

SPIRIT

THE LEELANAU SCHOOL MAGAZINE

a year of grace
and gratitude



a better way to learn

FALL 2021

seeing past the fog



"Last year, educating was like driving at night in the fog. You could only see as far as your headlights, but you could make the whole trip that way."

Rob Hansen, Head of School
adapted from E. L. Doctorow

I was always taught the importance of carrying a good compass, and there have been times in my life when a compass kept me from harm. In the days of cell phones with GPS apps, I suppose not too many of us carry the old fashioned magnetic compass anymore. But the value in understanding the cardinal directions remains both necessary and comforting. This skill is not as essential on the clear days when I know exactly where I am, but it comes in pretty handy when it is dark or foggy.

The pandemic challenges all of us with the fog of unknowns and unknowables. At Leelanau, navigating instruction, student life, finances, admission, and enrichment would be impossible without a good compass. Fortunately, The Leelanau School has steadfast direction and a trusted compass in the form of our mission statement: *To ignite a passion for learning...in a culture of acceptance*. There are no escape clauses for pandemics or politics or weather or financial hardship. Instead, we cling to our mission when the obstacles are the most daunting. In doing so, we prove both the value of the mission and the vastness of our capacity to succeed.

This past year we practiced grace and gratitude at Leelanau. We were schooled in the benefits of patience, agility, and resilience. We learned that staying together and becoming a community required daily attention and intention, and that trust is built upon authenticity. And we proved - just as we have for 96 years - that actual experiences shared with peers teaches more than any encyclopedia or website ever can.

The importance of who we are and what we do has grown more urgent and desirable for current and prospective families, staff and faculty. The success of the past year validated that we are on steady ground, that we are worthy of celebration, and that we hold a compass that can guide us through any storm. I often share a Louisa May Alcott quote with Leelanau students - *"I am not afraid of storms for I am learning how to sail my ship."* Overcoming challenges is the pathway of growth and wisdom. It is the basis of our approach to teaching and learning. Because of that, we are stronger than we have ever been. We are more aware of our value than ever before.

We are Leelanau, yesterday, today and tomorrow - no matter what.

Rob Hansen
Head of School
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SPIRIT

THE LEELANAU SCHOOL MAGAZINE

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SPIRIT Magazine was born from the idea that since its founding in 1929, Leelanau has been fueled by a spirit. A spirit to ignite a passion for learning - to inspire, push, and support student discovery; to encourage creativity and meaningful questioning; and to immerse students in meaningful learning.

it takes guts to be happy

It takes hard work to be happy, and this year's students and seniors showed us what they were made of; resilience and grit! In his Commencement address on June 5, Leelanau School alumnus Jacob Wheeler '96 praised seniors with these thoughts.

"You didn't ask for this tough situation. You didn't deserve it. No one did. To return to school this past September and immediately go into lock down. Couldn't see your friends. Couldn't hang out together. Couldn't hug and high five. This is the antithesis of what your free-spirited teenage years should be about. It's not fair.

And yet you made it. This experience has made you stronger, more resilient. It forced you to adapt. It also forced you to realize the love, compassion and devotion of this Leelanau community around you. You told me about this during our lunch last month. The banana muffins that Mrs. Blondia brought and left outside Ottawa Cottage for those of you who had tested positive for COVID. The gratitude for teachers who brought groceries and left them outside your window. The relief of seeing faculty vaccinated in February, and you students getting your Pfizer shots in April. The recognition that you at Leelanau are a family."

Indeed, our entire community found themselves in circumstances new and unfamiliar as we wound our

way through COVID-19 protocols, long semesters without breaks, and separations that often felt unnatural for a school that champions closeness, exploration and travel, and "hands-on" experiences. Gratefully, we learned that 6 feet of distance and a mask cannot undo what is unique and valued at The Leelanau School. Compassion and care for one another prevailed, and our seniors and students triumphed **TOGETHER** under the wise and creative mentoring of our entire faculty.

