt.

In closing, I ask you to remember that the Girard College Alumni Association is a volunteer organization designed to benefit the school and its current and former students. Without contributions and gifts, the GCAA will not be able to perform its mission. Please remember to donate to the GCAA.

## Hail Girard!

**RONALD MARRERO '94**

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# Award of Merit Winners



## ABOVE

On October 5, 2019, Girard's campus was buzzing with Homecoming activities. The evening was capped with the Award of Merit ceremony. Congratulations to the honorees – Shawn Swords '80, Ray Popdan '58, Rob Fisher, Rob Smith '88, Harry Young '68, and Anthony Bralczyk '56.

## IN MEMORIAM

# Till Our Hearts Be Still

JOHN BROWN, '34

ANTHONY VOLK, '37

HENRY DEVUONO, '39

DR. JOHN LANDER, '40  
Former President

TOM MCGOVERN, '40

EDWARD ROACH, '41

GENE RUGGERE, '42

IRV ANTONI, '42

ALFRED SMERAGLIO, '43

ROBERT DURMONT, '43

NORBERT KOCKLER, '43

RICHARD LUCE, '44

SALVATORE CAVALLARO, '44

SAM BENOFF, '45

DANTE BATTISTINI, '47

JOHN HAGAN, JUNE '47

EDWARD MAKO, '49

FRANCIS JONES, '49

JIM TANAHIL, JAN '49

JOE YATES, '50

JOSEPH CHOCLOS, '50

ED SUAREZ, '50

WAYNE UMBREL, '51

JOHN DICINQUE, '51

JOHN HANDSHUH, '51

JOSEPH FOSCO, '51

HARVEY FELDMAN, '52

JIM BROUSSARD, '52

TOM MCKNIGHT, '52

PAUL GUIDA, '52

JESSIE WOODRING, '53

BOB STERLING, '53

BUD MURRAY, '53

GEORGE BOSHER, '53

WILLIAM BILPELS, '53

DAVID MARSEE, '55

ELROY HOUSER, '55

NICHOLAS BOSNIC, '55

WILLIAM STONE, '56

HARRY PRICE, '56

HARRY PRICE, '56

PETER CORRIDONI, '56

R. KENT LYDIC, '56

ROBERT WIGGINS, '56

JOHN NOVOSEL, '58

FRANK GALLAGHER, '59

WILLIAM EVANS, '60

PAUL CARLSON, '61

MORGAN T., HANCOCK, '63

GILSON C. LORENZ, '64

RAYMOND STARZMANN, '64

JIM STANZEL, '67

DAVID BATHURST, '74

ELIJAH MCCOY, '11

CRAIG KAUFMANN  
Former Director of Admissions

JOE VENDETTI  
Associate

## SAVE THE DATE

# Founder's Day 2020

Friday, May 15  
Golf Tournament & Banquet

Saturday, May 16  
Campus Events starting at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, May 17  
Tour of Stephen Girard's Farmhouse  
in South Philly

Look for more information from  
the Girard College Alumni Association!



*At Our Core*

# Alumni Reflections on Our Core Values



Will Lewis

'00

**WHAT DO** Tastykakes, green Nike huaraches, and flip phones have to do with a passion for entrepreneurship and paying it forward?

Well, if you're William "Will" Lewis '00, the answer is everything.

Will Lewis was one of ten children growing up in an apartment in West Philadelphia. The Lewis family was led by Will's mother.

"My mother needed to do what she could to save her children," Lewis explained during a recent visit to campus. "My father was a drug addict and we would spend a lot of time with my grandmother. A family member recommended Girard College. My older sister and I took the test together and I got in. I would tease her about being the smarter one, but little did I know that I was being shipped away."

Adjusting to life at Girard was not always easy for young Will. There were missed holidays and birthdays that were formerly shared with his family. At first, there was a lot of loneliness.

"Life at Girard took a bit of getting used to," Lewis admitted. "My first night was rough."

In time, Girard College would produce many memorable experiences.

