

The Owllet

Hoosac School Source for Alumni News and Nonsense



Ryan Moreau today

creating work-life balance

RYAN MOREAU REALIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING BALANCE BETWEEN WORK AND HIS PASSIONS

Ryan Moreau '04 was introduced to Hoosac School while playing hockey for Cushing Academy, a prep school located in Massachusetts. After meeting a few of the students on the Hoosac team, he made a visit to the school. The visit inspired him to make a leap of faith, leaving behind four years at the larger Cushing for the much smaller Hoosac.

"I just kind of decided to jump ship and do that for my senior year," he said. "Hoosac was a much, much smaller school which was kind of a culture shock at first, but it seemed like a very close-knit group of people"

The small class sizes and close-knit hockey team helped Ryan develop a strong sense of community while at Hoosac.

“You know, happiness is working to live, instead of living to work.”

"Coach Rabinowitz made sure we held ourselves accountable and that we held each other accountable as well. And since most of us were in the same dorm, we were together a lot. You couldn't hide from any issues or from any problems or anything like that," Ryan explained.

Ryan said Hoosac was instrumental in helping him find his path following high school: "It was a really good learning experience. You had a little bit of freedom to make your own way and that's a big thing for kids to have to figure out. If you're 15 or 16, your world is really small by comparison, so I think getting a little bit of freedom to venture out is a big



deal for kids. It's real world stuff."

Ryan grew up in Dallas, Texas where hockey was the furthest thing from his mind. As most kids his age, he gave baseball and soccer a try, but it wasn't until 1993, when Dallas welcomed its first professional hockey team, the Stars, something stirred within Ryan.

"I went to a game, and I was just a wide-eyed kid that as soon as I saw it, I was like I need to I need to know what this is and just started playing, started going to camps." Since that moment, hockey has been a huge part of Ryan's



Ryan's passion for hockey spilled over into his wedding

life. So much so, he and his wife changed into hockey jerseys and sported hockey sticks after exchanging their wedding vows last year.

"I've had a lot of phenomenal opportunities in my life, and many of them are thanks to relationships that I made through hockey. It's not just the game itself, it's the people that are involved in it and the people that you get to meet and the opportunities that it can create if you take advantage of them."

Following Ryan's graduation from Hoosac, he attended Plymouth State University where he played hockey and began coaching in the

Oliver Crawford



Oliver Crawford '17 didn't know anything about Hoosac before his first trip to campus: "I had never seen campus or heard of anyone going there. What makes this shocking is that I grew up a mile down the road from the school. Many people questioned my decision to go there, it was out of the norm for Hoosick Falls. Some had even advised me not to attend.

My first day at school I knew I had made the right choice. How could you step onto a campus with a big old mansion and not fall in love with it? It's a beautiful place and a treasure for the local area. Other than the grounds, the faculty and staff make it that much better. Teachers become friends and mentors, and teach you far more than just how to write a paper. I can't understand for the life of me why anybody wouldn't wish to attend.

A lot of growing up happens in high school, and Hoosac influenced that process. A week into school I could tie a better tie than many adults I promise you. At lunch I learned proper etiquette, special thank you to Mr. Uhl and his persistence on the matter. These little skills and lessons have helped me make a better first impression plenty of times.

I can't stress enough how being in such a diverse environment at a young age helped me grow. My first year I had befriended people from, Korea, China, Lithuania, New Zealand, and countless other places. It opens your mind to new things. It gives you an opportunity that some colleges

Oliver Crawford continued ON PAGE 7



Rocher Guo



We recently heard from **Shen Rocher Guo '13** and asked about her experience at Hoosac. She said Hoosac taught her to be more independent: "I was 16 when I came to Hoosac from China. That was the first time I was away from home and away from my parents. I got used to living on my own pretty quickly, from remembering to put laundry into one place before laundry day, to knowing how to budget my spendings."

The next important lesson Rocher gleaned from the school was social.

"I learned how to interact properly with others, including friends, roommates, and teachers. I am still close with the friends I made at Hoosac today. These are the friendships I will cherish for the rest of my life."

Following graduation, Rocher attended Lehigh University and graduated with a BA And MA in Accounting and Finance. Today, she works with one of the largest accounting firms in New York City, Deloitte.

"My responsibilities include preparing and planning taxes for wealthy individuals, private equity funds, and corporations," she said.

"This job isn't my first. I tried out different experiences at different locations in different industries via internships before I discovered what I really wanted to do."