Now our seniors have departed on their next educational journey with a clearer sense of what they are made of. They are bound for colleges and universities, large and small, facing many of the same concerns of the past year. How reassuring to know that the skills and stamina they built over the past two years will serve them well, equipping them for new challenges in new communities.

These lessons learned were discovered inside the classroom and outside the syllabus. Happiness is hard work. Relationships are worth the effort. Change will help us grow. Patience and progress are possible through practice. Courage is easier with a friend at your side. A global pandemic can't stand in your way.

How very Leelanau!





jumping in head and heart first



The people I love the best
jump into work head first
without dallying in the shallows
and swim off with sure strokes almost out of sight.
- from To be of use, Marge Piercy

"Business as usual" was simply not possible during the 2020-21 academic year, but our community jumped into the work head and heart first. Every day was a lesson in The Leelanau School's core values. Single dorm rooms, outdoor classrooms, lunch on the deck clad in our wooliest coats, and windows wide open to keep fresh air circulating. There was a wipe down of every desk, doorknob, and pencil between each class and meeting. Did we mention daily morning temperature checks?



Laura Hood asked our musicians to sing with extra gusto through their masks, and our creative theatre students performed everywhere but the auditorium. Kim Speicher taught Spanish in a clear mask so students could actually see her mouth form a foreign language. **It was the last week of May before our new students saw the full faces of faculty and staff.**

Everyone took on new roles and responsibilities to move things forward, and do what had to be done, again and again. Safety and technology manager, Rob Dymond '00 took on a night housekeeping shift to keep us healthy, CFO and HR director Ginny Singleton assisted in the kitchen when staff felt ill, faculty delivered hot meals (individually prepared and wrapped by dining services) to dorms three times a day during post-vacation quarantine periods, and Head of School, Rob Hansen, swabbed over 600 nostrils to administer rapid-testing kits.

This work was real, essential, and deeply appreciated by our entire community!



goodbye 2020, hello May Term

One of Leelanau's most creative pivots of the season was our decision to postpone our beloved Winter Term until May. This signature program is always a time to travel, explore, and engage with the local community. Those did not feel like safe options in January 2021.

Happily, "May Term" allowed students and faculty a chance to explore a whole new world of spring possibilities in our region, including birding, angling, hiking, plein air painting, photography, and outdoor volunteer work. It also gave songwriters a chance to try out their new works in small performance venues around the region!

from the original song Hiking by Ellie Herman '22

Living on this earth I cannot understand

Why humans only seek value in things of high demand.

I know that a nugget of gold is more than experience untold

But these adventures are truly a currency of their own.

Chorus

I know that I will be content
With trekking up this ascent
To see the view at the top
Not missing a beat, I'll never stop. I'll never stop.



THE LEELANAU SCHOOL CORE VALUES

- INTERCONNECTEDNESS
- AWARENESS
- INTEGRITY
- LEADERSHIP
- COURAGE
- RESILIENCE
- STEWARDSHIP





love in the time of co

GRACE

As faculty and staff returned to campus masked, distanced, and uneasy in Fall 2020, Head of School Rob Hansen reassured the group with a simple but powerful request:

"Allow yourself and your students some grace this year."

Many of us wondered what that really meant and how it could be practiced in the face of so many unknowns. Yet, when whittled down to its simplest definition - courteous goodwill - grace became a north star and guiding principle for the entire community.

Now, as we return to campus for Fall 2021, we understand more about the virus and our community's careful response. Gratefully, The Leelanau School is fortunate to boast a 90+% vaccination rate. We've experienced and overcome quarantines, lock-downs, and a school calendar that pivoted as needed with national pandemic surges.

We are still adults without all the answers, yet we are vigilant, flexible, and compassionate. We are students with understandable anxiety, frustration, and impatience, but we are learning to voice these concerns and trust the rich resources of our teachers and mentors.

TOGETHER we are guided by grace and an optimistic approach for the days to come.



