



SPOTLIGHT ON EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING:

CONSERVATION, SUSTAINABILITY, AND SERVICE

At St. Andrew's, education is more than academics; it is an immersive journey that extends beyond the classroom. Rooted in our mission to develop curious, courageous, and compassionate global citizens, our programs integrate experiential learning with hands-on opportunities that connect students to the natural world and their community. Whether investigating local ecosystems, cultivating sustainable practices, or engaging in service projects, St. Andrew's students deepen their understanding of conservation, sustainability, and their role as stewards of the environment.





A Living Laboratory on Shoal Creek

The 31st Street Campus sits alongside the dynamic Shoal Creek, providing an unparalleled natural environment for experiential education. Here, students conduct hands-on research, blend art and science, and explore the vital principles of conservation and sustainability. Through this engagement, they cultivate an appreciation for biodiversity and an understanding of the interconnectedness of human and ecological systems.



A Conservation Hub on Southwest Parkway

St. Andrew's Episcopal School's Southwest Parkway campus is home to 125 acres. More than 60 acres is undeveloped land, complete with designated campsites, working beehives, hiking trails, and so much more. These natural resources provide unparalleled opportunities for hands-on learning and exploration, connecting students across all grade levels—kindergarten through 12th grade—to the beauty and lessons of the natural world.

Thanks to the vision and dedication of our Director of Experiential Learning, Blake Amos, the southern portion of our Southwest Parkway campus has been transformed into a dynamic outdoor classroom. From exploring the biodiversity of our land to understanding sustainability practices and connecting art with nature, these unique experiences enrich our students' academic journeys and foster a lifelong appreciation for the environment.



Sustainability in Action: Food and Gardens

Lower and Middle School students actively participate in sustainable food practices through campus gardens that serve as hubs for learning and community. These gardens teach the importance of food systems, from seed to table, as students grow vegetables, herbs, and flowers, sharing their harvest with the school kitchen. They also learn about pollinators' critical role in food production and life cycles, emphasizing interconnectedness and environmental responsibility.



Environmental Leadership: Middle School Environmental Action Council (EAC)

The Middle School Environmental Action Council (EAC) exemplifies student leadership in sustainability. This fall, EAC members planted a fall tomato crop using water-efficient drip irrigation and a heat-retaining rock trellis. Supported by a water catchment system, students conserved resources while fostering a thriving garden. Their work exemplifies the intersection of environmental stewardship and innovative problem-solving.

EAC students also embraced conservation on a broader scale by participating in the national Monarch Watch Tagging Program, aiding in the study of monarch butterfly migration. Partnering with the Shoal Creek Conservancy and Austin Parks Foundation, they also engaged in hands-on restoration efforts during "It's My Park Day," planting native flora and dispersing seed balls to support local ecosystems. These projects empower students to lead in creating a sustainable future while strengthening ties to their community.



Upper School Sustainability Club: Leading the Charge for a Greener Future

The Upper School Sustainability Club at St. Andrew's Episcopal School is a vibrant and inspiring group of students dedicated to making a difference for the planet. Their passion for protecting the environment is evident in everything they do, from raising awareness about climate change to implementing tangible solutions that make our campus and community more eco-friendly.

These environmentally conscious leaders are making an impact in countless ways:

- **Educational Initiatives:** The club regularly hosts seminars and discussions on pressing issues like climate change, renewable energy, and sustainable living, empowering peers and the wider community with knowledge and actionable steps to create a greener future.
- **Hands-On Stewardship:** Whether working in the PARK to nurture our campus green spaces or developing creative ways to reduce single-use plastics at St. Andrew's, the students are translating their passion into meaningful action.
- **Collaborative Problem-Solving:** Through brainstorming sessions, research, and partnerships, the club continuously explores innovative ideas to make our school's habits and systems more aligned with sustainable practices.

By combining creativity, commitment, and compassion, the Upper School Sustainability Club is not only leading by example but also inspiring others to think critically about their role in protecting the planet. Through their efforts, these remarkable students are proving that even small actions can lead to big change, one project, one habit, and one conversation at a time.

Highlights of Experiential Learning Across Grade Levels

Bee-ing Sustainable• St. Andrew's Highlander Hives

When senior Truman Cunningham '20 heard a homily in Chapel about the importance of incorporating nature into education, he was struck by the idea that building a relationship with nature from a young age can have a strong impact, particularly when it comes to sustainability and compassion. He joked with his friends, Will and Teddy, that they should become beekeepers and build a hive in the PARK on the Southwest Parkway Campus. All jokes aside, it didn't take long for his "silly idea" to take on a life of its own. Research quickly revealed that there was much more to beekeeping than meets the eye, but that made it all the more intriguing.



