We anticipated and we planned for a hybrid Tennis Ball event this year; however, the global supply chain had other plans! The 29th Annual Tennis Ball event will be held on Saturday, April 23, 2022, and the 30th Annual Tennis Ball will be held on Saturday, November 19, 2022.

We've learned to pivot during challenging times and make the best of whatever comes our way. We look forward to celebrating with you twice!

“As we face unprecedented vehicle shortages and adjust to continue to best meet our customers’ needs, there is one thing we know for certain: supporting An Achievable Dream is incredibly important to us! So even though the timing of the Tennis Ball event is changing, their work continues and the importance of supporting this organization remains. We can't wait to see you on April 23, 2022 at the 29th Annual Tennis Ball, bidding on cars in the auction and supporting the mission of An Achievable Dream!”

— Art Casey, Casey Auto Group

Thank You to Our Tennis Ball Premier Sponsors

Save the New Date

29th Annual Tennis Ball 04.23.2022
Join us at the Cavalier Hotel for A Night to Dream! Benefitting our program in Virginia Beach, our third annual A Night to Dream, A Mysterious Mardi Gras, will be the winter event you won’t want to miss!

The holidays have passed, spring is still to come. What better time to support our mission while having some fun? Join us for the third annual A Night to Dream on Friday, February 25, and chase the winter blues away while supporting a mission you believe in!

FRIDAY
FEBRUARY 25
2022
7:30 p.m.

SAVE THE DATE!

A MYSTERIOUS MARDI GRAS

AN EVENT TO BENEFIT AN ACHIEVABLE DREAM VIRGINIA BEACH
At the Historic Cavalier Hotel

SAVE THE DATE FOR THE THIRD ANNUAL
A NIGHT TO DREAM!

Visit NightToDream.org for sponsorship details and to purchase your tickets or sponsorship today!

Yellow Diamond: $10,000
Emerald: $5,000
Ruby: $2,500
Amethyst: $1,000

Get ready for A Mysterious Mardi Gras and reserve your spot now for the third annual A Night to Dream on Friday, February 25, 2022.

PURCHASE YOUR TICKETS OR SPONSORSHIPS AT NightToDream.org
Tennis Ball attendees know that the excitement of our live auction, with many premier items such as high-end vehicles, vacations and unique experiences, makes this event memorable every year. The vehicles are a vital component of this event. The vehicle industry is facing extreme inventory shortages throughout the world, and while our automotive partners are more committed than ever in their continuing support for An Achievable Dream, they simply do not have the inventory to contribute to the Tennis Ball auction at this time. The revenue from vehicles in our auction is so significant that, in collaboration with our executive leadership, board chairs, premier sponsors, and vehicle donors, we have decided to embrace this plot twist and make 2022 our biggest and best event year ever with not one, but two Tennis Ball events! The 29th Annual Tennis Ball will be held on Saturday, April 23, 2022, and the 30th Annual Tennis Ball will be held on Saturday, November 19, 2022. We’ve learned to pivot during challenging times and make the best of whatever comes our way. We look forward to celebrating with you twice!

"An Achievable Dream’s Tennis Ball has become the region’s premier fundraising event, benefitting an organization we all believe in. We are honored to be a part of it each year by donating vehicles for the live auction, and there is no way we would miss the opportunity to support the Dreamers. With such a severe shortage of car inventory regionally and nationwide, we must postpone the 29th Annual Tennis Ball until April 23, 2022. We are excited for a great turnout, an exciting live auction, and most of all, supporting the students of An Achievable Dream.”

— Stacy Cummings, Priority Auto Group

Save the Date

29th Annual Tennis Ball
04.23.2022

Virtual and In-Person Experiences are available for each Sponsorship Level! Visit TennisBall.org for sponsorship details and to purchase your tickets or sponsorship today!

29th Annual Tennis Ball Sponsorship Opportunities

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Reserve your spot now for the 29th Annual Tennis Ball on Saturday, April 23, 2022.