Rocher's advice to students is to seek opportunities even if it means moving out of your comfort zone: "You will most likely find things that interest you, people with whom you like to work, and experiences that you will carry into the future."



Share your news!
info@hoosac.org

Dan Lepage

Dan Lepage '14 has stayed busy during the pandemic. He graduated from University last summer where he completed a degree in kinesiology. He currently works at a hospital in Sudbury, Ontario where is working to become a fully registered orthopedic technologist. He is also working on completing a Masters in human kinetics. Following up on the conclusion of his hockey career, he's taken up mountain biding and enjoys forging new trails. He writes, "I definitely miss the days of being at Hoosac playing sports and going to the river with the guys!"

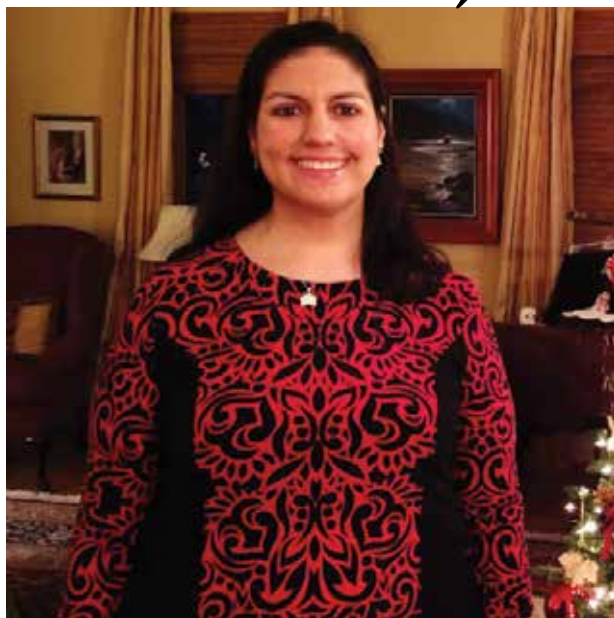


Marco Scotti



Marco Scotti '12 is running his own Masonry and Contracting company in Rhode Island. In his free time, he is coaching high school hockey and working as a volunteer fireman. He hopes to make it back to Hoosac soon for a visit.

Christina Yaeger



Christina Yaeger '02 is living today in Marshfield, MA, working this past year for the MA Dept. of Unemployment Assitance and is happily married to her husband, John.



Colman Aucoin



Colman Aucoin '09 passed his private pilot certification. He is currently working as a pilot and airframe and powerplant mechanic for Air Cargo Carriers in Milwaukee, WI.

See his story in the Fall issue of Hoosac Today.

Yannick Potvin



Yannick Potvin '06 joined Desjardins Group this spring, putting his leadership to task as an advisor and trainer. Desjardins Group is the leading cooperative financial group in Canada and the fifth largest cooperative financial group in the world with assets of \$227 billion.



1990 graduates **Rana (Kelton) Hasman** and **Phoebe (Harris) DeFeo**



The following is a sampling of emails we received from Hoosac alumni reflecting on how much our former headmaster, Richard Lomuscio, impacted their lives.

Remembering Richard



Thomas J Sullivan '88

I'm now 51-years-old and graduated from Hoosac back in 1988. I stayed in touch with Mr. L since then. While he lived on Shelter Island, we had a house in Sag Harbor, a short ferry ride away.

Just two weeks ago I spoke to him. I normally speak to him eight to 10 times a year. The best part was seeing him in Long Island in the summer time. While I only attended Hoosac for 1 year, the connection to Mr. "L" has been 33 consistent years now. I told my parents about him passing and after my mom got off the phone with me she texted me:

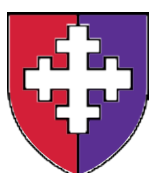
"He took you under his wing and put you in the right direction for learning."

The drive up to Hoosac that afternoon from Pawling NY as we pulled into the entrance of the school, I said I do not want to go here. I had an interview with Mr. Wright and Mr. "L" at the time, learning that Ms. Wright lived in Pawling NY and Mr. "L" lived in Shelter Island and had a boat. My moms text continued to say, "...on the drive back home I told my parents I wanted to go to Hoosac. We are so grateful to Mr. Lamuscio for what he did for you".

My parents over the years did tell him personally this story over coffee one afternoon sitting on our porch in Sag Harbor. Today a great part of my success, not only on the professional side but on the personal side, is a result of Hoosac and knowing "Mr. L".

