

The cover image displays just some of the hands that put in work to invest in the education of our students, from parents to our faculty, administration, volunteers, and board.

PICTURED ABOVE & ON COVER (BACK ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT) B. LaTanya Davis (Math & Science Teacher), G. Ashley Handley (Curriculum Coordinator), H. Ty Williams (Associate Director), I. Richard Abernethy (Board Member) [MIDDLE ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT]

f. Darnell Gardner (Board Member), G. Brian Goessling (Executive Director), A. LaTonja Cummings (Volunteer and Parent) [FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT] E. Quenten Long (2nd Grader), A. Dedric Cummings (4th Grader)

There are so many things seeking to separate people in the world today. Paul reminds us of those things that bring us together in unity in his letter to the Ephesians. Now, more than ever, do we need God's Word and His Gospel to guide us in truth and love. This year at Restoration Academy we will be focused on a theme of unity as found in Ephesians 4:1–6. As we look back on the 2019–2020 school year, It is my desire that you would find encouragement and hope in what you see in this annual report and give great glory to God for the things that He is doing at Restoration Academy.

I, therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

-Ephesians 4:1-6

WHEN I THINK OF

we stand together a belief statement about race and unity

As a Restoration Academy family consisting of staff, administrators, board members, and school resource officers, we are united in stating that the following tenets are biblically grounded and true:

We believe that Jesus Christ has called His people to "be the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). When on earth, Jesus shined a bright light through acts of compassion, truth, grace, and justice. Ultimately, He gave His life so that we could live. We too as light are expected to shine brightly in a dark world. Our light should reveal the goodness of the kingdom of God but also expose the harsh realities of sin on this earth.

We believe that we must shine a light on and lament racial injustice wherever it is found in our country. We believe that racism is a sin. We believe that all men and women are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) and therefore each individual has extraordinary dignity. With that said, there is a long history in our nation that has not affirmed the dignity of black lives. From slavery through Jim Crow segregation, denial of voting rights, discriminatory lending practices, unconstitutional policing tactics, and incidents of police brutality, we have seen our nation perpetuate horrendous acts of systemic injustice. Like Nehemiah and King Josiah (Nehemiah 9:2, 2 Kings 22:13), we lament and confess not only for our own sins but also for the sins of our ancestors who were involved or silent during these incidents of suffering. Our hearts are grieved that the Imago Dei has not been universally affirmed in the lives of our black- and brown-skinned brothers and sisters.

We believe that the Body of Christ is composed of unique and diverse people. Part of this diversity includes ethnic diversity. In I Corinthians 12, the apostle Paul reminds us that every part of the Body "belongs" (verse 14) and that every single part of this Body "is needed" (verse 21). Unfortunately throughout much of American history, not all of our black- and brown-skinned brothers and sisters have been affirmed in this reality. Sadly, this mindset has sometimes occurred in and outside the church. In verse 26 Paul says, "When one member suffers all suffer together." We must be mindful that when any member suffers or dies, this should create a response of lamentation throughout the Body of Christ. This should be our first response. Co-suffering is a signpost of interconnectedness.

We believe that God passionately defends the poor and oppressed (James 1:27, Matthew 25:31-40, Psalm 10, Isaiah 58). God requires all of His people to "do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God" (Micah 6:8). "Doing justice" can only be done in space where injustice exists. In Matthew 5:9

we are told that we are "peacemakers." This means that we are entrusted to make peace wherever it is missing or broken. This entails God's people to vocally, physically, and financially stand in the gap for justice so that those who are oppressed may experience peace and justice.

We believe that God has instructed us all to obey and respect our authorities (Romans 13:1–7, Hebrews 13:17). We endorse obedience and respect for the men and women who serve in our police forces. We acknowledge the daily danger ever-present in their vocation and the heroism frequently exhibited in doing their duty. We believe that most of these men and women seek to serve and protect their communities with excellence. However, we understand that there are those in authority that abuse their power, and these individuals should always be held accountable. Part of pursuing justice is demanding that those in power give an account for abusing those they serve (Jeremiah 22:15–16, Ezekiel 16:49, James 2:1-13, 5:1–6).

