

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **An Achievable Dream Virginia Beach, Inc. Announces New Board Members**

**Virginia Beach, VA** – 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 include 4<sup>th</sup> Precinct Patrol and Tallwood High School’s School Resource Officer and 1<sup>st</sup> Precinct Sergeant. Sergeant

Washington's training includes serving as a School Resource Officer, Police Training Officer, and a member of the 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 (VBCPS) "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 their 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 like 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 and serves on the Executive Board for the Virginia Peninsula Chamber of Commerce and is a 2021 graduate of LEAD Peninsula.

A full list of the members of An Achievable Dream's Boards of Directors can be found at [AchievableDream.org](http://AchievableDream.org).

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### **About An Achievable Dream**

An Achievable Dream, a nonprofit, operates schools in Virginia in partnership with Newport News Public Schools, Virginia Beach City Public Schools, and Henrico County Public Schools. An Achievable Dream's mission is to develop independent, productive citizens through a Social, Academic, and Moral Education (SAME®). Dedicated to the belief that all children can learn and succeed regardless of socioeconomic background, AAD provides students with additional resources and opportunities to bring equity to education.