Dear Fellow Alumni,

As the Class of 2017 takes the next steps in their adventure, we invite you to take a look back to where your own journey began at this great institution. Now in its third publication, this issue of gssmnow features a retrospective of several past classes including 1997, 2007, and 2013. We also highlight some of the work and achievements of GSSM alumni after moving on from their beginnings in Hartsville. The school's slogan, “Get Here. Get Anywhere,” captures the opportunities and limitless possibilities made possible by the education at GSSM for those featured alumni, as well as the 1800 or so of us who began our own journeys at GSSM.

GSSM has been on a journey of its own since its founding in 1988. From shared beginnings at Coker College, to the beautiful standalone campus today, GSSM has evolved and expanded in ways few of us could have predicted. With the installation of Dr. Hector Flores as GSSM’s newest president in April 2016, and his support of GSSM’s effort to expand the school’s reach beyond Hartsville, GSSM will continue to reach and impact more South Carolinians than ever before. These ever-expanding programs allow more students to receive exposure to a GSSM-style education, expand and improve the quality of STEM education around the state, and contribute to the economic growth and development of the economy of our state and nation.

As we close, we would like to thank all of those who contributed to GSSM over the past year, be it through financial donations, volunteering, or service on the Alumni Board. The Alumni Board always has open ears and wants to hear from you on ways we can do better, whether it relates to our outreach efforts to alumni, the events we plan, or the ways we give back to GSSM. We also hope you share what issues matter most to you as an alumnus of the school. There is nowhere in South Carolina—or the nation—quite like GSSM. We look forward to continuing our work with you to further cement GSSM’s reputation as the preeminent place for high school-level STEM education in South Carolina and the United States. Sincerely,

Bryant Hutson ’05  
President, GSSM Alumni Board

Dewey Nguyen ’04  
President-elect, GSSM Alumni Board
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION COMMITTEES

AWARDS
The Awards Committee names an Outstanding Alumnus of the Year and additional award(s) each spring. The committee establishes explicit selection criteria, solicits nominations, chooses the recipient(s), and plans and holds the award(s) announcement.

2016–17 MEMBERS: AJ Maulion, Patrick Cleary, Bryant Hutson, Kenzie Foster

COMMUNICATIONS
The Communications Committee works with the alumni relations manager to improve communications between GSSM/GSSM Foundation and the alumni association. The committee solicits and generates content for the monthly alumni newsletter.

2016–17 MEMBERS: Jacob Kline, Alexis Myers, Ashley Boone

FUNDRAISING
The Fundraising Committee works with the alumni relations manager to garner financial support for both GSSM and the Alumni Association. Committee members personally contact their classmates and students in the years immediately above and below to encourage them to support GSSM and increase alumni participation.

2016–17 MEMBERS: Kristin Garris, Tina Baggot, Dewey Nguyen, Latoya Dixon

MEMBERSHIP/NOMINATING
The Membership/Nominating Committee works with the alumni relations manager to encourage participation by all alumni. The committee oversees the regional alumni chapters and leverages their classmates and networks to maintain contact with all alumni.

2016–17 MEMBERS: Brian Kelley, Cody Whetsel, Dan Ward, Gabi McNulty

PROGRAMS
The Programs Committee works with the alumni relations manager to develop, establish and maintain programs through which all GSSM alumni can give back to the school. The committee coordinates the alumni reunions, as well as preview days, the annual winter gathering, networking events, and alumni reconnect dinners.

2016–17 MEMBERS: Todd Pleune, Tiffany Haigler, Samantha Griner, Patrick Gorospe

The CSC is GSSM alumni’s connection to internship & career opportunities in the Palmetto State. Here are just some of the benefits:

- Statewide Network of Corporate Partners
- Talent Advisory Council Comprised of HR Executives
- Matching Service Designed by Data Collection & Analysis
- Networking Opportunities, Mentoring & Virtual Gatherings
- Updates on the SC Economy, Including Real Estate, Startup & Industry Sector Announcements
- Growing Database of Industry Clusters & Market Needs
- Ongoing Communications about New Opportunities
FLASHBACKS  CLASS OF 2013: CELEBRATING COLLEGE GRADUATION

IMAGES SUBMITTED BY THE CLASS OF 2013

Governor's School for Science & Mathematics
Alumni Association 2016
For some people, self-driving cars are a thing of the future, but for Brennan Cain, GSSM Class of 2017, the future is now and autonomous vehicles are his reality.