Purchase your tickets or sponsorships at TennisBall.org
Calvin Malone graduated from An Achievable Dream in 2006. After graduation, he joined the United States Navy. During his years of service, he developed great leadership qualities backed by the foundational core values, honor, courage, and commitment. After eight years of service, he returned home to settle in North Suffolk with his wife and five children. He recently obtained his Master of Business Administration degree at Saint Leo University in March 2021. Two months later, he was recruited by Allstate to become an Exclusive Agent/Agency Owner. His agency, Calvin Malone Insurance Agency LLC, will open its doors for business on December 1, 2021 in Suffolk, Virginia. When he is not behind his desk, he is usually spending time with his family, at local sporting events with his children, or taking bike rides through his community.

Calvin believes AAD provided a fun and safe learning environment for its students and, as a result, they developed a great camaraderie among each other. "Truly a home away from home, AAD’s family-like structure created lifelong relationships among students and staff. I attribute a lot of my success to my experience at AAD,” Calvin said.

Calvin is most grateful for the experiences he shared with the teachers and staff at AAD. "The direction I received from Marilyn Luter, Richard Coleman, John Hodge, James Hayden, and Lee Vreeland helped shape the very foundation that I stand on today." He especially credits Mr. Coleman for his leadership and mentorship: "For most young men, their father is the first male figure they learn from. That figure for me was Mr. Coleman," Calvin said. In his early years at AAD, Calvin frequently visited Mr. Coleman’s office and gained nuggets of wisdom to prepare him for the future.

Mr. Hodge and Mr. Hayden were also great male role models who provided life lessons for him both inside and outside the classroom. Calvin shared about AAD’s president and CEO Dr. Lee Vreeland, “Everyone under the tutelage of Dr. Vreeland will agree that the guidance and nurture she provides feels mother-like. Her support extends far beyond school walls and is felt for generations throughout the community,” he said.

When reflecting on some of the lessons he learned at AAD that have carried him to this point in life, Calvin shared: "Attending AAD meant you were at school later in the day while most of your friends were at home already playing or enjoying their summer vacation. I didn’t know it then, but that structure created the ability to focus on my goals without being distracted by outside influences. Because of the family-like structure at AAD, I never felt like I was missing out on anything. I am certain that the husband and father I am today and my future success is because I was afforded the opportunity to attend AAD. Etched in my brain are the many encouraging words, morning handshakes, and motivational quotes on the banners hanging throughout the halls. AAD gave me so much, and I would not be the man I am today had it not been for the structure it provided and the caring staff.”

Calvin is excited about opening the Calvin Malone Insurance Agency

Continued on page 7
Asia Lane, Class of 2009
I graduated from AAD in 2009 and I work for the City of Hampton as an administrative assistant in the Community Development department. Prior to the pandemic, I was a promotions assistant at iHeart Media in Norfolk, Virginia. Today’s circumstances and life changes have urged me to pursue home ownership and financial freedom, so I decided to study real estate and revive my retail business, LANELUXX LLC. An Achievable Dream always taught me to believe in myself and reminded me that I am someone special. Those words stayed with me along my journeys and failures. I understand everything I do isn’t going to be perfect, but everything I do is according to my purpose and God’s timing. I gave birth to my daughter before finishing college and thought it was an unattainable goal to complete school with a newborn and without financial support. An Achievable Dream stood behind me every step of the way and encouraged me to continue. I appreciate the support, love, assistance, mentorship, resources, and integrity AAD poured not only into me but in other students and our community as well. I love AAD!

Josh Thompson, Class of 2011
I graduated from AAD in 2011 and I serve as a federal merchant able-seaman with the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration. On June 12th, I celebrated four years in this career. An Achievable Dream prepared me to code switch (adjusting my vocabulary to tailor it to my surroundings). Because of An Achievable Dream, I know how to walk into a job interview well groomed, speak confidently and firmly, and communicate my worth to others. I plan to pursue entrepreneurship in the future.

