An Achievable Dream High School Class of 2017

“The Fass Family/Ferguson Enterprises Scholars

An Achievable Dream Class of 2017 received diplomas to the fervent cheers of family and friends during their graduation ceremony on June 8, at Christopher Newport University’s Ferguson Center for the Arts. “We are all given the same 24 hours, and even if you haven’t been spending your time wisely up until now, this is a new beginning, a fresh start. Who you were in high school does not matter as much as you think,” said Shealtiel Weekes, Class of 2017 Valedictorian. “Excellence is never an accident…. it’s the result of hard work. So, now is the time to push, go forward and work hard. Attain excellence… the kind of excellence that will make your dreams a reality. It is up to all of us to make a difference, to have people say honorable things about us and to leave the impression that you never gave up on yourselves.”

Eight-six percent of the class graduated with an advanced studies diploma. Members of the class completed 595 honors courses and 280 advanced placement courses. One hundred percent of the class is planning to attend college, a trade school or serve in the Armed Services.

During the ceremony, members of the Class of 2017 presented signed photographs to co-class sponsors Arthur and Jean Fass and Ferguson Enterprises. As class sponsors, they will provide annual merit scholarships for each member of the class every year that they attend college and maintain a required grade point average. Ferguson also sponsored the classes of 2008 and 2016. “This year we are particularly proud to sponsor the Class of 2017,”

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”
—Nelson Mandela

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said Robert Braig, Vice President of the industrial group for Ferguson’s parent company, Wolseley. “All of us at Ferguson Enterprises are proud to be a small part of what goes on at An Achievable Dream.” Arthur Fass, CEO of Maritime Products International, and his wife, Jean, were touched by our Academy many years ago. “It’s a privilege for us to be able to help sponsor this class,” said Arthur. “God bless these young children and God bless Walter Segaloff for bringing this program to this city.”

**Class of 2017 Highlights**

- Class of 2017 received a total of $2,018,300.00 in scholarship funds.
- The Class of 2017 applied to 185 colleges and universities and were accepted to 140 of them.
- Richard Cotman received the Virginia Tech Clark Scholarship.
- Takari Ford, Trent Kinney, and Richard Cotman received the Virginia Tech Presidential scholarship.
- Tajauna Batchelor received the Salem College Gramley Scholarship, totaling $80,000 over four years and the Newport News Redevelopment Housing Authority Scholarship.
- Sheatiel Weekes received the HUFS-Capstone Scholarship for $35,000 each year.
- Whitney Banks, Tajauna Batchelor, Richard Cotman, Jarice Tinsley and Sheatiel Weekes were inducted into the Mu Alpha Theta Math National Honor Society.
- Traveon Williams was named 2nd team All-State Offensive Line, 1st Team All-Region Offensive Line and 1st Team All-Conference 18 Offensive Line for football.
- Destiny Williams was the 3rd in Command for the NJROTC Program.

“Senior Walk is an amazing opportunity for the graduating Dreamer scholars to showcase their accomplishments. It is equally important for our younger Dreamer scholars to see the face of their dreams walk past. The Senior Walk presents itself as a momentous occasion to inspire and aspire! Congratulations to An Achievable Dream Class of 2017.”

—N'Dia Taylor, fifth grade student

**Second Annual SENIOR WALK**

Seniors from An Achievable Dream High School walked through the halls of An Achievable Dream Academy, while our K–5 Dreamers excitedly cheered!
Judge Richard Bray
President and CEO of the Beazley Foundation

Recently, Dr. Lee Vreeland, vice president for academics, and I met with Judge Richard Bray, President and CEO of the Beazley Foundation. We discussed public education; the challenges our children and families face; and how the Beazley Foundation got started, among many other topics. Meeting with Richard and listening to his stories about “Mr. Beazley,” as he prefers to call him, and sensing his passion for the Foundation’s mission to help others, especially children, inspired me to write this article. It also inspired me to write articles for future issues of Achievements about An Achievable Dream’s wonderful sponsors, and to share what inspires them (you) to support our Dreamers.

—Kathy Edwards, President/CEO

“Mr. Beazley wanted to bring education to the doorstep of every young person willing and able to pursue it,” Judge Richard Bray says of Fred Beazley who established the Foundation in 1948.

