February 2026

GOW AT A GLANCE

A Monthly News Snapshot from The Gow School



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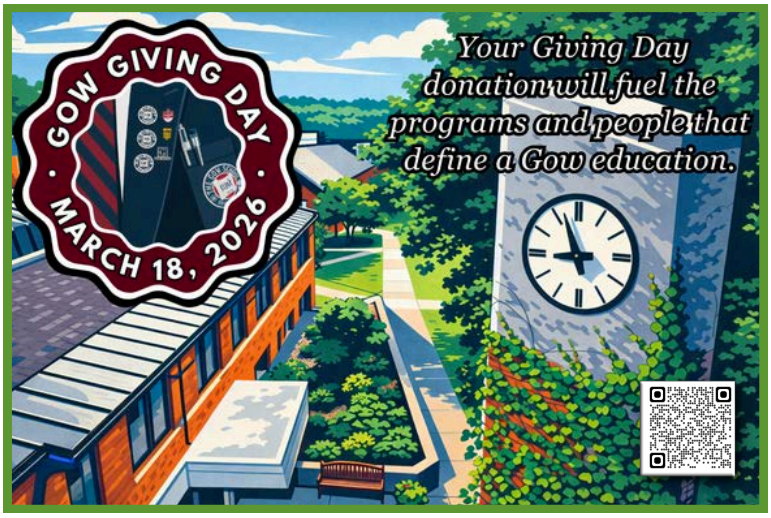
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Gow Spotlight

Grace Obletz '18

A warm welcome, meaningful mentors, and the courage to stand alone. Discover how Grace Obletz '18 carried her Gow experience from the classroom and courts to a career in social media marketing.



February 14-22	February Recess
March 4	Gow Speaker Series - Dr. Sharon Saline
March 11	Virtual Open House 9:30 am
March 18	Gow Giving Day
May 21	8th Grade Moving up Ceremony
May 21	Student Awards and Senior Dinner
May 22	Commencement





WINTER CARNIVAL



At –3 degrees, Winter Carnival at Gow lived up to its Buffalo definition of a "warm" winter day. Even without much help from Mother Nature in the snow department, students embraced the cold and dove into a day packed with energy and school spirit. From ping pong, scavenger hunts, and Hungry Hungry Hippos to shooting pool and hoops, the focus was less on the temperature and more on being together.

Color War competitions kept the excitement high with events like Blitz Chess, a Dog Sled Race, Name That Tune, Just Dance Challenge, joust, and tug of war competition, while bounce houses, popcorn, and cotton candy offered plenty of chances to recharge and take a break. Thanks to the Student Council, student volunteers, and their advisors, Winter Carnival once again proved that at Gow, fun - and community - shine through no matter the weather.



Building More Than Robots: The Gow Robotics Story





The Gow School's Robotics program began in 2001, with the help of alumni Trey Roski '85 and John Remar '85, creators of the internationally known BattleBots franchise. After developing a hands-on robotics curriculum called BotsIQ, Mr. Roski brought the program to Gow, where it first launched as a club. By 2002, Robotics was adopted as a senior-level class, becoming one of the most innovative academic offerings on campus.

From the beginning, the course looked very different from a traditional classroom. Robotics at Gow is fully hands-on and team-driven. Instead of exams or research papers, students earn their grade by designing, building, and competing with a fully functioning combat robot. Over the course of the year, they move through every phase of the engineering process, starting with CAD (Computer-Aided Design), where they use professional software to design their robot, and progressing to CAM (Computer-Aided Manufacturing), where they program the school's CNC machine to manufacture the parts they have created. Students then assemble, wire, test, and refine their machines in preparation for competition.

The class mirrors real-world engineering research and development. After preliminary competition in March, students evaluate performance, identify weaknesses, redesign components, and improve their strategy before competing again at regional events in April. This iterative process teaches resilience, critical thinking, and problem-solving in with real world application.

Equally important is the emphasis on teamwork. Students are responsible for organizing themselves into functional roles that reflect different engineering disciplines, structural, electrical, and mechanical. They must manage timelines, create project schedules, and use tools such as Gantt charts to stay on track. In doing so, they develop executive functioning skills like time management, organization, and accountability, skills that extend far beyond the robotics lab.

In its early years, Gow's team had no high school competitors and faced off against adult teams from major technology companies such as Apple. Today, Gow competes against more than 60 high school teams, and Gow consistently ranks in the top ten each year.

Just as Gow has been a pioneer in dyslexia education, it has also helped pave the way in robotics education. For more than two decades, the program has empowered students to think like engineers, work like professionals, and compete with confidence—proving that hands-on, experiential learning can be truly transformative.