"Participating in sports saved me, both academically and in the residential space. Mr. Leek was my teacher and coach. He told me that if I ran track, that I will pass social studies," Lewis chuckled.

At Girard College, Will found male mentors and role models for the first time.

"Mr. Gary was the best person in my life. He had a great influence," Lewis recalled.

Participating in camping trips with the Boy Scouts and discovering an interest working

the lights in the Chapel, both under the direction of Mr. Keith Steiniger, helped Will find his place.

"As I got to middle school, I decided that I wanted to be a part of the Girard experience," Lewis affirmed. "Mr. S. sat me down and showed me how to make Girard work for me."

Will's Girard experience was, quite literally, eye-opening.

"I was not very active in class. My teacher asked me to read something aloud. After, she recognized that I could not see. At that point, they sent me to Wills Eye and gave me glasses. Of course, they were so big that I would take them off to seem cool and only wear them in class," Lewis says with a laugh. It's clear that Will's fondness for Girard has grown throughout his life.

Will seems to have been born with the same entrepreneurial spirit that drove Stephen Girard and many Girard College alumni. Will's first business was started at Girard.

"I wanted a pair of green Nike Huaraches. I figured out by 6th grade that if I wanted something, I had to earn it myself," Lewis explained. "I would work in the kitchen and they would pay me in Tastykakes. Of course, I would turn around and sell them. From that I earned \$25. Later, I asked my house parent to purchase candy with my earnings. I would sell that, too."

Will is clearly a man of vision and not afraid of taking risks and putting in hard work. From selling hot dogs in the recreation center with his grandmother during the summer to starting a business while a student at Lincoln University, Will dedicated himself to trying new things and adjusting his approach as necessary. He wasn't afraid to make mistakes along the way.

**"I learned a lot at Girard and I'm very grateful. It's a pleasure to see my younger brothers and sisters who are now students here. I know that many of them have big dreams just like I did. I want to help them get there in any way I can."**

WILL LEWIS





## ABOVE

Will Lewis '00 credits Girard with encouraging his entrepreneurial spirit. He now owns a successful audio/visual company and uses it as a platform to give back to the school and community.

Eventually, Will secured his real estate license, but that market went bad during the financial crisis in 2009. Will was also working for Nextel and made the rounds to local barbershops, where he soon became one of the company's best salesmen. At AT&T and Verizon, Will soaked up everything he could about being a successful businessman. It's easy to see that Will had all the makings of an excellent entrepreneur.

When Will met Julius Walker, the two combined their knowledge of technology and sales into the beginnings of Nu Millennium Audio Visuals Systems (NMAVS). Since its founding nine years ago, Nu Millennium's clients include the Democratic National Convention, the City of Philadelphia's Film Office, the city's Night Market, and Enon Baptist Church, as well as international celebrities such

as John Legend, Eugene Roberts, and Patti LaBelle. Nu Millennium also runs a state-of-the-art recording studio at its offices located in Upper Darby, PA.

When asked to identify his role models, Will mentions Magic Johnson and Tyler Perry, two men of extraordinary vision and work ethic.

Philanthropy and giving back to Girard College and the community are very important to Will and to Nu Millennium. Every summer the company hires at-risk young men who have never been in a space where a company is owned by young people.

"We currently operate a 30,000 sq. ft. facility with a school for AV," Lewis says, "where we teach our students everything from how to wrap cable to training on the latest equipment."

At Girard College's Beyond the Wall 5K and Family Fun Walk in October 2019, Nu Millennium provided the stage, sound system and lighting at no cost. They spent many hours building the stage in front of Founder's Hall, demonstrating their attention to detail.

"I learned a lot at Girard and I'm very grateful," Lewis says sincerely. "It's a pleasure to see my younger brothers and sisters who are now students here. I know that many of them have big dreams just like I did. I want to help them get there in any way I can."



*Initiative:*

FOUNDER'S KEEPERS

# Restoring the Iconic Heart of Our Campus

The Founder's Keepers Initiative was formed after the U.S. Department of the Interior awarded a half-million dollar "Save America's Treasures" grant to help realize the dream of a new roof for Founder's Hall – a grant that was matched by prominent Girard graduate, Myer "Mike" Feldman '30, special counsel to President John F. Kennedy.



