

# SAINT MARY'S SCHOOL

## Alumnae Profile Series

by Chelsea Ward '09

### Taylor King '09

**Performing Arts Faculty and Dance Instructor  
Northfield Mount Hermon, Gill, MA**

Taylor King grew up in Chapel Hill, N.C., which is perhaps where she got her strong affinity to the color light blue. (She's also a devoted UNC-Chapel Hill fan.) Taylor's Saint Mary's journey began with her mother, Sonya, who works in Downtown Raleigh for the Department of Justice. Sonya frequently drove by Saint Mary's during her morning commute to work, and that's how she began to fall in love with the beautifully timeless campus. Who knew a morning drive could have such an impact on a young girl's life!

#### *A New Modern Approach*

Once Taylor decided to visit Saint Mary's campus, she signed up for an overnight visit. Upon arrival, she instantly knew 900 Hillsborough Street was where she wanted to spend her high school years.

Before Saint Mary's, Taylor attended public school in Chapel Hill and danced at different studios in the area. Her love for dance continued to grow once at Saint Mary's where she was a member of Orchesis. So much of her time during high school was spent with the group that she decided to serve as vice president for the organization her senior year.

Recalling her favorite places on campus, Bacon Gymnasium's dance studio immediately came to mind. "It was a dance studio for learning technique, but it was also a place to learn about yourself," she explains.

Prior to Saint Mary's, Taylor spent most of her time learning classical ballet. It was in Mrs. Yount's dance class that she began to learn about modern dance techniques. "It was like connecting with the floor in more ways than your feet and exploring the space in a natural way."

This new modern approach to dance would quickly navigate Taylor's career path.

#### *Dance is more than an Art; it's a lifestyle.*

After Saint Mary's, Taylor graduated from East Carolina University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance Performance. Afterwards, she enrolled at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro where she received her Masters of Fine Arts in Choreography.

Today, she's a performing arts faculty member and dance instructor for Northfield Mount Hermon in Gill, MA. And, her passion for choreography and teaching goes beyond her instruction studio at the college.

Taylor is a member of two dance companies in Massachusetts, Quantum Dance Collective and VEERdance. Both are modern-based professional dance groups who travel and perform throughout the Northeast. Taylor will perform her first large-scale performance with VEERdance this September 2019.



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### *Staying Connected*

Though Taylor's job is a few states away from the Saint Mary's campus, she makes time to stay connected by keeping in touch with other Saint Mary's girls. She also always makes sure to have her class reunions marked on her calendar and gives back through gifts to Saint Mary's Annual Fund.

"Reunion Weekend provides us the opportunity to feel connected to this campus we called home and to reminisce with friends about their experiences here," she explains. "One of my favorite memories is of spending time on the large oak tree swing that was behind Smedes. I think of it every time I'm back."

At her 10th reunion held in May, Taylor was excited to see that Saint Mary's remains true to campus traditions but is also still evolving. In the future, she hopes Saint Mary's thrives and continues to be an all-girls school that empowers and uplifts young women.

"I hope the school holds true to the traditions at Saint Mary's but continues to be progressive in developing young women," she says.

As for today's Saint Mary's girls, Taylor has one piece of advice: "Take every opportunity that intrigues you, because you'll never know what moment or lesson will impact your life forever."

Taylor truly embodies the spirit of Saint Mary's women who are resilient, intelligent, resourceful, passionate, and nurturing, and who are educated to make a difference in their communities and the world. And, we can't wait to see what her future holds for her.

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