In Jeremiah 29:7 God instructed His people to "seek the peace of the city." We believe that seeking the peace of our city will involve the diverse Body of Christ to work in unity to proclaim the message of reconciliation founded on Jesus and to produce peace by affirming the dignity of black lives, by reforming systems of injustice and oppression, by co-laboring with police and city officials, by lamenting where peace is missing, and by celebrating wherever peace is found.

We believe that we have a "living hope" in the risen Jesus Christ (I Peter 1:3). Jesus came to earth to die the death that we deserve. In His death, burial and resurrection He triumphed over sin, and this includes the sin of racism. Through this sacrifice, He also created the means for us to have unity, fellowship, and reconciliation with others. We are ambassadors of reconciliation and commissioned to take this gospel message of hope into a darkened and broken world (2 Corinthians 5:18–21). We believe that the message of the gospel is demonstrated in both word and deed (James 1:22–25, Luke 7:18–23). In Christ, the salvific message of the gospel, and the peace that comes from His kingdom, we have an "abundant life" to offer for today and for eternity (John 10:10).

In conclusion, we believe that the power of the gospel is the only thing to arouse and create lasting change. The gospel not only is a means to reconcile us to God but also the conduit to reconcile us to one another. Apart from the gospel, we do not have the power or the ability to see our hearts or the hearts of others changed. The gospel opens our eyes so that we can truly see (John 9:25). The gospel of Jesus Christ provides true hope in the mission and ministry of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:16–21).

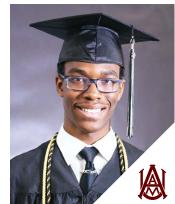






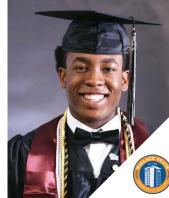
Malcolm Bonner





Isaiah Dorsey









Alisa Lee

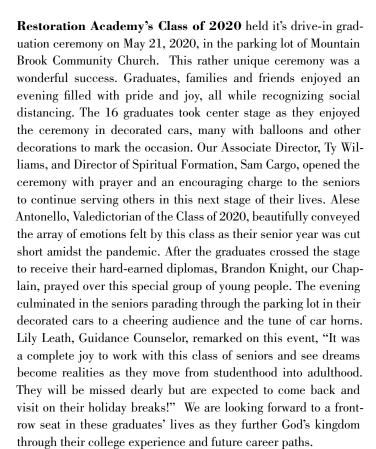


Kirstyn Poole



Khari Pugh













Brelyn Sims





Rashad Wells

MEET THE CLASS OF 2020











RESTORE: ANNUAL REPORT FOR RESTORATION ACADEMY RESTORE: ANNUAL REPORT FOR RESTORATION ACADEMY

We began this school year encouraging the Restoration Academy family to Taste & See God's goodness during the 2019-2020 school year. We focused our attention on the fruit of the spirit and prayed our students would taste the Lord's provision! Little did we know that the Lord was bringing many changes amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. We celebrate our students who have overcome so many obstacles in their education, the least of which is a three-month quarantine. See how they continued to Taste & See His provision during this extended period of quarantine.



LEARNING FROM A DISTANCE

On March 14th, Restoration Academy closed in order to slow the spread of COVID-19. Our team worked tirelessly to transition the school to an online learning platform; two weeks later, RA Away launched! RA Away is a full-bodied online learning program created for each of the 365 students at Restoration Academy. God has given us 365 precious, uniquely made students who depend on the school to educate them holistically and fully in Christ-centered education. We are so thankful that even amidst a global pandemic, this commitment did not falter during online learning. Even over the internet, education at RA was excellent and our students were continually pointed to Jesus!



DISTRIBUTING LAPTOPS

When RA students were sent home for the rest of the school year, they suddenly needed to access and participate in virtual school This led to our laptop distribution initiative starting on March 14th and leading into the summer. With the help of our IT department, we were able to loan over 100 computers to our students so that they could access online learning. Our team was even able to ensure that all Restoration Academy families were connected to wi-fi for this school season. It was amazing to see RA committed to making sure none of our families lacked what they needed technologically to finish the school year.

—Dedric Cummings, 4th Grader



We should all come together...like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. addressed in his speech. I hope that one day the world will get in a big circle and pray for all people to come together as one."