While at GSSM, Brennan worked alongside his engineering instructor, Dr. Elaine Parshall, to teach Robotic Control Systems to a class of his peers. This student-teacher co-taught class was unprecedented at GSSM and rare among other public boarding schools across the country.

Through the Summer Program for Research Interns (SPRI), Brennan studied high-speed autonomous vehicles for six weeks at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). When he returned to school in the fall, Brennan was inspired to share what he had learned. “I enjoyed my research at MIT, and when I came back, I started thinking about how I’d like to show others what I learned because it was fun for me,” he said. What started out as a simple pipe dream soon became reality.

Brennan approached Dr. Parshall, who saw the potential to create an interesting and unique class based on his summer research. With Dr. Parshall’s support, Brennan pitched his idea to the school’s administration.

“This is a student who went to MIT for summer research and really advanced himself. He returned to his school community and wanted to share this knowledge with his fellow classmates,” said Danny Dorsel, Vice President for Academic Affairs at GSSM. “What he did was explore with me how best to do that... whether it be through a club activity or an interim course, and at the end of the day, along with Dr. Parshall, we decided that what would be most effective would be to teach it as a semester-long course.”

The class was based on robotics control systems, which are the basis of self-driving cars, but it also focused more broadly on robotics in general. Building on his SPRI research, Brennan taught students in his class how best to program a robot to navigate efficiently using environmental stimuli, including vision, range scans and an inertial measurement unit.

One of the perks of Brennan teaching his peers was his ability to anticipate problems that might arise. Because he knew his peers and their coding tendencies, he was able to resolve their individual issues with ease. But he couldn’t have done it alone. During his lessons, Dr. Parshall was on hand to offer suggestions, like slowing down to make the material more manageable. But when it came to actually teaching, she says her input was minimal.

Brennan and Dr. Parshall hope the class will continue next year with a new student instructor - someone who is currently taking the class.
In October of 2012, I quit my job as a software engineer at a growing and well-funded startup in San Francisco and moved to New York City to focus full time on a side project that I’d been working on with some friends from college. We were working on building a tablet that allowed people to order and pay from the tables of full-service restaurants.

Over the next year, we developed that idea into a fully realized product that succeeded at all of the product goals we’d set out for ourselves. Unfortunately, although customers we tested with loved it, we couldn’t find anyone to buy it, and we had to pivot the product in a number of different directions.

Eventually, we ended up building a product called Roast, which allowed patrons at coffee shops to use their mobile phones to order and pay ahead of time and skip the line. At the peak of the product’s use, we were up and running in 20 independent coffee shops in the New York area.

Eventually, as our funding ran dry and we were having trouble generating revenue, we ended up shutting the company down.

Although the company itself didn’t end up being a success, I think of it as a huge personal success for myself and my co-founders. We’ve each ended up getting much closer to our professional passions as a result, while also having the priceless experience of having deeply thought about every function that’s necessary to make a company successful.

Since then, I’ve worked as a software engineer at a few small startups and am now a technical leader at Aaptiv, which is an on-demand audio-based fitness application.

Although I love my position and team, I’m positive that at some point in the future, I’ll find myself trying to build a company from the bottom up again, as there’s nothing quite like the feeling of seeing someone’s life improved by something that didn’t exist until you created it.
The GSSM Foundation hosted its inaugural Alumni Entrepreneur Symposium, Project Verge, in April in Hartsville.

Part of the Foundation’s initiative to create an innovation ecosystem centered around alumni, Project Verge was a two-day think tank aimed at connecting GSSM alumni with each other and with SC-based entrepreneurs and innovation leaders.

The symposium featured conversations about corporate innovation gaps, startup collaborations, job creation, and the possible development of an Alumni Consulting Team to support SC’s growing R&D needs.

“Project Verge is the beginning of a new journey for us aimed at building a larger focus on economic development and the role the GSSM Foundation, in partnership with GSSM alumni, can play,” said Kim Bowman, CEO, GSSM Foundation. “We’ve got an incredible talent base, and it’s time to tap into it. It’s time to think bigger, more creatively, and more long-term.”