My Check List for Every Class This Year

1. Keep them Safe
2. Lower their Anxiety about the Current Situation
3. Make them Laugh
4. Make them Feel Loved
5. Teach them Something

via Empowered Teaching

ALL IN THAT ORDER

Coronavirus: reprise

GRATITUDE

Last spring, during our second annual Core Value Challenge, our underclasspeople reflected on Leelanau's core values through a series of shared conversations and activities. We discussed **courage** while imagining **leadership** roles in the year ahead, and **stewarded** the campus in preparation for the week's graduation ceremonies. Students demonstrated **integrity** while volunteering for the Leelanau Conservancy, and took time for **awareness** and self-care. We raced across campus in faculty-student teams, proving **interconnectedness** can be fun and funny, and we celebrated our **resilience** during this year of unthinkable challenges.

We lingered on resilience, which is so often bolstered through gratitude. We took time to thank many of the people that led us through the pandemic, and reflected on families that were willing to take a chance on life away from home. We noted our good fortune to be face-to-face when so many were not, and cheered the surprise announcement that we could unmask for the final week of the school year because of our Leelanau community's commitment to vaccination.

Learning to express gratitude is an ongoing process for all of us. There is a reason we "practice" gratitude and all these other key core values!



DO YOU KNOW A STUDENT WHO WOULD THRIVE IN THIS CHALLENGING AND COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITY?

PLEASE CONTACT:

Catherine Creighton, Director of Admission
231.334.5826 | ccreighton@leelanau.org
or visit leelanau.org/admissions

WELCOMING APPLICATIONS FOR WINTER 2022 and FALL 2022

ADMISSION CORNER





you cheered us on...

...and led us through the fog!

Generosity, connection, and care from our extended Leelanau family enabled The Leelanau School to build momentum, growth, and stability during the past twelve months, despite pandemic curveballs. Gifts in all shapes and sizes from alumni, parents, friends, local supporters, faculty, and staff allowed us to bring face-to-face learning to our student body in a safe and meaningful way. Parents trusted our school and dedicated faculty with their children's safety, education, and tuition dollars. Students benefited from compassionate and compelling in-person teaching, time with friends, and opportunities to explore our beautiful region.

Our Leelanau Board of Trustees matched gifts up to \$100,000 during Fall 2020, sparking new and returning donors to give generously. In fact, Leelanau raised more gifts from more donors this year, reaching totals comparable to the conclusion of the LeelaNow Campaign!

Finally, conscientious and creative planning by the school's leadership stretched every gift to make certain student, faculty, and campus stewardship remained top priorities.

**We approach the year ahead
with momentum and optimism,
and YOU by our side.
THANK YOU, FRIENDS!**

leelanau.org/giving

TO HELP, or learn more about gifts of cash, stock, in-kind or matching donations, and sustaining or estate gifts, please:

- Return a gift in the enclosed envelope
- Visit our website at leelanau.org/giving
- Or contact: **Kate Olson**
Director of Alumni and Development
One Old Homestead Rd, Glen Arbor, MI 49636
kolson@leelanau.org | 231.334.5841



Board of Trustees | Leadership Transitions

Mary Beth Hardwicke, MD, has been appointed Board Chair, effective July 1, 2021. Dr. Hardwicke has served on the Leelanau Board of Trustees for the past six years, including a role as Secretary. Her nephew Travis Hardwicke is a 2015 graduate.

Dr. Hardwicke received her B.S. in Zoology with High Distinction from the University of Michigan and her Medical Degree from Wayne State University School of Medicine. She spent the first ten years of her career in Medical Education, directing an Internal Medicine Residency Program before forming her own practice. During her career, Dr. Hardwicke has been the recipient of numerous awards, including multiple nominations as a "Top Doc" in Detroit Hour Magazine, the "Outstanding Clinical Faculty Award" from Wayne State University, Detroit Crain's Business Health Care Hero, and was named "One of the Best Primary Care Physicians in the Country" by Town and Country Magazine.

