

Carey Shinbaum '87

St. Nicholas School Artist-in-Residence

St. Nicholas students and parents know “Mr. Carey” as an incredibly talented teacher and musician. He has a natural gift for helping children learn to be the best they can be. As artist-in-residence at St. Nicholas School, he enjoys giving back to the school where his musical journey began. He writes that working with young people, he’s inspired to innovate on a daily basis. He constantly looks for ways to engage and inspire his students. Read on to find out more about Carey’s impressive education and career involvement.



A native of Fort Payne, AL, Carey Shinbaum’s formative musical experiences took place while growing up in Chattanooga. While his first musical tutor was the von Trapp family’s “Enjoy Your Recorder” book, he made the leap to oboe at age twelve, inspired by his sixth-grade music teacher Robert Clark, who became his stepfather.

Other great teachers were to follow, and soon he was performing as a soloist and substitute member of the Chattanooga Symphony and Opera. He received the Andrew Carnegie Merit Award to attend Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, where he studied oboe with Cynthia DeAlmeida and chamber music with Elden Gatwood.

Carey subsequently served as principal and solo oboist with both the Tucuman Symphony Orchestra and the Camerata Lazarte in Argentina, and, as acting principal oboe of his hometown orchestra, filling in for his first oboe teacher, Chattanooga Symphony Orchestra principal Robert Burks. He went on to receive his master’s degree at the Cleveland Institute of Music, where he studied with John Mack, principal oboe of the Cleveland Orchestra.

Upon his graduation from CIM in 2001, Carey was appointed principal oboe of the Huntsville Symphony Orchestra. He has previously performed as principal oboe with the Youngstown Symphony, the Cleveland Pops Orchestra, and the Columbus (GA) Symphony Orchestra, and has been featured at the Eastern Music Festival, Sarasota Music Festival, the Music Academy of the West, and with the Jerusalem International Symphony Orchestra project. He was awarded top prize as winner of the performance competitions of the Darius Milhaud Society and the Pittsburgh Concert Society.

Carey shares a love of teaching with his wife, Laura Howard, a teacher at Baylor School and poet whom he first met in the Chattanooga Symphony Youth Orchestra.

