



Temple Christian School

Spring Alumni Newsletter 2020

Alumni Spotlight: Gabe Taviano ('95)

By Audrey Powell (Junior)



Gabe Taviano (left) with his family - Photo credit: Taviano family

For the past five years, 1995 Temple Christian graduate, Gabe Taviano, has lived with his family in Siem Reap, Cambodia, where they've worked in non-traditional missions. Gabe is a talented photographer and graphic designer, and he uses his gifts and testimony for the glory of God. He has also published a book of his photography.

Thinking back to his days at Temple Christian School (TCS), Gabe explains that his "love and passion for art started there." He specifically recalls a teacher named Mrs. Kempton, who inspired him greatly. His favorite memories are making and growing close to friends through sports. During his high school years, he participated in soccer, basketball and baseball.

After graduating from TCS, Gabe attended Grace College in Indiana, where he majored in graphic design.

Before moving to Cambodia, Gabe and his family lived in Columbus, Ohio, where he worked in mostly corporate graphic design jobs. He also started his own photography business.

He married his wife, Marla, in 1998, and then graduated with a bachelor's degree the next year. The couple has been blessed with three daughters. The oldest, Olivia, is 19 and engaged to a Cambodian. Ava is 17, and Nina is 14.

While in Ohio, the Tavianos were involved with a church called Sanctuary Columbus. This church supported an orphanage in Cambodia, and this is how the family got connected to

the mission field. Gabe and Marla went on two short-term mission trips to the orphanage. In 2015, the family moved to Cambodia, with support and oversight from a missions organization called International Outreach Ministries.

They resided in the capital of Phnom Penh for a year while they studied the language. They then moved to Siem Reap, a popular tourist town filled with ancient Buddhist temples. It was there that Gabe started a global media and design company, Kingdom Media, where he has taught and employed Cambodians.



"Phnom Krom" - Photo credit: Gabe Taviano

Marla, who is both a speaker and a published author, has also done much for the community there. She has had the opportunity to assist nearby village kids with reading. On top of this, she has started five nonprofit libraries throughout these villages.

Last year, Gabe finished and published one of his latest ministries, a book called *Dark Sunsets*. This book reflects a personal trial he went through seven years ago when he had a severe heart attack. One of his arteries was completely blocked, and the doctors told him he was just 10 minutes away from losing his life.

"I didn't know why, but God allowed me to live through it," said Taviano.



"Yellow Branch Falls" - Photo credit: Gabe Taviano

Due to this near-death experience, Gabe suffered from serious depression and anxiety for three years following his heart attack. It got to a point where he even contemplated suicide. This trial proved to be a perspective-altering one. It caused him to think about what he was doing with his life. He asked himself, "How can I take what happened, and use it not just for myself, but for other people?" This question inspired him to share his story through the book, filled with emotions and quotes which are reflected in photos of dark sunsets.

Recently, the Tavianos have decided to move back to the United States. They have gone through some struggles, such as selling their things and getting a visa for Olivia's fiancé', but have now successfully arrived in South Carolina, where they are living near family.

What God has next for the family in the States is still unclear, but they know with confidence that the move is in the family's best interest.

"We are really excited but really anxious," said Gabe, because "We don't know what's next and what God has for us to do."

Alumni Spotlight: Courtney Hoover ('00)

By Grace Smith (Senior)

A TCS graduate of 2000, Courtney (Stone) Hoover is now a physician's assistant working at Lima Memorial Hospital. She uses her medical knowledge, personal life experiences, and her faith to make a difference to those around her.

From the age of 17, Courtney knew that she wanted to go into the medical field. She earned an associate degree through Vicks University in Lima, which is now Rhodes State College.

Courtney married her husband Jeremy in 2002. Three years later, the couple moved to Fort Collins, Colorado, to be closer to her husband's family while she finished her prerequisites at Colorado State University. Courtney worked in the banking industry while she pursued her master's degree in medical science with a focus in physician's assistant (PA) studies.



Eventually, she got a job in Phoenix, Arizona, and attended PA school at Midwestern University in Glendale. *Courtney Hoover and family - Photo credit: Hoover Family*

For years, Courtney and her husband tried to have children but were unable. However, in time, God worked a miracle. In the summer after Courtney started PA school, they were pregnant with their first son, Braxton, who is now 11 years old. They also have a 6-year-old son, Dalton.