The realization of a new roof created an awareness of the need to make restoration and preservation of this magnificent structure a sustained effort, and in 2013 your Girard College Alumni Association assumed stewardship of the initiative.

The Founder's Keepers name was adopted to suggest a spirit of "ownership" for those who participate in this noble undertaking. Being a Founder's Keeper identifies a person as having made a personal commitment to support the well-being of this national landmark. To Girardians, of course, that commitment takes on an even deeper meaning because Founder's Hall is the abiding icon of our Girard experience. In short, Founder's Keepers represents an acknowledgement that the future of this grand building is in our hands.

And what have those hands accomplished thus far? Amazing things, on many levels (literally). Beginning with the second

ABOVE

The next undertaking for Founder's Keepers will be the restoration of the four George Gibbs murals in the Founder's Hall boardroom.



floor, west side, badly deteriorating windows were systematically and painstakingly restored to Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission standards. The work then moved to the east side. By the time you read this story, every window in Founder's Hall will have been restored to original 1848 specifications — a project that took over two years to complete at an approximate cost of \$400,000, all funded principally with alumni and Girard community donated money and grants.

In between the west and east windows projects, Founder's Keepers took on restoration of the massive main and north facing doors, to the exacting guidelines of the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's "Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties." The effort included a conservation-level paint analysis that revealed 25 coats of paint and enabled the identification of the original 1848 color, which was replicated. The project cost \$80,000, took six months to complete, and was recognized with a coveted Preservation Alliance of Philadelphia Grand Jury Award.

Founder's Keepers has identified its next project as the restoration of the familiar George Gibbs murals in the Founder's Hall boardroom. These four heroic-size paintings, done in 1929, are historical and iconic in their own right — as closely associated with the interior of the historical building as the famed Corinthian columns are with the exterior. They are badly in need of cleaning and restoration and the work is expensive.

After the murals, or, with luck, simultaneously, Founder's Keepers hopes to take on restoration of the building's entablature. Located nearly 100 feet above ground level, the entablature is comprised of marble and granite horizontal "layers" resting on the great columns and separating them from the roof — its elements include the architrave, frieze, and cornice. Restoration of the entablature involves the entire perimeter of the building, some 560 linear feet. It is a major undertaking. And then there are the soaring Corinthian columns themselves which need work — all 34 of them.

Is Founder's Keepers capable of taking on the restoration of almost a tenth of a mile of entablature? Or nearly three dozen, 80-foot tall, six-foot diameter granite

columns? Those same kinds of questions might have been asked before we took on restoration of the 40 windows. The only real question is: How do we get there? We will, of course, continue to depend on large gifts and grants. They are critical. But the Founder's Keepers' mantra has always been: "Every donation counts."

As Confucius may have said: To move a mountain, begin by carrying away small stones. The ultimate restoration of this great structure will be achieved by the small stone carriers: you and me. Will you join us in this noble cause? If you have ever thought about giving back for the care and education you received from Girard College, what better way could there be than helping to preserve the magnificent monument to philanthropy we call Founder's Hall.

**Gifts at any level are most welcome, are fully tax deductible and can be made payable to:**

**Girard College Alumni Association / Founder's Keepers and sent to the alumni office at 2101 South College Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19121.**



#### ABOVE

Over the course of two years, every window in Founder's Hall was restored to the original 1848 specifications, thanks to contributions from the Girard community. (Garry Norton '67)



#### ABOVE

A new roof for Founder's Hall was made possible by a "Save America's Treasures" grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior, and inspired the creation of Founder's Keepers. (Garry Norton '67)



#### ABOVE

An analysis of the front doors of Founder's Hall revealed 25 coats of paint, including the original color. The restoration was recognized with a Preservation Alliance of Philadelphia Grand Jury Award. (Garry Norton '67)



Hail Girard!