After retiring to Northern Michigan, Mary Beth co-chaired the Interlochen Public Library's successful Capital Campaign, raising \$3.2M. She currently serves on the Library's Board of Trustees and oversees their "Living your Best Life" Health and Wellness series. She volunteers weekly at the Traverse Health Clinic, serving a largely indigent population. Dr. Hardwicke leads seminars and lectures for local groups such as the Traverse City Senior Center and the Glen Lake Woman's Club.

Mary Beth is joined by Carolyn Helmlinger (past Chair) serving as Vice Chair, Gretchen Knoblock '82 as Secretary, and faculty emeritus, Norm Wheeler, as Treasurer.





the grace YOU gave



this year, giving means getting, too!

In 2021 you may donate to The Leelanau School for all the right reasons, and gain some tax savvy advantages, too.

Here is just one example:

Under the **CARES Act for 2021**, an individual can elect to deduct 100 percent of their AGI for cash charitable contributions. This effectively affords individuals over 59½ years old the benefits similar to a QCD; they can take a cash distribution from their IRA, contribute the cash to charity, and may completely offset the tax attributable to the distribution by taking a charitable deduction in an amount up to 100 percent of their AGI for the tax year.

If you're planning a large donation in 2021, this may be a helpful strategy as long as you are between the ages of 59½ and 70½ and are not dependent on existing retirement funds.

We encourage you to explore other CARES Act advantages with a tax professional.

We asked and you answered!



The Karman Activity Center needed renovation, and the Cook family made a transformational gift to expand this educational and recreational resource for our students!



Our snowplow had weathered one too many winter storms, and the Scripps family stepped in to help with a shiny new truck and plow. Their only request - we call her Grace. How perfectly appropriate!



You also graced us with gifts in-kind and items off our student activities wish list; disinfectant and cleaning supplies, telescopes, appliances, building materials, greenhouse and garden goods, furniture, craft supplies, games, and musical instruments ranging from electric guitars to tongue drums to a cherished family accordion.

THANK YOU for walking this path with us, and **THANK YOU** for leading the way through example.

our generous donors

The Leelanau School is honored to recognize these alumni, parents, friends, foundations, and org Leelanau program and scholarship funds or made gifts in-kind between July 1, 2020 and June 30,

LEADERSHIP GIFTS (\$10,000+)

Anonymous*
Charlevoix County Community Foundation
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Mary Beth Hardwicke and Robert Provenzano
Bob* and Sukie* McNutt
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Networks Northwest | NW Michigan Small Business
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Jane and John Todd III Fund | Kalamazoo
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The Harry A. & Margaret D. Towsley Foundation
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Warner W. Kent Jr. '42*
Daniel and Cecelia Kim



organizations that contributed to
30, 2021.

