

The Neighborhood Academy is a faith-based, college preparatory, independent school whose mission is to break the cycle of generational poverty by empowering youth and preparing them for college and citizenship.



THE NEIGHBORHOOD ACADEMY

FALL 2023

NEIGHBORHOOD news

709 N. Aiken Avenue | Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Letter from The Head of School

To: The Neighborhood Academy Community



I have returned from my summer sabbatical with a refreshed mind and soul. While it was hard for me to distance myself from The Neighborhood Academy – this school for which I care so deeply, it was important for me to

hit the 'reset' button and focus on my family and overall health. I give special thanks to Brent Jernigan, Assistant Head of School, and Shannon Prentiss, Dean of Student Affairs, for stepping up in my absence.

This fall we welcome a visiting team from the Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS) for our second 10-year accreditation. PAIS facilitates accreditation visits to ensure the public that member schools meet and maintain standards of educational excellence. During the summer, we completed our self-assessment to measure and document our school's quality, safety, sustainability, and overall impact. I look forward to keeping you updated on this vital accreditation.

We are about to complete the first term of the 2023 academic year, and our new cohort of Middle School girls has seamlessly transitioned to the TNA lifestyle of academic

excellence in which we pride ourselves. These girls are intelligent, courageous, and kind, and we are ecstatic to have them.

Today, we are educating 170 students, and with the addition of girls to the middle school, we will increase our enrollment to 200+ students in the next two years. We have plans to build a new wing for the middle school girls, expand our STEM curriculum, and increase support for our faculty and staff. With this said, I am happy to announce that **The Neighborhood Academy is embarking on a capital campaign to further our mission, erect a new Middle School wing, support our students and alumni, and retain and enrich our facility and financial stability.**

Career exposure is critical to a student's future success, and throughout the summer, we welcomed professionals to share wisdom, advice, and put faces to success. We continued our Female Focus program sponsored by PPG to give our girls exposure to the STEM fields by having guest speakers, math tutoring, and field trips. Also, a CMU tutor assisted TNA students with math through the Personalized Learning Squared (PLUS) program. PLUS combines well-trained in-person tutors with cutting-edge, AI-driven software to boost learning for middle school students.



In September, we held our biennial 2023 Nancy & Paul O'Neill Speaker Series where we welcomed Anthony Ray Hinton. With 400 people in attendance, Mr. Hinton chronicled his powerful 30-year journey from wrongful conviction to freedom won. We were honored to have him share his story and time with our donors and our students. This event would not have been possible without the leadership of event co-chairs, Annie Westbrook and Steve Harms; the dedication of our Host Committee; and the relentless efforts of TNA staff including Carolyn Sanford, Jonathan Winkler, Jake Gomrick, and Marcus Platt. **Please visit our website to watch a recording of the entire production and view photos.**

I thank you again for your support, and it's truly wonderful to be back!

Dr. Anthony P. Williams
Head of School





Congratulations to the Class of 2024 for successfully completing their Critical Leadership and Social Skills for Success course!

YOU Get a Backpack, and YOU Get a Backpack!

We offer a million thanks to Saint Andrew's Episcopal Church in Highland Park and St. Michael's of the Valley Episcopal Church in Ligonier for providing TNA students with backpacks stuffed to the brim with back-to-school supplies.



Facilitators from Development Dimensions International (DDI), Avid Learner, Inc., Lead Beyond, Cultivating the Evolution of Professional HR



(CEPHR), and Pittsburgh Leadership Foundation spent the summer working with our students to identify their strengths, understand the components of successful leadership, and how to apply those skills while working in groups to construct a bridge!

Special thanks to DDI for contributing the resources for our workshops, and moreover, thank you to all our volunteer facilitators for spending time with us this summer!



Jake Wrigley, CFO at Frank B. Fuhrer Wholesale, (right) came to TNA to spread some professional wisdom. Jake emphasized the importance of being a life-long learner, having good mentors, and always valuing time as a resource.

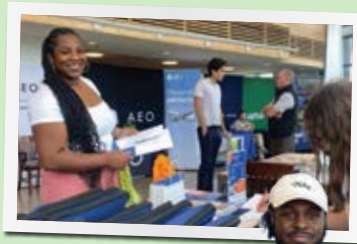


Dr. Jimmy Williams, Jr., Senior Vice President and Chief Technology Officer at ATI Metals (below), spoke about his career in engineering and experience as a minority in the tech industry. Dr. Williams' role elevates technology at ATI and accelerates progress on their product and process.



2nd Annual Young Professionals Career Fair

In June, we held our 2nd Annual Young Professionals Career Fair at American Eagle's Headquarters! Participants learned the ins-and-outs of job searching, received a professional headshot taken by Denmarsh Studios, and networked with professionals from over 20 organizations. Thanks to our intrepid job hunters, participating vendors, and a special thanks our Presenting Sponsor, Allegheny Technologies Incorporated.