FOOD DISTRIBUTION

COVID-19 and the consequential closing of schools brought many new challenges to RA. One question that came from this change was how our food program could continue. While Restoration Academy does not have a lunch program for our students, we do provide fresh fruit and nutritious snacks during the school year for students whose families are food challenged. During the COVID-19 pandemic, those students remained food challenged but were unable to access RA's food offerings. Thanks to a few of our church partners, including Covenant Presbyterian Church, we were able to provide food for thirty RA families who were affected by this crisis — a total of 150 meals per week! Fresh fruit, handmade casseroles, lunch food and snacks were distributed each week, helping families in incredible ways! Even during this strange and challenging time, we were encouraged to see our partners come together to help RA continue it's mission and love others well.



A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE

"I was so impressed with how even though our babies were at home, the communication from Restoration Academy was impeccable! I mean I had heard horror stories from some of my friends who's kids attended other schools. As a parent I never felt left out. RA was very good at communication with us and they made the transition very smoothly even for those that didn't have computers at home! They continued to pray for us, they checked on us and inquired if we had needs during this pandemic because it was really tough. They even provided supplies weekly for those that needed it! That was a real blessing especially for those that were not working during the time. Even with discussing plans with school reopening in the fall, we are blessed to have been involved in the process with the faculty and staff on what I feel is an awesome plan of action! You see that is what I absolutely love about Restoration Academy! They operate in a spirit of excellency and they not only tell us they care, they show us! This is why my son is a part of this wonderful family!"

—LaTonja Cummings, Mother of Dedric Cummings













TASTE SEF

From the grand opening of a new building to the sudden transition to online school and everything in between—this year was one of change. It's hard to believe that this time last year, we were preparing for a normal school year and that it so quickly became a year like none other. Even with so many unknowns, it was clear that the Lord's hand was in it all; we have "one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:6). We are so encouraged to look back at this year and see how God unified us. We hope you are encouraged too.



























where are they now?

A look at four RA alums who have recently become alumni from various institutions of higher education.





KAYLA BROWN, '16

Kayla has been accepted into and will enter the Alabama A&M University Masters of Social Work program in the fall. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Social Work from Alabama A&M





WILLIAM GARRETT, '14

This year, William is graduating with an MBA from The University of West Alabama. William has an undergraduate degree in Accounting from The University of Alabama and currently lives in Atlanta, Georgia.





KIERRA PRICE, '15

Kierra graduated from the University of Alabama at Birmingham this year with a Bachelor of Arts in Theater. She wants to specialize in directing and is currently working to build her experience in the

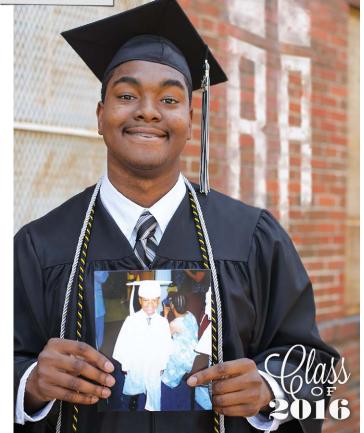


"Unity is when God's children love and respect each other."

— Quenten Long, 2nd Grader







TRENT MCMULLEN, '16



There was a joyous celebration when we heard that RA alumnus. Trent McMullen, had just been accepted into the Physical Therapy Doctoral Program at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) Immediately, memories of Trent's time at RA and the hard work this young man has put forth during his young life flooded our minds.

Trent began attending Restoration Academy as a kindergartner. Many of our faculty and staff have been fortunate to witness the Lord work mightily in his life for over thirteen years. His quiet demeanor, humble spirit, work ethic, and focus pierced his most adverse circumstances.

Inspired by his math teacher, Mrs. Connie Edwards, Trent and three of his friends made a pact. They committed to graduating from high school and college. All four of these young men are fulfilling this commitment today. By the time Trent graduated from Restoration Academy in 2016, he had earned the extraordinary opportunity to travel to New York City and meet top executives at various New York-based companies with the non-profit organization Cultivating Hope. Two years later, Trent found himself making a second trip to New York. This time, Trent, those same friends who made a pact for success, and their math teacher were honored by the Three Doctors Foundation with the "Positive Peer Pressure Award".

