

MARCH  
2025  
WILSON HALL



# ACCOLADE



Sara Helen Simmons '25

## Simmons National Merit Finalist

Sara Helen Simmons has earned the prestigious distinction of National Merit Finalist in the 70th annual National Merit Scholarship Program, a recognition awarded to the top one percent of high school students nationwide based on their outstanding performance on the PSAT/NMSQT. As the only student in Sumter County to receive this honor, according to the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC), Sara Helen's achievement reflects her exceptional academic ability and potential for success in rigorous college studies. A student at Wilson Hall since preschool, she advanced from Semifinalist to Finalist by maintaining a stellar academic record, achieving a top-tier SAT score, and demonstrating consistent excellence. Beyond academics, Sara Helen is a dedicated leader who actively contributes to her school and community through various extracurricular activities. Her recognition as a National Merit Finalist not only highlights her intellectual achievement but also showcases her leadership, perseverance, and commitment to success, making her a standout student poised for a bright future.



State Champion Bowling Teams: Luke Banar '26, Luke Bartlett '29, Stirling Tindal '26, Maddox Moyer '28, Carson Geddings '26, Addie Geddings '31, Camryn Wilmes '25, McKenzie Gray Mills '25, Molly Jones '25 & Anna DuBose '27.

## Boys & Girls Bowling State Champions

Baron Bowling dominated the lanes at the SCISA State Bowling Tournament in Columbia, bringing home the state championship titles for both the boys' and girls' teams! The boys' team, consisting of Luke Banar '26, Luke Bartlett '29, Carson Geddings '26, Maddox Moyer '28, and Stirling Tindal '26, delivered an outstanding performance to claim the championship. The girls' team, featuring Anna DuBose '27, Addie Geddings '31, Molly Jones '25, McKenzie Gray Mills '25, and Camryn Wilmes '25, also showcased their skill and determination to

secure the state title. Under the leadership of Mr. Curtis Helms, both teams demonstrated exceptional talent and teamwork, making it a historic night for Baron Bowling. With these championships, Wilson Hall has won 74 state titles.

The following bowlers placed in the SCISA State Individual Bowling Tournament: (girls) Addie Geddings - 3rd and Camryn Wilmes - 10th, (boys) Carson Geddings - 5th, Luke Bartlett - 10th, and Luke Banar 12th.





Anna Kate Coker '25

## COKER RECEIVES PRESTIGIOUS ART RECOGNITION

Anna Kate Coker '25 earned the prestigious Gold Key award, the highest honor in the regional competition of the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, for her outstanding drawing. Sponsored by the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers, the nation's longest running and most prestigious recognition program for creative teens, this award recognizes works that demonstrate originality, technical skill, and the emergence of a personal voice or vision. As a Gold Key recipient, Anna Kate's artwork will be featured in an exhibition at the Savannah College of Art and Design, and she will advance to the national competition. A dedicated student in the Advanced Placement Studio Art (Drawing) class taught by Ms. Tara Breslin-Schumacher, she exemplifies the talent and creativity fostered within Wilson Hall's Visual Arts Department. Additionally, in the same competition, Liz Singkhonket '26 received Honorable Mentions for two of her works, and Tilan Byrd '25 also earned an Honorable Mention, further showcasing the exceptional artistic ability of Wilson Hall students.

# Thank you TO OUR AMAZING SPONSORS!

We are incredibly grateful to all the sponsors who have signed up to support the Wilson Hall Invitational. Your generosity is making a difference as we raise money for the Future Fund, our new annual fund for Wilson Hall. We're excited to announce that all team spots are officially filled. While we are no longer accepting new team registrations, we still need food and beverage sponsors—and we would love to have your support. If you or your business are interested in joining us as a sponsor, please reach out to [carolinezitzke@wilsonhall.org](mailto:carolinezitzke@wilsonhall.org). Let's make this event a huge success for Wilson Hall!