Biking to Cumberland, MD

Guided by Pittsburgh Youth Leadership, a determined group of 18 cyclists departed from TNA on a Friday afternoon to cycle to Cumberland, MD, via the Greater Allegheny Passage. Lots of miles, hills, and persistent rain did not deter the group from achieving their goal as they arrived in Cumberland on Sunday afternoon!





CONVOCATION 2023

On August 29, we held our annual Convocation ceremony to welcome and bless all new and returning students, faculty, staff, and board. This special tradition truly celebrates the beginning of another great academic year!



To Infinity and Beyond!

This fall, we welcomed some out-of-this-world visitors from NASA, CMU's Robotics Institute, and the Moonshot Space Museum. They presented to TNA Middle School scholars on the physics of space, the Moon, and space craft design.

Special thanks to Rachel Burcin, Global Programs Manager; and Zachary Manchester, Mechanical Engineering Assistant Professor with Carnegie Mellon University's Robotics Institute; Luke Idziak Spacecraft Systems Designer at NASA Ames Research Center, and the team at the Moonshot Space Museum!

Fore!

TNA Sophomores, Lyniah and Adia, caddied at the African American Chamber of Commerce of Western Pennsylvania's "Tee Up and Network" golf clinic at the Bob O'Connor Golf Course at Schenley Park. Special thanks to First Tee Pittsburgh which seamlessly integrates the game of golf into teaching life skills and empowering kids and teens.



"Caddying at the event was a great experience. I was not only able to learn more about the game of golf and how to be a caddy, but I also had the opportunity to meet Mr. Anthony Stepney, Master Professional at the PGA. I was improving my craft while also having fun and enjoying myself!" - Adia



Congratulations
to the High School Bulldogs
on winning the Ozanam Boys Basketball
High School Summer League Championship.

Fall Activities

-  Football
-  Cross Country
-  Golf
-  Cycling
-  Volleyball
-  Acting
-  Ceramics
-  Hip Hop Dance

Community Slam

The future is bright for these Bulldogs! As a result of our Community Slam at the Boys & Girls Clubs of Western PA back in the spring, seven TNA 9th graders represented TNA at Multiplying Good Pittsburgh's National Youth Summit at Howard University in Washington, D.C. in June! This would not be possible without the support of the Will Allen Foundation.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Aniya Jackson — Class of 2018

Aniya Jackson '18, earned her bachelor's degree in public health from Slippery Rock University in August 2022.

Currently, Aniya works as a Care Manager for LifeSpan, a nonprofit organization located in Homestead, PA, assisting senior citizens and their needs. Her duties as a Care Manager consists of offering support to Allegheny County residents aged 60 or older with a variety of services such as housing, meals, and any other accommodations they may need in their senior living communities.

"I've always been the kind of person who takes pride in helping and assisting other people," said Aniya.

Despite two of her four years at SRU being virtual due to the global pandemic, she did her best to remain involved on campus and in student organizations.

"The workload was more manageable than I had expected thanks to all the prep that TNA had instilled in me beforehand – writing long papers, reading, annotating, studying outside of class... Thanks to all that, I was better prepared for college than my peers."

In college, Aniya was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, and she was President of Queens: a Black student-run organization which serves as a safe space for minorities on campus, primarily focused on but not limited to, the African American community.

Aniya has hopes of going back to school to pursue a postgraduate degree.

"I'm in a place in my life where I'm trying to figure out what is next for me professionally... I'm not 100% certain about my decision yet, but a few of my peers are pursuing their Master's degrees which is encouraging to me and makes me want to give it a try," she said.



"Don't be afraid to put yourself in positions to be more knowledgeable. You never know what you're going to learn and where it can take you."

CORPORATE CONNECTION

CentiMark Corporation has been a true partner in multiple ways with The Neighborhood Academy since 2004.

Years ago, TNA co-founder, Jodie Moore met with John Rudzik, CentiMark's then Chief Financial Officer (now Executive Director of CentiMark Foundation) and was so impressed with TNA's mission that CentiMark has been contributing to student scholarships through the PA Corporate EITC program for 18 years!

Edward B. Dunlap, Jr., Founder & Chairman of CentiMark, started the company 55 years ago. His son, Timothy M. Dunlap, succeeded him as

President & Chief Executive Officer. TNA mourns the passing of Ed last year, as well as his wife, Anna, in July 2023.

Each year Ed, and now Tim, invite TNA seniors to CentiMark in Canonsburg, PA, to congratulate the students on their success in high school, discuss their college and career plans and offer several life lessons. CentiMark then treats the senior students to lunch at Southpointe Golf Club!