As they moved along in the process, it became clear that bringing a hive to the PARK wasn't going to be easy. The first step was to find someone with experience to help navigate the process. They decided to visit the Austin Sustainable Food Center, a location that has a similar bee setup to what they wanted to create. There, they were introduced to Tara Chapman, founder of Two Hives Honey. Tara, now the official, professional St. Andrew's beekeeper, and affectionately known as their "beesource", was integral to the trio learning the ropes of beekeeping.

When reflecting on their work, Will noted that he has learned far more than he could have anticipated. Aside from the ins and outs of bees and beekeeping, he credits this project with teaching him about leadership, pain (literally), stress, and pride. From a leadership perspective, this was an independent project, so the responsibility of making their idea a reality fell entirely on them.

Truman, Will, and Teddy graduated from St. Andrew's in the spring of 2020 but their legacy continues with a renewable club of beekeepers at the Upper School called the "Highland Hive."

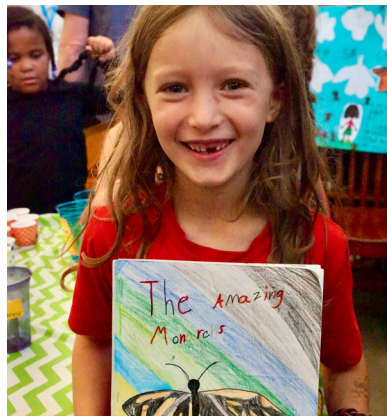
Fifth Grade Wildfire Study:

As part of an integrated English and science unit, fifth graders explored wildfire ecology through expert guidance from the Austin Fire Department with a controlled grassfire simulation. This real-world learning experience highlighted strategies for managing land and preventing the spread of wildfires.



Second Grade Garden Club and Pollinator Palooza:

Second graders nurture a vibrant vegetable garden, discovering biodiversity firsthand as they dig for worms, plant seeds, and marvel at creatures like tarantulas and Texas spiny lizards. Their annual Pollinator Palooza celebration showcases their research on pollinators' critical role in ecosystems, fostering public speaking and research skills while engaging the community.



Commitment to Global Citizenship

Through these types of programs, St. Andrew's students gain a profound understanding of the environment and their responsibility to protect it. These experiential opportunities help students grow as thoughtful leaders and global citizens, connecting classroom knowledge to real-world impact. Whether tagging monarchs, cultivating gardens, or cleaning waterways, they embody our mission by making a tangible difference in their world.

At St. Andrew's, we believe that the lessons learned through conservation, sustainability, and service are vital to shaping the next generation of compassionate and courageous global citizens.



St. Andrew's Capstone Projects: Fifth, Eighth, and Twelfth Grades

Capstone projects at St. Andrew's Episcopal School are a hallmark of our commitment to cultivating independence, leadership, and a spirit of curiosity in our students. Anchored in experiential learning, these projects allow students to explore their passions, engage with real-world challenges, and develop the skills necessary for lifelong learning and global citizenship. From fifth grade to senior year, our capstone initiatives empower students to take ownership of their education while fostering a deep sense of purpose and agency.



5th Grade: Leadership Academy and Capstone Projects

The journey to independent learning begins in fifth grade with the Leadership Academy, an intentional program designed to equip students with the skills and mindset of servant leaders. During the first weeks of school, students explore the concepts of leadership, identify their evolving identities, and practice collaborative skills. This foundation prepares them for the year-long 5th Grade Capstone Projects.

The Capstone Projects are student-driven, teacher-mentored endeavors that combine academic learning with real-world problem-solving. Students choose a topic they are passionate about, conduct research, and take servant-leadership-oriented actions to address adaptive challenges—complex issues without clear solutions—in their communities. The process culminates in reflective presentations, where students share their insights and growth with peers and mentors.

Goals of the 5th Grade Capstone Projects:

- Empowering student interests and passions.
- Addressing adaptive challenges in their communities.
- Developing essential academic skills, including research, writing, and critical thinking.
- Strengthening executive functioning, such as organization, time management, and initiative.
- Encouraging servant leadership and community engagement.
- Building communication skills, including public speaking and audience-specific messaging.
- Responsibly integrating technology to enhance learning and presentation.