*Save the Date!*  
**03.31.25**

**WHERE:**



**Quixote  
Club**

## SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

**Contact Caroline Zitzke,  
Development**

[carolinezitzke@wilsonhall.org](mailto:carolinezitzke@wilsonhall.org)  
803-469-3475 ext.141



# Five First Place Trophies at State Art Show

Wilson Hall art students showcased their exceptional talent at the S.C. Independent School Association State Art Show, earning an impressive total of 15 awards. Among the top honors, Cecilia Ayres '30 (sculpture), Annabelle Branham '25 (ceramics), Tilan Byrd '25 (drawing), Lydia Leishing '26 (sculpture), and Abby Norton '31 (sculpture) each received first place trophies in their respective categories, highlighting their artistic excellence. The success of these students is a testament to their dedication and creativity, as well as the guidance and expertise of their teachers, Ms. Tara Breslin-Schumacher, Mrs. Rachel Jones Brown '00, and Mrs. Renee Norton. Under their direction, the Visual Arts Department continues to thrive, fostering a community where students' artistic abilities can



State Art Show winners: Abby Norton '31, Annabelle Branham '25, Tilan Byrd '25, Lydia Leishing '26 & Cecilia Ayres '30.

shine. Receiving awards for placing second in their respective categories were Parker McLeod '25 (ceramics) and Jack Thompson '27 (open mixed media 2D). The following students received an Honorable Mention: Sarah-Jane Bates '25 (ceramics), Nathan Brunk '31 (mixed media), Lexi Fox '27 (sculpture), Sophia Levi '28 (drawing), Logan Schumacher '25 (drawing), Gracie Shook '35 (painting), Carmen Thomas '34 (sculpture), and Ari Widrick '27 (drawing).



Abby Hodge '29, a member of the JV cheer squad, performs during halftime of a basketball game in the Nash Student Center.

**APRIL 11, 6:00-8:00**

*Middle School Dance*

**NASH STUDENT CENTER**



**DRESSY-  
CASUAL**



# Faculty Attends Literacy Conference



Mrs. Holly Williamson, Mrs. Sande Tisdale, Mrs. Valerie James, Mrs. Lynn Davis, Mrs. Hayes Jones, Mrs. Amy Jones, Mrs. Megan Zimmerman & Mrs. Anne Gratz

Continuing to enhance their teaching skills through professional development, nine members of the faculty attended the Palmetto State Literacy Association (PSLA) Annual Conference for three days in Hilton Head. The conference served as a dynamic professional learning opportunity, uniting educators at all levels to share insights and strategies for refining literacy practices. Reflecting PSLA's commitment to promoting literacy through improved reading, writing, and communication instruction, the event underscored the belief that literacy is a lifelong tool for learning. Among the speakers was Lindsay Kemeny, a dedicated teacher, speaker, author, and podcast co-host known for her passion for literacy and the practical application of research, while international literacy consultant and author Matt Glover of-

fered valuable perspectives on nurturing writers of all ages, early reading, oral language composition, and supporting children's intellectual development. This enriching experience aligns with Wilson Hall's commitment to providing continuous learning opportunities for its faculty, ensuring that professional growth remains at the forefront of their educational mission.

The following faculty members attended the conference: Mrs. Lynn Davis (2nd), Mrs. Anne Gratz (3rd), Mrs. Valerie James (Preschool 3), Mrs. Amy Jones (Kindergarten), Mrs. Hayes Jones (Librarian), Mrs. Stacey Reaves (Head of Upper School), Mrs. Sande Tisdale (5th), Mrs. Holly Williamson (Reading Specialist), and Mrs. Megan Zimmerman (4th).

As a fun STEAM activity, Madelynn Davis '27 & Claudia Rhodus '27 and fellow students in the French classes enjoyed a Jour de Crêpes, or "Day of Crêpes," in the cafeteria. This special day is dedicated to making and eating crêpes, which are thin French pancakes, allowing students to experience an authentic French tradition while incorporating elements of science and culinary arts. Led by French teacher Mr. Scott Warren, the event gave students a hands-on opportunity to practice their language skills while learning about cultural customs. Wilson Hall offers four years of French, beginning in the 8th grade, providing students with a strong foundation in both the language and the rich traditions of Francophone countries.







## STUDENT-FACULTY BASKETBALL GAME

During a lively and raucous pep rally in the Nash Student Center, the Student-Faculty Basketball Game brought excitement and school spirit, with the faculty emerging victorious. Organized by the varsity cheerleaders under the leadership of Captain *Annabelle Branham '25*, the event was designed to energize the crowd ahead of the night's basketball games. While members of the basketball team were not eligible to play, they took on roles as team coaches and officials, ensuring a competitive and entertaining matchup. *Walker Wilson '26* fired up the crowd as a devoted Baron Fan, while *Lucy Buxton '25*, a member of the varsity team, encouraged fans to fill the stands for the upcoming games. Boys team coach *Mr. Rip Ripley* also addressed the audience. The pep rally concluded with Co-Captain *Sophie Sweatman '25* and the cheerleaders leading the school in singing the Alma Mater and the fight song.