Kathy Slencak, Manager of Public Relations, has long been TNA's friend and contact at CentiMark and LeMont Restaurant.

Last year, LeMont graciously invited us to celebrate our 21st anniversary at their restaurant. The Dunlap Family Foundation generously underwrote a portion of the celebration in the elegant private dining room.

TNA is grateful for the long-lasting relationship and wonderful traditions that CentiMark has created and provided for our students and entire community over our 18-year relationship. Thank you!



SENIOR SPOTLIGHT

Samaira, Class of 2024

TNA Senior, Samaira of Penn Hills, has had quite a summer participating in programs feeding her passion for math and engineering. Samaira has completed Carnegie Mellon University's five-week Summer Academy for Math and Science (SAMS) program, and a week-long program through Robert Morris University and NAIOP Pittsburgh- to explore the world of commercial real estate.

"I absolutely love math and science, and someday I want to become a mechanical or civil engineer," Samaira said. "These programs have been really cool. I lived on campus at CMU and met so many different people. It was nice seeing minorities like myself, too. The experience was very 'college-like' with the independence and freedom to meet the professors."

Soon after Samaira completed the SAMS program, she went on to explore another potential career path: commercial real estate.

"At the Robert Morris NAIOP Pittsburgh program, my team and I won first place for our design of a new eco-friendly warehouse. It had solar panels and everything needed to reduce its carbon footprint. I even won a personal award for being the 'Most Transformative' since I was nervous and shy for the first few days."

Samaira hopes to be accepted to North Carolina A&T State University, Harvard, Columbia, or Georgia Tech. She credits her love of engineering and math to a SeaPerch program in which she participated when she was in 5th-7th-grades. SeaPerch is an educational tool that allows students to construct remotely operated underwater vehicles using engineering skills.

In her free time, she enjoys reading adventure books (her favorite being *Bridge to Terabithia* by Katherine Paterson), doing math equations out of her own practice booklet, and cycling with Pittsburgh Youth Leadership (PYL).

"Cycling is relaxing and fun to me, and I completed my first trip with PYL to Cumberland, MD in the spring," Samaira said. "Friends would tell me all about the trips they would go on, and I was never sure about it. Then one day, I said, 'Okay, sign me up.'"

Samaira is appreciative of TNA Math Instructor Jason Scott for his consistent help and guidance.

"Mr. Jason is my advisor, and I have always enjoyed the way he teaches and how he is able to drop everything to help students understand something," she said.

"Even if you had trouble with other classes' homework, he would help you. He always made time to read over my U.S. History papers!"



SUPPORTERS CORNER

Bob and Susan Edwards of Wexford are strong in their Christian faith and their advocacy of The Neighborhood Academy. Bob and Susan both worked for 30+ years at PNC Financial Services and GlaxoSmithKline, respectively, and are now enjoying their retirement through travel, volunteerism, and golf.

Susan was introduced to TNA in 2020 through Carolyn Sanford, Assistant Head of School for Development, and Susan's former college roommate.

"We believe that education effectively sets up the trajectory of a person's future. Thriving in school and making good life choices creates a solid tomorrow," said Susan. "A value-based life can make a huge difference in society," Bob agreed. "If I had a magic wand, I would do two things: give everyone a good education and open everyone's eyes to faith. TNA does both from our perspective."

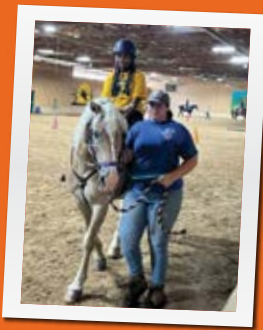
Bob and Susan are also very supportive of Penn State where Bob serves as the vice chairman of the Schreyer Honors College's External Advisory Board. The Edwards invited Honors College Dean Patrick Mather to join them to tour TNA. He was so impressed with the school and the students; he used the word 'inspiring' more than once to describe the school. Bob noted, "Each student we met at TNA looked us right in the eye, shook our hands, and welcomed us."

Bob and Susan sponsor a student's tuition every year and use the PA Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) Program to redirect their PA State tax liability to approved schools such as TNA and receive a 90% PA tax credit.

"The EITC program is so easy. It's a little-known option, but it really lets our tax dollars work hard to help these students. We do it year after year," said Susan.

An EPIC Weekend

On Saturday, September 9, the Outdoor Adventure Club went to Slippery Rock University to groom, tack, and ride horses at Storm Harbor Equestrian Center.



On Sunday, September 10, John McClelland, Ron Snyder, and TNA students, Samaira, LeSheem, Yasir, and Andre along with Chago Bradbury of PYL ran the Tough Mudder – a 15K with over 20 obstacles!



