SUNDAY, MAY 24, 2015

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VALUES AT CORE OF SUCCESS FOR S.A. ACADEMY
Page A4

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Page A2

San Antonio Express-News

EXCLUSIVE

Military
San Antonio Academy

Core values, scholarship keys to school's success

Since 1886, institution has educated future leaders in various fields

By Ed Connolly

Be honest, be kind, be the best you can be.

Those three admonitions are immediately visible, on small signs at key locations, to all who enter San Antonio Academy's main administration building.

Offered by headmaster John Weisbecker in the course of one of his daily morning chapel talks last year, the words are later repeated, enduring the ethereal ethos of San Antonio's most highly respected private school.

Founded in 1886 by Dr. W. W. Seiby, who was educated at Princeton University, San Antonio Academy is the city's oldest preparatory school for boys, and one of the oldest, if not the oldest, more than 115 years old.

It was not always a school with a military program, noted Webber in a recent interview. "However," he said, "on the first day of school, the boys expectedly brought their rifles with them to school. We need to un- dress and in that context of the time, it was a way of maintaining order."

He also added that when headmaster Seiby noticed the boys had spent their lunch hour at nearby Travis Park and were diminishing the population of squirrels, he ordered the guns removed.

According to the com- munity history, the school was founded on the occasion of its 135th anniversary in 1915. San Antonio Academy was the first private school in Texas to be labeled "military" of the University of Texas.

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A notable alumna of the university, Seiby, adopted the motto of the school, "To be a scholar, to be a leader, to be a gentleman." This motto carries on as a testament to the school's commitment to excellence.

The San Antonio Academy focuses on East French Place. Prior to this site, the academy first made its home near Travis Park, then near San Pedro Park.

The 1897 football team at San Antonio Academy included Thomas C. Frost and J. H. Frost.

The fourth-grade class of 1974 stands at attention for a photo at San Antonio Academy.

Theodore Roosevelt was a student at San Antonio Academy.

According to Weisbecker, the hall also functions as a theatre for productions of Shakespeare, chorale concerts and debates.

This commitment to the arts and humanities, combined with a strong emphsise on science, engineering,