Senior year was fast approaching, and Trent was working harder than ever. He was enrolled in Restoration Academy's AP calculus class, taught by Mrs. Connie Edwards. Only a handful of students would survive the rigors of the course. Trent recollected. "day after day, we would take practice AP calculus exams. It was the hardest thing I've ever done." His perseverance paid off. After it was all said and done, Trent scored the highest possible score on the AP calculus exam, which catapulted him into the top one percentile in the state of Alabama and the top three percentile in the nation among AP calculus test-takers.

Trent went on to study Exercise Science with a concentration in Physical Therapy at The University of Alabama. His freshmen year would prove to be life-changing. While playing a pick-up game of basketball, he was injured and was prescribed physical therapy sessions. "It was then that I got to see firsthand what physical therapists did and how they helped me. During my sessions, I kept thinking I could do this," Trent recalled.

Later, when asked about the impact Restoration Academy has had on his life, Trent said this, "Restoration Academy forged and trained me to work hard and go over and beyond." Working hard and going over and beyond would carry him through the next three years at UA. Trent graduated from The University of Alabama in 2020 and is looking forward to his first day of class in UAB's doctoral program on January 11, 2021. He is expected to graduate with a doctorate of physical therapy in 2023. We never knew the quiet, humble little kindergartner would become Dr. Trent McMullen, DPT. Still, we approach every student at Restoration Academy with the wholehearted belief that each one of them could be.



Keeping a culture of unity in our school was one of our greatest priorities during quarantine. In the midst of E-learning, Mrs. Wall's 2nd grade class found a creative way to still feel close to one another! In March, Mrs. Wall's online classroom page quickly became a kind of virtual post office where students were able to correspond with each other, along with other family members, teachers, or friends. One student in particular, Cortez, decided to write to the Birmingham Police Department to tell them how thankful he was that they were protecting his city. He guickly received a wonderful response from BPD and was able to speak with them over video call! Postmaster Wall enjoyed seeing how this assignment kept her class's "family feel" alive and how it cultivated a friendly and considerate online environment.





Rhythms of Restoration

The aim of Restoration Academy's Art Department has always been to provide an outlet for students to express themselves. This past year was no exception. As a part of the new building expansion, RA added a completely updated art classroom, as well as its first dedicated music classroom. Both of these areas helped our students develop and showcase their creative skills. With the new music room, we offered students multiple courses, including a choir class and an African drum circle course. We saw many students showcase their artistic gifts throughout our Fine Arts Month in February and enjoyed African drum circle performances for the Christmas and Black History programs. RA also offered dance classes for elementary and middle school students. Special thanks to our art teacher Lydia Larrivee, our music teacher Kimberly Jones, and our dance instructors Debbie Stotser and Amy Long. We are also grateful for the people who have supported these initiatives.

Glorifying God as a Team

Elizabeth Phipps has been teaching 4th grade at Restoration Academy for the past 3 years and will now be coaching our girl's volleyball team! Her passion for volleyball began in 6th grade and was carried into high school and college. When asked what her desires for the team are, Mrs. Phipps replied: "My goal for our

volleyball team is to create a culture of excellence that begins in the classroom and is carried out onto the court. One lesson that I learned while playing college volleyball is how important a team's culture is to the success of that team. I want our team culture at RA to be one that holds our athletes accountable to give their all in whatever they are pursuing and ultimately glorify the Lord while doing so."

Due to COVID, this upcoming season brings many unknowns. Throughout this uncertainty, Mrs. Phipps hopes the team can build trust and cohesiveness. "Whether competing in games or competing in practice, this season our team will be pursuing excellence by building a culture in which we glorify God in all we say and do."





WATCH DR. ROWE WITH STUDENTS ON FOX 6



High School Helpers

Our senior class had many opportunities to serve the community and our school this year. Each month, seniors volunteered with the Church of the Reconciler Food Bank. Before the seniors began volunteering, it would take three men hours unloading 2 tons of food each month. In an effort to make the food delivery much more efficient, the pastor at the Church of the Reconciler reached out to RA. With the help of 18 sets of extra hands, the work was done in less than an hour! Not only did the seniors serve in this way, but they also participated in a reading program with our elementary students. Seniors visited various elementary classes each week and read to students, creating an environment that encouraged children to read while also allowing them to get to know each other. We hope that our graduates will take what they learned about service into the real world and continue to lead by serving others!