While struggling in school in Pawling, the drive 99 miles away straight up Rt 22 in New York from my house in just one year and the continuation of a friendship of 33 years leaves me nothing to say but, "Thank you Mr. L."

I am glad I told him many years ago thank you for what he did for me. You never know who you will bump into during your course of your life time that will make a positive change in your life, for me it was Mr. "L".



Irving J. Waldman, Honorary Trustee

With great sadness and tears in my eyes, I pen this remembrance. There is much to be said as I knew Richard well and shared many confidences over the years. When I came onto the board, after son Jeffrey graduated, my relationship with Ricard began. Some of the highlights follow, but far more is left out. I am sure readers of this tribute will understand.

Let's go back in time at a board meeting in NYC (Harvard Club) when it became known that Donn Wright expressed the desire to retire. As a back bencher and using my attorney negotiator skills I suggested that Richard was the logical successor. With much deliberation the board came up with a package with transition plan that was acceptable with all. One might say it worked out well.

Fast forward to his investiture; that Saturday was memorable. With bagpipes playing, and all trustees and staff in academic dress, we march down to the gym for the installation. I was honored to read two selections from the Old Testament, Hebrew bible. A moving event as Richard became our new Headmaster, leader of Hoosac.

As a teacher I am not best to comment. Others have deeper insight into his skills and teaching abilities. To me, there was no one better. A motivator of teens, leader of staff, praise from all who came in contact with Richard. Working and learning from him was pure joy. He had outstanding listening skills.

Next transition - Dean our new Headmaster. Richard had full confidence with Dean leading the school. I completely agreed. Richard (never "Mr. L." as I was older), most every February visited Naples, FL. With son Jeff, now a retired trustee, we'd have dinner. An annual tradition that will sorely be missed. Most recently, in February 2020 we met again to have dinner, talked of old times, how the school was doing. After family, it was always about Hoosac.

My friend, you left us too soon. May you rest in eternal peace.

George L. Funkouser III '71

I oft recall my first year at Hoosac in 1968 (which I believe was Richard's and his wife Karen's first year too), when he taught biology class in the classroom in the basement beneath the dining hall. What was most impressionable was the manner in which he often taught the class, squatting in a frog like position atop his desk for the entire lecture!

Aside from this physical contortion, I would hasten to note that he was an excellent biology (and French) teacher and a fine connoisseur of Jaguar automobiles. With fond memories, George

Daniel J Barbiero '96

I'm so sorry to hear about Mr. L I lived in levino with him and us boys would go up to watch TV with him we would watch his shows. I distinctly remember watching (Murphy Brown) and (Fraser) with him. He was very hospitable and me being from the same area LI NY we had things in common. I remember his son victor and Brian Serell witch Brian was in my dorm wood Hall my 3 and 4th year. I remember his Jaguar, he would drive it on the weekends. He will me missed by all who knew him.

Sincerely, Daniel

Dwight Marvin '74

I'm sure you will get many contemporary reminiscences and photos. From my era, who can ever forget the world premier of his and Don White's classic movie, "The Frog that Devoured Bennington"?

However, one of my favorite stories Richard shared with me was from his early days at Hoosac. Don Wright assigned him to be in charge of the Yule Log immediately on joining the faculty and shared he was going to meet with John Roy, then a trustee, and my father; both keepers of Frank Butcher's memory and devoted Yule Log cast members for many years. To Richard's dismay, the meeting lasted an entire evening, with a detailed recitation of the entire production and John and my father singing the whole thing to him from memory.

Having heard the same details from my earliest childhood memories from them both, I can only imagine Richard's pleasure learning it in one sitting. Of course, it was largely by oral tradition the Yule Log was maintained for years. Butcher refused to permit his work to be recorded, and I have the only known copy of one of his performances; an unauthorized recording of the last performance in Bouton Hall on the old campus in 1953. Along with some private recordings of several selections from "In Stately Measure," which Butcher did for my father in the 1950s, there are no other copies of original Yule Log music remaining.

James B Gravitt '68

In a world filled with sorrow, set backs and disappointments their are few experiences that cross the vast oceans of human feelings. We experience warmth loss and sacrifice but nothing compares with the finality of death. From who's station a traveler begins a new journey alone, empty handed with shadows and a few stars to guide the traveler on.

One shining guide was Richard Lomuscio. I have known him for over fifty years and his guidance has crossed all the major stations and high points of my life. War, marriage, personal loss, to name a few. As the memories of my personal losses in and out of the Hoosac family rise and fall as we all become scared and dated.