Following PA school, the Hoover family returned to Lima. Courtney became employed with Dr. Scherger with the OB/GYN outpatient clinic in Lima, where she worked with women of all ages. However, she felt God leading her in other directions.

After some time, Courtney switched over to general and trauma surgery because she “felt stagnant.” It was a huge leap of faith. She now works at Lima Memorial Health System.

Courtney said her favorite part about general and trauma surgery is the opportunity to serve and share the love of Jesus. Her past struggles with infertility have helped equip her to be even more of an encouragement to the different women and families that she works with.

God has recently been teaching Courtney about “the importance of being a light” as a Christian. Courtney said, “You don’t have to be the loudest, the best, or the most talented. You can be a light wherever you are.”

The Hoover family attends Living Hope Church in Lima, where Courtney helps with the children’s services.

Her favorite Bible verse is “Trust in and rely confidently on the LORD with all your heart and do not rely on your own insight or understanding. In all your ways know and acknowledge and recognize Him, and He will make your paths straight and smooth [removing obstacles that block your way],” (Proverbs 3:5-6, Amplified Bible).

In their freetime, Courtney and Jeremy enjoy flipping houses together. Courtney also loves to do interior design.

Some of Courtney’s favorite memories from Temple include participating in sports, her cousin coaching her in volleyball, taking science class with Mr. Sandy, and having a missions week. She also loved how involved the teachers were with the students’ lives.

Courtney developed a great friendship and mentorship with Mrs. Rufener, Mr. and Mrs. Heath, as well as Mr. and Mrs. Mohler, who became huge influences in her life.

“They made you think outside of the box,” Courtney said. She added that they helped her realize that you can love the unlovely and that you can be open with people outside of your own faith and still be a light to them.

Courtney's advice to students at Temple is, "Don't give up on your faith because it's not going to give up on you. Your faith will be challenged, but hold tight even when you want to give up; don't give in to what the world says."

Faculty Spotlight: Mrs. Valeri Brokaw

By Lydia Bassett (Senior)

Mrs. Brokaw, Temple's Christian School's (TCS) middle and high school band and choir teacher, has been teaching at TCS for four years. She teaches middle school band and choir, high school band and choir, and seventh grade Bible class.



Brokaw w/her saxophone - photo credit Valerie Brokaw

Mrs. Brokaw originally wanted to be a writer early in her schooling career and still journals as a self-proclaimed "grammar nerd." She attended The Ohio State University, with an initial major in audio engineering, but found she was more drawn to the musical side of the major. Eventually, she changed her major to music education and later went on to

receive a master's degree in saxophone performance.

Before teaching at Temple, Mrs. Brokaw taught at a missionary school in Malaysia for 18 years. When Mrs. Brokaw and her husband were first married, they discovered their passion for teaching overseas from a trip to Europe. They taught in Honduras for two years. After moving back to the United States and teaching for four years, they felt God was calling them to go back overseas.

When trying to find a job abroad, Mrs. Brokaw and her husband received two job offers, one in Colombia and one in Malaysia. While trying to decide which offer to accept, they would often ask their then 2-year-old son

whether he would prefer to live in the mountains or by the ocean. Eventually, he began to



Brokaw family - photo credit Valerie Brokaw

consistently reply with “ocean,” and Mrs. Brokaw and her husband accepted the offer in Malaysia.

At the school in Malaysia, Mrs. Brokaw taught elementary music classes while her husband taught band. She recalled that many activities were held outside because of the warm, tropical weather.

After teaching in Malaysia for six-and-a-half years, tragedy occurred, seemingly out of nowhere. Mr. Brokaw passed away in 2004 due to complications from a bicycle accident. After his death, Mrs. Brokaw decided to stay in Malaysia to let her children finish their education. She and one other colleague were responsible for covering the positions left open from the passing of Mr. Brokaw. Mrs. Brokaw stayed in Malaysia for another eleven-and-a-half years teaching band and music.

Her husband’s passing taught Mrs. Brokaw so many lessons.

“I’ve learned tons about trusting God through (the passing of my husband),” said Mrs. Brokaw, adding, “Even when things aren’t the way you want them, you can still trust God.”