Romans 15:6 tells us, together we may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

With humble beginnings, housed in a dilapidated wing of a church, Restoration Academy now spans two buildings with over 360 scholars.

Our founders, Dr. and Mrs. Anthony Gordon, once shared, "Restoration Academy began as a need—a need for a safe place for children to learn and grow in a community riddled with gang violence and drug activity. The desire to have a safe place for students to learn, grow, and hear the gospel turned into an idea. The idea became a prayer—a prayer that changed into a vision, and that vision became a reality in 1988 when 69 students showed for the first day of school eager to rise above their circumstances." Since then, RA has united the body of Christ with one goal: advancing the two greatest commandments in each student's life. We are called to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love others as ourselves.

On Tuesday, December 18, 2018, Restoration Academy broke ground on an 11,000-square-foot addition. The undertaking would

require an extraordinary effort and contributions from individuals, including our staff, students, church partners, small businesses, and corporate partners, to raise the 2.4 million dollars needed to build a state-of-the-art building.

As families and friends enter our new building, they always notice the many wonderful features that we have been blessed with. As soon as one comes inside, they will notice security upgrades throughout both buildings. Our students are now also greeted with a colorful mural that bears our school's mission statement. The newly constructed spaces were built with large windows to let in natural light. In addition to spacious classrooms, the new space features a fine arts wing with a visual arts studio where our students can discover their love for artistic expression along with a music room filled with instruments. From this music room, it's not uncommon to hear the rhythmic heartbeat of our African drum circle. There are also dedicated tutoring spaces where tutors from across our city plant seeds for success, restore confidence, and build long-lasting relationships with students.

Evidence of unity is all around us and throughout the halls of Restoration Academy. We could not have built any of this for our precious students without the support of so many of you.





TOP: Art has been taught in a variety of spaces in our current high school, but hasn't yet had its own space. The new art studio is a place where all students can create and reflect their amazing creator.

LEFT: Like the visual arts, music is something that has filled whatever space was available. Music now has its own space, sound proofed and all.

BOTTOM LEFT: The creation of a new main office with a waiting area provides a central entry point for guests to the school as well as a far more functional space for parents and students.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Art can change a space from ordinary to extraordinary! The mural by celebrated artist Sean Gilder with Red Path Creative frames the learning space while reminding students of the RA mission.





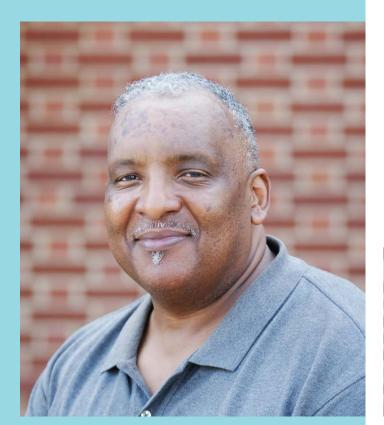
"Unity is something you contend for in love."

-Brian Goessling, Executive Director

"You can't have Unity without Diversity."

- Richard Twiss, cited by Darnell Gardner, Board Member





TY WILLIAMS **Associate Director**

Ty Williams has served at Restoration Academy as the Development Director for the past two decades. This year, he is excited to expand his role at RA as the new Associate Director. When Mr. Williams first joined RA, he had no idea what "development" meant or even how long he would stay at RA. God quickly showed Mr. Williams that His plans were far greater. With this new opportunity, Mr. Williams will lead development efforts for the school, but he will also be more involved in the academic and athletic teams. He is hopeful that his years of service, leadership, and relationship building will continue to positively impact the overall mission of the school.

"I have learned to appreciate the beauty of diversity in unity. What that means to me is that although we come from different backgrounds and experiences, we do have the ability to come together for one cause and one purpose. "

—Ty Williams, Associate Director

STAFF

We've welcomed several new people to our team, or transitioned several people in to new positions.



BRIDGETTE ANTONELLO Director of Stewardship



Development Assistant



DEMETRIUS COATES



BRANDON KNIGHT



DR. PAULETTE ROWE Director of Alumni Affairs Child & Family Counselor



ANNE-MARIE TOULIATOS

"Unity is respecting all people, no matter their color, gender, age, zip code, etc. Working together, respecting each other's knowledge, opinions, etc. if when different from your own. Having the ability to bring all together, where all are feeling included, being heard, and especially being valued and respected."

