

THE VANGUARD SCHOOL OF LAKE WALES

TERM 2 • DECEMBER 2023



CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF LEARNING TOGETHER

The Vanguard School pursues the process of learning and community through unity. We believe learning is a catalyst that impacts every aspect of life as our students enroll for a variety of learning pursuits.

Vanguard's diverse community produces resilient, empathetic, hard-working adults who aspire to lead significant lives.

As an all-gender neurodiverse boarding and day school, we work to help families find a learning environment where care, confidence, and community are central to the learning of each student.

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THE VANGUARD SCHOOL STATEMENT OF VALUES:
THE VANGUARD SCHOOL IS AN INCLUSIVE PREPARATORY BOARDING/DAY SCHOOL
DEDICATED TO EMPOWERING NEURODIVERSE LEARNERS. SPECIALIZING IN
PROVIDING AN INDIVIDUALIZED ENVIRONMENT FOR STUDENTS TO CONNECT TO
LEARNING, FIND A COMMUNITY, BUILD CONFIDENCE, AND SEEK TO IDENTIFY THE
VALUE IN THEMSELVES AND OTHERS.



Happy Holidays to our Vanguard Community



The holiday season is a chance to come together and reflect on the past year. During this time of joy, celebration, and appreciation for family and friends, we know it is also a time when many of you set goals for the year ahead. As we come together as a community at the end of Winter Break, I encourage our students to reflect on the life lessons, hard work, and sacrifices they make to reach their potential and set goals for the new year. I also encourage you to set goals as well, and I hope one of them is visiting campus to see all the wonderful lessons taking place on our campus. It may even motivate you to give to the Vanguard Annual Fund, as you will be inspired by the empathetic, hard-working, and resilient learners you meet on your visit.

The resilience of our Vanguard community shines through on campus daily. We continue to see the benefit of a Vanguard experience when alumni visit us and share their learning success while students at Vanguard. This is when we know the mission is worth our ongoing commitment as these alumni smile, hug, and express their appreciation of how the faculty made them feel so they could reach their potential. More importantly, what the Vanguard community did for their confidence. This community relentlessly pursues our mission: to provide exceptional attention to individual students who learn differently by developing the skills, confidence, and self-advocacy to accomplish life pursuits. (continue on pg. 3)



Community Campus Photography
Left: By Kieran Conrad
Right: By Stephanie Coulombe



Our parents continue to humble us with their unwavering support and passion as they advocate for their students and Vanguard. Vanguard is dedicated to empowering neurodiverse learners and specializes in providing an individualized environment for students to connect to learning, find a community, and build confidence while seeking to identify the value in themselves and others.

Over and over, our teachers and residential faculty have stepped up with their dedication, preparation, and willingness to create a culture of continuous learning so that our students receive the specialized instruction they need to succeed. We invest in ongoing professional development for teachers and residential staff, enhancing a culture of collaboration and continuous experimentation. I want to thank our Board of Trustees and friends of Vanguard, who raised an additional \$25,000 this fall so our staff can continue to be at the forefront of research about executive functioning and the neurodiverse learner. Again, I am humbled by the can-do spirit of our board of trustees and faculty. I thank every board member, teacher, and staff member for their dedication to our students and commitment to our mission. For the fourth year in a row, we have reached 100% participation from our staff. Our Employees have contributed an average of \$100 to the annual fund because they believe in the Vanguard experience's impact on students. I challenge you to get behind this fabulous cause and show your support as well.

As we look forward to 2024, I encourage you to look back on the year and take a moment to appreciate every experience, no matter how small. Thank you so much for your support this past year and if you have not visited Vanguard or it has been a while, please plan to visit this wonderful school and feel the joy on campus. We hope you have a safe and festive holiday season with your family.

Happy Holidays!

L. Shannon Graves
Head of School



Happy Holidays!

