

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 2020

NEIGHBORHOOD news

709 N. Aiken Avenue | Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Letter from The Head of School

To: The Neighborhood Academy Community



Reflecting on the past several months, I would venture to say that we have encountered challenging times that have not been easy for anyone. Not for anyone in our community, at The Neighborhood Academy (TNA), the

Greater Pittsburgh area, and across our nation. As Head of School, I reflect on racial injustice and inequity experienced by many in our country and evaluate how it affects TNA students- not only in this moment, but how it may affect their future growth and development. An intolerance for diverse voices and spaces encountered throughout our nation, not only now but since our country was established as a unified people, demands the recognition of equity and justice as a civil liberty and right for all. Equity and justice should be experienced by all and not predetermined by one's race, socioeconomic status, gender, religious affiliation, or any other social identities that one possesses.

In addition to the impact of racial injustice that we have experienced within our nation, the COVID-19 pandemic is challenging us all in ways that we never thought possible. The coronavirus has had a profound impact on our world, forcing us to adapt various

aspects of our lives. For that reason, I would like to take this moment to acknowledge and pray for those who have been impacted by racial injustice and COVID-19.

These issues do not exist in a vacuum, and while the implications of racial injustice and COVID-19 have deeply altered life as we know it, for me, it reinforces the significance of a high-quality education and the value of the lives of our students.

The value of a high-quality education not only benefits our students, their education benefits society and will radiate positivity throughout our nation in the years to come. Education enables opportunity- namely, the opportunity to develop skillsets that guide our students to be change-agents who will impact the future trajectory of individuals and communities in the Pittsburgh region and beyond. **Our students have access to opportunity because of your belief in the value of their education and their lives.** In light of the challenges that we have faced over the summer, I am relieved to see gratitude, positive insight, and optimism exuding from the wide range of TNA supporters who believe in our mission and students.

The work of The Neighborhood Academy would not have been possible without the generosities of TNA supporters-individuals, corporations, faith-based communities, and foundations. These true friends enabled us to seamlessly transition to

distance learning in the Spring and Summer to provide a high-quality, college-preparatory education to our students from their homes as part of our mission *to break the cycle of generational poverty through education and to prepare our students for college and citizenship.* The achievements and successes of our students made during this time- despite the distance, difficulties, and hardship- fill me with emotion and overwhelming appreciation, knowing that these milestones could have been lost. I am forever grateful for their success.

As we enter our 20th academic year, please know that you have the power to move mountains for our students, and when we stand together in unified belief for a great cause such as this, our power is amplified. My brothers and sisters, I am happy to report that despite challenges so grave, our mission remains steadfast. This fall we are able to safely reopen our school in a blended learning model to 141 students, which includes our largest graduating senior class of 26 students. Students of The Neighborhood Academy will continue to receive the education necessary to achieve their dreams of college success, developing their talents so that they will become change-agents for a stronger nation that will make the Pittsburgh region and beyond a better place for all.

With love and in solidarity,

Dr. Anthony Paul Williams



BY THE NUMBERS

141
STUDENTS

26
SENIORS
*largest class ever
in TNA's history*

1
COMMUNITY

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

KIKI ROCKYMORE

Learn and Earn



Kiara "Kiki" Rockymore, a TNA Class of 2020 Senior and new Freshman at Seton Hill University, took part in the Learn and Earn program during this past summer. **Learn and Earn**, a summer youth employment program delivered by Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, and Partner4Work, aims to set young people on the path to a successful future through a 6-week, paid summer employment program.

As a first job, Kiki described her overall experience as contributing positively to her ability to ask for help and advice and also mentioned that her favorite aspect of the program was the virtual peer interaction with guest speakers. Kiki worked with a group of her peers to develop an app, "Perfect Balance", in response to the negative impacts of COVID-19 on teen sleeping and eating. Thanks for all your hard work this Summer, Kiki, and good luck at Seton Hill!