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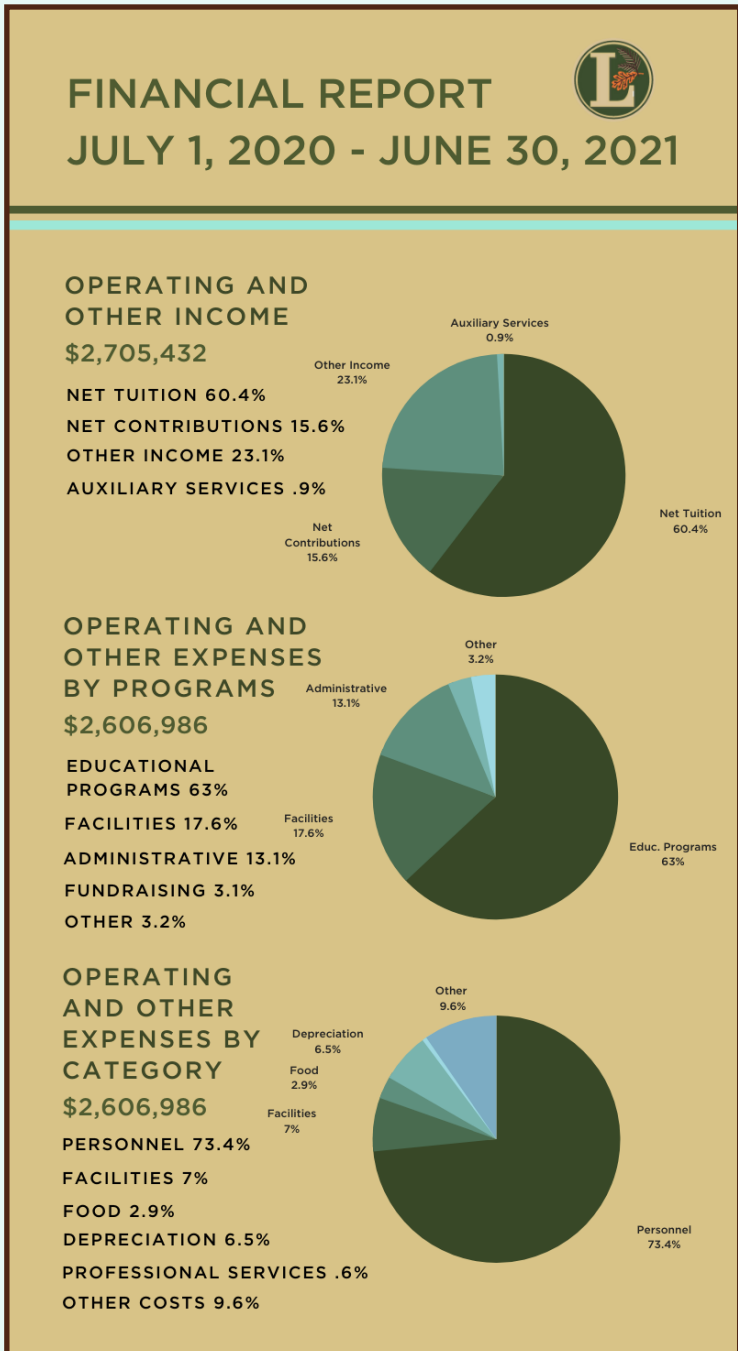
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Richard Virkstis*
Jeffrey and Jill Wagenberg
Beth Weiss
Peter and Susan Westerman
Norm and Mimi Wheeler
George* and Rosalie Whyel in memory of Sukie McNutt*
Bill* and Francie Winslow
Bill* and Francie Winslow in memory of Sukie McNutt*
Bonnie Withee
John* and Margaret Wonser
Bradley and Christine Wynn
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Rosso Family Foundation
The Sportsman Shop

annual report 2020-2021

it all adds up to momentum!



THE LEELANAU SCHOOL | MISSION STATEMENT
The Leelanau School ignites a passion for learning in a boarding school environment where students thrive by engaging academically and by celebrating everyone's unique learning styles in a culture of acceptance, preparing for successful and meaningful lives in higher education, careers, citizenship, and service.

GROWING UP LEELANAU 101
DON'T GO THROUGH LIFE. GROW THROUGH LIFE.

ABSORPTION OF LIGHT
Every fresh face and story brings character and meaning to our Leelanau community. This September, **nineteen new students** are lending their light to the student body, with a **significant surge of entering 9th and 10th graders**. This is exciting for the year ahead - and the years to come!

TRANSFER OF LIGHT
Our new and returning students are gathering light, knowledge, and kindness from **forty-two incredible faculty and staff members**. Life lessons are taught in the classroom, in the houses, around the dining table, and in every adventure, activity, and trip we take.

GENERATION OF ENERGY
Students and faculty bounce ideas and energy off each other. **Rigor and challenge are accompanied by compassion, commitment, and a big dose of humor.**

STABILIZING FACTORS
Routine, exercise, mindfulness, and nature are stabilizing factors at The Leelanau School. Inside the classroom and out, new ideas are reinforced through customized educational plans and tools crafted to enhance living and learning strengths.

