

March 28
2025

A FACULTY OF FRIENDS

from the desk of Chad Ashby
Founding Head of School



A school is only as strong as its faculty. I'm saying it now, and I want you all to hold us to it! The Oaks Academy will rise and fall on the strength of its teachers.

Here's what we have to offer: a collection of flawed men and women redeemed by the gospel whose hearts have been set free to love their Maker, his world, and his children. These humble folks have a knack for teaching, and, *I believe*, are not living in Western PA by accident. They have been planted in this patch of soil because they have been called to lead our students further into the truth—and to delight in God's goodness and beauty together in our classrooms at The Oaks.

It's a tricky thing to build the first faculty of a new academy. What will hold it together? What will be its glue? I can think of no better bond than Christian friendship. Friends talk. Friends argue. Friends pray. Friends sing. Friends eat. Friends share. Friends are merry together.

One of the greatest honors our God and Savior has bestowed upon us is this very status of friend: "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you *friends*, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you" (Jn 15:15). Our new teachers are a treasury of experience and wisdom, filled with knowledge, ideas, and passion vital for the growth of The Oaks as an institution—and *its students* as image-bearers.

As friends who delight in God's good gifts—books, art, food, books, atoms, Plato, stars, geometry, and did I mention books?—we hope to draw our families into a campus united around Christ where it's normal to feast, to be curious, and to learn.

Pray for our faculty this spring and summer as we seek not only to build class plans, select curriculum, and prepare classrooms, but also to grow as friends. It will require a common vision, trust, forgiveness, patience, and a whole lot of hope.

Honestly, the same is true for all of us—parents, teachers, and students of The Oaks Academy. John reminds us, "Greater love has no one than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (Jn 15:13). It's going to take sacrifice from all of us to pull this thing off. While I know our faculty will teach our kids how to write a persuasive essay, bake a proper scone, and track planetary retrograde motion in 2025-2026, I hope that together we can teach our students what it means to be *true friends*.

All's well and quick march!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chad Ashby'.

MEET THE TEACHERS



KELLIE DUNN

Classical Literature

Mrs. Dunn has been teaching for over a decade, much of that in the classical tradition. She taught history, literature, writing, and grammar at the Gideon Study Center and currently teaches writing at the SEEDS school. Before that, she was a teacher, supervisor, and educational director at Huntington Learning Center.

Kellie comes to The Oaks with a degree in English Secondary Ed from Duquesne and a PA Teaching Certification. More importantly, she brings a zeal for technical composition and love for great books!

She and her husband Andrew have two daughters ages 6 and 8 that she homeschools, and they are very active at Waterdam Church. Fun fact: she is legally blind in her left eye!



MATTHEW CUMMINS

Algebra I, Medieval History, Earth Science, & OT Hermeneutics

Matthew Cummins is a graduate of the University of Louisville (M.S. Chemical Engineering) and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (M.Div). He has a background as a PPG process engineer but joins us most recently from the faculty of Linsly Academy. Mr. Cummins takes great delight in stories that combine imagination and study. *Les Misérables*, *Jurassic Park*, *Indiana Jones*, and *Ender's Game* have all contributed to crafting Matthew's worldview. He appreciates things that point us to the grandeur of God: the study of sciences, biblical chiasm, or even (especially) a walk by the water. Mr. Cummins lives in Wheeling, WV, with his wife Amanda and three daughters Jane, Grace, and Joy.

ALLAN EDWARDS

Classical History

Mr. Edwards lives in Washington, PA, with his wife LEEANNE and children EVERETT and MARTHA. He's a graduate of Grove City College and The Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Mr. Edwards has worked in churches, ministries, and nonprofits. He is currently the Director of Operations at Chick-Fil-A in Collier Township, PA. In their free time the Edwards enjoy books, board games, and sports.

Mr. Edwards brings to The Oaks pastoral experience and years of training and managing students in the workplace. Gifted with enthusiasm, creativity, and a love of history, he has taught various courses including Intro to Law, Speech and Debate, and Formal Logic. He and LEEANNE are active members of the Classical Christian Homeschoolers of Washington and Washington Presbyterian Church (PCA).

Mr. Edwards and Mr. Ashby lived in the same dormitory in Grove City, albeit in rival fraternities, and Allan was the official sweetheart of Mrs. Ashby's sorority!

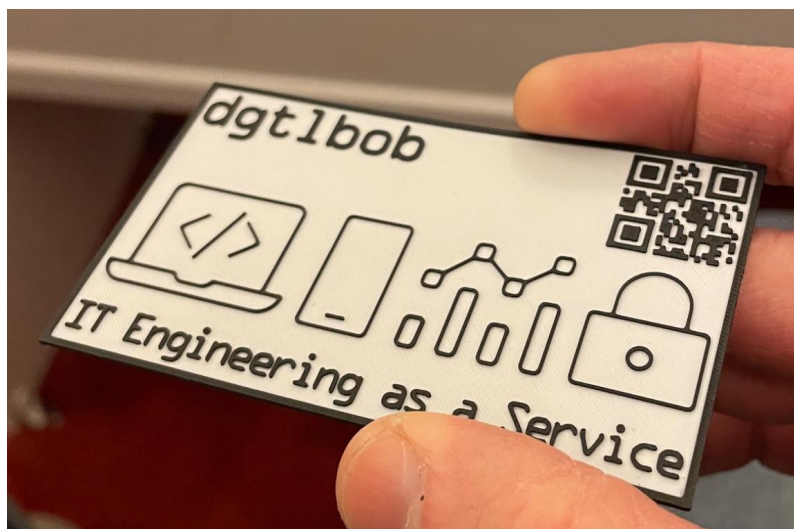
BOB MENKEL

Algebra II

Bob Menkel is known as a patient problem-solver, with a strong background in technical software engineering. He's worked in multiple industries including defense, education, legal, marketing, and finance.