Mr. Beazley’s desire and the Foundation’s mission is the basis for years of support for An Achievable Dream (AAD) in Newport News and in Virginia Beach. To listen to Richard talk about Fred Beazley, one understands the motivation that guides the Foundation to provide generous grants to AAD and many other organizations in Hampton Roads. Mr. Beazley and AAD students share the “perseverance” trait. Dreamers overcome so many challenges and obstacles in their lives that only inner strength and fortitude can explain how they continue to pursue their dreams. Yes, AAD plays an important role, but the students themselves deserve much of the credit for their success.

Richard explains AAD this way:

“You introduce children to opportunities and promise, a new vision for quality of life, and then you show them the right door to walk through. You give them the foundation and instill hope, and then they enter the world and the rest is up to them.”

He goes on to explain Mr. Beazley’s life and the perseverance he displayed and the choices he made. Living in Portsmouth, he dropped out of school at the age of 16, borrowed $40 to buy a mule and a cart, and sold coal and oil door to door. That’s how he got started in business. The Great Depression depleted everything he had earned and saved. So, in the mid ’30s he moved to Atlanta and started a new business—in ice. He eventually owned 50 ice plants in four states, and leased cold storage warehouses to railroads.

When his fortune was restored, he moved back to Portsmouth and established the Foundation with the needs of the community and young people as its primary focus. Richard met Mr. Beazley when he was 12 years old and remembers his kind heart even then. Richard was named a trustee of the Foundation in 1994. He retired as a judge from Virginia’s Court of Appeals in 2002 to become the Foundation’s president and CEO.

“Mr. Beazley was the most honest man I ever met. He was distinguished with his generosity which reflected what was in his heart,” Richard said.

That’s another thing Mr. Beazley and AAD share—the belief that we all have to give back to our community. AAD students are required to join a club, and every club is required to do a community-service project. That could mean collecting pennies to make a donation to a homeless shelter, singing at an assisted living facility or creating artwork to give to sick children at a local hospital.

Richard said, “Mr. Beazley would be so proud of our partnership and the difference An Achievable Dream makes. He would have loved this.”

“You give them the foundation and instill hope, and then they enter the world and the rest is up to them.”

—Judge Richard Bray
The Second Annual Beach Ball to benefit An Achievable Dream Virginia Beach was held on Saturday, May 20, at the Cavalier Golf and Yacht Club. Guests enjoyed music by popular local band *Breaking Brad*, Fusion Painter Gerome Meminger, a silent auction that featured wine and spirits, exclusive restaurant packages, resort getaways, paintings created by students from Seatack Elementary/An Achievable Dream Academy and much more!
THANK YOU to our sponsors for their generous support.

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Thank you to Checkered Flag for donating the 2016 Mini Cooper to raffle at the Beach Ball.

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Thank you to our Anonymous sponsors.

Thank you to the many volunteers who gave their time and to the staff of the Cavalier Golf and Yacht Club for making the Second Annual Beach Ball a success. We could not have done it without you.

Thank you to Gerome Meminger for lending your artistic talents.

Thank you to the auction item donors who provided so many wonderful items.
An Achievable Dream Happenings

An Achievable Dream expands to Henrico County

“I still get goosebumps thinking about the first time that I saw those kids and how they were energized coming into school, how the staff was energized. Knowing what we face as an urban county, it seemed like something that our schools should consider.... Kudos to Newport News and An Achievable Dream for the effort that they’ve put forward, the fact that they were able to think outside of the box so many years ago. We’re looking to photocopy the success that Newport News has had.” —John Vithoulkas, County Manager, Henrico County

In January, the Henrico County School Board approved a partnership with An Achievable Dream (AAD) to open An Achievable Dream Certified Academy at Highland Springs Elementary School on July 10, 2017. For 2017–2018, the certified academy will include kindergarten through second-grade students. Each year, a grade level will be added, with the entire school serving as a certified academy in 2020.

For the first time, AAD will license our curriculum and framework to Henrico County Public Schools as a result of a memorandum of agreement between the Henrico County School Board and An Achievable Dream.

The memorandum of agreement states that the “ultimate goal” beyond the planned five years is to add a middle/high school much like the Newport News Middle/High School.

Ninety-five students will be selected for each grade level at Highland Springs, with 95 more joining each year. The students will be selected by criteria considering several factors: economic circumstances, family, sibling participation, attendance in prior years and geographic proximity to the school.

The Highland Springs’ families and students are excited for the program! There are a few students who get off the bus every morning and say, “Is today the day we get to start the Achievable Dream Academy?” The parents are optimistic to see the results the program will bring to their children! The outreach from community members and groups has been overwhelming as well. Everyone wants to know more and how they can pitch in to help.