GROWTH
Stepping out of a comfort zone guided by a cohort of supportive adults and friends allows Leelanau students to **bloom with grace, confidence, and a life-long curiosity** and passion for learning.

when nature is already your classroom

With national headlines declaring "Outdoor Learning Could Help Safely Return Students to Campuses," "Outdoor Learning Improves Engagement and Mental Health," and "Learning Blooms in Outdoor Classrooms," The Leelanau School found itself in an ideal position to teach and engage during the 2020-21 school year. Though a brisk Fall and typical Northern Michigan winter kept us bundled and moving, academic classrooms, house and student activities, and FAU meetings were easy to spot in familiar outdoor locations on our beautiful campus.

In fact, during September 2020's teacher orientation, staff practiced a ready answer for students feeling contained by the pandemic.

"I'm bored. What should I do?" **"Go outside!"**

"But I want to watch TV." **"Go outside!"**

"Where is everyone?." **"Look outside!"**

We suspect our answers this fall will be the very same. It is just a smart and healthy plan all around!





voyageur (noun): one who journeys, travels, traverses



What would you say if someone told you to climb into a homemade canoe with 12 other people and paddle for two days, come rain or shine? Your first instinct might be to use some rather salty language and spout all the reasons you are not seaworthy. Or, you might worry that boarding a boat with your entire senior class could stir up some troubled waters. It is not accidental that one of The Leelanau School's most enduring and memorable experiences poses a spectrum of emotional and physical hurdles on a path to self-discovery and team building!

"There's nothing theoretical about paddling together," claims Michael Jarvis, Dean of Students. "You're literally all in the same boat. If you don't work together, there's just chaos and you're all over the place. Truth is, with all groups, they all start out that way, and they only get better by practicing. This is experiential leadership at its root."



Now they're gone to a new adventure
While the wind hums a joyous song
While the wind oui, oui, oui
While the wind non, non, non
While the wind hums a joyous song.

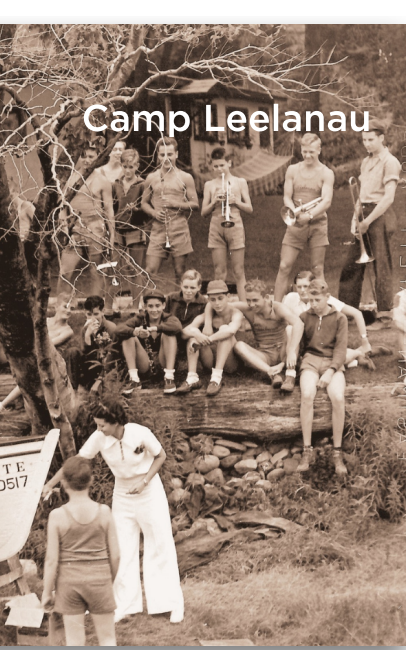
- from *The Voyageur Song*

Though paddling has been a camp and school tradition from the very start, our current 33-ft cedar replica of a 16th-century Voyageur Canoe was hand crafted in 2011 under the guidance of Mr. Jarvis. Faculty and students spent afternoons, evenings and weekends building 'the boat,' as it was affectionately called. Made of hundreds of cedar strips and fiberglass, the boat tips the scale at 350 pounds and can carry 12-16 passengers. The canoe represents more than pure craftsmanship, as it continues to serve as a hands-on learning tool.

This school year, Leelanau students and faculty are delighted to be returning to Exploratory Trips in all grades. According to Provost Becca Dymond, "We lost these off-campus learning and team building opportunities last year due to our campus-centered [Covid safety] focus. We all know the importance of relationships, trust, and communication at Leelanau. These develop when we are all in the same boat - or tent together!"

Voyageurs have a mystique of their very own. These French Canadian journeyman traveled the interior waterways during the peak of the North American fur trade. Their passages conjure up stories of perilous adventure, grueling work, and cheerful camaraderie.

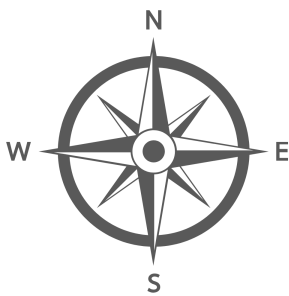
Thankfully, our Leelanau students are not expected to portage over granite terrain with 600 lb. packs and are spared the conventional Voyageur diet of oats and grease!