### TOP LEFT

*Logan Mims '25* motivates her team during a time out.

### TOP RIGHT

*Mrs. Molly Simpson Matthews '93* & *Mrs. Erin Trueblood* defend against *Abby Bradley '25*.

### BOTTOM LEFT

*Mr. Brent Kaneft '00* looks to evade *Jackson Bonser '25*.

### BOTTOM RIGHT

*Annabelle Branham '25*, Varsity Cheer Captain, speaks to the crowd.





# CURRICULUM NIGHT A SUCCESS

Rising 9th through 12th grade students and their parents attended the Curriculum Information Night coordinated by Mrs. Susan Barfield, Director of Academics. As the 2025-26 course scheduling process approaches, the event provided a valuable opportunity to explore the curriculum and Advanced Placement (AP) course offerings in an engaging setting. After a brief overview, families met with AP teachers and department chairs, asked questions, and gathered key information about course expectations and academic planning. Whether considering one of the 22 AP courses for the first time or building on their academic journey, attendees left with insights to guide their course selections for the upcoming school year.



Mrs. Lori Brown, Mrs. Sheri Singleton & Mrs. Susan Barfield welcome parents to Curriculum Information Night.

# Burleson & Busch State Teacher of the Year Finalists



Mrs. Laura Burleson      Mrs. Mindy Busch

Wilson Hall is proud to announce that two of our teachers, Mrs. Laura Burleson and Mrs. Mindy Busch, are among the nine finalists for the South Carolina Independent School Association (SCISA) Teacher of the Year award. After being elected by their peers, they entered the state-level contest by submitting an essay, resume, and recommendations from colleagues and administrators. A panel of educators selected the top three finalists for each division from submissions statewide. There are 120 schools that are members of SCISA. Mrs. Burleson, who teaches 6th and 8th-grade history, has taught at Wilson Hall for three years, while Mrs. Busch, a kindergarten teacher, is in her sixth year.

In preparation for the upcoming spring musical, *Mary Poppins Jr.*, students in the Set Design & Construction class have been hard at work bringing the magic of Cherry Tree Lane to life. Under the guidance of Ms. Tara Breslin-Schumacher and Mr. Steve Hudson, these students are not only building intricate sets but also gaining valuable hands-on experience in construction, design, and the proper use of power tools. Their dedication and craftsmanship will set the stage—literally—for the production, which opens March 12 at the Sumter Opera House. From mastering measurements to perfecting paint strokes, these students are learning skills that extend far beyond the classroom, proving that behind every great show is an incredible team working tirelessly to make the magic happen. Pictured are Adam Baker '25 & Mr. Hudson.





WILSON HALL  
THEATER DEPARTMENT  
*presents*

Disney and CAMERON MACKINTOSH'S  
**MARY  
POPPINS  
JR**

MARCH 12 & 13, 6:30 PM | MARCH 14, 4:00 PM  
SUMTER OPERA HOUSE

ADMISSION: \$18.00 - ADULTS, \$9.00 FACULTY & STUDENTS

TICKETS: [SUMTEROPERAHOUSE.COM](http://SUMTEROPERAHOUSE.COM)

Cast members of *Mary Poppins Jr.* have been diligently rehearsing since early October, dedicating their time and energy to perfecting their performances. Here, they are seen practicing choreography on a Sunday afternoon at Miss Libby's School of Dance. Under the guidance of the show's choreographer, Mrs. Jen Alford Reimer '00, the cast is working hard to bring the musical's lively dance numbers to life, showcasing their commitment and enthusiasm for the upcoming production.