8th Grade: Project Citizen

In middle school, students delve deeper into civic engagement through Project Citizen, an interdisciplinary capstone that reflects St. Andrew's dedication to preparing students as leaders and compassionate global citizens. Over the second semester, students identify a real-world issue beyond the school's gates, conduct in-depth research, and develop an actionable plan to address it.

Topics have included:

- Lack of Financial Literacy Education in Schools
- Preserving the Bee Population
- Accessibility for the Blind in Austin
- Combatting Light Pollution
- Addressing Veteran Homelessness

By working on meaningful projects, students learn to approach challenges with creativity, perseverance, and an ethical commitment to service. Project Citizen encourages them to see their potential as change-makers and empowers them to contribute solutions to societal issues.

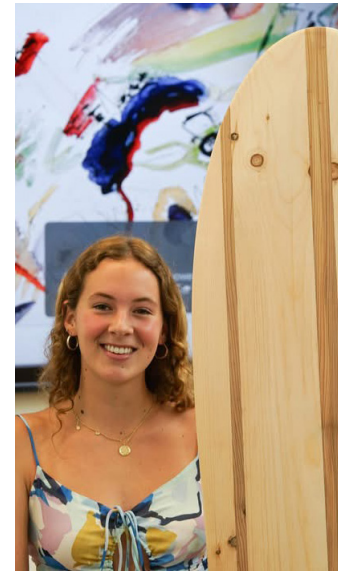
12th Grade: Senior Projects

The Senior Project is the capstone experience for every St. Andrew's graduate, embodying the culmination of their growth as scholars, artists, athletes, and servants. After months of preparation, students dedicate the month of May to pursuing a personal passion, serving their community, or tackling an ambitious challenge. They conclude the experience by presenting their work to family, faculty, and peers, celebrating their accomplishments and reflecting on their journey.

Recent examples of Senior Projects include:

- **Healthcare Equity:** Finley A. '24 volunteered at Lirios Pediatrics, a clinic for uninsured children, enhancing patient feedback systems and connecting families with essential resources.
- **Art and Craftsmanship:** Bella B. '24 learned metalsmithing, creating a jewelry collection inspired by architectural styles.
- **Sustainability and Culture:** Grace S. '24 built a traditional Hawaiian surfboard, mastering woodworking techniques while exploring Hawaiian craftsmanship and environmental mindfulness.
- **Film Production:** Ben S. '24 wrote, directed, and produced an original short film, honing his artistic and technical filmmaking skills.

These projects highlight the independence, creativity, and resilience of St. Andrew's students. Through Senior Projects, they apply their learning to real-world contexts, showcasing their readiness to lead with curiosity, courage, and compassion.

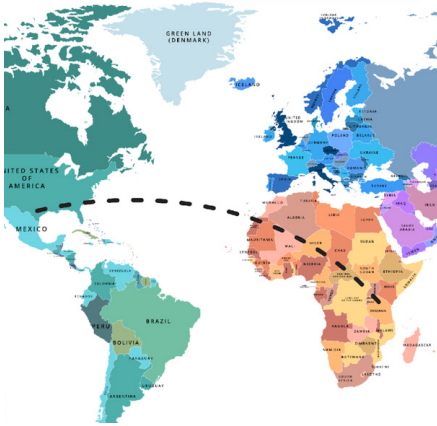


Capstones as a Foundation for Lifelong Learning

Capstone projects at St. Andrew's not only allow students to integrate knowledge and skills across disciplines but also foster personal growth, leadership, and a commitment to making a difference in their communities. Through these transformative experiences, students discover their voices, refine their talents, and emerge as empowered global citizens ready to engage with a complex world.

Pursuing Global Citizenship at St. Andrew's Episcopal School

At St. Andrew's, we believe that global citizenship is more than a concept—it is a practice rooted in curiosity, empathy, and action. By immersing our students in diverse cultural, environmental, and interpersonal experiences, we prepare them to navigate an interconnected world with confidence and compassion. Our re-ignited travel and exchange programs exemplify this commitment, offering opportunities for meaningful engagement that aligns with our mission to develop curious, courageous, and compassionate global citizens.



From Texas to Tanzania: Promise Village Academy and Fourth Grade Collaboration

Through our partnership with Promise Village Academy (PVA) in Tanzania, our fourth graders build bridges across continents. This enriching collaboration begins with a “Schools and Communities” unit, where students exchange letters and share insights about their daily lives.