La’Brea Bryant, Class of 2012
I graduated from AAD in 2012, and currently work in department E85 as a radiological controls technician at Newport News Shipbuilding. The proudest moments in my life occurred after I had children. Being able to mold two very handsome, intelligent, and promising young men has been nothing short of a blessing. An Achievable Dream prepared me for my life starting at a very young age. From our beginning etiquette classes to learning how to write a check, these principles never left my mind. I believe the foundation at An Achievable Dream prepared me to remain focused and dedicated to perfecting my craft at work, and to never give up. I’m always looking to improve myself and learn something new every day. As long as I’m being good to others and being the best “me” I can be, my heart will remain satisfied. In the future, I plan to pursue my radiological certifications and continue to build the best naval nuclear power vessels in the world. I want to pass down my successes to my 7-year-old Lathan, and our newest addition, 2-year-old Damarié.

Tamara Allen, Class of 2019
After graduating from AAD in 2019, I enrolled at Virginia Tech. I am currently a junior, studying philosophy, politics, and economics. I believe that my college experiences allowed me to take a journey of self-discovery. I would say this journey of self-realization and maturity is the greatest life milestone I am most proud of. I am grateful to An Achievable Dream for exposing its students to the corporate and business world and providing them with knowledge and experiences to present themselves well when entering those spaces. In the future, I would like to intern and work on Capitol Hill.
As we continue our Profiles in Leadership series highlighting a few of the many leaders making a difference and impacting our communities, we are pleased to feature Reverend Tyrone Nelson. Reverend Nelson is pastor of Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church in Richmond. We had the opportunity to interview Pastor Nelson on his first encounter with AAD, the challenges he faces as a leader in the liturgical community, and hear his thoughts on leadership and community impact.

Your first trip to An Achievable Dream in Newport News had a lasting and profound effect on you. Can you share a little bit about it?

In 2014, I met with a Senator by the name of Walter Stosch who was involved with An Achievable Dream. He asked me if I had ever heard of An Achievable Dream and invited me to take a trip with him to visit the school. We traveled with Henrico County Manager John Vithoulkas and visited the Academy. We greeted the students as they got off the bus, shook their hands, looked them in their eyes, and then we saw the AAD morning program, which I loved. Afterwards, we took a tour of the school and learned about the before and after-school programs.

This impacted me because I felt something was missing here in Henrico—seeing that interaction first thing in the morning, hearing words of empowerment and encouragement being spoken to students, seeing students’ visual presentation in their uniforms, watching the community partners greet the students with a firm handshake, and hearing the positive affirmations showed me that there was a spirit to this organization.

The most important part of my initial introduction to AAD was hearing the end result. Stephen Covey wrote a book called The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. One of those habits is to begin with the end in mind. I thought about this when I learned that almost 100% of AAD students attend a two-year or four-year college, enter the armed forces, or pursue a trade. That is the standard we aspire to achieve, and that gives students a sense of hope.

After my visit, I returned to Henrico very excited and I spoke with my school board representative and district, and we met with the superintendent. After a few trips to Newport News to meet with Kathy Edwards, Lee Vreeland, and Walter Segaloff, An Achievable Dream Certified Academy at Highland Springs Elementary was born.

As we continue to navigate such unprecedented times, what challenges have you experienced, and what perspective have you tried to maintain as you approached these challenges?

I’m trying to keep a positive outlook—these are unprecedented times and I’m uncertain whether we will ever return to the way things were. I am keeping the most important thing in front of us, which is relationship building. We’ve lost the ability to gather together without concern or trepidation, so I would like to continue to build relationships, especially for our young people. I couldn’t imagine missing out on a year and a half of school with my classmates, only to return wearing masks and feeling as if things were abnormal. We have to continue to encourage our young people and do what we can for them, our school staff, and our local government.

In what ways are you most proud of your church and the community as you stay connected and uplifted in the long-term? What growth have you seen in your community?