Project Verge featured keynote speaker Paul Singh, an entrepreneur, speaker and investor. Singh travels the country in his 30 Airstream Classic to find, explore and uncover the best startups outside of Silicon Valley with his company Results Junkies.

Participating alumni traveled from more than six states. Project Verge explored Hartsville and Sonoco’s Innovative Paper Solutions Studio.

The Foundation is planning to take VERGE on the road next year! If you’re interested in attending, keep in touch!
ALUMNI IN BRIEF

- Nearly 70% of workforce alumni have careers in STEM fields.
- 65% of this year’s graduating class will remain in state for college.
- 62% of female alumni work in STEM fields.
- 99% of alumni indicate they would attend GSSM again.
- 77% of alumni report that they are working within their field of study.
- 49% of alumni living out of state would return to SC for the right opportunity.

- Technology/Innovation: 16%
- Medicine: 15%
- Education: 13%
- Research/Field Science: 11%
- Non-STEM Other: 10%
- Engineering: 9%
- STEM Other: 6%
- STEM Business/Finance: 5%
- Non-Profit/Foundation: 5%
- STEM Law: 4%
- Non-STEM Business/Finance: 3%
- Non-STEM Law: 3%
COMING HOME | BRIGITTE BARNETT

We caught up with GSSM Class of 1994 alumna and now GSSM Foundation Director of Recruitment Brigitte Barnett to find out what alumni can mean to GSSM.

Foundation: What brought you back to GSSM?
BB: After attending Furman University, I started teaching special education in Greenville County, and I loved my job! I have a passion for students with special needs and had no intention of ever leaving the classroom, so I thought. I remained actively involved in the Alumni Association and received an email about a position available with the Foundation. On a whim, I replied to the email and asked for more information. After meeting with Kim (at an airport in between her flights, no less), I knew this was an opportunity I could not pass up! Similar to the underserved students I loved in my classroom, there is a special group of students who are maxing out at their home high schools that need the exceptional opportunities only an advanced residential program like GSSM can provide.

Foundation: How did your experience at GSSM influence that decision to return?
BB: I will never forget the day Van Sturgeon, GSSM’s first recruiter, came to my middle school to tell us about this new residential high school in Hartsville, wherever that was. His passion for the opportunities at the School was contagious, and I knew I had to go. I could not wait until I was old enough to apply!

Attending GSSM was the best decision I ever made! Not only did I receive an unparalleled education, I developed emotionally and personally in a way that could not have happened at my home school. Add the doors that were opened for me through research opportunities and relationships built and you have a perfect educational storm! It is a blessing to be able to share my experience at GSSM and the new opportunities that have been developed since then with students and their families across the state.

Foundation: What do you hope to accomplish with your involvement and in your role at GSSM?
BB: If I could reach one shy, smart student and lead her to a life-changing opportunity at GSSM, I would feel successful! Fortunately, I have been able to shepherd more than 600 students through the residential program and touched thousands more through our summer outreach program.

Foundation: What’s your advice for other alumni who are thinking about increasing their involvement with the school?
BB: No matter what stage of life you are in, I am sure, like me, you can see the influence of your time at GSSM. We all talk about the family that is built in a residential environment at a foundational age. Our network grows exponentially each year. Whether it is in fellowship with a local alumni chapter, mentoring a current or prospective student, sharing information about summer programs and residential opportunities with friends and coworkers, seeking an internship or job through Career Services or joining the staff at GSSM, stay in touch!
Wilson White ('99) with Google’s Senior VP & General Counsel, Kent Walker. Celebrating Wilson’s promotion to Director of Public Policy and Government Relations!

Teresa Chow ('03), Gauri Pradhan ('03), Kristen Newsom ('03) and Vidthya Abraham ('03) shared in the excitement at Poppy Markwell’s ('03) wedding to Henry Fitzhugh.

Dan Ward ('07) and Mary-Kate Ward ('09) traveled to San Francisco, where they visited with Ryan Cooke ('07) and Kacey Coley ('07). Here they are at Industrial Light and Magic, where Kacey is currently working.

Alexis Karr ('10) and Kayla Broeker ('10) met up with Jordan Bailey ('09) at Disney to celebrate Jordan’s new position as Behavior and Technology Intern.

