

# *She Puts The Saint IN ST. LUKE'S*



*At a young 69 going on 70, this special teacher has got game! Here, this straight shooter shares insight on the surprising impact of a sport we don't often hear about in SEC territory. By Hayley Hill*

If you've spent any time at St. Luke's Episcopal School in the last 45 years, most likely you know Ms. Linda McKay, better known as Macy. Loved by all, Macy teaches physical education and while she teaches all the sports you would expect, it is archery that is near and dear to her heart. "I teach with a lot of structure. I am old school and even have written exams to ensure our students truly learn the sports in our curriculum. I love the small class size as I can work individually with all of the students," Macy tells us.

With a large percentage of the Bay's youth attending private school, her views are interesting. "As a private education facility, there is no shortage of academic and social pressure on the students. Year after year, I have witnessed how archery has benefited countless students. Not only does it require extreme focus, which helps the students learn how to quiet themselves, it results in reduced stress and confidence as well," shares Macy.

The benefits don't stop there. "I have seen children who were shy or timid and not particularly athletic really blossom in archery class. They don't have to be the biggest, fastest and strongest to excel in archery. Good athletes don't always make good archers, as it can be hard for some of them to slow down and they don't typically have the patience required. Even the team coaches love what archery teaches their players! Also, archery uses fine motor skills and can be hard at first for students with coordination challenges, but through patience amazing results can be achieved," Macy says.

With three teams comprised of 74 students from grades four to 12, they compete around the Mobile area and hopefully advance to state competitions. "While I have taught archery my entire career, I have been a competitive coach for 12 years. It is competitive but not cutthroat and there are approximately 20 schools involved. We all pull for each other as it develops such valuable life skills. I hear all the time from grown students what an impact it made on their lives," shares Macy.



Hired by founding member, Anne Carson, Macy has made St. Luke's her home for over four decades. "It's my family! Some of my best friends have been made here. It is so family-oriented and you just can't compare it to anywhere else. When I started in 1973, I thought I had died and gone to heaven even though we had so little. We had a set of bowling pins and two balls, one bounced and one didn't and that's the truth! Since then we have come a long way in sports, academics and overall growth. I never dreamed at that time we would have a high school and a football team! We had no gym and now there are two." Macy beams about the newly renovated gymnasium at the lower school and the state-of-the-art facility at the upper campus.

Headmaster Mike Notaro shares, "Macy is the epitome of the type of teacher I love. She always puts the students' interests first and has that unique ability to get the students quickly engaged and enthusiastic about the lesson or skill being taught, without them even realizing how much they are learning. She is extremely loyal to St. Luke's and our mission and it shows in her work ethic. She is without question a master teacher and coach!" Not bad, considering he worked for Paul "Bear" Bryant and the New York Yankees. As for Macy's retirement? "Nick Saban stated he has been part of a team since he was nine years old and until he can't, he will be part of a team—I feel the same way. Even when I retire, I will come and volunteer."