BOTSIQ





Alumni Spotlight

Grace Obletz ’18



Grace, Sarah (sister), and Peter ‘14 (brother)



Grace and sorority sisters

Grace Obletz ’18 spends her days doing what many people do: watching social media. But for Grace, it’s not doom scrolling. It’s her profession.

Now based in New York City, Grace works in organic social media marketing, building content strategies for platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook for Shark Ninja, the small appliance brand. She studies what people are watching, what they’re sharing, and what’s trending, then turns that insight into storytelling that connects brands with real audiences. It’s creative and fast-moving, and she thrives in this industry thanks to skills that began taking shape years earlier at The Gow School.

Grace came to Gow midway through her sophomore year, following in the footsteps of her brother, Peter ’14. Gow had only recently begun admitting girls, and Grace was among the first. She remembers the campus feeling big and quiet, far from the city, but the welcome was immediate. Smiles in the lunchroom, faculty who took the time to know her - those early moments made Gow feel less like a new school and more like a community. That sense of connection stayed with her.

Grace credits faculty members like Mr. Joseph Cendrowski and Mr. Robin Marshman with supporting her in ways she didn’t fully understand at the time, but values deeply now. She jokes she gave Mr. Marshman “a run for his money.” In the classroom, she gravitated toward experiences that felt real and creative. Business Ethics with Mr. Thomas Giallanza introduced her to entrepreneurship through hands-on learning, while Mr. Wright’s journalism class gave her something even more lasting: the freedom to write, explore ideas, and find her voice.

Athletics played an equally important role. As the only girl on the squash and tennis teams, Grace embraced the challenge. Rather than seeing it as a barrier, she saw an opportunity- to compete, to prove herself, and to push beyond expectations. She credits Mr. Mark Szafnicki as a constant supporter.

After graduating from Gow, Grace attended High Point University and earned a degree in Marketing and Strategic Communications with a double minor in social media and marketing. Later, joining the marketing team at Shark Ninja in Boston, it didn’t take long for her to find her niche. Social media was where strategy met creativity, and she’s been there ever since.





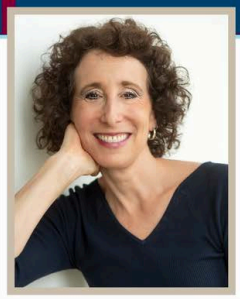
Grace laughs easily about loving the online world; it’s part of why she’s so good at her job. But she’s quick to point out that the confidence to pursue a creative path didn’t come from nowhere. “Gow gave me the skills and support to fine tune what I had a passion for - creative writing - and turn it into a job,” she says.





THE GOW SPEAKERS SERIES

Informing and inspiring our community about learning differences



Dr. Sharon Saline

- *Psy.D., Clinical Psychologist*
- *Award Winning Author and International Speaker on ADHD, Neurodivergence and learning disabilities*

Strengthen Growing Brains: Improving Executive Functioning skills builds competence and confidence for neurodivergent students at home and at school

Tired of daily struggles with your neurodivergent child or teen around school, homework, or chores? Dr. Sharon Saline explains why executive functioning skills are essential to development and getting things done, sharing practical strategies grounded in her strength-based 5 Cs of ADHD™. You'll leave with simple, effective tools to reduce conflict, boost cooperation, build confidence, and strengthen family connection.

Wednesday, March 4, 6:00 p.m. (ET)

- No charge to attend
- Scan QR to receive the Zoom link
- Please share this invite with others!

For more information, contact 716.687.2075 or development@gow.org

Gow Speaker Series Library

Enjoy other Gow Speakers from our past presentations



View

Lydia Sherrie
From Process to Progress: A Parent's Guide to Securing and Implementing an Effective Individualized Education Program (IEP)



View

Dr. Ken Pugh
Understanding the Literate Mind: Speech, Language, Reading and the Brain.



View

NYC Attorney's Michael Mastrangelo and Gergory Cangiano
Securing District Funding for Private Education: Legal Steps and Strategies



For a century, Gow has shaped lives and built lifelong connections. Join fellow alumni and families in making the Centennial Celebration truly memorable by becoming a sponsor and helping bring this historic milestone to life for our community.

Sponsorship Opportunities »

PLANNING TO ATTEND THE CENTENNIAL?

Are you planning to attend some or all of the Centennial events next October? As we work to design a meaningful and memorable weekend of celebrations, please take a minute to indicate your intentions by completing the very short survey through the link below:

Centennial Survey »



Save the Date! On March 18, we are asking the entire Gow community - alumni, parents, grandparents, faculty, staff, students, and friends - to come together for Gow Giving Day. A Giving Day is a 24-hour, online fundraising effort. It is an opportunity to honor the ways Gow has impacted your life through a donation to our Annual Fund. There will be prizes, challenges, and fun incentives to donate. Stay tuned for more information!