Wilson White ('99) with Google’s Senior VP & General Counsel, Kent Walker. Celebrating Wilson’s promotion to Director of Public Policy and Government Relations!

Members of the Class of 1996 met up in November in Charleston, SC for their 20 year reunion!
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https://www.gssmnow.com/faculty-then

"Ma Bunn" on her 24-year tenure at GSSM.

Foundation: How long have you been a part of the GSSM family?
Ma Bunn: Since 1993. So hey, probably before almost all of my students were even thought of, at least the ones now anyway.

Foundation: What do you remember about your first experience with GSSM?
Ma Bunn: Okay, there are two things that stand out in my mind when I came to work here. One of them is that my mentor here was Dr. Hendrick. She and I shared an office. I don’t know if you’ve ever seen a picture of that. It was in Wiggins House, and we had a fireplace and we had everything in the world in there because Dr. Hendrick has books up to here [the ceiling]. I tend to do the same thing, so we just junked that place up. But I was talking with her about GSSM and she was like THE person to talk to. So that was my best and highest point of coming in and being introduced to everything.

And then, on the way down the stairs in that same building, Mr. Boyd turned to me and said, “Oh, we have a whole bunch of Macs that don’t work, and what are you gonna do about that?” This was like my first day! Now, I had never ever used a Mac, much less worked on one, but I figured I could do it since I took apart stuff for forever. I said, “Well, I’ll have to take a look at that!” Those were those old Mac classics. You know, the ones that looked like boxes? Well, years and years later, when we finally got rid of them, I made one into an aquarium. I have a fish that lives in it along with a little SpongeBob figure.

Foundation: What has changed the most during your time at GSSM?
Ma Bunn: Well, let’s see, the building! But really, the fact that we have now grown so much. It’s difficult to imagine. It was really heart-wrenching to leave that tiny group and become huge because it was like I knew everybody and their mom and grandma. And now, I really don’t have that opportunity. You still have that relationship with a lot of people, but not everyone, because I don’t teach everyone any more. That’s the biggest change for me, personally. I guess, possibly, the biggest change overall is the fact that the universe has changed so much. I remember when we only had one telephone on each hall. Now you have a telephone in every pair of jeans. It’s a different universe and the information is more immediate. But by the same token, they [the students] still have that same desire to learn as much as they can. They just have better tools.

Foundation: Do you have any advice for the new graduates and young alumni?
Ma Bunn: Wow, oh my. Most of them are going to universities. Not to get too fine a point on it, but don’t be afraid to try something new. Don’t be afraid to try something that you might not be perfect at. You might be great, and even if you’re not, you’ll learn from it. Give it a shot!

Foundation: Do you have any advice for our older alumni?
Ma Bunn: Yeah, come back and see me! I miss you! Advice for them, I guess possibly to remember what’s important to you. Keep that in mind when you’re going through life and making decisions. Weigh what’s important to you as you move forward, and continue to follow your dreams. You’re amazing, all of you guys, at adapting. Keep your energy up! Keep going. Be excited! If you can’t find something that makes you excited, then you might need to jump onto a different ship.

Foundation: Final question! Pizza or tacos?
Ma Bunn: Oh no! That’s an evil question! I think tacos, but only from La Victoria here in Hartsville. Man, it is a REAL Mexican restaurant (hope you speak Spanish). It’s so fantastic!
**Faculty Now**

**Dr. Maria Garcia Otero  SPANISH**

We asked new GSSM faculty member Maria Garcia Otero to reflect on her first year in Hartsville.

**Foundation:** How long have you been a part of the GSSM family?

**Maria:** Since August 2016

**Foundation:** What brought you to GSSM?

**Maria:** The students. Before coming here, friends and colleagues in Florence raved about the high-achieving students and the wide range of opportunities offered to them.

**Foundation:** What stood out to you most during your first day/week on the job?

**Maria:** The high standards that both faculty and students maintain at all times, in and outside of the classroom. Impressive. The collegial atmosphere in the academic wing. And the humanities curriculum. It is strong and equally valued by both our students and the administration. Some of my colleagues in the humanities remain active scholars, and I love it. From the very first day, it was clear to me that this is a place I could trust. Here, students are taught, but also cared for. And they thrive. This is a place I would not hesitate for a second to send my children.