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Brittany Griffith, '15



A 2019 graduate of Penn State Behrend with a degree in Marketing, Brittany started a new job in February at Red House Marketing in the Southside of Pittsburgh as their Assistant Account Executive. In her position, Brittany manages various accounts at the firm and ensures the development of creative marketing materials. As a college student, Brittany served as an intern for local non-profit, Grounded Strategies, and MARC USA. Brittany's Senior Seminar project with our very own Mr. Jason Scott, TNA's Math and Science Department Chair, helped nurture her interest in marketing. She describes the small class sizes at TNA as critical to her college success, saying "I'm used to talking with my teachers about whatever I need. So, when I arrived at Penn State and had a question, I was always the one raising my hand".

Her advice to current TNA students:

"Stay on top of your deadlines!"

Her favorite TNA memory:

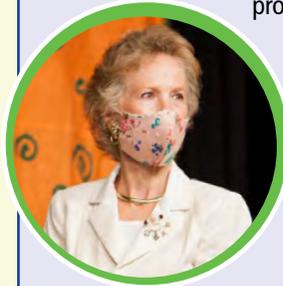
"Going to Italy with my classmates! Visiting different cities gave me perspective. Now, I know that travel is something meant to be in my life."

Where do you see yourself in five years?

"I think marketing is something that I'll always want to do, but eventually I'd like to get into real estate and invest in properties."

CONVOCATION

In July, the Board of Directors of The Neighborhood Academy voted unanimously to award Ms. Josephine B. Moore, the co-founder of The Neighborhood Academy, an Emeritus title for her selfless dedication to the lives of countless young people throughout the Pittsburgh area. From the Larimer Avenue youth program to embarking upon

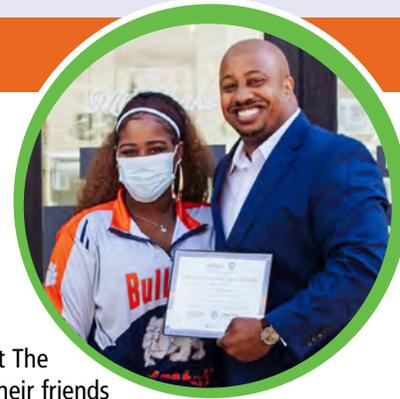


starting a school, Jodie's relentless pursuit of justice and equity has earned her the love and respect of students, alumni, donors, board members, faculty and staff of The Neighborhood Academy. Though she has received numerous awards, none gives her more gratification than this commendation from the community she loves so deeply. Jodie received the Emeritus title at Convocation, Wednesday, September 9th, 2020.

SPECIAL THANK YOU'S

MILK SHAKE MILESTONE

On Saturday, July 25th, **The Milk Shake Factory** and **Pittsburgh Penguins®** teamed up with The Neighborhood Academy to celebrate 18 graduates of TNA's Class of 2020.



The Milk Shake Factory presented each graduate with the "Milkshake Milestone" award that represents all their hard work and dedication throughout their years at The Neighborhood Academy. The students celebrated with their friends and families by enjoying a free milkshake, an assortment of chocolate sweets, and a Pittsburgh Penguins® gift bag. We look forward to continuing our partnership with The Milk Shake Factory and Pittsburgh Penguins throughout the 2020-21 Academic Year.

BACKPACKS FOR SUCCESS

St. Michael's of the Valley Episcopal Church of Ligonier and St. Andrews Episcopal Church of Highland Park support students of The Neighborhood Academy each year by donating backpacks



full of school supplies to equip our students for success as they return to class. Thank you to the volunteers of both churches for their efforts for our students: Father Jim Simons, Ann Bush, Penny Montgomery, Terry Northcutt, Marty Federowicz, Mary Roehrich, Pat Kennedy, Becky Usner, and Becky Byerly.



STUDENT ORIENTATION

The Rob Bell Fund generously donated TNA sweatshirts, reusable TNA water bottles, and TNA stickers to the entire TNA student body as part of our orientation experience this year. Thanks to their generosity, our students will come back to school in style and safety and bond together as a TNA community through shared identity.

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

The Neighborhood Academy received \$25,000 from the Jack Buncher Foundation. Thank you to all our champions, supporters, and friends who helped us meet the challenge offered by the Jack Buncher Foundation, doubling the generosity of our donors.



Your support ensured the college-preparatory education of TNA students for another year.