# Girard's Fascinating Legacy



**“By being attuned to world events, ready to move quickly, and having a broad network Girard was able to deploy his ‘modest capital’ to great effect.”**

**KATHY HAAS, DIRECTOR  
OF HISTORICAL RESOURCES  
AT GIRARD COLLEGE**

# 1773 — 1792

## TOP RIGHT

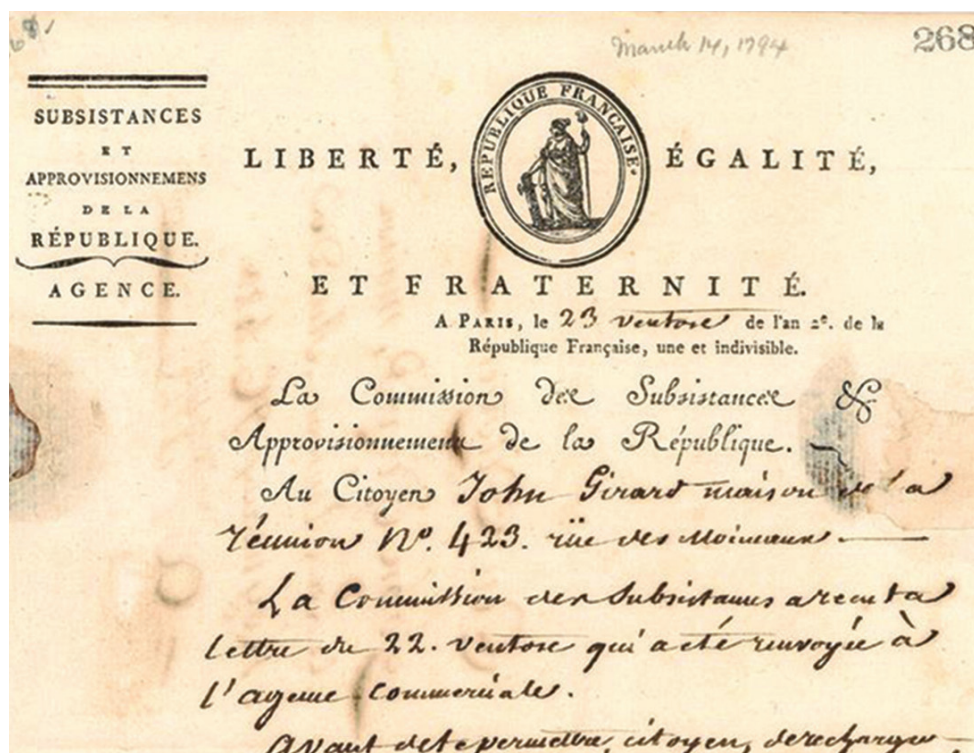
A letter with a revolutionary French letterhead.

## SOURCES

Thomas M. Doerflinger, “A Vigorous Spirit of Enterprise: Merchants and Economic Development in Revolutionary Philadelphia” Omohundro Institute and University of North Carolina Press, 1986.

John Bache McMaster, “The Life and Times of Stephen Girard, Mariner and Merchant” Philadelphia, J.B. Lippincott Co., 1918.

Stephen Girard Papers.



**ACCORDING TO LEGEND**, when Marie Antoinette was told in 1789 that the peasants had no bread, she callously quipped “Let them eat cake,” thus adding fuel to the brewing French Revolution. The story is false — similar tales circulated about royals over one hundred years earlier — but the food shortages were real, following a 1788 grain harvest that was 35% below normal. The need to feed the French nation was a high priority for the new French government and clever businessman Stephen Girard was poised to turn this situation into a business opportunity.

Although Stephen Girard had been a captain since 1773 and had been in Philadelphia since 1776, he had not been instantly successful. By 1782, his net worth was only £2,280, which in scholar Thomas Doerflinger’s words, was “about enough to buy one good ship.” But as Doerflinger explains: “during the 1780s, while many neighboring merchant houses reeled and broke in the unsettled business climate, Girard effectively employed his modest capital,” including “making a few shrewd shipments of foodstuffs to famine-devastated France.”