Mrs. Brokaw explained how she enjoys many aspects of teaching.

“God is the One that’s going to do the teaching, I’m just a vessel. I spend lots of time in prayer, realizing God loves every single child and trying to build them up the same way He would. I enjoy leading kids to the point where they can believe they can do all things,” she said.

“I love making music and seeing people come together to create one whole from many parts—a



Brokaw with her children - photo credit: Valerie Brokaw

picture of the body of Christ with everyone being brought together.”

Outside of school, Mrs. Brokaw is involved with many community activities. She attends Lima Community Church. She is also involved in Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), which helps children have more of a voice in the court cases which affects them. Mrs. Brokaw also uses her talents in a local community musical group, the Hallelujah Saints Band.

Mrs. Brokaw shared her words of wisdom to anyone thinking about pursuing education as a career.

“Trust that God can use you in any setting. If you consider yourself His hands and feet, He can give you self-fulfillment wherever you teach,” Mrs. Brokaw said. “Nobody’s perfect so we must realize God is sufficient for all of our needs.”

Lincoln Waters: 2019 Golf Accomplishments

By Aubree Linhart (Junior)



Lincoln at 2019 Districts - photo credit: BJ McPheron

Senior Lincoln Waters achieved success last fall with his athletic accomplishments in golf. His hard work paid off as he was able to make it to the OHSAA Boys State Golf Tournament in Columbus last October.

Lincoln had attended Temple since kindergarten. Though he played other sports including soccer and basketball, Lincoln focused mostly on golf in high school.

He joined the golf team his freshman year. He said he learned a lot from the team with four seniors that season. However, for the past three years, Lincoln had been the sole member of Temple’s golf team.

A few of Lincoln’s high school golf accomplishments include TCS winning the 2016 Sectional Men’s Golf Team Championship, individually winning second place at the NWCC tournament in 2019, District medalist in 2019, making First-Team All-District in 2019, and qualifying for State in 2019.

Many friends and family supported Lincoln on his journey to Columbus to compete in the OHSAA State Golf Tournament. He had a great experience and finished tied for 47th place.

Lincoln has always liked to try new things and is thankful he found a sport he really loves. He credits his grandfather for sparking his interest in golf in eighth grade.

“I started going to the golf course with him but didn’t get serious until high school,” Lincoln said.

From learning life lessons on the course to going to State, Lincoln experienced many things to make his high school golf career memorable. He explained that his favorite part of Temple golf was his freshman year and participating in the District tournament his senior year.

Lincoln said, “Winning Districts was insane! I am so happy about that.”

BJ McPheron, Temple’s athletic director, was Lincoln’s coach for his tournament run for the 2019 season. They had the opportunity to spend more time together, and Lincoln is very grateful for his advice along the way.

Lincoln’s future plans involve playing golf for Ohio Christian University in Circleville, Ohio, where he has received a partial athletic scholarship, allowing him to both receive a Christian education and play the sport he loves.

Lincoln said that one of the reasons golf is so important to him is because golf “teaches you humility, self-control, and some really good life lessons.”

Lincoln has shown what happens when you have a passion to work for something big. His victories have impacted his life tremendously, and his interest in trying to learn new things will continue for him.



Lincoln at 2019 District match - photo credit: BJ McPheron

Spring Play 2020: Café Murder

By Brady Vondran (Senior)

On March 13 and 14, Temple Christian students had the opportunity to show off all their hard work by putting on a mystery dinner theater production called *Café Murder*. Wendell Hill was the director of the production. Linda Kiser and Valeri Brokaw helped in casting.

In this production held at Temple, Rosemary Saint-John (Lindsey Stump, junior), a loud, annoying hypochondriac, celebrates her birthday at a restaurant with her five unique sisters, a peace-loving hippie (Emma White, sophomore), twin valley girls (Kaylee Linhart and Emily Bontrager, freshmen), a rough-around-the-edges truck driver (Allison Durst, senior), and a

proper, refined banker (Aubree Linhart, junior).

When Rosemary disappears and is presumed murdered, the only objective witnesses in the restaurant are the audience members, who must cast their votes in this comical murder-mystery. Was the criminal one of Rosemary's sisters or perhaps the self-taught detective (Caleb Kiser, freshman)? Could it have been the passionate French chef Franc (Austin Hill, junior) or the polite and proper *maître d'* (Audrey Powell, junior)?

