

THE ROGERS ENDOWMENT FOR PUBLIC POLICY STUDIES

Jeffrey Kimbell '89 hosts SG students on a whirlwind tour of Washington politics

ROGERS SCHOLARS IN THE NATION'S CAPITAL

It's a leap of faith from the Hilltop to the Hill

ASCALON

And then St. George the dragon slayer drew his mighty sword Ascalon...



Beltway Bound

In March, a group of 10 history and government students at St. George's — nine juniors and a senior—traveled to Washington, D.C., as participants in a hands-on interactive program made possible by the William S.R. Rogers Endowment for Public Policy Studies, brainchild and creation of Jeffrey Kimbell '89 along with a cadre of fellow SG alumni and Washington colleagues

It's no news flash that St. George's School is more than 125 acres on a hilltop overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. It is more than its celebrated buildings, rambling athletic fields, technology-driven facilities and vibrant arts center. It is even more than King Hall at high noon, though you'd have a hard time convincing a surge of famished students midway through the academic day of that. There are layers to the St. George's experience that go deep, and one of those layers, arguably the core of the school's identity and sense of community, is its alumni base — historically, of course, philanthropically, one hopes, and collaboratively as well.

We say collaboratively, because when St. George's alumni share their professions and accumulated life lessons with the school that spawned them, they bring to the table a perspective and a measure of authenticity unavailable within the confines of a campus classroom. And

when they allow themselves to be exemplars in real time of what a student might consider doing once he or she leaves this place, they offer an invaluable dimension to the curriculum so painstakingly crafted by educators here to direct a given student's course of study. Those alumni become extensions of the teaching staff, partners in a way, embraced by current faculty for the unique possibilities they represent in the promulgation of the school's academic mission.

SG Trustee **Jeffrey Kimbell**, a member of the Class of 1989, would argue that the dynamic works both ways, that you simply give back in direct proportion to what the school and its teachers gave you years before. Kimbell lives in Washington, D.C., where as president of Jeffrey J. Kimbell & Associates he represents some 25 hand-picked clients in the life sciences community seeking legislative and policy
(Please see "Beltway" on the back)

**ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL**

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Rogers Scholars Descend on D.C.

Reflections from the 10 Rogers Scholars who spent four days immersed in the Washington, D.C. power train point to meaningful lessons learned and eye-opening career insights gained

"That was the coolest three hours of my life," said **Shivam Patel** '17, following half a day at the Pentagon where he and nine other St. George's Rogers Scholars visiting Washington, D.C. listened to and mingled with an assortment of senior U.S. military leaders from the Marines, the Air Force and other branches of the armed services. Just being in the Pentagon is remarkable enough, let alone having the opportunity to tour its halls, attend press briefings, enjoy a private audience with an array of decorated officers, and, yes, order lunch at the Pentagon cafeteria. Of course, it helps when your host is Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs and Pentagon Press Secretary **Peter Cook**.

Cook, a member of St. George's Class of 1985, is a central figure on the advisory board of SG's Rogers Endowment for Public Policy Studies. A close friend and colleague of **Jeffrey Kimbell** '89, who established the endowment in 2008 in honor of his former history teacher Robin

Rogers, Cook is also one of a handful of Washington-based St. George's alumni responsible for bringing the Robin Rogers program to life (see "Alumni bring diverse expertise to Rogers Scholars Program," facing page). His contribution as a Pentagon press VIP complemented input from fellow alumni sponsors on a wide range of topics related to the ebb and flow of politics, domestic and foreign, across the nation's capital over the course of the students' four-day visit.

Kimbell and his board, with input from our student participants, coordinate themes and speakers each year in Washington on behalf of the program, and collaborate with SG history teacher Jim Connor and Director of Alumni Relations Bill Douglas here on the Hilltop. The Pentagon experience is one component, and a commanding one at that, but the depth and breadth of the program cover much more and truly it offers a comprehensive view of what goes on in Washington and how the system works.