Girard got breaking news of the situation in France through his extensive business network. In April 1789, one of Girard’s captains wrote from Sète that “three-fourths of the cities in France are in revolt for the purpose of lessening the prices of bread and meat, so that wheat and flour will always have a good sale although the harvest promises very well.” Girard’s business associate Samatan Frères of Marseilles repeatedly urged him to send grain and flour. Much of his capital was already tied up, but, eager to seize the opportunity, Girard combined with another

merchant to charter the “Ann” and sent her to Petersburg, Virginia for 14,000 bushels of wheat. He then chartered the “Active,” to be filled with another 20,000 bushels of wheat at Petersburg. When his ship the “Polly” arrived home in Philadelphia on December 19, 1789, she was offloaded and sent out again in only three days, en route to Marseilles with 700 barrels of flour.

Girard continued to send shipments to revolutionary France; in just two years he exported £20,570 worth of goods. But as France plunged into international wars, trade grew more complicated. On one hand, as a neutral power, United States vessels were legally immune from seizure; offering great opportunities for American shipping. But Girard also had ships under French flags, which were now subject to capture by France’s enemies. In 1792 he wrote to Captain Demay of his ship “La Virginie,” which was sailing under a French flag, “If you meet any vessels on the high seas do not show your colors till you are sure of the stranger’s nationality. If she is not French and belongs to any power at war with France show your American passport, in short, do the best you can in the emergency.”

Not all of Girard’s interactions with revolutionary France turned out well. There were shipments that were spoiled, vessels that were damaged, and even worse, his associate and friend Samatan was guillotined during the Reign of Terror. But by being attuned to world events, ready to move quickly, and having a broad network Girard was able to deploy his “modest capital” to great effect and this episode helped him accumulate some of the funds that he would eventually parlay into a multi-million dollar fortune.



Winter 2019

# News & Notes

## SAVE THE DATE

**May 7**  
**Spring Concert**

**May 14**  
**Art Show**

**May 16**  
**Founder's Day**

**June 4**  
**High School Commencement**

—

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## ADMISSIONS

Families interested in applying to Girard College are invited to sign up for a campus tour. Tours are conducted on select Tuesdays from 9:30 – 11:30 a.m. and provide an opportunity to visit classrooms, see students at work, and meet with faculty and staff. Visit [www.girardcollege.edu/admissions](http://www.girardcollege.edu/admissions) to sign up for available dates.

If you know of an outstanding student that would benefit from the educational and residential programs at Girard College, please send their name and contact information to our Admissions Office at [admissions@girardcollege.edu](mailto:admissions@girardcollege.edu)

## Student Highlight



**Jordan Smith '20**

**IN JUNE OF 2019**, Jordan Smith '20 took a significant step toward fulfilling his lifelong dream of becoming an astronaut by attending the Advanced Space Academy at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, Alabama. An avid aficionado of science and technology, Jordan worked with alumnus Charles Hicks '74, an engineering consultant who makes it a point to support the next generation of students interested in STEM topics. Hicks helped Jordan with the application process, and in conjunction with the Girard College Alumni Association, provided the funding for the camp's tuition.

# Ways to Make a Difference at Girard College

## Gifts of cash

## Gifts of stock

## Gifts of life insurance policies

## Matching gifts

## Recurring gifts

## EITC & OSTC

**GIVE SECURELY ONLINE AT**  
[www.girardcollege.edu/support](http://www.girardcollege.edu/support)

**GIVE BY CHECK**  
Checks can be made out to  
*The Girard College Foundation*  
and mailed to:

Girard College  
Attn: Office of Advancement  
2101 S. College Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19121

Please include "Winter 19 S&G"  
in the memo line.

## ESTATE PLANNING

Stephen Girard's legacy has made possible an extraordinary education for tens of thousands of young men and women. Your legacy can, too.

Consider making a planned gift to Girard College, just as our founder did.

Begin the conversation with us by calling Sylvia Bastani, Vice President of Advancement and Strategic Partnerships at 215-787-4442 or via email at [sbastani@girardcollege.edu](mailto:sbastani@girardcollege.edu)





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