Our church, Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church, is community-focused. Prior to and during COVID, we prepared hot meals every Friday and served our community. We also have a partnership with Feed More, which is our regional food bank. It delivers food to our church, and then we hand it out to the community. We also have a partnership with our local school, Carver Elementary, and with our local Walmart grocery store. Our church has what we call a “Mount Market,” where we purchase groceries from Walmart and hand them out to our community.

We were awarded a Choose Healthy Living grant and it involves churches along the East Coast with United Way to educate communities.
about vaccinations. I’m proud that I serve a church where people care about each other, are not solely inward-driven, but are focused on the community as a whole.

My community is interesting because it’s a gentrified community. In 1956, Interstate 95 was built in the middle of this community. My church is located in the Historic Jackson Ward district, which was at one time called the “Harlem of the South” or “Black Wall Street.” For African Americans, this was the hub of economic growth in the city. When Interstate 95 was built, it destroyed about 700 homes, and now we have one of the largest public housing complexes directly across the bridge from us. So, on one side of the bridge, we have public housing and dense poverty and on the other side, we have a gentrified community behind Virginia Commonwealth University, all within one-fourth of a mile. The challenge here is to continue the work we are doing in our community. Sixth Mount Zion Baptist Church is known as the “beacon on the hill,” so we call ourselves “the Mount”—elevated to do the work to care for people who need it the most. And that’s what we will continue to try and do.

You have been the biggest advocate for AAD in Henrico County. What does it mean to you to have AAD in your district?

We are starting to see an impact of the program on young people and we are trying to build it even more. AAD in Newport News has such an incredible history and it has been established for three decades. We’re trying to build that type of culture in Henrico. Initially, the program wasn’t supposed to be in my district, but part of the reason that I wanted a program here was to build a community, establish partnerships, and get the community to see the importance of An Achievable Dream.

Having AAD in my district means maintaining a track record of students post-graduation and establishing connections to invest in them when they go to college with scholarships. We definitely have some work to do, as we are expanding to Fairfield Middle School, but I believe that we can continue to make our schools great. I want us to build the momentum to push students to want to continue to be in the program throughout middle and high school.

The first class of Dreamers will graduate in 2028 in Henrico County. What does that day look like to you? How is that most meaningful to you?

It’ll be a great day because we will have persevered! Having our first class of Dreamers graduate means that the program has sustained itself and survived. I’m hoping on that day that every student who walks across the stage has a plan after graduation day, whether destined for college, a trade school, the military, or something else—to know every student will do something great—that’s what excites me the most.

I can’t wait to share with parents that there’s continued support after their child graduates, that they’re always a part of the An Achievable Dream family after graduation, and that they can sow back into the Highland Springs community.

The Highland Springs community itself is special. We want An Achievable Dream Certified Academy at Highland Springs Elementary to be the “kick start” for students to be excited about going to school and staying in school.

What are you most looking forward to in the future?

I’m looking forward to making it past this pandemic. It’s been tough because my church was supposed to open its doors, but we are still having virtual services. I miss people, I miss the fellowship—being able to give someone a hug, give them a handshake, touch people and gather together. I can’t wait until we can get to a place where we can take off our masks and look each other face-to-face again.

I really believe in the Eastern Henrico community. I grew up in the city of Richmond and chose to move to Eastern Henrico. I’m proud of what we’ve been able to accomplish in the Varina district and Highland Springs in particular.

I can’t wait to see the continued success of AAD in Henrico County and to say “I told you so” to those who initially doubted us, when we continue to move forward and be successful.

Calvin Malone, continued from page 4

through Allstate and welcomes the challenges associated with a new business. On his decision to open an insurance agency, he shared that he is creating several job opportunities within the community to form a team dedicated to providing quality service. “I decided to open an insurance agency because it affords me the opportunity to provide security for my family, while providing the community with services designed to protect them from life’s uncertainties and prepare them for the future, just as AAD did for me.” He looks forward to a successful and longstanding future with Allstate.