Here before you, I present Richard Lomuscio a great scholar, intellect, teacher and counselor. Who at this moment I am expressing the spirt and labor supported by my classmates and Mr. Richard Lomuscio peers as a lifetime of sacrifice of intellectual work.

John Reed '72

I attended Hoosac School from 1972 until 1975.

I am deeply saddened from an email I received telling me Mr. Lomuscio has passed away.

My three years at Hoosac School became some of the most memorable ones for me.

It was my first time for me to experience living in a location that was not my home but it became more than a home. I was uncomfortable for the first two days. It was a new school and a very new environment with all new unknown expectations. Walking around it seemed everyone had the normal reservations.

Then I met Mr. Lomuscio! He confronted me with a smile. He knew my name! He never took his eyes off of me! His voice and his presence was everything I needed!

He would be the one person throughout my three years at Hoosac School whenever I saw him or whenever I spoke to him, Mr. Lomuscio knew exactly what I needed to hear. Thank you Mr. Lomuscio.





GRAFTONIAN

Jean Fogarty Covey '87

My dad and I were recently talking about Hoosac. I have fond memories of my years there.

I am a stay at home mom. My youngest of five children just graduated high school ending a quarter of a century of homeschooling. I am also a remote administrative assistant for two brothers in real estate. I have two boys in college, one boy is a contractor and my oldest son is in the military. My daughter teaches piano and works part time for a call center. I have four grandchildren.

Life is always busy but always good!

Someday I hope to get back



out East and visit Hoosac. I would love to show the kids where I went to school and to once again hike up the power lines.

I had a great time at Hoosac because I learned how to enjoy nature and the outdoors through hiking, fishing, swimming, barbecuing skiing, etc. Growing up in NYC made it hard for me to appreciate these things. I went into accounting because I saw it as a solid career path which it has proved to be so far, and it enables me to learn so much about the inner workings of different types of businesses. The skills I learn in audit will benefit me no matter which direction I choose to follow. Discipline and dedication enabled me to complete my



ANTONIAN
Hoosac Trustee
Dino Constantine '11

MA. There were countless times when I wanted to quit, and several of my classmates did, but I refused to give up and powered through to completion.

Suzanne Bergesen '00

I attended Hoosac school from 1997 and graduated 2000.

Dean Foster at that time was my soccer coach and algebra teacher, I really liked him.

Since my time of graduating I have done quite a bit of traveling and some volunteering. I did volunteer for CARE Norway which helped collect food, clothes, and money for the refugees during Rwandan civil war.

I am from Norway and the Norwegian government is very interested in taking in refugees from various countries at war, both in the middle east, Africa and some countries in Europe.

My sister has also taken an interest in helping, she works as CFO for a company called Atlas Alliance here in Oslo, she has traveled to a variety of African countries to meet with their governments and ensure that monetary donations are being controlled/dispensed properly, as many of the smaller countries have police corruption.

I lived in NJ for 10 years and when the economic crisis hit in 2008, my wife Desiree and I relocated to Austin, Texas.

We moved back to Norway in 2017 and work for a company that contracts renewable energy in large business and industrial application. I am a lead mechanical technician in

