

# Stories from the Heart



## FACULTY PROFILE: CHARLOTTE RILEY

If you don't know Mme Charlotte Riley, you may think she's always been a teacher. It's not hard to see why, she's been a teacher at Sacred Heart for 30 years. Yet before stepping into her teaching role in 1991, Charlotte was a bit of a vagabond.

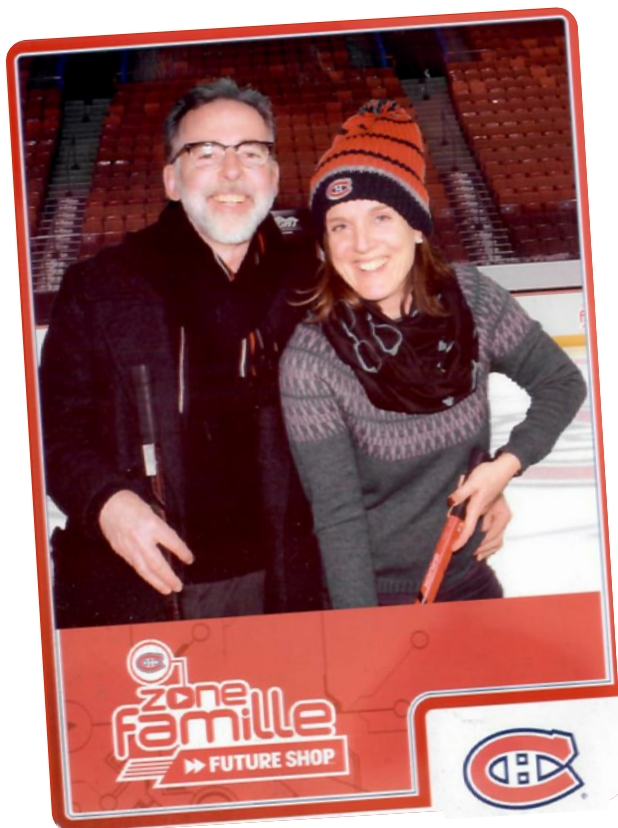
Maybe it's because her family moved a lot when she was a child. She was born in New York, moved to Connecticut and then to St. Louis, minutes away from Sacred Heart Villa Duchesne. In 1969 her family moved to Montréal, her father's hometown where she lived until 1978 when she moved to Halifax and started attending Sacred Heart School of Halifax. A dream of her mother's, now fulfilled.

Charlotte loved Sacred Heart — the sense of community, the teachers, her RSCJ mentors, and her classmates all made a lasting impression on her.

When she graduated, she wasn't entirely sure what she wanted to do, but she knew she was good at languages. So she went up the street to King's College where she enrolled in the Bachelor of Arts program to study French and Spanish. The four-year program took Charlotte five years, not because she didn't apply herself — she finished with an Honours Degree with a major in French Literature and a minor in Spanish and Philosophy — but because for two of the years, she didn't

take the full course load while she worked and travelled, including living for a full year in Aix-en-Provence, France. That life-changing experience, where she lived among artists and philosophers while studying, was incredible and it was with great reluctance (who can blame her) that she returned back to Halifax to finish her degree.

For the next few years, Charlotte tried on a few careers. She started out in the burgeoning film industry here in Halifax as a production assistant, working on the very first season of Codco. After two years she moved to Maine where she often summered with her family and worked a series of jobs that included carpentry, waitressing, assembling craft kits, and painting boats at the Landing School of Boat Building and Design in Kennebunkport. It was there that she met and instantly fell in love with her eventual husband, Eamonn, an Irish transplant with a passion for boat building.



When the lustre of her slightly nomadic and financially lean days started to fade, Charlotte and Eamonn decided moving to Nova Scotia was a wise choice; here Eamonn could immerse himself in the wooden boatbuilding scene, and Charlotte could return to school and get her education degree, which she did as soon as they moved back.

Armed with her degree, and a new home in Mahone Bay, Charlotte started her teaching career at Bridgewater High School as a part-time French teacher. There, she loved the fact that she could ease into the profession and that there were both great mentors and great kids. The next year, however, she moved to Chester High School where she spent two years starting their French Immersion program. It was less enjoyable, and Charlotte questioned if she even wanted to continue teaching.