SENIOR GIFTS

When the pandemic struck last Spring, our Class of 2020 seniors were still chasing their dream of graduating high school and heading off to college in the Fall. Even though our graduates finished their final months of high school, albeit from their bedrooms and not the classroom, our friends at the **Arts, Equity, & Education (AE&E) Fund** believed there was still much to celebrate. In response to the pandemic and in recognition of growing financial burdens, AE&E Fund benevolently awarded each Class of 2020 graduate with a gift of \$3,000 to support their transition to college life.

These gifts will assist with college expenses such as tuition, housing, technology needs, books, and more.

To learn about about the AE&E Fund and their generous gifts to our seniors, please visit: aeefund.org/grantees-2020-tna



VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR

Lu Wenneker: Ms. Wenneker is one of our volunteers who works with the faculty, ordering them and the students books for classroom use. Most recently, she provided 35 books on financial literacy, a class which is taught every year. Ms. Wenneker taught Art History at The Ellis School for many years before moving to Los Angeles, continuing Art History teaching at The Marlborough School. She returned to Pittsburgh several years ago to be closer to her family.



Audie Hart: Ms. Audie has been a volunteer for over six years at The Neighborhood Academy, where she has been a great asset to teachers, staff, parents, and especially to our students. She has volunteered as our receptionist coordinator, facilitating our daily work and greeting everyone with a smile. All the staff and students recognize Ms. Audie's genuine love and care for our community.



Dr. Thomas Antos: Dr. Thomas Antos, MD has been an Internal Medicine Specialist in Pittsburgh for over 51 years. Earlier this year, he spoke to a roomful of our high school students who are interested in pursuing medical/veterinary careers. Dr. Antos maintains our gardens outside the kitchen, keeping them beautiful and free of weeds. Thank you, Tom!



Emily Jarrett served as The Neighborhood Academy's Capital Campaign consultant for the building of our school. She was an enthusiastic and committed supporter of TNA and its mission. Emily loved the faculty and delighted in gathering them at her home for dinner after the end-of-year faculty wrap-up meetings. We will miss Emily immensely, but she holds a special place in all of our hearts.



TRIBUTES AND MEMORIALS From 6-11 until 9-9

IN MEMORY OF Ann Leibrick

Ellis Wasson

IN HONOR OF Anthony Williams

Sarah Heppenstall
Beatrice Jones
Laura Varga

IN MEMORY OF Charles Ligions

Jerry Coleman

IN HONOR OF Daniel Ballon

Karin Cole
Anonymous
Shannon Lenet
Carlyn Moyer
Patricia Root
Cathy Stentzel

IN MEMORY OF Emily E. Jarrett

Peter Leone

IN HONOR OF Eugene C. Beard

Alan Schorr

IN MEMORY OF Gay Palmer

Ann Pollack

IN HONOR OF Harvey Adams

Tina Calabro

IN HONOR OF Jodie Moore

Laura Varga

IN HONOR OF Joyce Beard

Alan Schorr

IN HONOR OF Kathleen Gavlak

Rita Yeasted

IN MEMORY OF Margaret M. Farrell

Beatrice Jones

IN MEMORY OF Margaret M. Robinson

Jerry Coleman

IN MEMORY OF Margie English

Jerry Coleman

IN HONOR OF Mary Martin

Carol Baker

IN MEMORY OF Paul O'Neill

Jewish Healthcare
Foundation of
Pittsburgh

Richard J. Alden

James Alder

Stacey Brumbaugh

Bonita A. Cersosimo

Rosalyn T. Cox

Aaron George

Joanne Hansrote

Miriam Harris

Lori McAdoo

Shana Padgett

Sally J. Robuck

Ellen Walton

John Williams

Donald K. Wolf

Bill Wolf

IN MEMORY OF Robert Dapper

Joanne Dapper

IN HONOR OF Ronika Frank

Beatrice Jones

IN HONOR OF Sue Van Doeren

Gwynn Goldring

Judith Talbert

IN HONOR OF Talia Landerman

Donna Welsh-Johnson

IN HONOR OF Thomas Johnson

Carol Cozen

Nancy Mears

Jean Robinson

Laura Varga

CORPORATE CONNECTION

Corporate Revenue Increases 14% Over Previous

Corporate partnerships make a difference at The Neighborhood Academy. Each relationship established provides not only much-needed scholarships for our students, but also career opportunities. Through our career exposure and workforce development program, students gain meaningful, real-world insight for the careers that await them after college graduation. Many of our students have been selected for internship positions and have obtained well-paying jobs as a result of our connections in the corporate sector. **We added five new businesses and reclaimed two in the 2019-20 school year.** Corporate support continues to grow and impact the lives of our students and alumni as they enter the workforce poised and prepared.