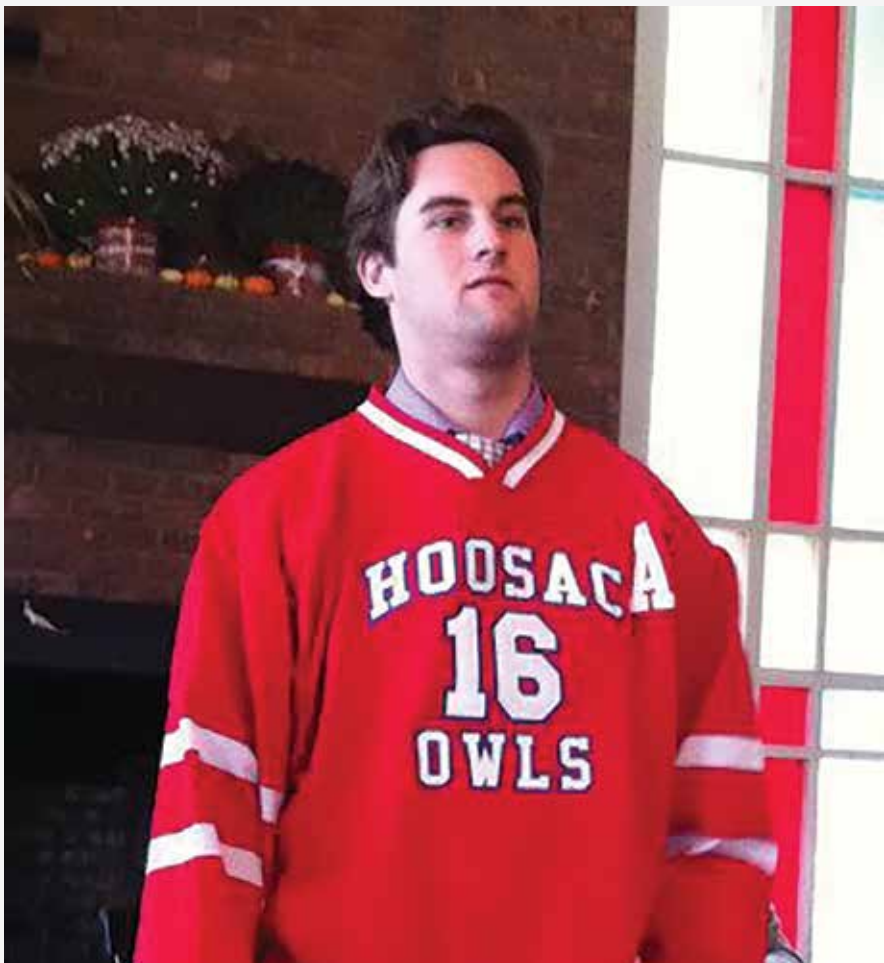


AS FAR AS ACTIVISM, VOLUNTEERING IN ADDITION TO WORK HAS SO MANY PROFOUND BENEFITS. IT'S A GREAT WAY TO NETWORK, IT MAKES FOR A STRONGER RESUME, AND IT'S GOOD TO GIVE BACK TO THOSE IN NEED. WHAT YOU PUT OUT IN ENERGY WILL COME BACK TO YOU.

-SUZANNE BERGESEN

energy and environmental technique. We mainly do start up and maintenance of hotels, apartment buildings, malls, even indoor ski arenas.

I am very concerned about global warming and preventative measures. I am also a teacher for the up and coming apprentices who are all graduates and are looking for internships. Norway is now moving more toward wind energy as a sustainable source and moving away from oil.



ANTONIAN

John Bragga '12

My first impression of Hoosac was definitely in the mountains not near many places. However I loved the atmosphere visiting it and after vacations coming back to Hoosac.

Absolutely the fact that I was living on my own at a school hundreds of miles away from where I grew up and lived was a definite

self defining moment.

I formed a great career life where I work in the Millwork field and am a Warehouse Supervisor growing into a role for the future of Director of Supply Chain.

I'm still being Hoosac by the ways that Hoosac taught me how to be on my own with a budget and how to have great morals and ethics in life.

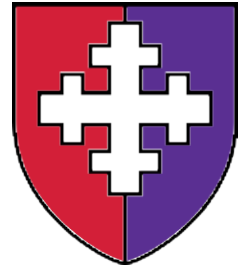




Former Hoosac faculty Halee Pucklhaber and Tim Woford were wed on January 15th



Sam Mahar '04 and partner Christi welcomed a new baby in February



A big thank you to these Hoosac alumnae who supported a new generation of Hoosac students by making a gift designated to Towne Hall, the new dormitory for girls!

- Yuanyuan Guo '19
- Elizabeth Gaudreau '18
- Danielle Sivertsen '18
- Emily Levin '17
- Julia Kopala '16
- SeungBee Yang '14
- Alexandria Halbin '08
- Anna Montagna '08
- Akeesha Simmons '08
- Gabriella Cowan '07
- Niki Knihnicki '05
- San Hung '02
- Christina Trongone Yaeger '02
- Jennifer LaChance '98
- Kendell Klein Munzer '92
- Jill Sarmanian Larson '91
- Emily Singer Lucio '87
- Marbie Parshall Tarburton '88
- Lisa Hughes '78
- Jan Hadwen Hubbell '74
- Maureen Thompson Phillips '73