> —LaTanya Davis 7th Grade Math & Science Teacher

RESTURATAIN

(NOTEWORTHY STATS FROM THE 2019-20 SCHOOL YEAR & PRESENT)

number of years in which 100% of RA graduates have been accepted to college



total scholarship dollars accepted by the graduating Class of '20

student population

2020-2021 school year



student: teacher ratio in elementary classes

student: teacher ratio in a jr/sr high class

largest student: teacher ratio in a jr/sr high class average composite ACT score of RA's last two graduating classes

average high composite ACT score of RA's last two graduating classes

number of Chromebooks loaned out to students for online learning during Spring 2020

students prayed to receive Christ as their Savior last school year

2020-21 BUDGET \$3.748M

COST PER S9,990

*based on the enrollment numbers at the start of the 2020--21 academic year



*based on 2019-20 school year

5% comes from tuition

54%: tax-deductible, charitable donations

41%: Alabama Accountability Act contributions

WAYS YOU CAN HELP SUPPORT THE MISSION

For the 2020–21 school year, Restoration Academy will need to raise approximately \$2.03 million in tax-deductible contributions. Over the past 30 years, these generous donations have made it possible to offset the tuition costs of our students.

Supporters give charitable gifts in a variety of ways, monthly or annually. Supporters who give \$1,000, or more, during the course of the year are matched with a specific student at the school and the supporter receives monthly correspondence from that student, providing you with a tangible way of seeing what your gift is providing in the life of a student you will get to know.

WAYS TO INCREASE GIVING AT NO ADDITIONAL COST

The Alabama Accountability Act has provided a two-fold blessing. First, AAA has provided us with much of the additional means to double our entire elementary in just five years. Second, it allows our supporters and businesses to increase their contributions to RA by giving up to 50% of their state-tax liability to a scholarship-granting organization (Scholarships for Kids) to assist students who are zoned for failing schools or who live at a certain threshold of poverty. We are on track to expand to over 500 students in the very near future.

To learn more about how to increase your giving through AAA please visit

www.restorationacademy.org/aaa





HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

For over 30 years, Restoration Academy has relied almost solely on the Body of Christ to provide for our unique mission. In Jeremiah 29:7, we're instructed to "seek the peace" of our city. There are a myriad of ways to do this at RA, and we'd like to invite you to join us.

BECOME A MENTOR

We are in close partnership with the ASPIRE Movement as they seek to match mentors with individual students to develop dynamic discipleship opportunities. These relationships are mutually transformational and can have a great impact on those involved. Please contact Brandon Knight for more information:

bknight@restorationacademy.org

BECOME A SUPPORTER

At Restoration, each student is provided a quality, Christ-centered education regardless of their zipcode or socioeconomic status. Your contribution helps keep this stellar education affordable for RA scholars. On average, 60% of our budget is raised through these tax deductible gifts. Contribute a one-time, monthly, or annual gift at:

www.restorationacademy.org/give-now



VOLUNTEER

There are many unique ways to join the mission at Restoration Academy this year. For more information, visit

www.restorationacademy.org/volunteer





This year—due to COVID-19—our visitor luncheons will be virtual until further notice (visit our website for more info).

Even with this change, our luncheons will continue to be the best way to learn more about RA. Hear from special speakers, discover RA's mission, and meet our students! Please see the calendar below and register online at: www.restorationacademy.org/luncheons

 September 3, 2020
 February 4, 2021

 October 1, 2020
 March 4, 2021

 November 5, 2020
 April 1, 2021

 December 3, 2020
 May 6, 2021



RESTORE: ANNUAL REPORT FOR RESTORATION ACADEMY 18



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ARTIST STATEMENT: THE COVER

"In times of COVID, we had to get creative about how we could communicate the idea of unity whilst still respecting social distancing. The cover concept is built around hands becoming representative of (some of) the co-laborers that work in harmony to ensure that students at Restoration Academy are receiving a top-notch, Christ-centered education."

-Geoff Sciacca

Associate Professor, Samford University & Annual Report Designer



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