"We introduce topics like SuperPACs, how are delegates chosen, how does the electoral college work, what is a lobbyist, and what is the Federal Election Commission, the FEC," explained Kimbell. "We cover broader themes in foreign policy, including think tanks, and what is NATO, and is NATO still relevant. It is important to bear in mind that everything we present is bi-partisan, or bi-cameral in the case of the House and Senate. We always attempt to include a partisan bent from each side." To the student participants, it is Washington politics in the flesh.

The itinerary in March was exhaustive and interactive. Students heard from Margaret Kimbrell, executive director of the consensus-building, anti-gridlock movement No Labels, on "The Politics of Problem Solving." They heard from Mike Gula, co-founder of the fundraising firm Gula Graham, on "Political Fundraising and Lessons in Life." They learned about "Politics in the Digital Age" at the offices of Google Inc. They met with U.S. Senators Jack Reed (D-RI) and Sheldon Whitehouse P'12 (D-RI) in the Hart Senate Office Building. They even heard from Chris Cox, executive director of the National Rifle Association Institute for Legislative Action, on the defining role of lobbying in American politics. And, of course, there was the Pentagon.

SG's Rogers Scholars this year included **Alden Grimes** '17 (Portsmouth, R.I.), **Austin Page** '17 (Long Lake, Minn.), **Sophie Williams** '16 (Millwood, Va.), **Tyler Jones** '17 (Nantucket, Mass.), **Shivam Patel** '17 (Towaco, N.J.), **Oasis Zhen** '17 (Qingdao, China), **Dillon Kaynor** '17 (New Canaan, Conn.), **Sophia Small** '17 (Washington, D.C.), **George Moss** '17 (New York, N.Y.) and **Margaret Todd** '17 (Austin, Texas).

The group, upon their return to St. George's in late March, collected their thoughts and impressions and parlayed these into a presentation delivered as part of SG's pilot program SGx during Alumni Weekend on May 7. Their SGx angle was this: "Student Government has a large impact on student life on campus, but is it enough? Exploring Washington, D.C., and the interactions between the forces driving our country is one way to compare and restructure our Student Government."

What were those thoughts and impressions? To follow are a sampling from an anonymous survey distributed to the student participants following the trip:

"The speakers and presenters enhanced my knowledge of public policy

and government in Washington because I was able to apply what I have learned in AP Gov to people in real, day-to-day occupations, especially in the areas of campaign finance and journalism."

"One thing that I remember clearly from the trip is don't take your politics personally. It is very hard *not* to let something that you care about become attached to you, and it is very easy to let

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it get personal. Seeing how a Democrat and a Republican can sit together in a room, joking with one another but still speaking for their own parties and working together, demonstrated how you can strike a balance between conflicting political beliefs."

"We read this 500-page textbook front to back for our AP exam, and it doesn't come close to comparing with what we were able to see in D.C. behind closed doors. With gridlock and partisan politics, you assume nothing's happening down there. But it's not like nobody is showing up for work. People are actually working extremely hard behind closed doors in Washington, really grinding to get something done, but we don't always see the results from our point of view, sitting in a classroom here in Newport, R.I."

Finally, a note of gratitude to host Jeff Kimbell from junior Shivam Patel brings it all back to Robin Rogers himself:

"I just wanted to thank you for everything you have done for the Rogers Scholars program. I learned so much, and I took so much out of the experience. An opportunity like this is the reason I came to St. George's, and with the help of you, and the other alumni from the program, you all made it happen. I would be lying if I said it wasn't the most enlightening experience in my life. I have always contemplated studying foreign policy and public policy, and this program pushed me over the fence to a career that I would like to pursue, and enjoy."



Standing at the entrance to the White House are (left to right): Dillon Kaynor '17, History teacher Sarah Mongan, Austin Page '17, Sophia Small '17, Sophie Williams '16, Oasis Zhen '17, Shivam Patel '17 and George Moss '17