



## **The Gunnery Announces Peter W.E. Becker as its Eleventh Head of School**



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On behalf of the Board of Trustees, The Gunnery is pleased to announce the appointment of Peter W.E. Becker as the eleventh headmaster in its one hundred and sixty one year history. Mr. Becker will draw on founder Frederick Gunn's tradition and Susan G. Graham's legacy in moving the school forward over the next decade.

Mr. Becker currently serves as a Master of History and Interdisciplinary Studies at the Lawrenceville School in Lawrenceville, New Jersey. He led the redesign of the Interdisciplinary Program's curriculum seeking different ways to instruct, encourage and inspire students to learn and communicate. He also serves as Housemaster of Kennedy House. In addition, Mr. Becker has served in a number of critical roles including as the Director of the Humanities Program, and as a coach of the girls varsity squash and boys freshman tennis teams. He also held the Shutt Faculty Chair for four years.

Mr. Becker is a graduate of the University of Virginia, where he earned a B.A. with Distinction in Religious Studies, and Yale University, where he earned an M.A. in History. He was awarded a Fullbright Grant to study classical history, architecture and archaeology at the American Academy in Rome, Italy.

In making the announcement, The Gunnery Board of Trustees Chair Stephen W. Baird said, "Peter Becker brings to The Gunnery a demonstrated record of educational leadership, broad accomplishment in every aspect of his life, and tremendous respect from current and former colleagues, students and parents. Peter was the unanimous selection of the Gunnery Board of Trustees to lead our school into what we expect to be a very vibrant and promising future. The

Board is delighted that Mr. Becker will bring a great track record and winning attitude to our program."

At the school's all student and staff meeting to announce the selection, Mr. Becker remarked, "I am honored to have been chosen to build on Fredrick Gunn's remarkable vision that is as compelling today as when first articulated in 1850. It is especially humbling for me to follow on Susan Graham's twenty one year tenure during which the school earned a well deserved reputation for its academic rigor, college placement, athletics, a growing emphasis on the arts, and as a special place where a student's individual perspectives and goals are valued. The Gunnery's emphasis on character is such an integral part of its unique identity - one that fosters respect for individual strengths, perspectives and goals so as to sustain an energetic and thoughtful community."

Chair of the Trustees Selection Committee Jonathan M. Estreich said, "We undertook an extensive national search to identify the most talented individual to lead our school. In Peter Becker, we found someone with exquisite academic credentials, a keen sense of the unique role of boarding schools in educating the whole person, and a vision for how to sustain the school's success and build on its strengths."

Prior to his eight year tenure at The Lawrenceville School, Mr. Becker had a career as an investment banking and venture capital analyst, where he gained the finance and management skills he has drawn on throughout his career.

In giving expression to his educational philosophy, Mr. Becker said in part, "Boarding school education is distinct from education in any other setting because boarding schools are 'total institutions.' Boarding school teachers commit to live and work amidst the constant demands of a residential educational setting. Boarding school instructors teach constantly, inside and outside of the classroom, by word and deed. Likewise, students learn from the institution itself – from the structures that govern all aspects of their days, whether in the dining hall, the classroom, theatrical rehearsals, sports, or in their dorms in front of a computer in the evening. While the classroom provides the obvious locus of learning, the standards to which teachers hold students outside the classroom, and the clarity and consistency with which these standards are articulated and are upheld across the community, serve as a powerful and supportive element of the curriculum."

Mr. Becker will assume his duties at The Gunnery July 1, 2012 where he will be joined by his wife Amy Julia and children Penny, William and Marilee.