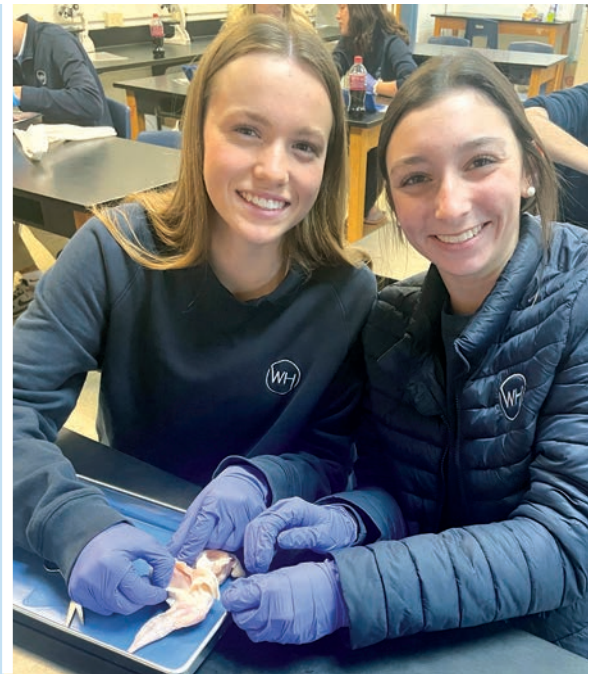






Emma Dizon, Mary Frances Eaddy & Charlotte Anne Wells, Class of '36, celebrate their 101st day of school as they and their classmates enjoyed dressing up as one of the 101 Dalmatians. Excited to mark this special milestone, the young students filled the hallways with spots, ears, and wagging tails, bringing the beloved characters to life. In addition to their creative costumes, they enjoyed activities inspired by *The Hundred and One Dalmatians* by Dodie Smith and the Disney film *101 Dalmatians*, further immersing themselves in the story's magic. Students used their math skills to draw 101 spots on a Dalmatian and their reading and writing skills to find 101 words in the room. While wearing hats they created, they also enjoyed a fun snack of "dog bones" (pretzels) and "dog spots & dots" (mini marshmallows and chocolate chips). The celebration added an extra layer of fun to their learning experience, making the 101st day of school a memorable and joyful occasion.

Ella Sill '26 & Edna Lee Harris '26, students in Mrs. Ashley Morris's anatomy class, participated in a hands-on STEAM lab activity by performing a chicken wing dissection to study analogous structures and muscle function. Through this interactive experience, students examined the similarities between the muscles, tendons, and bones of the chicken wing and those of the human arm, deepening their understanding of anatomical structures and movement. This engaging lab not only reinforced classroom learning but also provided a practical application of biology and physiology concepts in an exciting and exploratory way.



Wilson Warrick '25, a student in the Senior Seminar/English 12 class taught by Mrs. Molly Simpson Matthews '93, and his classmates took center stage as they presented their research findings from the Community and Solitude unit to classmates and faculty members. This culminating project challenged students to explore the balance between connection and isolation in society, encouraging deep reflection and critical analysis. Through their presentations, they showcased research skills, persuasive communication, and the ability to synthesize complex ideas—all essential for college and beyond. The experience not only strengthened their public speaking confidence but also fostered meaningful discussions about the role of solitude and community in shaping personal and societal well-being.



Andrew Smith-Adcock, Pryor Davis & Martha Kate Skinner, Class of '37, and their classmates celebrate a milestone—the 100th day of school—by dressing up as 100-year-olds. With canes, gray wigs, suspenders, and glasses, these little grandmas and grandpas looked ready for a retirement party. They proudly paraded through the preschool classrooms, showing off their 100-day projects, then got to work building towers to 100, rolling dice in a thrilling race to 100, and even testing their patience (and taste buds) by licking a lollipop 100 times. And, of course, no celebration is complete without food, so they munched on a 100-piece snack feast. It was a day full of giggles, learning, and unforgettable fun as these tiny centenarians marked their first big school milestone in style.





*Wilson Hall proudly welcomed the members and coaches of the state champion basketball teams from 1977, 1978, 1980, and 2000 to campus for special recognition. Prior to the varsity boys' game in the Nash Student Center, these distinguished athletes were honored for their achievements and contributions to the school's rich athletic history. To celebrate the occasion, the Development Office hosted a reception, providing an opportunity for former players and coaches to reunite and reminisce about their championship seasons.*

## ALUMNI

**2006** *Miller Moss and his wife, Kaelyn, announce the birth of their daughters, Betty Gray Moss and Harper Rose Moss.*

**2009**

*Tom DuRant works as the Southeast Territory Manager for FAE, a global company that designs and manufactures equipment for forestry, agricultural, road and de-mining operations. He graduated from Clemson University with a Bachelor of Science in agricultural mechanization and business. Tom and his wife, Mary Page, live in Greenville with their daughter, Ann Thomas.*

*Myers Varn Floyd works as a senior associate of talent acquisition for KPMG, a global accounting firm. She graduated from the College of Charleston with a Bachelor of Arts in arts management. Myers and her husband, Matthew, have a son, Briar, and live in Charlotte, North Carolina.*

**2010**

*Zach Martin is the Customer Success Manager for Avail Swag, a merchandise supply company. He graduated from Winthrop University with a Bachelor of Science in business marketing. Zach and his wife, Morgan, live in Charlotte, North Carolina.*