While our students learn about the Maasai culture—where children grow their own food, walk miles to school, and manage household tasks—they also discover commonalities, such as their shared love for play, similar academic pursuits, and future aspirations. This project nurtures understanding, broadens perspectives, and instills the values of empathy and interdependence.

Big Bend National Park: 8th Grade Adventure

The Big Bend trip offers eighth graders a transformative outdoor experience that serves as the culmination of their middle school journey.

During this five-day camping trip, students engage in activities that promote teamwork, self-reliance, and environmental stewardship. Tasks like setting up camp and preparing meals teach practical skills, while hiking the vast West Texas terrain challenges them to step outside their comfort zones. Beyond personal growth, students gain an appreciation for the unique ecosystem and the importance of protecting natural spaces, fostering a lifelong connection to conservation.



Middle School Summer Trip to Yosemite Valley

Middle School students have the chance to discover the awe-inspiring beauty of Yosemite National Park during a Grand Classroom summer trip.

Based in the historic Curry Village, students will hike breathtaking trails, learn climbing techniques at the birthplace of American rock climbing, and immerse themselves in the iconic scenery of the valley. Beyond Yosemite, the adventure continues with surfing lessons in Monterey Bay, walks through Redwood forests, and explorations of Santa Cruz and San Francisco. This trip fosters resilience, environmental awareness, and unforgettable memories.



Upper School Exchange Program: Osaka, Japan & Austin, Texas

Launching in the 2025-2026 school year, our international exchange program with St. Andrew's Episcopal School in Osaka, Japan, brings global learning to life.

Two students from each school will exchange places for an academic year, offering participants a profound cultural immersion. Our students will experience Japan's rich traditions and vibrant modernity while developing skills in cross-cultural communication and independence. Likewise, Osaka students will embrace life in Austin, enriching our community with their unique perspectives. This exchange fosters a spirit of multicultural conviviality and equips students to be adaptable, cooperative global citizens.

Why Global Citizenship Matters

Through travel and exchange programs, St. Andrew's students acquire real-world skills such as adaptability, collaboration, problem-solving, and communication. They learn to view the world through a lens of compassion and curiosity, embracing the diversity that makes humanity extraordinary.

By offering these experiences, we empower our students to go beyond borders—both literal and metaphorical—fulfilling our mission to develop exemplary scholars, artists, athletes, and servants who are prepared to make a meaningful impact on the global stage.

Real Asia

**COME WITH US TO
TAIWAN**

March 14-24th, 2025

- See top attractions like **Taipei 101** and **Sun Moon Lake**
- Hands-on **cooking** and **lantern-flying** activities
- Explore lively markets and scenic old **villages**
- Connect with nature at the breathtaking **Kenting National Park**
- Explore more of Taiwan's delicious cuisine at **Night Market**
- Discover the world-class Chinese art at the **National Palace Museum**
- Practice your Chinese** with locals

Please contact Mr. Blake Amos at bamos@sasaustin.org for more info.



Cultivating a Legacy of Stewardship and Leadership

At St. Andrew's Episcopal School, experiential learning is at the heart of our mission to inspire curious, courageous, and compassionate individuals. Through hands-on exploration, environmental stewardship, and service, students gain more than academic knowledge—they develop a profound understanding of their role in shaping a sustainable and interconnected world.

By engaging with ecosystems, collaborating with communities, and participating in transformative travel opportunities, students forge lasting connections to the environment and their global peers. These experiences prepare them to lead with purpose and empathy, embodying the values of stewardship, sustainability, and service in every endeavor.

As they journey from campus gardens to distant continents, our students carry forward a legacy of responsibility and action, ensuring that the lessons learned at St. Andrew's extend far beyond our classrooms—impacting the world for generations to come.



Building a Brighter Future for St. Andrew's students

Our Raise the Roof campaign theme reflects both the physical expansion of our campus and the elevated opportunities we are creating for our students. This campaign will fund innovative facilities that integrate cutting-edge STEM labs, dynamic art spaces, inspiring athletic environments, and vibrant hubs for collaboration and service. These enhancements will ensure every student has the tools and opportunities to excel—whether they are conducting scientific research, creating works of art, leading on the field, or serving their community.

By investing in this campaign, you are helping to create spaces where students engage in hands-on learning, cultivate their passions, and explore their role as compassionate global citizens. Together, let's build a future where the spirit of St. Andrew's and the ambition of its students are matched by facilities that inspire learning, leadership, and excellence.



St. Andrew's Blueprint
for the Future

Scan QR Code
to learn more