A shocking discovery of hidden gloves on a table revealed that it was in fact the newly hired, sarcastic server, whose role was alternated between freshmen Ethan Wright and Ilona Szuch.

Audrey Powell said her favorite part while playing the *maître d'* was being questioned by the audience. "I feel like it brought the mystery alive and also challenged me with my acting abilities," she said.



Café Murder- photo credit: Susan Searcy



Café Murder cast - photo credit: Susan Searcy

Emma White agreed by adding, "It was definitely a challenge to improve my skills and overall made me a better actor." She said she was very grateful to be part of such a talented group of people.

Allison Durst, who cherished this play as her last TCS production, said, "My favorite part was how close we got as a cast and getting to play a character that was so unlike anything I have ever done before."

Director Hill said that his favorite parts of *Café Murder* were the scenes that were obviously "over-the-top silly." He also explained reasons why he decided to do this play this year.

“I chose this play for the lower overhead costs and the opportunity for interaction between the cast and members and the audience. This has not been done before, at least to my recollection, on as grand a scale at Temple,” Hill said.

Overall, the *Café Murder* production gave cast members the perfect opportunity to show off their skills while interacting with the audience of all ages. Everyone who attended the dinner theater production left smiling.

TCS Class of 2020 - an editorial

By Carol Smith (Senior)

The Class of 2020 has definitely been through a lot. With school abruptly ending sooner than expected, final experiences being canceled, social distancing, and distance learning being the new norm, we are trying our best to adjust and cope with these changes.

However, despite the inconvenient disruption of the remainder of the 2019-20 school year, we have enjoyed our senior year to the fullest, and have made a ton of memories that will last a lifetime. Let’s take a look back at our incredible class.

Some of our seniors have held honorable positions this year. The senior student government officers were Carol Smith, president; Lydia Bassett, vice president; and Allison Durst, secretary. The National Honor Society members included Grace Smith, who led the group as president, Allison Durst, who held the position of vice president, and Lydia Bassett, who joined this year. The senior class officers were Brady Vondran, president; Lydia Bassett, vice president; Grace Smith, secretary; and Allison Durst, treasurer. Carol Smith and Grace Smith were inducted into the Quill and Scroll Society for excellence in journalism.



Seniors after a basketball game - photo credit: Susan Searcy

As a class, we have also had a couple of outstanding athletes. Jacob Holloway was named 1st Team All-Western Ohio Soccer League and Honorable Mention All NW District Soccer.

Lincoln Waters qualified for the OHSAA State Golf Tournament when he was named co-medalist at Districts. At State, Lincoln tied for 47th place.

Our senior class flower was the sunflower. We chose the colors burgundy and charcoal gray as our class colors.

As a class verse, we chose “So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness,” (Colossians 2:6-7, New International Version).

Our class quote was by Kristian Kan, “In response to those who say stop dreaming and face reality, I say keep dreaming and make reality.”

As you can imagine, we have been emotionally affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused senior year to end sooner than expected. We walked out of the halls of Temple for the last time and didn’t even know it. Though, we do completely understand that the decision to close schools was obviously the best.



Seniors on Valentine's Day - photo credit: Tracy Finch

Nevertheless, we are still sad about the things we are missing out on. There were things we waited for and worked hard for all year, just to have them pulled out from right under our feet, like junior/senior banquet, giving our advice to underclassmen and sharing our favorite memories in chapel, the countdown from 10 on the intercom on our last day, and the senior class trip to Washington, D.C.

As a class, we have talked about these things and have had excitement building up for these events since at least freshman year. We always looked forward to that moment when we would walk out of the halls of Temple for the last time and say, “We did it. We finally made it.” Unfortunately, we will not be able to experience that moment. We aren’t trying to sound selfish for being sad about these things, as we know this COVID-19 crisis is very serious. We are just grieving the loss of the remainder of our senior year.

Jenessa Klingler mentioned that this time has definitely caused sadness, but she also has had some good things come out of this.

“Some negative things were not being able to hug people you love, not being able to hang with your friends, not being able to go fun places, and not having senior year be normal and as great as it could have been.” Jenessa said. However, she added, “I got to sleep in longer, I had time to reflect on life, had time to stay in shape, and I read and learned more about the Bible.”