She went back to school instead, on the hunt for more inspiration. She spent 13 months at Dalhousie University getting her Master's Degree in Arts and Teaching (M.A.T.) and while there, applied for a French teaching position that came up at Sacred Heart, a familiar place where she knew she would be more inspired. In 1991, she started as a full-time French teacher, and the rest, as they say, is history.

Charlotte loves Sacred Heart School of Halifax. She feels strongly that as a Sacred Heart educator, she has been handed a torch of sacred trust, which she holds high. And while she has more recently started teaching co-ed classes, she does particularly love teaching and

mentoring female students, helping to champion women's rights, something near and dear to her heart that started as a spark from her parents and continued with her own education here.

Certainly much has changed over Charlotte's time here at Sacred Heart, but Charlotte takes pains to stay current and ensures she imbues her teaching practice with the energy and enthusiasm she is known for. She also keeps her finger on the pulse of the community, most recently serving as the Faculty Board Designate, and taking on extra responsibilities like running the Sacred Heart Exchange Program, which is now back and up and running after COVID and coordinating one of the School's newest and most exciting initiatives, a global scholars program.

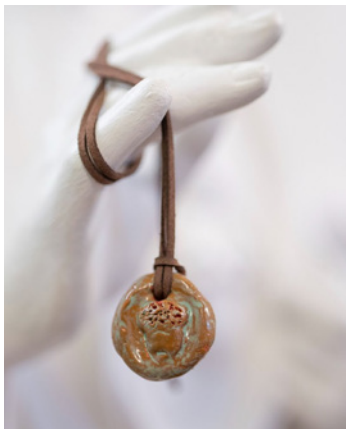
In her spare time and during the summer months, the old vagabond spirit that drove her early years is alive and well as she seeks new places to travel, explores old haunts, and looks for adventures from which she can bring inspiration or a new lesson back to her students.

Charlotte's spirit, dedication, and boundless enthusiasm are legendary around Sacred Heart and we're delighted that she has no plans to slow down anytime soon.

## WE REALLY ARE ONE BIG FAMILY

In October, Trish Ellingwood, a double alumna of the Academy of the Sacred Heart in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan and Manhattanville College of the Sacred Heart in New York, was on a cruise with her husband Coby and stopped in Halifax. While she was here, our own Pat Nichols gave them a personalized tour of our School. Trish, who was a primary school teacher all of her career, is now a volunteer at yet a third Sacred Heart school in Greenwich, Connecticut. In a follow-up card to Pat expressing her thanks, she wrote:

*"Going to another Sacred Heart School just proves what a FAMILY we really are! When I zoomed in with the 3rd-grade class at Greenwich this week I told them all about our visit and promised to bring in the red SHSH bag and pin for them to see. The teacher will put the photos I took up on the big screen. The girls asked what your uniforms were like and when I answered I didn't know because your children were all in spirit gear, they really liked that idea!"*



As thanks, Trish also sent along a necklace their art teacher made to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Philippine's Feast and notes the significance of the acorn for them and us.

As we always tell our students, and particularly our alums, once a child of the Sacred Heart, always a child — welcome at any one of our Sacred Heart schools around the world; as Trish has proven.



# BACK TO THE HEART IN OCTOBER

The first-ever Fall Alums and PALs Reception that took place in October, during the Thanksgiving break, was a big hit! Thanks to everyone who joined us to reconnect and share memories over refreshments. Based on the turnout and feedback, we plan on keeping this event on our annual calendar.

Don't forget the next event is our annual Wine & Cheese which this year will take place on

**TUESDAY  
DECEMBER**

**20**

5:30-8:00pm

[RSVP Now!](#)







## THE RETURN OF THE *Christmas Fair!*

Our famous Christmas Fair was finally back in person this year after two years of modified events and we definitely felt the love of our Sacred Heart community. Santa Claus joined us and hundreds of people to take part in our signature events like the Bake Table, Coffee with Carole, Used Uniform Shop, the Games Room, the Cake Walk and all kinds of Christmas-themed fun. A number of our alums were on hand too, including sisters Nzingha and Zamani Millar and Meaghan Richardson '07 who took time out to say hello to our new Head of School Dennis Phillips. Thanks to everyone who showed their support.



# Tidbits

Congratulations to **Hannah Baillie '18** who gave the Fall 2022 Valedictorian address at Mount Saint Vincent University on October 23rd. Hannah, who is graduating from the Mount's Public Relations program has had amazing success during her tenure there, including being a finalist in the Rhodes Scholarship program in 2021. No doubt Hannah made her family, including us, very proud during her address. To read more about Hannah's university journey, [click here](#).



