

# HOW THE PAST INFORMS OUR FUTURE

**R**EADING THROUGH this issue of the *ECF Reporter* reminds me that for generations this institution has successfully built upon its past to enrich its future.



The memories of Founder's Day and its powerful impact on the lives of students and adults alike throughout the years is an example of the past influencing the future. I shall not forget the speech made by Howard Wolfson '85 last year when he shared the story of skipping school and the lessons learned, while reminding us of the fact that there are many schools that teach one how to be a better student but few who focus on how to be a better person. This year's speaker, Rebecca Spitz '90, reminded us through the example of her own life as a journalist that we are confronted with ethical and moral decisions in daily life in whatever profession we choose. Both gave examples of the ethical training they experienced here at ECF, which influenced their past and continues to inform their daily lives.

The description of the upper school course, Moral Leadership in Personal and Professional Life, is another great example of the past building toward the future. Through students working with faculty, a course was revised and made more relevant by focusing on a commitment to moral leadership as seen through the eyes of invited alumni/ae who are asked to speak of their own experiences, helping current students build personal leadership skills. The fact that the class of 1955 provided extra funds to support the travel expenses for the speakers helps connect past students to future leaders in a very real way.

Building upon the past success of a course

entitled Settlement: The West Bronx Story, we are introducing the new City Semester: The Bronx Experience, an experiential interdisciplinary program that is akin to taking a semester abroad without leaving the city. This will include Serving the City, a course that collaborates with community organizations in the Bronx, thus building on our historical service component that has and will always be a vital part of ECF culture.

Hands-on art experiences have enriched the lives of students here at ECF for generations, and this issue again reminds us of the curriculum and its expression through the arts, which prepares our students for a life enhanced by avenues of self-expression, which can in turn touch the lives of others. The charming first grade collages on the cover give us insight into early impressions of life seen through their eyes.

And finally, our community was inspired by the power of Charlayne Hunter-Gault's Fieldston graduation address. She recalled her own experience of girding herself with values, and how a sense of worth and self-confidence instilled in her by family and other important people in her life allowed her the strength to confront and withstand the challenges she faced as the first black woman to graduate from the University of Georgia.

As I end my two years among you, I am confident that the richness of the past informs this institution and gives strength to the exciting future emerging under the leadership of our new head of school, Damian J. Fernandez. I wish you all the best.

Joyce Gregory Evans  
Interim Head of School