A letter from John Reed '68

Times have certainly changed since I attended Hoosac about 56 years ago, too. At that time, we had a total of 45 boys including all students in all four Forms/grades. Hoosac was not co-ed back then, and we certainly did not have computers, cell phones, tablets, or any other fancy electronic devices. But what we did have was an environment where discipline, fundamental wholesome values, and a focus on learning/study were able to flourish. I must admit that I was not one of the good little boys when I entered Hoosac – I was a discipline problem. I had been rebellious at Niskayuna High School, and I had rebelled against my Dad's strong discipline – hence my parents' tremendous sacrifice to send me to Hoosac. But as I mentioned in my letter to Lew, Hoosac literally saved my life. I entered at the bottom of the discipline chain and I got nothing but demerits for much of my time there. But Coach Dickie had several of us, Karl Bilhuber among our group, working in the extensive Hoosac forested land to clear out dead trees and cut them up into firewood to supply the many fireplaces in the residence that served as Hoosac administrative offices. We worked all day on each Saturday and had to work two hours for each demerit received in order to work the demerits off. Coach Dickie did not take any back-talk and he kept us busy the entire time. But he supervised us with love as well, so we all grew to love him for taking such good care of us despite our shortcomings. I will never forget him and I will be forever grateful to Coach Dickie and to Hoosac School for changing me into a disciplined youngster and diligent student. I went back to Niskayuna a changed person – so much so my classmates thought

I must have had a brain transplant!! I even continued to wear a coat and tie to classes there to remind me that I needed to remain on the straight and narrow. Hoosac left a very strong impression on me that has lasted a lifetime!

Today John resides with his wife Pensri in Northeast Thailand, where they are enjoying retirement.



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Email info@hoosac.org and tell us your Hoosac story.



Work-Life Balance continued from first page...

summers. “Without Hoosac, I wouldn’t have had that opportunity, so to say that I’m grateful for that is a massive understatement.”

Ryan continued to coach and found it rewarding to work with young people who shared his passion for hockey. “When I left Plymouth State, I moved to Plymouth, MA and started coaching a high school team there. I’ve been coaching ever since. It was something that was a massive passion of mine, because I’ve always had that competitive streak and playing in the men’s League and all that is fun and everything but, not quite as serious as when you’ve got kids that are depending on you. Then you have to be to be who they can depend on who they can count on. And that was a pretty big pretty big thing for me.”

According to Ryan, a team sport can teach you a lot about life: “No matter what situation you put yourself in, in one way or another, it’s a team sport.” He applies this same mindset to his career: “I sell beer for a living and I drive around by myself all day and I have to do that, but I still have a sales team, and I have to rely on other people and other people have to rely on me and if you’re not going to be somebody that people can count on, which is again the accountability piece from from being a teammate, then it makes you less of an asset. The team aspect of it, where you really have to make sure you pull your own weight is something that I think is invaluable as you go through life.”

He went on to say: “It’s almost a competitive thing for me to know as much as I can about as many things as I can, to be as on the ball as possible for my customers, so that they’re not missing out on things, or that somebody down the street doesn’t have something that they don’t. I want to help their business as much as I can.”

Ryan said one of the most profound lessons he learned from Hoosac was to ask questions of others. He said the close contact with people from other cultures routinely put him in a place of genuine curiosity and that learning to ask questions helps him in serving his customers’ needs better today. “You know, not just feigning interest, but actually being interested in their background and how they came to be on the same path as you. I find that kind of entertaining. It helps people open up or feel included.”

Leadership came naturally to Ryan, who believes strongly in giving back. “I think it was just something where I took pride in being there for others, and I know from all the coaches, that I had that made massive impacts on my life, that I felt that it was only fair to pay that forward a little bit. If I could help kids in any way then that’s something you kind of have to do, if given the opportunity.”

Asked what wisdom he would want to impart on students today, Ryan said to try different things before committing to one career path. “Talk to as many people as possible. I learned



From L to R Finn, Phakin, Felipe, Ricardo, Vinicius, Fernando, Rafael, Manfredi, Gabriela, Sofija and Sofia

Hoosac Tennis!

MANFREDI VERGINE ‘21 WINS THE PREMIER TENNIS TOUR TOURNAMENT AT THE USTA NATIONAL CAMPUS

In March, the Hoosac Varsity Tennis Team played two tournaments at the USTA (United States Tennis Association) National Campus in Orlando, Florida, which is considered the largest tennis training center in the world. The complex boasts 100 courts and sees competition from around the world routinely. It was Hoosac’s first time visiting the campus and based on the outcome of a series of tournaments recently, it’s clear it won’t be the last.

In the Tsitsipas Draw, Manfredi Vergine ‘21 of Pordenone, Italy was crowned champion while Phakin Thongbooncharoen ‘22 of Bangkok, Thailand finished as the runner-up! Sofija Filipovic ‘22 of Belgrade Serbia also won two matches in her USTA debut.