Calvin is also looking forward to being a community presence and giving back to the organizations that helped shape him. “I am proof that exposure to good people makes a difference in the lives of our children and much like the staff at AAD did for me, I hope to make a difference by being a positive role model in the community.”
Back to School Kick-Off

Welcoming Students Back with Block Parties!

In celebration of the 2021–2022 school year, An Achievable Dream hosted block parties at all locations. From Virginia Beach to Henrico, here’s how AAD ushered in the year:

In Virginia Beach, Seatack Elementary An Achievable Dream Academy ushered in the new school year with a DJ, food, games, and face painting. Students also received backpacks filled with school supplies!

The Southeast Community Coalition of Newport News celebrated the end of summer and the beginning of an exciting school year with a bash held at Heritage High School and An Achievable Dream Middle and High School. The festivities included food, free haircuts, live entertainment, student and family resources, and free school supplies.

Our Henrico County Dreamers at An Achievable Dream Certified Academies at Highland Springs Elementary and Fairfield Middle School celebrated the start of the school year with great food, activities, and most importantly, community!
I can hardly believe that we are nearing the end of the fall semester! We kicked off the new school year with back-to-school bashes for our staff and block parties for our students and communities. We also safely returned to in-person learning with enthusiasm!

We could not accomplish any of the milestones in this season without the unwavering support of our community. Your belief in our students and the mission and vision of An Achievable Dream continues to have a profound impact on the lives of our students and families. We are grateful that we are able to create equitable opportunities for our Dreamers, instilling in them resilience to walk through challenging times.

Along with challenging times come difficult decisions, including our decision to postpone the 29th Annual Tennis Ball. Our vehicle donors are a vital component of this event through their donations of high-end vehicles for the live auction. As we know, the automotive industry worldwide is facing extreme inventory shortages that have impacted our automotive partners as well. We have learned to make the best of whatever comes our way, so we have decided to embrace the “plot twist” and postpone the 29th Annual Tennis Ball to April 23, 2022. We are also excited to plan for the third annual A Night to Dream, benefiting AAD Virginia Beach, for February 25, 2022. For this event, we will gather in person at the Cavalier Hotel to support our students in Virginia Beach in style — this mysterious Mardi Gras event is one you won’t want to miss! And finally, on November 19, 2022, we look forward to a homecoming of sorts: gathering in person for a very special event — our 30th Anniversary Tennis Ball gala. As we plan for these events, we do so with gratitude for our amazing partners, sponsors, and community of supporters who whole-heartedly embraced this decision.

As we gear up for the winter season, I hope you stay healthy and well, and I hope you enjoy reading some of the highlights contained in these pages. As always, I am so thankful for your support and dedication to providing opportunities for our Dreamers.

With all my gratitude,
Lee Vreeland, Ed.D.,
President and CEO
What’s Happening at An Achievable Dream?

How adorable are our An Achievable Dream Academy Dreamers in Newport News on their first day of school? After seeing their teachers’ bright faces, they soon got to work in the classroom for what was a great start to an even better first day!

Our students at the AAD Middle and High School in Newport News stepped into the new year with a warm welcome from the Newport News Sheriff’s Office and a fist bump from their teachers and administrators. Students also received haircuts, and now they can set the tone for a sharp year!

We welcomed our An Achievable Dream Certified Academy at Highland Springs students back to the classroom! After a year of virtual learning, it was great to see their bright eyes!

We hope our Henrico Dreamers had an awesome first day of school! Our An Achievable Dream Certified Academy at Fairfield Middle School students began the year with a warm welcome from teachers and staff, and a visit from the Henrico County Fire Department. Welcome back, Dreamers!

Our Seatack Elementary Dreamers were off to a great start to the new year—from the morning program to group activities, school is in session!

