

Featured Alumna: Meg SCAMARDO Kozel, Class of 2010



Duchesne Academy is thrilled to welcome back **Meg SCAMARDO Kozel '10**, who is starting her first year as Counselor in the Upper School. Meg brings a wealth of experience and a heartfelt commitment to nurturing our students' well-being and success. "I'm most excited about building relationships with students and supporting this next generation of Duchesne girls, helping them become the best versions of themselves. I'm also SUPER excited to have my daughter on campus with me and see her grow up in the Duchesne community, just as I did."

Meg began at Duchesne in the nursery at 16 months old and first donned plaid as a kindergartner. Her mother, Kelley Coffield, was a long-time faculty member, and her sister, Elizabeth SCAMARDO, also a lifer, graduated in 2017.

Meg, now a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, cherishes many aspects of her Duchesne experience but cites Goal III as particularly influential. "It's the 'action' part that resonated with me and is a huge part of who I am," Meg says, describing her occupation as "the profession of Goal III."

However, social work wasn't always in the plan. After Duchesne, Meg attended Texas Christian University, initially majoring in theater. In high school, she participated in numerous productions both at Duchesne and St. Thomas High School. "I was the typical theater kid, always singing and dancing—in the halls and even in class," she laughs, noting the mixed reactions from faculty.

An Intro to Social Work class—a core requirement at TCU—offered Meg a new perspective. Featuring guest speakers, including two school counselors, the class sparked an "a-ha"

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moment for Meg, who had always felt at home in a school setting but had never been drawn to teaching. Realizing she could find fulfillment in social work, Meg switched her major and transferred to the University of Texas at Arlington, earning her Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) in 2014, followed by her Master of Science in Social Work (MSSW) from the University of Texas at Austin in 2016.

Meg's arts training continues to be valuable: "The 'Theater Kid' background helps with social work because as an actor, you learn to connect with feelings and emotions. Theater introduces you to people from different walks of life. A big part of the job is building relationships and being comfortable leaning into discomfort."

Before returning to Duchesne, Meg worked at Akins High School in South Austin as the school's social worker since 2018. Akins is a Title I public high school with a diverse enrollment of about 2,700 students. She previously worked as a Regional Adoption Caseworker at Austin's Gladney Center, engaging with all sides of the adoption triad. In both roles, it was the people and their unique stories that energized her, and she looks forward to bringing that expertise back home.

This summer, Meg, her husband, and their six-month-old daughter relocated to Houston from Austin, where Meg had lived since completing her master's. We are so excited to have her home at Duchesne. Welcome back, Meg!