No achievement, however, was greater

than what Manfredi Vergine ‘21 was able to accomplish later on in the Premier Tennis Tour Tournament. In a tournament composed of 72 tennis players, Manfredi knocked off opponent after opponent, finishing first overall, taking the gold and winning his second consecutive tournament!

In doing so, Manfredi’s UTR ranking increased to 11.

Hoosac’s head coach and former Brazilian Davis Cup Captain Ricardo Canto Pereira is thrilled with the incredible achievement, but now has his sights set on this Friday. “We’re looking forward to seeing what our team can do at the upcoming tournament on the 26th. Knowing this team’s dedication and work ethic, I have no doubt they will be successful again.”

Manfredi Vergine ‘21 of Hoosac School is now known to Division 1 college coaches nationwide.

so much working retail. I absolutely hated it, but I’m so glad that I did it because it made the next jobs that I went to that much more rewarding. You know, working weekends and working holidays and things like that, so doing things that you don’t necessarily think that you would want to do, to learn the lessons for the next step in your life would be probably the biggest piece of advice I could offer. You know, happiness is working to live, instead of living to work.”

Ryan said it was important to him to maintain a work-life balance that included his passion for hockey. “If you have something that you’re that passionate about, and you have the ability to do it, I think you’re doing yourself a disservice if you don’t.” He said coaching has connected him with his passion as much as it has with his

community. “It’s such a phenomenal thing to be able to be a part of and to help kids grow and to help a town be proud of their program that I wouldn’t trade it for anything.”

When Ryan took a chance on Hoosac, he didn’t realize it was a risk. “I think courage is something that you don’t realize that you had until after the fact. Have the courage to do it or you’re going to miss out on some things. And do something, and even if it’s something small again like you know coaching on the weekends or doing something like that. Do yourself that favor.”

Ryan has referred two students to Hoosac since his time as coach, including **Stephen Whyte ‘12** and **Max Brande**, who will join Hoosac’s roster in the fall.

In March of 2020, Brick Nkugwa accepted a position with Hoosac to play basketball. His guardian, Sue Rothwell, accepted a teaching position in Nigeria, more than 2,000 miles from their home in Uganda. While the family's plans appeared to be falling into place, the threat of the Covid-19 pandemic abruptly altered them. These are excerpts from some of Sue's journal entries as she shared the journey one of our Hoosac students faced in reaching campus.

Road to Hoosac

March 2020, Uganda

The President locked down the country overnight – the only airport closed, all embassies closed so no visas were going to be processed, a curfew from 6pm-7am was put in place, all public and private transport was banned, online teaching and learning began.

July

School finished for the summer, goodbyes were said digitally, plans to go home to the UK to visit family and replenish Brick's wardrobe were all put on hold.

Whilst the curfew had been eased from 9pm-6am, three people were allowed to go out in a car, there was still no sign of the visa offices or airport opening. A contact at the US visa office advised us it would be January at the earliest that they would start processing student visas so again our hopes were dashed.

The infection rate was still very low and no deaths had been reported.

August

As my contract had now finished, we had to vacate our school apartment for an expat teacher who was already residing in Uganda. Fortunately, one of my co teachers kindly allowed us to stay in her apartment as she had returned home to the UK on a repatriation flight.

Infection rates had risen slightly but still only around 6,000 and 12 deaths.

September

Rumors were saying the

airport would open but these turned out to be false. I started teaching online in my new school in Nigeria, time difference two hours behind Uganda, Brick started online with Hoosac – seven hours behind Uganda and so our new normal began.

On *September 20th* the President finally announced the news we had eagerly been waiting for – the airport was to open on October 1st.

It was then a rush to go to the Nigerian embassy, in between my classes online, to hand in our STR visa applications so we could get to Nigeria. Covid tests, Brick going home to say goodbye to his family, visas issued, packing up all our belongings, we finally left Uganda on October 4th.

October 9th, Lagos, Nigeria

We are now almost at the end of our self-isolation week, Covid test required on Monday, and then we can start the next process. Our STR visas need to be converted to residency visas then we need to make an appointment at the US Embassy here so Brick can get his visa – we are not sure how long this will take! My journey is almost complete as I can soon start teaching back in the classroom in my new school. Brick's timescale to get to Hoosac is still unknown but we pray it is sooner rather than later.

He is very engaged with his new teachers and classmates and his desire to be there in person is immeasurable.