Our Lynnhaven Middle Dreamers had an amazing first day of school—filled with friends, warm welcomes, and excitement about the year ahead!
Ashley Melnichak, art teacher at An Achievable Dream Certified Academy (AADCA) at Highland Springs Elementary, was recognized for winning a Partners in the Arts grant in the amount of $10,800 for an arts integration proposal she submitted prior to the pandemic in February 2020. Ms. Melnichak spent the summer in an arts integration course offered through the University of Richmond and has been working with the director of Partners in the Arts, Rob McAdams, to meet with artists and bring the idea to life.

The current plan is to have VCU design students work with groups of our fifth-grade Dreamers to design a sculpture that would exemplify light, motion, or sound. Richmond artists Matt Lively and Tim Harper will then help the students create an actual structure to be placed outside on the AADCA playground.

We are very proud of Ms. Melnichak!
What’s Happening at An Achievable Dream?

An Achievable Dream students from Newport News and Virginia Beach participated in a trip to see the Washington Football Team vs. their crosstown rivals, the Baltimore Ravens at FedEx Field. This amazing trip was courtesy of local businessman and philanthropist Mr. Art Casey of Casey Auto Group. Thanks to his generosity, the Dreamers had the opportunity to ride in a Washington Football Team van and enjoy watching the game from a luxury box.

An Achievable Dream sponsored a two-week summer program, Men in the Making, for young men in the Newport News community. This program included courses on teambuilding, character, education, and leadership. During the camp, attendees visited Mariners’ Museum, Onelife Fitness Center, and Christopher Newport University. Throughout the program, the young men learned about the value of education, perseverance, and what it takes to excel beyond high school.

An Achievable Dream is proud to announce that we have been selected as one of four local nonprofits to receive a 2021 Youth Literacy Grant from Dollar General Literacy Foundation. We are grateful to partner with Dollar General once again, and we are excited for our Dreamers at Seatack Elementary to continue building their literacy and reading skills!

We are honored to be a recipient of a grant from Bank of America, which will help us continue working toward equity in education and help ensure our students are fully equipped for success in college and their careers. Now more than ever, contributions like this are critical to our community and we are grateful for Bank of America’s continued support.

AAD gratefully accepted not one, but two gifts from Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital. The hospital’s medical staff and administrators came together in support of AAD’s Virginia Beach students and program to help ensure our students are equipped with all that they need to succeed in school and in life. Thank you for believing in our students and for helping to fuel their futures with these donations!

This summer, high school students from An Achievable Dream Middle & High School and Denbigh High School engaged in Industry Link, a collaborative workshop sponsored by the College Access Collaborative and the Calhoun Discovery Program of Virginia Tech (VT). Students engaged with emerging technologies such as 3-D laser scanning, Arduino programming, object detection, and Virtual Reality and participated in collaborative problem solving. They also discovered drone delivery and experienced flight with leaders from the Mid-Atlantic Aviation Partnership at VT. During lunch-and-learn sessions, students discovered their Enneagram Types, learned of multiple pathways towards their career goals, and discovered the many resources available to them that can support their future endeavors. We are grateful for our partners at Virginia Tech for providing such an enriching opportunity for our Dreamers!
Maia Chaka Officiates first season NFL Game

On Sunday, September 12, 2021, our very own Maia Chaka was the first African American woman to officiate an NFL game. Maia serves as Student and Program Success Coordinator in Virginia Beach, where she oversees student enrichment opportunities, including a student mentoring program, and serves as a resource for students at all AAD campuses. Maia helps ensure our students maximize their full potential by connecting them to the many resources we offer, including extracurricular activities such as clubs and internships. She also encourages and challenges our students to strive for and achieve excellence in their academics. We are so proud of Maia and wish her much success in the NFL. We know she will continue to make history!