This time has definitely been sad for me personally. TCS has been a complete blessing in my life. The amazing teachers and staff, the faith-based education system, the opportunities, and the amazing students have all affected my life positively. In the midst of the chaos, I have been trying my best to stay positive and look at the bright side of things.

Although the last couple months have caught us all by surprise, we find comfort in knowing that this chaotic time did not catch the Lord by surprise! He is in complete control of all of this and all glory belongs to Him!

The TCS Class of 2020 will still get to graduate. All may watch our virtual graduation ceremony online via Facebook, YouTube and WOSN on Friday, May 22, at 7 p.m. The class valedictorian is Lydia Bassett, with a cumulative G.P.A. of 4.2. The salutatorian is Allison Durst, with a cumulative G.P.A. of 4.0.

Congratulations to the class of 2020 for their outstanding achievements and for making this year a great one!

A letter from TCS board member Eric Smith

Dear TCS Staff and Family,

I hope and pray that you and your families are well. The last several weeks have been unprecedented for all of us. On behalf of the TCS Board, I want everyone to know we are praying for you. During this time of uncertainty, economic crisis, and shelter in place order, we all have been impacted, but we are optimistic that things will return to normal sooner rather than later.

We, as a board, want to thank you for being so cooperative with your children as they have had to school from home. We understand this added another layer of responsibility to your already very busy lives. Thank you for all you've done.

It is always the board's intention to keep our TCS families, alumni, and students up to speed with everything the school is doing. Here are several updates for your perusal.

Mr. Bowman's Update: We are so grateful for everyone's prayers for our superintendent, Mr. Bowman. His heart procedure was a total success, and he has been slowly integrating himself back into a normal schedule. Each week, his endurance increases, and he is getting stronger by the day! If you get a chance to see Mr. Bowman, please let him know how much you appreciate him. He is a blessing to all of us!

Daycare: Under state orders, we were forced to shut down our daycare on April 3. We are waiting for direction from the governor on when we can reopen. As soon as we get the state's approval, we would like to get the daycare back up and running. It is our honor to offer this service to the community, and we truly value all of our workers who have been so faithful to TCS!

Building update: As our board chairman, Jason Szuch, shared in the February 2020 update, we are exploring several options for TCS. We are still looking at the feasibility of the Home Depot becoming our new home, along with other possibilities and land options in our area. Over the last three years, TCS has seen double-digit growth in enrollment, and we are believing that this will continue to be the norm! The board is very excited about TCS's future, and we know that God will provide the best option for us.

New Website: Please view our new website at tcspioneers.org. The new site is much more user-friendly and easier to navigate. We appreciate all of the hard work and efforts of Dave Clevenger in building this site. Please continue to check the site regularly for updates on everything happening at TCS.

EdChoice update: As many of you know, the State of Ohio has two scholarship programs. The first is the EdChoice Traditional Program. This was created for students who attend or would be designated to attend a failing school district. The second is the EdChoice Expansion Program. This was just created this year for families who meet federal income

guidelines regardless of which school district they attend, and who have children in kindergarten through 12th grade.

The board and I are very excited about the EdChoice Expansion program. This new opportunity allows families of faith to get state funding for their children to attend a private school, based upon their household income. The window for enrolling has now been extended to May 30. Please share this with your friends and check out our website for updates.

Re-enrolling your children: We understand that this is a challenging time for many families, but as a friendly reminder, re-enrollment fees are \$150 per child. This fee helps us purchase needed supplies and textbooks for the upcoming school year. If you have any questions, please contact the school.

Thank you for your continued support! The board and I believe that TCS's best days are ahead of us!

Sincerely,

Eric Smith
TCS Board Member

A special thanks to our alumni!

Thank you, TCS Alumni! We appreciate your support and your continued prayer for Temple Christian School. With the journalism class's online publications and future publications of the TCS Alumni Newsletter, we hope to keep you informed about school events, former classmates, and the faculty and staff at TCS. You can always stay informed with current happenings at TCS by following the Temple Christian website www.tcspioneers.org, our Facebook page, and Twitter account, @TCSPioneers. Thank you, and go Pioneers!



Eric Smith, TCS Board - Photo credit: Eric Smith