Sue Rothwell and Brick Nkugwa pose for a photo before Brick's flight to the United States to attend Hoosac School

Resilience, determination and hope are all qualities Brick (as well as many thousands of others during these unprecedented times) has shown in abundance during these trying times. Whilst it will be very emotional for me when he finally gets on the plane to the US and Hoosac, I know it is the right thing for his future and that he will be well nurtured in very capable hands.

October 12th

We have just found out that the American Embassy is still closed so we have applied for an emergency appointment and are waiting to hear back. In the meantime, there have been riots and protests this week in Lagos against police brutality and the End SARS campaign is gathering momentum. I was due to physically start teaching in my new school on October 19th but due to the increased violence the state governor has now ordered another full lock-down. We can hear police sirens and gunshots from our compound but we are safe and secure.

We were alerted by email that an emergency visa appointment had been granted for October 30th. Fortunately, at the beginning of the week the protests subsided so we were finally able to make it. It was a very different visa experience to the UK visa process but Brick was told there and then that he was to be granted the visa. Brick was ecstatic.

Flights were booked for November 11th.

I was now able to work in school and was getting to know my new class, knowing that each day was a day nearer to Brick leaving. My new colleagues arranged a game of 10-pin bowling (we have one in our compound) for the night before Brick left which was good as it kept me busy.

November 11th arrived and my emotions were raw. After 10 years of seeing this little boy grow up to be a young man was great in one respect but also meant it was time for him to fly the nest. I held it together until we got to the security gate. Hugging him and saying goodbye, knowing I would not see him until summer 2021 was one of the most difficult things I have had to do but I was also so proud of everything he has achieved.

December, Hoosick, NY, United States

If you had told me this time last year what lay ahead, like many of you, I don't think I would have imagined what we would have to go through. But have made it – maybe with a few more gray hairs on my part but knowing Brick is where he wants to be and is happy is reward in itself.

I can't wait to see him in person again, where no doubt he will have grown again in stature and as a person, but in the meantime I look forward to hearing all about his adventures and experiences whilst he is being Hoosac.

*Oliver Crawford
continued from
front page*

don't even offer. Thanks to the small school experience I had the opportunity to get to know every one of the 115 students that were there at the time. I am happy to say I still keep in touch with many of the friends I made.

My first year at school there were no more than a handful of day students. By my senior year there was what had to have been an all time high. Not to brown nose, but Dean has done an excellent job of creating a stronger connection between Hoosac and the town. The recent expansion of ISA alone

shows a lot. More and more people are having their eyes opened to what a special place Hoosac is.

I now work at Iron Coffee Co. while finishing school. I've been there for over two years now. My brother **Andrew Crawford** works there with me as well, along with **Bauer Ward**, a current student. My friend **Will Kennedy**, another alumni, worked there before going out to Colorado for school. We were, and are, all happy to be able to be a part of something that has become such a landmark for the town.



TRIVIA QUESTION

What was Col. Pfister's occupation while living in the home he built still standing on Hoosac's central campus?

Email sgraves@hoosac.org with your answer. First correct response wins a Hoosac prize!

HOOSAC



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Hoosac Faculty Peggy McLenithan takes flight!

I grew up across from Chapin Field located in Cambridge, New York. I remember Aviation Days from my early childhood. Those were great days because, if you were brave enough to fly, a pilot would take you up in one of the small planes. Over the years I probably flew a half of dozen times. I loved all of it. I never felt sick and I could see the earth and the sky from a different perspective.

In October of 2019, just prior to Covid, I drove over to Chapin Fields. It was a glorious day. I was hopeful that I would once again have the opportunity to fly. I was imagining how lovely it would be to see the aerial view of the foliage.

It was nearly two o'clock and one of the pilots asked me if I would like to "go up." I was not disappointed!

When we were back on the ground I heard a sound unlike any sound I had ever heard before. I followed the sound and saw a gyrocopter. (Think *The Road Warrior*). Before I knew it my friend Steve Gifford was asking me if I wanted to "go up." I said *yes* and was bitten by the bug.

That was the day I decided to take pilot lessons. Honestly, I never thought I could consider learning something that exciting. It was the pandemic that allowed me to realize I did not want to regret not trying to learn something new. August 2020 was the day of my first lesson.

It was only a dream until I made it real.

Chapin Field is a public use airport operated by Cambridge Flying Club which was organized in April 1963 to promote interest in general aviation, give instruction in flying and maintenance of aircraft, purchase necessary equipment for the use of members, and assist members with upgrading their pilot ratings.



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