One of our favorite activities is to lend a helping hand at Valley View Presbyterian Church's monthly food bank by sorting, packaging, and distributing food items to the community.



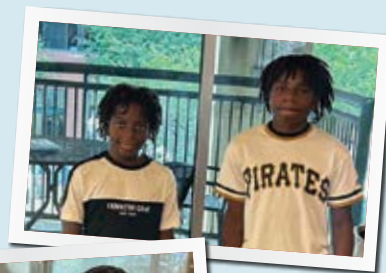
"TNA students come here and really lift our spirits — and they make our work a lot less difficult!"

They jump right in and never skip a beat."

— Pastor Chad Collins

Let's go, Bucs!

Thank you to PNC Bank for donating 70 Pirates tickets to the TNA community to watch the Buccos square off against the Atlanta Braves. We love watching a good ball game (and Pierogi race, of course!)



Way to Go, Dr. Kaz!

In July, TNA Biology Instructor, Rainee Kaczorowski, presented at the Scientist Lecture Series in Cleveland, OH! She spoke on how floral traits differ among the Nicotiana species in relation to pollinator visitation, and how floral scent affects pollinators and antagonists.

TNA students and faculty enjoyed an action-packed day at Camp Guyasuta with team-building activities, a low-ropes course, and ziplining! Special thanks to the Rob Bell Fund for kicking off our academic year with this fun outing.



OH-IO!

TNA Seniors had a jam packed visit to Ohio State University. The group explored Buckeye Nation, played basketball on OSU's outdoor courts, and went to downtown Columbus to enjoy some tacos and games!

The second day started with an admissions tour, meeting the team that oversees the Morrill Scholars Program, and learning about the Fisher College of Business while competing in a game of Post-Secondary Trivia.



#GoDukes!

The Lady Bulldogs were treated to a Duquesne Dukes volleyball match. Special thanks to Coach Duck and Coach Harrison for this special outing.

HONORS AND TRIBUTES

From 5/1/2023 - 9/1/2023

IN MEMORY OF
Jessica McClelland
Ms. Yvonne Novick

IN MEMORY OF
Clarissa W. Burchfield
Albert H. and Clarissa W. Burchfield
Memorial Fund

IN HONOR OF
The Fosters
Grandis Family Charitable Fund

IN MEMORY OF
Barbara Omolade
Ms. Nancy Augustine

IN MEMORY OF
Katie Wooldridge
Ms. Michele Bender

IN MEMORY OF
Frances Cohen-Knoerdel
Mr. Costas G. Karakatsanis and
Ms. Barbara

IN MEMORY OF
Charles Gibbons
James Mahood

IN HONOR OF
Conor McAteer
Mr. Costas G. Karakatsanis and
Ms. Barbara Blackmond



WISHLIST

All wish list donations are tax-deductible and can be gifted by donating their value at givetna.org.

Item(s)	Price		
Notebooks	\$5	STEM Instructional Materials	\$100
Hygiene Items (Soap, Toothpaste, Toothbrushes, Lotion, Laundry Detergent, Dryer Sheets)	\$10	TNA Travel Fund - Trip to Egypt 2024!	\$100
Computer Case for a Student	\$10	Monthly Food for a Student	\$120
Sick Day Supplies (Kleenex, Cough Drops, Tylenol)	\$10	Ti-84 Calculator	\$125
Lab Glasses	\$10	Sports Equipment	\$200
Cleaning Supplies (Clorox Wipes, Disinfectant, Gloves)	\$25	Bike	\$250
Art Supplies	\$25	Chromebook	\$250
Senior Seminar Needs	\$25	Microscope	\$250
One-Month Tuition for a Student	\$50	Monthly Food for a Family	\$360
One Charging Cord and Accessories	\$50	One-Month Tuition for 10 students	\$500
Chemistry Glassware, Test Tubes, Beakers	\$50	Charging Cords and Accessories for classroom	\$500
SAT Prep for a Student	\$50	iPad	\$500
Science Fair General Materials	\$50	SAT Prep for 10 students	\$520
Apple Pencil	\$100	Macbook Pro	\$1,500
		Chromebooks for Classroom	\$2,500



JOIN THE Legacy Society!

Join the Legacy Society! Consider creating your own legacy of support by investing in our students' futures.

The Neighborhood Academy's Legacy Society recognizes and honors those who have included TNA in their estate plans which sustain the school in profound and pragmatic ways. Consult with your financial advisor as you plan your legacy gift to the school.

**CONTACT US TO LET US
KNOW IF TNA IS IN YOUR WILL OR
TO RECEIVE MORE INFORMATION.**

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