OUR BUSINESS TEAM
NATASHA, TIM &
CHERYL



A Learning CommUNITY



Jae Allen
6-12 Principal
& Dean of Students



Ashton Holliday
Academic
Coordinator



Kieran Conrad
Residential
Coordinator



Peter Konneh
School
Counselor



Stacy Robinson
Office Manager
Travel Coordinator

As we conclude 2023, and prepare for the winter break, I want to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude to all who make The Vanguard School an amazing learning community. We are a community with many gifts and talents, from our classrooms, dorms, and all points in between, our collective holistic efforts to grow and prepare the whole diverse learner to thrive in a diverse world.

Our tradition of learning together creates an environment where students grow as resilient, empathetic, hard-working young people who aspire to lead lives of significance filled with passion, commitment, and a willingness to make decisions that may be hard in the present. In the end, these challenging moments have a positive and lasting influence on each student's future.

Recognizing that our campus is our students' home away from home, we offer a welcoming and growing community with nurturing academic and on-site residential staff. Our fall semester has seen students involved with athletic programs, student-led clubs, structured extracurricular activities, on and off-campus group dining, mandatory study halls, dorm activities, and on and off-campus trips/activities. Spring semester athletics include basketball, pep squad, archery, track and field, tennis, and weightlifting, and our monthly trips are available for families to sign up students for central Florida experiences.

In the spirit of this season, I am reminded of my good fortune to serve in leadership at The Vanguard School. Indeed, my career as an educator has afforded me vast, varied, and richly rewarding opportunities to lead, teach, and learn from young people.



To our entire Vanguard community, please have a safe and joyous winter break.

Respectfully,
Dr. J. Allen



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR CHARLES D. BERRY FOUNDATION COMMUNITY AWARD RECIPIENTS

Iyanna W. & Alma T



Austin T., Darrem O. & Ben K.



Ashton Holliday, Academic Coordinator

Our academic and residential mentors take conversations in our book clubs to the next level, fostering intentional discussions that bridge academic and daily life. Our teachers have focused on individualized learning approaches and demonstrating skills through projects, while others tackled essays and other avenues of learning processes—complete with individual accommodations. Academic mentors have been empowering students to take control of their academic destinies. From checking academic updates to proactive communication with teachers directly, our students display more academic autonomy. Seeing our school embodying the core values in students' daily lives is incredible. Kudos to our educators for their engaging and tailored approach to learning!

Congratulations to our seniors! We are thrilled to announce that several of our incredible seniors have received acceptance letters from universities nationwide!

Our students have received early acceptances to the following:

Barry University, Stetson University, Kean University, Lynn University, Kent State University, Miami University, Ohio Wesleyan University, Xavier University, Montgomery County Community College, Caldwell University, University of Memphis, Hartwick College, McDaniel College, Mercyhurst University, and more!

Kieran Conrad, Residential Coordinator

We are excited to share an overview of our residential life program, a crucial and individualized learning aspect of your child's experience at Vanguard School. We commit ourselves to providing an environment that fosters autonomy, responsibility, and a strong sense of community among our students.

Our dedicated residential life staff supports and guides your child on this journey. Open communication embodies the heart of our approach, and we encourage students to voice their thoughts, concerns, and ideas. By engaging in meaningful conversations and seeking opportunities to improve campus life, we aim to create an environment where students feel heard, valued, and supported.

Consistency, fairness, and accountability remain fundamental to dormitory behavior and orderliness expectations. We look to provide a safe and respectful living space where every student can thrive. Clear guidelines and expectations ensure that staff treat all residents fairly and that students become accountable for their actions and inaction.

Peter Konneh, School Counselor

The Vanguard School takes mental health very seriously, and we make every effort to ensure students feel comfortable during the transition period throughout their tenure on campus. Learning together about mental health in school lets students feel less alone and offers them the resources they need for self-development. Vanguard school students are mentally healthy, ready to learn, actively engaged in school activities, and have supportive and caring connections with school mentors and professionals.

The Infirmary and Counseling Team helps students with social skills, stress, anxiety, social communication, appropriate problem-solving skills and coping skills, acute health challenges, engaging in a positive school culture, and more. We encourage students to share their feelings and build positive trusting relationships and boundaries with teachers and peers.

Learning Together

The Vanguard School would like to share their gratitude for the ongoing learning and professional development across all we do!

