

Gator "Grad" -tude

An aerial view of GVHS presents an imposing institutional edifice, a stone-laden Praetorian Guard providing safety for the triumvirate of arts, athletics, and academics to commit itself to excellence. But inside the walls are living, breathing people, with both talents and flaws, partaking in character transfusions from one generation to the next. Inside the security of the walls, I interacted with Isaac Newton's three laws and John Locke's second treatise, and also with an Isaac and a John. Inside the walls, I found that choral harmonization requires as much listening as singing, and that three strangers playing basketball in freshmen gym class become friends when aligned by common purpose. The Activity inside the walls developed in me the tendency to persevere, to fail and get back up again and again, representing an important ideal in a country where opportunities are available for those who wish to pursue them.

I'd wager I'm not the only person who read this question, lifted a brow, and asked: "What is post-secondary success?" Happiness? Money? Becoming an effective U.S. citizen? A global citizen? Perhaps a savior of souls? Or a steward of Mother Nature? Whatever it may be, GVHS provided a foundation, preparing me to enter the world ready to ask this question and seek and answer for myself. The opportunities and challenges inherent in the continuing reception of new ideas prevented adolescent world views from stagnating into axioms and incorrigibility until a time, today, when I am more self-aware and more able to survey the world from my own eyes.

Ben Reitz

Class of 2002

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