Saturday School at the Dream is officially underway! Our Dreamers across all three localities began their first day with some exciting themes—for our Academy students in Newport News, the theme was "Space Jam,” while our Middle and High School students began by “Relating, Recharging, and Reconnecting for Success.” In Virginia Beach, our Seatack Elementary Dreamers began “Superhero Saturdays” and our Lynnhaven Middle students “Stepped Up Their Game.” In Henrico County, our Highland Springs Elementary Dreamers "Built a City,” and at Fairfield Middle, our students went “camping.” Learning at AAD is an adventure—even on the weekend!

In early October, AAD celebrated the annual Henrico County Homecoming parade. Our student ambassadors led the way, and the AAD van followed the students as they passed out AAD swag and information about An Achievable Dream Certified Academy at Highland Springs Elementary!
An Achievable Dream Announces
New Virginia Beach Board Members

An Achievable Dream (AAD) is pleased to announce the appointment of three new board members to the Virginia Beach Board of Directors: EJ Manuel, former National Football League (NFL) player; Christopher W. Washington of the Virginia Beach Police Department; and Crystal B. Bright of Dominion Energy.

“We are delighted to welcome EJ, Christopher, and Crystal to our Virginia Beach board, and we are grateful for their commitment to bringing equity to education by providing opportunities for success for our students and in our communities,” said Dr. Lee Vreeland, AAD President and CEO. “Our organization’s Boards of Directors are dedicated to giving back in our region, and we could not be more grateful for the commitment and energy of these dynamic new board members.”

Charles Barker, Chair of An Achievable Dream Virginia Beach Board of Directors, shared, “I am so thrilled that these remarkable leaders will be joining An Achievable Dream’s board in Virginia Beach. As our program grows in this city, so does our community impact, and I have no doubt that change-makers like Christopher, Crystal and EJ are going to be instrumental as we continue to inspire hope through education.”

EJ Manuel, a Virginia Beach, Virginia native, is a former first-round NFL Draft pick who joined the ACC Network (ACCN) in 2019. Mr. Manuel is a studio analyst on The Huddle, ACCN’s signature football show, co-hosts ACCN’s In Play with Kelsey Riggs, and is a weekly regular on ESPN’s College Football Live. Mr. Manuel, who is one of the most productive quarterbacks in Florida State University (FSU) history, led the FSU Seminoles to a 25-6 record as a starter during the 2009-2012 seasons and the fourth most wins in program history. Mr. Manuel helped FSU to notable victories including the 2009 Gator Bowl, 2012 Discover Orange Bowl, and the 2013 Discover Orange Bowl. He also earned second team All-ACC honors for the 2012 season and was named the 2013 Senior Bowl MVP. Following his career at FSU, Mr. Manuel was a first-round draft pick by the Buffalo Bills in 2013. He started in 10 games during his rookie season, throwing for 1,972 yards and 11 touchdowns. He also spent five seasons in the NFL, playing four with Buffalo from 2013 to 2016 before a season with the Oakland Raiders in 2017.

Christopher W. Washington serves as Sergeant of the Virginia Beach Police Department. Sergeant Washington attended Norfolk State University and started with the police department in August 2008. Mr. Washington’s departmental assignments and training include:

- 4th Precinct Patrol and Tallwood High School’s School Resource Officer
- 1st Precinct Sergeant
- Police Training Officer
- Virginia Beach Police Department Recruiting Team

In 2016, Mr. Washington was awarded CAC Officer of the Year and Rotary Club Officer of the Year. Mr. Washington is thoroughly engaged in his community; while serving his community, Mr. Washington has a 20-year partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of Southeastern VA, providing karate and self-defense, gang, and other juvenile-
related training. He served as a leader for the Virginia Beach City Public Schools "Beach Girls Rock," teaching self-defense. He was also a 3-year presenter at the African American Male Summit. For four years, he was a weekly volunteer at Tallwood High School, training conflict resolution for the Martial Arts and Self-Defense Club. He participated with The Men of Excellence and FCA at Tallwood High School, three-year squad leader for Virginia Beach Police Department Cadet Challenge for middle and high school students, served as a youth leader and interim security leader at Calvary Revival Church, volunteered at the VB Juvenile Detention Center as a motivational speaker with Pastor Manley of CRC, and volunteered with nonprofit "Moving Forward Reaching Back." Mr. Washington also assists parks and recreation with its Spring Camp presenting "Stranger Danger."