**2010**

*Emily Cain lives in Charleston where she works as a senior clinical specialist for Boston Scientific, a global medical technology and equipment manufacturing company. She graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a Bachelor of Science in exercise and sport science and the Medical University of South Carolina with a Master of Science in medical science.*

*Mary Bennett Bracalente Hinson and her husband, Colton, announce the birth of their son, Emory Parschall Hinson, on February 4. They have another son, Bennett. Mary Bennett is the son of Beth Dunlap Wachter '86.*

*Robert Rohner and his wife, Lauren, announce the birth of their son, Rory Vincent Rohner, on January 24.*



*Avery Kate Blizzard '39 and her classmates wrapped up their exciting week of studying the letter P with a cozy Pajamas & Pancakes Day. Throughout the week, the young learners engaged in hands-on activities, each thoughtfully designed to reinforce their understanding of the letter P. These interactive STEAM activities not only made learning enjoyable but also helped build foundational literacy skills by strengthening their grasp of letter sounds. By incorporating play-based learning, the students developed essential early language skills while having fun, making their journey into reading even more engaging and memorable.*



## 2013

Sharp Turner and his wife, Courtney, announce the birth of their son, Robert Sharp Turner Jr., on February 20. Sharp is the son of *Cindy Sharp Scheele '80*.

## 2015

*Kendall Brogdon Watford* works as a Senior Marketing, Communications, and Public Relations Specialist for Duke University Health System. She graduated from the University of South Carolina Honors College with a Bachelor of Science in experimental psychology and a Bachelor of Science in hospitality management, and she earned a Master of Health Administration from the Medical University of South Carolina. *Kendall* and her husband, *Sam Watford '16*, live in Sumter where she is a member of the Sumter Junior Welfare League.

## 2016

*McKenzie Lowder* and *Tripp Boney* were married on February 22 at Bethel Methodist Church in Oswego with a reception following at a private residence in Sumter. *Caroline Rogers '16* was a bridesmaid. *Tripp* is the son of the late *Britt Boney '89*.

## 2017

*Diamond Crawford* lives in Silver City, New Mexico, where she is the Athletics Compliance Coordinator for Western New Mexico University. She graduated from Clemson University with a Bachelor of Science in food science and human nutrition and a Master of Education in student affairs.

*Caroline Kimbrell Ward*, who graduated from Clemson University with a Bachelor of Science in marketing, works as an accounting administrator for Rikes Roofing Services, a full-service commercial roofing company. She and her husband, *Easton Ward '17*, live in Greenville.



*Mr. Stephen Dinkins '93* was the guest speaker for the high school's chapel program in the Founders Chapel, where he shared an inspiring message with students and faculty. A former missionary, he emphasized that every follower of Christ has a calling to share the good news of Jesus, a calling that comes from four places: Above, Below, Outside, and Inside. Using scripture from Acts, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Luke, he illustrated this Biblical truth, encouraging students to embrace their faith and recognize the divine purpose in spreading God's word. His message served as a powerful reminder of the responsibility and privilege of sharing the gospel with others. *Mr. Lee Gandy* is the coordinator of the chapel program.



Students and faculty celebrated Valentine's Day in style on Spirit Day, wearing pink and red to show their festive spirit. Younger students enjoyed class parties filled with treats and fun activities, while high school students participated in a lively competition to crown Mr. and Miss Irresistible. Each student started the day with a paper heart, but if they spoke to a student of the opposite sex, they had to surrender their heart. By the end of the day, *Edmunds DuBose '27* & *Lucy Buxton '25* collected the most hearts, earning them the title of Mr. and Miss Irresistible. The varsity cheerleaders, who sponsored the event, awarded the winners with a special prize, wrapping up a day full of fun and friendly competition.

## 2018

*Justin Timmons* works as a supervisor for Canonbury Homes in Atlanta, Georgia. He graduated from the University of South Carolina with a Bachelor of Science in marketing.

## 2019

*Callie McAdams* works on the digital fundraising team for Liftoff Campaigns, a public relations and communications services firm in Washington, D.C., that raises money for political campaigns. She graduated from the University of Southern California with a Bachelor of Arts in communications and a Bachelor of Arts in political science and government.

*Kenzie Naylor* lives in Charleston and works as a registered nurse at the Medical University of South Carolina, where she earned a Bachelor of Science in nursing. She also earned a Bachelor of Science in biological sciences from the University of South Carolina.