Mr. Menkel holds a B.S. in Computer Science from Geneva College and has recently launched a full-time entrepreneurial endeavor called DGTLBOB, an IT consultancy focused on *servant-hearted* computer engineering. He seeks to help clients with app development, security services, and IT advisement. His business card is made on a 3D printer!

Students will appreciate Mr. Menkel's practical bent and wry humor as he broadens his horizons by launching back into a field he loved in school: mathematics!





LEEANNE EDWARDS

The Art of Music

Mrs. Edwards is a graduate of VanderCook College of Music (BMEd) and Edinboro University (MREd). She has taught at multiple homeschool co-ops, most recently teaching music appreciation and instrumental music at Classical Christian Homeschoolers of Washington. She and her husband Allan have two children: Everett (9) and Martha (7).

Leeanne's passions include reading, adventuring outdoors, traveling, campfires with friends, and strong, hot tea. She's recently discovered the novels of Elizabeth Goudge, and is taking a deep dive into examining how technology is shaping her family—you'll probably be able to recognize her future teens by their flip phones! Leeanne is looking forward to sharing her love of vocal music with the Oaks family this year.

MARY ADAMSON

The Art of Painting

Whether it is water coloring with her three daughters or baking the perfect sourdough bread, Mrs. Adamson is always in pursuit of beauty and creativity.

Mrs. Adamson is a graduate from Grove City College with an elementary education degree. She went on to become PA certified in Art Education while also achieving her Masters in Early Childhood Education. She taught both special education and 3rd grade for 10 years in Mount Lebanon School District.

Mrs. Adamson has a hand-embroidery and needle-felting business, but she says being a stay-at-home mom homeschooling her 3 daughters has been the biggest blessing of her life. She, her husband Matt, and their sweet girls have fallen in love with learning, reading, baking, painting, gardening, and raising chickens.



EMILY MARASCO

The Art of Theater

Although she now resides in the heart of Washington County, twenty years of Georgia summers have sent Southern roots deep into Emily's heart.

Mrs. Marasco is a graduate of Grove City College with a B.A. in English Literature and Theatre. She is a speaker, writer, and administrator for Apologetics, Inc. Her 15+ years of theatrical experience have fashioned in her a love for good storytelling, rich imagination, and kaleidoscopic characters. Her favorite role was playing Nora Helmer in Henrik Ibsen's 'A Doll's House' (GCC, '22).

When Mrs. Marasco is not perusing art museums, hosting tea parties, or longing for the English countryside, you may find her reading with her husband, Matthew, on their patio, photographing the natural world, or in the blessed aisles of Hobby Lobby.



PRISCILLA MARASCO

The Art of Dance

Priscilla Marasco holds a B.A. in Art and minor in dance from Hillsdale College. Her dance background includes training in the Vagonava and ABT methods of ballet technique as well as in the modern techniques of Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, and Lester Horton. Over the last decade, Mrs. Marasco has taught classes both privately and in a studio setting. She is passionate about teaching not only the technical elements of dancing but helping her students understand dance as a form of artistic expression and creativity.

Mrs. Marasco resides in Washington, PA with husband, Benjamin. She and her husband have fun working on home projects together, traveling, and spending time outdoors. She is an enthusiast for the coast, quaint coffee shops, theology, and most importantly, hydrangeas.



TIM FOX

The Art of Engineering

Mr. Fox has been an engineer in the oil and gas business of Western PA for decades. He is a graduate of WVU and holds a Masters of Engineering from MIT. As a lifelong member of the Waynesburg Fire Company and an avid gardener, Mr. Fox will incorporate hands-on experience and inspire curious exploration of an industry native to Western PA.



CHAD C. ASHBY

Geometry, Hearth Lit & Comp, Physics & Astronomy, Latin, and The Art of Baking

Chad Ashby is a seasoned pastor and educator. He and his wife Mindy moved back to Western PA with their six children to invest in the lives of families and students in a place they love. Mr. Ashby (M.Div SBTS, B.S., B.A. Grove City College) has taught countless math, literature, and theology classes, coached dozens of soccer teams, written hundreds of articles, and baked thousands of cookies.

Mr. Ashby serves as the Head of School at The Oaks but plans to be a mainstay of its classrooms for years to come. He's been known to host flapper parties, shoot potato cannons, play piano in class (badly), recite Shakespeare, and lock students in escape rooms. He makes sure classrooms are filled with song and the halls with school spirit!