**Foundation:** What’s your favorite thing about being a part of the GSSM family?

**Maria:** I really enjoy the genuine appreciation and desire for knowledge that faculty, students and families share. I admire my colleagues and hold our students in high esteem. But what I most enjoy is watching my students work in the classroom, knowing that when they leave this institution they will be highly prepared for the future.

**Foundation:** Do you have anything else you’d like for our alumni to know about you?

**Maria:** I hold a PhD in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia, with a specialization in religious art and material culture. I am a strong advocate of global dialogue and exchange. The knowledge of another language—in addition to being a life skill—becomes a powerful tool with which to learn about other peoples and cultures, and ultimately about one’s self.

With communicative methodology, classes are conducted entirely in the target language. There is no use of English—Dr. Gowan and I teach our students the language by means of exposure to meaningful and relevant content related to the history, arts and cultures, as well as the current socio-political events of the different nations in the Spanish-speaking world.

I come from the End of Earth—today’s Finisterre, from L. finis terrae—a very dramatic cape in the Atlantic coast of northwestern Spain. The Romans gave it that name more than 2,000 years ago, when they thought they had reached the end of the world and could not expand any further.

**Foundation:** Final question! Pizza or tacos?

**Maria:** Tacos, if they are al pastor (Florence, SC’s flea market on Saturdays are pretty awesome!).
A group at the MUSC Dental School takes a mission trip to Quito, Ecuador, every year, and this year, I had a chance to join them. I left SC on a Saturday and got back the next Sunday. So, we were in the clinic Monday through Thursday, all day, and in the morning on Friday. We had stations for cleanings, fillings, and extractions. Some nurses that came with us also had a medical station and an eye glass station. We saw about 1,000 people, plus another 600 came for glasses. There were 80 total volunteers. Fifty of us were students, and the rest were practicing dentists, retired dentists, and other people who just wanted to help out.

Quito is about 9,000 feet above sea level. Breathing is really hard, and you get winded from just walking up a ramp. But the food was so good! They fed us really, really well (thankfully, no guinea pig). We stayed in dorms at a nearby seminary. We had cold but running water, toilets, functioning electricity and even wifi. The clinic was about an hour away by bus. We’d leave at 8AM and start the clinic around 9AM or so. We would usually stay till around 5PM before heading back to the dorms for dinner. Because the trip was organized by a Christian group and the clinic is stationed in a local church, we would have evening worship and small group sessions.

During the trip, I got to do four fillings on my own. In lab at MUSC, we work on a set of plastic teeth, which are so different from real teeth. The cutting, the pressure you need, everything is different. For example, when you’re working on the plastic teeth, any little accident can nick the teeth (and cause your grade to drop). Enamel just doesn't nick that easily. Real teeth are so much stronger.

The first- and second-year students also take shifts in the injections area, so I got to do about 50 injections. It was really cool because when we got back to school the next week, we practiced them on each other in class. It’s pretty scary because you normally only do like three before you go into clinic. It was nice to be ahead of the curve!

The experience was very humbling, and the people there were so thankful. The locals in the town have a monthly income of only about $50. At one point, we went to a nearby mall that had a supermarket. It was just like any other metro area mall with fancy stores and bright fluorescent lighting. It was interesting to see the juxtaposition between that area and the area in which we were working. I definitely plan to go back again next year because I feel like we really made a difference.

Stephanie Choe ‘10

Alumna Stephanie Choe talks about her experiences in Ecuador and how they helped her get ahead in dental school.
ALUMNI PARTICIPATION THROUGH THE YEARS

ALUMNI GIVING THROUGH THE YEARS

Class of 1990
Vikhyat Bebarta
Rich Dayrit
Jamie Doornbos
Danny Dorsel
Krish Garris
Dawn Hoagland
Susan Lucas Kamat
Will Mahan
Michael Martak
Donna Moore
Paul Moore

Class of 1991
Anonymous
April DuPree
Matt Hands
Dimitri Schoeman
Brigid Troan
Brygg Ullmer
Chad Urso McDaniel

Class of 1992
Anonymous
Tamara Muldrow
Susan Neely-Barnes
Todd Pleune
Sally Satterfield
Art Tompkins
Keisha Walters
Jimmy Wells
Lin Woodson