Crystal B. Bright serves as the External Affairs Manager for Dominion Energy. During her 24-year career with Dominion Energy, Ms. Bright worked in the Regional Operations Center as an analyst, the Project Scheduling and Logistics group as the Project Scheduler for the Virginia Beach area, the Emergency Preparedness Center in Richmond, Virginia as a Communications Specialist, and in the State and Local Affairs Eastern team as an External Affairs Representative. As an External Affairs Manager, she is the direct contact for the city and county leaders in Gloucester County, New Kent County, Hampton, Newport News, Poquoson, York County, James City County, and Williamsburg. She keeps them updated on various items from Dominion Energy program and policy updates to power outages and construction projects. She also maintains a relationship with charitable organizations, including Habitat for Humanity Peninsula and Greater Williamsburg and the Boys and Girls Club of the Virginia Peninsula. Ms. Bright is a cum laude undergraduate of Old Dominion University, earning a bachelor's degree in English. She also has a master's degree in Writing Popular Fiction from Seton Hill University and a master's degree in Professional Writing from New England College. Bright is a member of the Rotary Club of James City County, serves on the Executive Board for the Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce and is a 2021 graduate of LEAD Peninsula.

The Virginian-Pilot features Dr. Lee Vreeland’s Letter to the Editor

On Monday, September 20, 2021, An Achievable Dream Academy and An Achievable Dream Middle and High School were placed on lockdown following a gun-violence incident at Heritage High School. Our leadership team monitored the situation closely and ensured all AAD students, faculty, and staff were safe. We remain incredibly grateful for the quick response of Heritage High School, Newport News Public Schools, Newport News Police Department, Sheriff’s Office, Virginia State Police and the other law enforcement officials onsite that day.

Dr. Lee Vreeland, President and CEO of An Achievable Dream, reflected on the incident in a letter to the editor published by The Virginian-Pilot.

‘We rose up’

As I processed the events surrounding the recent gun violence at Heritage High School, I experienced an overwhelming feeling: hope.

An Achievable Dream Middle & High School is located next to Heritage High School, and our schools have a longstanding partnership: Our students play sports, take dual-enrollment courses, and participate in other activities there. As the incident unfolded, school staff, faculty and division leadership partnered with local and state law enforcement, clergy, and other first responders, and we had one uniting goal: the students’ safety. Such unity in crisis is not always the case and left me immensely grateful for the community of Newport News and partners like the police department, sheriff’s office and public school division.

Let me be clear: This is not a battle any community, school, family or student should ever have to fight. It is our worst nightmare. Those who experienced the incident firsthand have layers of trauma to heal from, especially those injured. The Sept. 20 events could have ended very differently. But if there is a community that can prevent this from happening again, I believe it is Newport News. This week, we rose up and declared, in words and actions, "no more."

When does it end? It ends when communities come together like ours has. It ends when there are no boundary lines, no party lines, and when barriers are crossed and a community unites. It ends with us. Let us move forward with a renewed sense of hope in our community and our ability to overcome.

—Lee Vreeland, Ed.D., President and CEO, An Achievable Dream
In 2021, An Achievable Dream (AAD) launched the Founder’s Hope Circle for supporters who arrange an endowment gift of any amount to sustain AAD into the future. The Circle honors AAD founder, Walter S. Segaloff and his life of service and dedication to providing a better future for all students. By becoming a charter member of the Founder’s Hope Circle, your impact will provide a solid foundation to sustain AAD in the future, impact students’ lives now and for generations to come, and create an inspiring legacy of making a difference.

Visit AchievableDream.org/plannedgiving or contact us at 757-599-9472 to discuss arranging a legacy gift and joining the Founder’s Hope Circle today!