The uniforms are ordered, the banners are hung, the teachers are ready and our doors will open soon, and the excitement continues to build!

“I am thrilled about the possibilities the partnership with An Achievable Dream Academy will provide our students and their families. This partnership is about more than the extended time. It is about teaching and supporting the needs of the whole child—socially, emotionally and academically. It is truly an investment in our students and our community.”

—Beth Teigen, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Henrico County Public Schools

Henry Cole, author and illustrator shared with our Seatack Dreamers the process in creating and illustrating books! He’s the creative mind behind some of our favorite titles! Our Dreamers were amazed to see his work in action!
Owners of Chick’s Oyster Bar in Virginia Beach, Mike Atkinson and Cory Beisel, visited Seatack Elementary, An Achievable Dream Academy in Virginia Beach and were taken aback by the program. On average, Chick’s hosts 30 charity events a year and donates to more than 100 local charities. After their visit to AAD, they decided to focus their efforts on changing the lives of the Dreamers. On April 22, Mike and Cory, along with several other local restaurants and sponsors, hosted the First Annual Seafood Festival benefiting An Achievable Dream. The event raised more than $100,000!

Pictured above left are, left to right, Mike Atkinson, Cory Beisel and Charles Barker. Charles Barker Toyota donated the 2017 Toyota Tacoma TRD 4x4 Off Road truck, shown above right, for the raffle.

On April 20, in conjunction with Earth Day, AAD Virginia Beach hosted its second annual Community Volunteer Day. More than 50 volunteers spent the morning in the classrooms with the Dreamers, reading, making nest builders and bird feeders, planting vegetables and much more.

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National Read Across America Week and Dr. Seuss’ Birthday! Virginia Beach community leaders read to our Dreamers in honor of these special occasions.

On January 20, our junior and senior Dreamers had the opportunity to meet Llewellyn C. Radford as he shared excerpts from his book, *Dream On Dreamers: Book of Inspiration*.

Miss Virginia 2016, Michaela Sigmon, visited our Dreamers in April. She spoke about the importance of making people feel valuable and actively listening to others. She let our Dreamers know that they have the power to change someone’s life just by being kind.

Newport News Fire Chief Robert Alley shared his career story and encouraged our Dreamers to set goals. He gave three steps needed to accomplish goals: -Dream it. -Plan for it. -Do it.

Astronaut Dr. Charlie Camarda spoke to our third-, fourth- and fifth-grade Dreamers in March! Our Dreamers were very excited to learn about his flight to the International Space Station.

Middle/High School students had a wonderful experience bearing witness to a field demonstration/training session with Investigator Alana Cooper and her K-9 Arson Dog, Sadie. Sadie is Hampton Roads’ only accelerant detection canine certified by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Sadie and her handler, Cooper, assist with fire scene investigations locally as well as regionally and may also be deployed anywhere to assist as needed as part of the ATF National Response Team.
Many thanks to David Cromwell, President of Busch Gardens Williamsburg, and colleagues for visiting in May and introducing our eighth graders to some feathered friends.

Senior Commitment Day

For our first annual Senior Commitment Day on May 30, the Class of 2017 shared their plans beyond high school, pledged and signed their commitment to succeed at the next stage of their lives.

“As defined by Webster’s dictionary, a commitment is an agreement or pledge to do something in the future,” said Johnell Judkins, Class of 2017. “I don’t believe there's a more fitting definition for this very pivotal moment in our lives. Today, we take charge of our future and we set the stepping stones for our success.”

“As you transition to college, military, or trade school, please make a commitment to yourself to be the best you can be,” said Lee Vreeland, Vice President for Academics. “Although the road ahead may not always be easy, it will be worth it. Please remember you are not alone. An Achievable Dream is always here to support you. An Achievable Dream loves you.”
This time last year, I wrote about my dream for “Phoenix Pride” to spread throughout the student body and the surrounding community. This year, it took on new meaning for me. The idea was to take athletics to a completely different level this year—it’s so critical in a Middle-Schooler’s life to be accepted, to be a part of something special, to feel a pride in the person they are creating. That atmosphere of passion, drive, determination, success, perseverance and family can be felt at any of our athletic contests, events or award ceremonies. Each team wore newly purchased uniforms this season, with our new Phoenix logo, made possible through a variety of Athletic Department fundraisers and the generosity of donors.