Class of 1993
Anonymous
Christopher Crosby
Joe Gardner
John Gilbert
Jason Hong
Tim Hudgens
Robyn Kelly
Sarah Spruill
Jason Wilder

Class of 1994
Brigitte Barnett
Chas Sisk
McLeod Williamson

Class of 1995
Tina Baggott
Emily Carlisle
Jim Holifield
Martine Lellis
Deborah Goodson
Newland
Roneka Price
Emily Reinicker

Class of 1996
Alexis Armenakis
Carrie Christensen
Chris Dorsel
Annie Frazer
Tap Gresham
Legare Gresham
Tim LeCroy
Andie Ward

Class of 1997
Anonymous
Blake Crosby
Suzanna Greer
Shane McDaniel
Lee Ringer
Katherine Segersten
Jun Xu

Class of 1998
Wally Altman
Hank Pellerin

Class of 1999
Michael Bishop
David Gorney
Brenna Lord
AU Maulion
Wilson White

Class of 2000
Rominya Barry
Jennifer Bussell
Martin Caver
Sarah Funderburk
Ashley Hanlon
Carl Johnson
Rachel Korpan Lee
Robert Lawless
Zach Malchano
Kristin Muff

Class of 2001
Meredith Alger
Pam Altman
Anonymous
Patrick Cleary
Joy Darcy
Paige DeBeneditis
Bevin Hearn
Leslie James
Peter James
Rob Mitchell
Lynsey Parker
Chris Permenter
Natalie Rao

Class of 2002
Ben Chou
Allison Garret
Tamar Greenspan
Katie Abole Jacobson
Rob Johnson
Thomas Langston
Tiffany Langston
Julie Reeves
Laura Wnek

Class of 2003
Kelly Allen
Bailes Brown
Rita Czako
Brooke Keverline
Harmon
Justin Young

Class of 2004
Jonathan Beam
Tom Behling
Alex Marshall
Dewey Nguyen
Kathryn Pedings-Behling
Caroline Stapleton
Ali Currier Williams

Class of 2005
Michael Fountain
Bryan Hutson
Sarah Naletelich
Lee Tupper
Cody Wheatsel

Class of 2006
Duncan "Wall" Moore

Class of 2007
Betsy Cannon
Ryan Cooke
Dari Ward

Class of 2008
Anonymous
Dylan Hale
Bella Wang

Class of 2009
Mary-Kate Ward

Class of 2010
Rowan Armstrong
Nick Bishop
Anna Clapper
Lily Elsner

Class of 2011
Jordan Bailey
Ryan Gonzalez
Tom Wels

Class of 2012
Tracy Biaco

Class of 2013
Laura Campbell

Class of 2014
Patrick Goospe

Class of 2015
Tommy Berrigan

Class of 2016
Grace Berrigan

Class of 2017
Ali Currier Williams

Governor’s School for Science & Mathematics
Alumni Association 2016
STAY CONNECTED  FIND YOUR LOCAL CHAPTER!

Get regional updates from Alumni Association chapters. Contact them through our website scgssm.org/alumni-directory.

Don’t see a chapter in your area? Contact Anna to get one started! anna@scgssm.org

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
Chapter President: Brenna Lord ’99

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
Chapter President: Mackensie Yore ’04

TEXAS, COLORADO, & NEW MEXICO
Dallas Region Chapter President: Adam Seymour ’91
Houston Region Chapter President: Jimmy Wells ’92

MIDWEST
Campaign Captain: Todd Pleune ’92

BOSTON
Campaign Captain: Shan Wu ’00
Chapter President: Hank Lander ’01

WASHINGTON, DC
Campaign Chair: Jonathan Beam ’04
Chapter President: Caroline Stapleton ’04

NEW YORK
Campaign Captain: Kristin Garris ’90
Chapter President: Bailes Brown ’03

NORTH CAROLINA
Campaign Captain: Lynsey Parker ’01
Chapter President: Mary Ellen Player ’00

SOUTH CAROLINA
Campaign Captain: Cody Whetsel ’05
Chapter President: Jan Hebbard ’01

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
Campaign Captain: Patrick Cleary ’01

The Magazine for GSSM Alumni