We thank the following people and organizations for providing continuous opportunities for education and learning for our community and beyond! Whether recruiting and building partnerships, learning about new research, visiting school communities, and sharing unique approaches, learning together means providing a supportive and best-fit community for our students.

Thank you to FCIS, NAIS, TABS, LDA, IDA, IECA, AISAP, The Seminole Tribe of Florida, The Social Institute, Child Mind Institute, Beacon College, Forman School, Riverview School, Maplebrook School, Dr. Joelle Hood at Thriving University, and many more!

Below are some of the learning and partner experiences from this year.

Left to right: IECA Tampa, The Vanguard School in Pennsylvania, The Glenholme School, Study Travel in Frankfurt, Germany, School Connections in Germany and Miami, Marvelwood School, TABS in Brazil, The Phelps School, Excellence in Education Poland, LDSG in Bermuda, Capstone Education in Vietnam



Gratitude and Gifts

As a part of Learning Together includes recognition and awareness, our staff, students, and families took time this holiday season to share their thoughts and gratitude.

Our Staff and Faculty are thankful for...

I'm thankful for good health, my home & my family.

My friends and family

I am thankful for so many things: my family and friends, my lovely dog, my home, my health, and, possibly most importantly, my hand sanitizer and Lysol spray.

My family who are very supportive of each other.

I have much to be Thankful for - Church family, family, friends, health, Vanguard, and freedom, to name a few. So Blessed!

I am thankful waking up everyday and sharing my life with my family and friends! Especially with all my students and co-workers!

I am thankful for the empathy on campus. Everyone on campus supports and encourages one another.

Our Students and Families are thankful for...

I am thankful for Vanguard!

Thankful for the gift of life and family

The people at the Vanguard School have changed my son's life!!

I am grateful for traveling because I love to explore new places. I also love the culture and the history of new places I am visiting. I love my school. :D

I am thankful for my family and I am also thankful for the Thanksgiving break.

I'm thankful for my dogs and Tyler O! <3

Cross country, the staff and everyone in between. I love my own family though more than anything else along with my home away from home which is Vanguard. Oh and the friends I have made are the best anyone could ever ask for and I'm more grateful for them than anyone would ever know.

I am thankful that the staff is able to help me with problems and be able to talk to somebody from staff in order to help me feel comfort and relief from my problems.

Our Gratitude...

Thank you to everyone who has donated to our Annual Fund!

A very special thank you to

Cowles Charitable Trust
Charles D. Berry Foundation
Rob and Diane Klingel
William and Ramona Easter
Gene Graves
Tom Owen
June Ullman

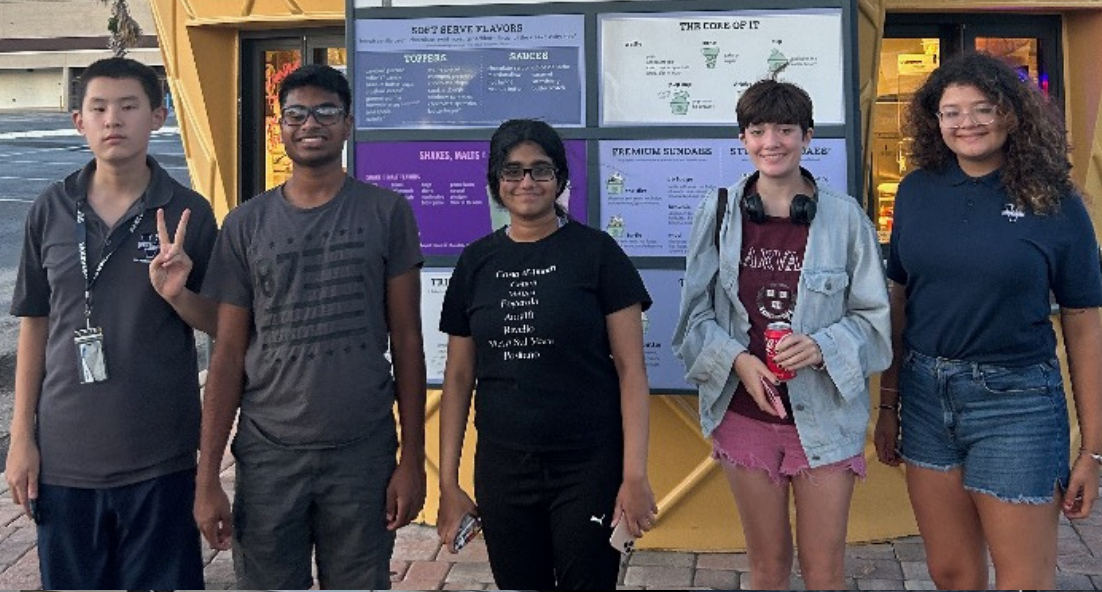
You can designate where your donation is best served! As a 501c3, your donation is tax-deductible, too!