Hats off to **Tua MacNeil '22** earned Atlantic Collegiate Athletics Association's Athlete of the Week in November. Tua took an impressive three of four ACAA Women's Cross Country events this year, including a gold medal at the ACAA Championships.

Well done to **Sylvia Driscoll-Sangster '17** who has been accepted into the Physiotherapy program at Dal. Good luck!

Congratulations to **Grace Atkinson '08** who got married this past August to Bretton McRae. No doubt Grace's mom, Susan who is also an alum of the class of '74, was beaming with pride.

Congratulations also to alum and Sacred Heart teacher **Jessica Maynard '06** who together with her husband welcomed baby number two — Jack Scott.



Well done to **Meghan MacAskill '16** who is finishing up her law degree in Galway, Ireland and will head back to Canada in the fall to article with the Calgary firm, Beresh Law.



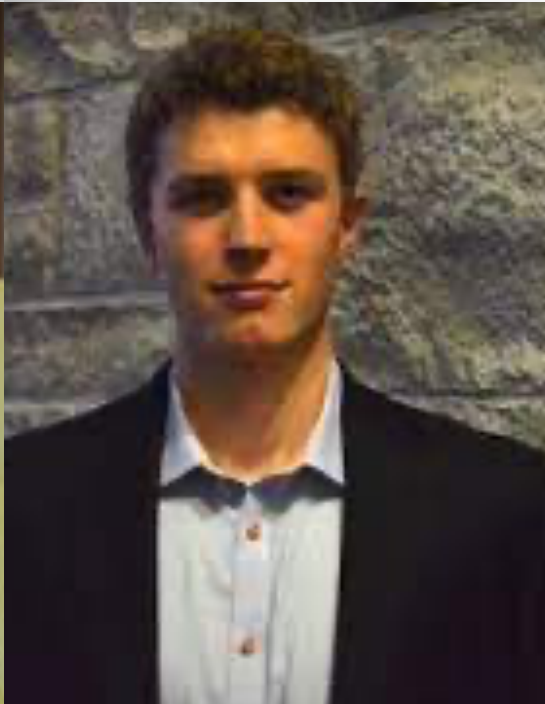




Kudos to **Jaden Lawen '21** who was invited this fall by Dalhousie University to join the Golden Key International Honour Society as one of the top 15% of students at Dal based on his academic achievement. This honour is an awesome community, leadership, and academic opportunity that will help share Jaden's promising future.



**Ameeta Vohra '93** is going to be busy this holiday season as she takes on the role of managing the editorial and social media content for the IIHF for the upcoming World Junior Hockey Championships in Halifax. Cool job!



And speaking of new roles, congratulations to **Joy Tagboto '14** who started a new position as Commercial Executive at Microsoft, to **Henry Machum '13** who is now a litigation associate at Davies Ward Phillips & Vineberg, and to **Sam Wile '14** who is now working as a Financial Advisor at Assante Wealth Management in Halifax.



Congratulations to **Catherine Burke '17** who is engaged to marry American Noah Greenberg.



A number of our alums are continuing on impressive educational journeys, including **Emefa Tagboto '16** who is studying for her Master's Degree in Human Resources and Organizations at the London School of Economics; **Aristides Milios '16** who is working on his Master's Degree in Computer Science at McGill University with a focus on Natural Language Processing, a subfield of Machine Learning; and **Cameron Barrett '18** who is studying for his Masters Degree in Classics at Dalhousie University.



We are seeking donations for our Annual Giving Fund. **Donate here.**



Well done to **Isabelle Melanson '22** who is currently at the University of Ottawa. A volunteer with French for the Future, Isabelle was recently invited to participate in the 25th anniversary celebration of the organization at the Rideau Club in Ottawa, where she spoke about the importance of bilingualism in her life.





# We Want to Hear from You!

Share your stories, news, photos, and announcements, or pass along regards to a favourite teacher or former classmate.

**Drop Miriam an email!**

5820 Spring Garden Road  
Halifax, NS B3H 1X8  
Phone: 902-422-4459  
**shsh.ca**



@sacredheartschoolhalifax



@SacredHeartHfx



@SacredHeartHalifax