To recommend a friend or colleague to learn more about us, please contact Sheila Rawlings at 412-626-6851, or via email at Sheila.rawlings@theneighborhoodacademy.org.

SPOTLIGHT



During Accenture's Virtual Week of Service in June, the work and mission of The Neighborhood Academy was featured and shared with Accenture employees. Thanks to our dedicated friends, TNA received nearly \$3,000 in Accenture employee donations and matching gifts, as well as career development support for students through "Career Conversations". As part of this experience, students watched videos provided by employees of Accenture through virtual platforms and other multimedia resources. Students were asked to reflect on the videos that they watched and here is what Jada had to say:

"I didn't know there was a "solutioner" career until watching Lani's video. I think it's really interesting that he gets to help people in this way, and enable them to succeed in the parts of their business that they have trouble in. I also like how he is exposed to different cultures and backgrounds through his job."

-Jada, 12th

CONSIDER CREATING YOUR OWN LEGACY TO NURTURE OUR STUDENTS' FUTURES.

Join The Neighborhood Academy's Legacy Society, whose donors endorse the co-founders of the school, The Reverend Thomas E. Johnson, Jr.'s and Ms. Jodie Moore's educational vision, "to break the cycle of generational poverty by preparing low-income youth for college and citizenship". The Legacy Society recognizes and honors those who have included TNA in their estate plans, which sustain the school in profound and pragmatic ways. Please contact **Carolyn Sanford**, Assistant Head of School for Development, or **Sheila Rawlings**, Director of Development, at 412-362-2001 for more information.



UNITE WITH US THROUGH UNITED WAY

Please consider joining our rich community of corporate connections today!

United Way Agency Code: 221578



TECH ENDOWMENT FUND

Want to donate laptops? Check out our Technology Endowment Fund here: www.justgiving.com/campaign/TNAtech

Wish List

As we prepare for an adapted fall semester due to the global pandemic, we are asking for critical items to help our students and their families during this time of uncertainty. All wish list donations are tax-deductible, and can be made online by visiting our website at:

www.theneighborhoodacademy.org/support/wish-list.cfm

- One Chromebook - \$250
- Chromebooks for a classroom - \$2,500
- One charging cord & accessories - \$50
- Charging cords & accessories for a classroom - \$500
- One-month tuition for a student - \$50
- One-month tuition for ten students - \$500
- Weekly food for a student - \$30
- Weekly food for a student & their family - \$90
- Monthly food for a student - \$120
- Monthly food for a student & their family - \$360

WELCOME NEW STAFF MEMBERS

Talia Landerman, a native of Pittsburgh and graduate of the University of Pittsburgh (B.A. '16 & MSW '19), joined The Neighborhood Academy in March of 2020 as Development Associate. In this role, Talia works to financially support and sustain TNA's mission. After graduating high school in 2011, Talia spent a year in Israel learning at Bar Ilan University and then volunteered for a year of National Service through Compass AmeriCorps. Talia serves as the new Vice Chair of the University of Pittsburgh's School of Social Work's Alumni Advisory Board. **Welcome, Talia!**



Meredythe Hlasnik, former AmeriCorps teaching associate at TNA during the 2012-2013 academic year, returned to us in August as our new Graduate Support staff member. Meredythe has a teaching background in math, physics, and special ed., and she recently made a career change to be a practicing mental health counselor. Meredythe will be working in the College and Career Counseling Department, focused on growing and enhancing our ability to provide students with a personalized college counseling and professional development experience. **Welcome, Meredythe!**



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

www.theneighborhoodacademy.org

phone: 412-362-2001 fax: 412-362-2004

709 N. Aiken Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15206



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