On the Middle School level, we saw an increase in the number of students who participated in one of our programs that competed in city-wide competitions—archery, track, volleyball and basketball. For the first time in history, our Boys Basketball Team made it to the City-Wide Semifinal game and lost by one heartbreaking point. Our Pep Band and Cheer Team completed year two and both received new uniforms this season! We had more than 180 student-athletes flourish in these activities.

Students may also participate in our after-school Intramurals program on the Middle and High School level. This is an opportunity to play non-competitive flag football, archery and basketball. More than 120 students were committed to all three sports.

We have such a wonderful, unique partnership with Heritage High School, allowing our students in grades eight through 12 to participate in more than 18 different sports and activities. I am proud to report that 175 Achievable Dream students participated, excelled and represented Achievable Dream so well while wearing the Heritage High uniform. Ten of our student-athletes made the Ironclad All-Conference 18 Teams! For example, Senior Enoch Sutton, on the boys’ volleyball team, received a statewide honor of First Team All-Region 4A East. His team made it to the State Semifinal game. Additionally, classmate Craig Long, member of the Varsity Football, Indoor/Outdoor Track teams, received Second Team All-Conference 18 Tight End, and second place in the Triple Jump VHSL 4A Boys Indoor Track, fourth place in the 4X2 Relay in the VHSL 4A Boys Indoor Track and first place in the Triple Jump for the Ironclad Conferences 18 track meet. There are many others who gained personal bests in these events from the “Dream.” What an exciting year!

Come out next season, catch the Phoenix Pride and support your Dreamers as they strive to be the best!
To our Boards of Directors, thank you for your time, your support, your commitment and for “Sharing the Dream.”

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Why do you support An Achievable Dream?

“I have long personally supported An Achievable Dream as a creative and results-oriented initiative. We’ve seen “the Dream” expand from a small pilot program to one that educates thousands of our kids all the way through high school. Your support is crucial as we help our young citizens and prospective leaders navigate the future in a positive way.”

—McKinley Price, Mayor of Newport News

Donations of school supplies for the school stores
Each day, our students in kindergarten through fifth grade earn merit points for attendance, good behavior and proper uniforms. Those merit points translate to dollars in their school checking account. Once a month, Dreamers visit the school store and are able to purchase needed school supplies with their dollars earned. Donations to stock the school stores are always appreciated, from standard items such as notebooks, pencils, erasers and crayons to fun items like activity books and stickers.

Donate online and make a difference in the life of a child
Your tax-deductible donation makes it possible for our children to succeed in school, continue to college and become successful members of society. An Achievable Dream is changing lives through education. Your generous support will keep hope alive for thousands of students. To donate online, go to AchievableDream.org/make-a-difference.

THANK YOU for supporting our students. With your generous gifts, they are well on their way to achieving their dreams.

Give Local 757
Thank you to the many donors who supported An Achievable Dream during Give Local 757, a 24-hour Hampton Roads fundraising event. More than $16,000 was raised in support of scholarships for our Dreamers to attend camps this summer.
**Achievements**

**An Achievable Dream, Inc.**
10858 Warwick Blvd., Suite A
Newport News, VA 23601
(757) 599-9472
information@AchievableDream.org
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**AN ACHIEVABLE DREAM**

*Is dedicated to the belief that all children can learn and succeed, regardless of their socio-economic status.*

*Please join us by adding your support to our Dreamers!*

Donations can be mailed to: An Achievable Dream, 10858 Warwick Blvd., #A, Newport News, VA 23601
Or by calling the office: (757) 599-9472
Or online at: achievedream.org/make-a-difference

- **$10,000:** Will help with the cost of college visitation trips for our high school Dreamers.
- **$5,000:** Will help with the costs for field trips, which are an integral part of the AAD program.
- **$2,500:** Will fund one month of after-school tutoring for AAD students.
- **$1,000:** Will help pay for student bus transportation for one week of Summer Intersession or one Saturday School.
- **$500:** Will help provide books for the AAD classrooms and libraries.
- **$250:** Will help with the cost of our students’ extended day snack programs.
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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

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**SAVE THE DATE!**

25th Annual An Achievable Dream TENNIS BALL
Saturday, November 18, 2017
Hampton Roads Convention Center

Become a Corporate Sponsor!
Visit AchievableDream.org or call 757-599-9472.

**Stay Connected with An Achievable Dream**
Sign up to receive our monthly email newsletter, the *Power of the Dream*, and receive the latest information on our Dreamers. Go to www.AchievableDream.org or send an email to information@AchievableDream.org.

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**Educating children socially, academically and morally**

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