# 2020



Livian Mai Branch '20

*Livian Mai and William Branch were married on March 1 at St. Matthew Catholic Church with a reception following at Alexander Homestead in Charlotte, North Carolina. Madison Landstrom '20 was a bridesmaid, Angela Do '29 a junior bridesmaid, and Aliyah Do '24 the flower girl. Livian, who graduated from Wingate University with a Bachelor of Science in marketing, works as an associate analytics and insight analyst for SellEthics Marketing Group. They live in Charlotte.*

# 2021

*Gracyn Coker, an English and history major at Wofford College, completed an internship with Smoak Public Relations in Greenville. Gracyn will pursue a Master of Science in management at Wake Forest University in the fall.*

*Madi DesChamps, who will graduate from Clemson University with a Bachelor of Science in marketing, has accepted a position as a management trainee for Cintas Corp. in Greenville. Cintas is a national company that provides specialized services to businesses, including uniform rental, facility services, safety supplies, and first aid products.*

*Sarah Emily Durham works as a microbiology clinical laboratory assistant at the Medical University of South Carolina College of Health Professions in Charleston. She is a biology major at Charleston Southern University Honors College.*

Gracyn Coker '21



# 2023

*Amberly Way, who attends Southern Wesleyan University where she is a member of the softball team, was named the Conference Carolinas Softball Player of the Week on February 4.*



Amberly Way '23

# 2024

*Olivia Beasley is a member of Zeta Tau Alpha sorority at Wofford College.*

*Katie Croft is a member of Kappa Delta sorority at Wofford College.*

*Jennings Frerichs is a member of Kappa Alpha fraternity at Wofford College where he also serves as a Wofford Ambassador.*

*Bella Grudzinski, a retail and retail management major at the University of South Carolina, is completing an internship as the Coordinator of Volunteers for the United Way of the Midlands. She serves as the president of USC's Brazilian Portuguese Club, and she is a member of Gamma Phi Beta sorority, the Carolina Sales Institute, and the USC Dance Marathon. Bella is also involved with Delight Ministries, a Christ-centered community for college women, and Shandon Ministries.*

*Ben Reynolds, a construction science and management major at Clemson University, was a member of the Clemson team that was the overall winner at the Construction Management Competition at the Association of Builders and Contractors Convention in Las Vegas, Nevada. Teams from colleges and universities nationwide participated in the competition which challenged students to solve real-world problems faced in the construction industry.*



*Logan Pauly '26 has his ankle taped by Mrs. Mary Peyton Zilch Clepper '14, athletic trainer, as a participant in an AP Research project conducted by Banks Smith '25. Banks is investigating the effects of athletic taping on athletic performance among Wilson Hall high school students, aiming to provide insights into its impact on injury prevention and sports performance. In AP Research, a course within the Capstone Diploma Program, students design, plan, and implement a yearlong investigation to explore a research question of individual interest. Guided by Mrs. Martha Jo Smith Johnson '99, they employ ethical research practices, utilizing research methodology to assess, analyze, and synthesize information. Their work culminates in an academic paper, presentation, and oral defense.*



# LET'S GO BARONS

1. Hugh Humphries '25 reached a significant milestone in his basketball career by scoring his 1,000th career point during the Barons' victory over Hilton Head Christian on January 17th. To celebrate this achievement, he was honored with a special game ball, presented by Mr. Glen Rector, Athletic Director, in front of a packed gym at the Nash Student Center. The presentation took place before a varsity basketball game, with teammates, coaches, family and fans applauding his dedication and talent on the court.
2. Harper Burke '28 takes the ball down court in a JV game. Coached by Mrs. Reita Shugart Hidalgo '01, the team won the Region Championship and Region Tournament Championship, earning a record of 11-3..



3. Nolan Gooch '28 concentrates on his free throw in a JV game in the Nash Student Center. Coached by Mr. Hunter Sheridan, the team finished the season with a record of 14-5.
4. Ford Wilder '26 moves past an opponent during a varsity game in the Nash Student Center. The team, coached by Mr. Rip Ripley, won the Region Championship for the third consecutive year and advanced to the State Quarterfinals, finishing the season with a record of 19-10.
5. Shawn Michael Matthews '25 received special recognition for reaching an incredible milestone by scoring his 1,000th career point during the game on January 27th. In honor of this achievement, he was presented the game ball by Mr. Glen Rector, Athletic Director, marking a proud and memorable moment in his basketball career. He is the 15th Baron to join the exclusive 1,000-point club.