



# Alumni Spotlight

## Ashley Burns

Class of 2005



**Since you have graduated from James L. Collins Catholic School what academic, career, and/or volunteer paths have you taken? What is your current job title and company?**

After graduating from Collins Catholic, I attended Corsicana High School. I graduated from Corsicana in 2009 and attended The University of Texas at Austin. I graduated from UT in 2013 with a degree in Elementary Education. After graduation I moved to San Antonio and began teaching 4th grade in Edgewood ISD. After my first year of teaching, I got married and moved to Rockwall, Texas where I began teaching 5th grade English and Language Arts at Shannon Elementary. Currently, I am still teaching 5th grade at Shannon and I am back in school at The University of Texas at Arlington, pursuing a degree in Educational Administration. My goal is to one day become an elementary school principal.

**What lesson did you learn while at James L. Collins Catholic School and how has it shaped you into the person you are today?**

Although I learned many lessons during my ten years at Collins Catholic, the biggest lessons I learned included hard work and dedication. Because of my teachers, I was taught at a young age that I was capable of achieving great things and could do anything if I put my mind to it. The teachers at Collins Catholic not only had faith in me, but they also pushed me to do my best. Growing up, I never imagined I would become a teacher, but because of outstanding teachers like those at Collins Catholic, I found a love for education and a passion for working with students.

**How have any of the four cornerstones of James L. Collins Catholic School allowed you to transform the world in your own way?**

As an elementary school teacher, the four cornerstones (faith, involvement, integrity and respect) are all very important. On a daily basis, I work in the lives of our youth. As a public school teacher, I think the most important thing I can teach my students is to have always have integrity to not only do what is right but to also stand up for what is right. I remind my students often that they are leaders on our campus and even when no one is watching I expect them to always do what's right.

**What advice would you like to give to the students at James L. Collins Catholic School?**

My biggest piece of advice is to enjoy your time at Collins Catholic! Even though I spent 10 years there it somehow flew by. To this day I treasure the education I received, but also the teachers and friends that still impact my life today. I am proud of my education and my time spent at James L. Collins Catholic School.

**What would you say to prospective families about why they should choose James L. Collins Catholic School?**

To prospective families, Collins Catholic is a great school to attend for multiple reasons. First, class sizes are small and intimate. Students are able to learn in a smaller group setting and receive more one on one attention. Second, Collins Catholic does a great job of building leaders for life. During my time at Collins, I tried multiple clubs and activities and was able to find what I loved at an early age. I was exposed to multiple opportunities in the classroom, but also through service programs that worked with places like the animal shelter or the food pantry. Most importantly, students are able to grow in their faith at a very young age. They leave Collins Catholic with an understanding of the life Jesus lived for us, and what more could any parent want than that?