LEELANAU'S PHOTO ARCHIVES

Your memories are important to us!

The Leelanau School is proud to be embarking on a photo archive restoration project this fall. As we begin to sort, tag, and organize decades of digital and printed photos, we will be seeking volunteers to assist. Our long-term goal... a library of photo memories to enjoy, share, and print.



Stay up-to-date with campus activities and Alumni News by keeping your address and email current at leelanau.org/updates, alumni@leelanau.org or 231.334.5841.



Class of 2018



1988-1989

ALUMNI REUNION SAVE THE DATE!

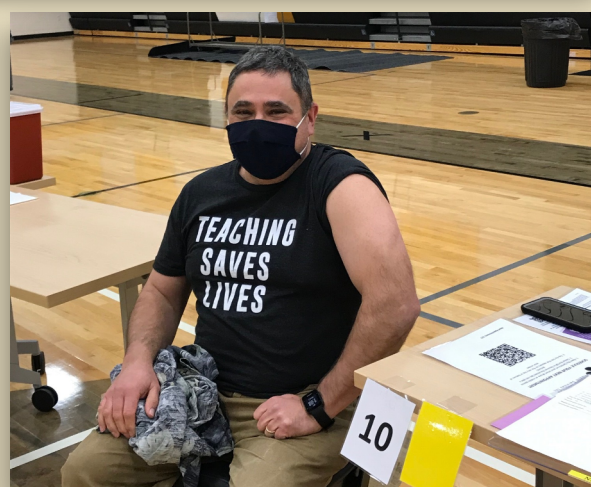
July 8-10, 2022

Let's paddle back to each other next July! Details and registration info will follow this spring.

rites of passage

During our "new normal" over the past year, Leelanau was able to return to activities and traditions we love!

Clockwise: Senior Voyager trip, Lawn and Tree and the Pinebrook ring ceremony, College selections, COVID-19 vaccines, May Day Dip, and Leelanau Outdoor Challenge



#PeopleofTheLeelanauSchool

How do you convey the heart of school that is tough to describe? Let the people speak!

This spring, we embarked on an exciting exploration of the People of The Leelanau School, initiated by friend and colleague, Chris Hintz of iSee Communications. As Chris put it, "It's tough to summarize or encapsulate an educational history and philosophy as layered as Leelanau's. The best way to capture the spirit and energy of a place like Leelanau, is by telling the stories of the amazing people who bring joy and purpose to the community."



Michael Jarvis | Dean of Students
The Leelanau School | 2000 - present

"My goal is to help grow decent human beings and to help them think of themselves as decent human beings. Sometimes they want you to tell them what to do, and I tell them to 'do what you think is best.' "

We would love to feature YOU as a person of Leelanau! Send a photo and quote, story, bio, or fun tidbit to alumni@leelanau.org.



Daniel Hulse '98 | M.A., PPS
Dean of Students | Christchurch School | VA

"Every part of who I am, professionally, personally, as a husband, as a father, is because of Leelanau. My travels, my educational approach, my passion, it all stems from my years at Leelanau and the people who, for those years, were my family! [It was] the confidence that my teachers and the entire community gave me. Not just academic confidence, but confidence to make my own decisions, confidence to be myself, and confidence to travel my own path. Mr. Hood, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Wheeler, Mr. Karner, and Mr. Brotschul all taught me how to live with integrity, emotional intelligence, and GRIT!"



Ethan Cook '21 | Salutatorian
University of Cincinnati

"I can remember multiple times when I was like, 'I'm giving up. I can't do this anymore. I'm not smart enough. Not good enough.' It sounds so cheesy to just say 'you can do it if you put your mind to it!' But it's true - if you have a chance and the time to focus on the logistics of learning who you are as a learner. You just need a place and people to support you through that. The Leelanau School has helped me see who I am as a person. They have watched me succeed and they've watched me fail but they always helped me back up."



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