Choose which donation option works best for you:

- Use the QR code with your phone camera
- Visit <https://www.vanguardschool.org/donate>
- Call us to make a donation or discuss your gift

Donate today, and share your passion for Vanguard with others!







Alumni Community

Connections with our alumni and learning of their path forward are rewarding for our entire community. We encourage this connection and spotlighting alum success reinforces the mission for Vanguard School.

We have been hearing from more of our alums and want to hear from you! From the Class of 1995, Ronald John Pephens visited our campus this fall, and shared some thoughts about his learning journey.

Congratulations on all of your success, Ron!

Ron attended college right after Vanguard and graduated with a degree in Graphic Design from the Art Institute of Houston. He started his career in graphic design work with real estate companies and various sign companies. He also worked in web design, then returned to school for computer animation from 1999 to 2001. His interest grew from a technical drawing class at Vanguard School in 1994-1995.

As a student, he stated that the level system (similar to our Core Value system today) was the main factor that helped him work hard to be a better person. He started lower on the level system and eventually worked his way up and graduated with honors. His main goal was to work to maintain the highest level he achieved. Out of the core values, he said he learned the most about integrity and leadership while in Vanguard School. These core values have helped him with his new life journey as a father.

He is married and has a daughter. He now works in security and has succeeded in this career path for the past decade. He is now the security supervisor for the City of Longmont, where he and his team maintain recreational facilities. Ron stated that he loves his job (working for the city), which is something we all aspire to.

Congratulations Ron, and thank you for visiting The Vanguard School!

Schedule
a visit!
Contact us
to plan your
visit to
campus



Join the Alum
Network

Follow us on
Social Media



[the.vanguard.school](https://www.the.vanguard.school)



The Vanguard School
in Lake Wales, FL

Contact us to share
your ideas
or learn how to
connect in more
ways with our
community!
pr@vanguardschool.org

LEARN ABOUT OUR COMMUNITY

The Vanguard School is now enrolling for Fall 2024-25

The Vanguard School is an inclusive preparatory boarding/day school dedicated to empowering **neurodiverse** learners. Specializing in providing an individualized environment for students to **connect** to learning, find a **community**, build **confidence**, and seek to identify the value in themselves and others. We strive to produce adults with the grit and skills to pursue personal interests and goals.

Contact our **Admission Team** to discuss more about our individualized approach for 6th through 12th-grade diverse learners



Susi Vacek

Will Peterson

admissions@vanguardschool.org

Top Reasons Parents Shared for Enrolling their Child

Small Class Size
Small Campus Census
Peer Relationship Guidance
Mentors
Core Values Focus
Athletic Participation
Financial Consideration

Community Demographics Domestic and International Students

Bermuda, The Bahamas, Brazil, Canada, Cayman Islands, China, Dominican Republic, Germany, Puerto Rico, Turks & Caicos, Uganda, United Kingdom, Vietnam

California, Connecticut, Florida, Indiana, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Tennessee, Texas

What Support Does The Vanguard School Offer?

- Math and Language-Based Learning Challenges
- Healthy Peer Relationships
- Individual Leadership
- Independent Living Skills
- Social Skills and Confidence
- Learning Accommodations for All

Contact us to learn more about our diverse learning community of 120 students in 6th-12th grades. We accept Florida State scholarships, and offer rolling admissions.



www.vanguardschool.org