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SUMMER
NEWS



The Between & Beyond

JONATHAN CHAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The end of the school year was a packed but fun season here at CHAT. The After School Program wrapped up with fun activities, including field trips, a visit from a traveling petting zoo, and a STEM learning event in partnership with Mad Science. Church Hill Academy held prom for the first time since 2019 and celebrated the graduation of all 10 seniors. This summer, the Workforce Development team has kept busy managing the farm's growing season, expanding some in-house operations, and offering a screen printing class for the Boys & Girls Club.

“Liminal space can also become the site of transformation if we remain anchored to our center of gravity—the fundamental truth that we are chosen by God.”

As we anticipate the coming school year, I've been reflecting on the concept of “liminal space.” The Franciscan priest and author Richard Rohr writes that liminal space is where we are *“betwixt and between, having left one room or stage of life but not yet entered the next. We usually enter liminal space when our former way of being is challenged or changed....It is a graced time, but often does not feel ‘graced’ in any way. In such space, we are not certain or in control.”***

In my own life, I find myself in a liminal space. As I begin approaching midlife, I'm contemplating who I've been and who God is calling me to become as a husband, father, and a leader here at CHAT. My family moved into a new house in June, and while it's just a few blocks over in Church Hill, everything still had to go from one house to the other. (*We're still* unpacking boxes.) My wife is entering an exciting new season in her work leading national community development efforts. Our son Isaiah is on the cusp of turning three, and he's getting a baby sibling in December. Of course we're thrilled, but I'd be lying if I said we aren't also a little anxious about the many changes that lie ahead.

When I look across CHAT and our city, I see us moving through liminal space as well. We're entering uncertain economic times and continue to deal with COVID-19's lingering impacts, particularly the learning loss and social-emotional isolation that have built up over time. We're working to bring additional staff, resources, and ideas to bear

next school year. And as we look to the future, we've entered into an intentional, collaborative process with our wider CHAT community to revisit our organizational and brand identity to better reflect who we are today and who God is calling us to be.

Change is afoot, and more is yet to come. It's easy for me to become discouraged by the uncertainty of liminal space, the loss of what came before, and the struggle to find a new way forward. But Rohr writes that liminal space can also become the site of transformation if we remain anchored to our center of gravity—the fundamental truth that we are chosen by God. I'm reminded of one of the core goals of our work: to help students recognize and experience their identity as image-bearers of God. This profound understanding of self-worth can be the foundation of resilience and agency that leads to flourishing.

For all of us, it's my hope that the truth that we are chosen by God will give us strength to grow and respond to the deep challenges of our lives and the world around us. I'm comforted by the words of the Apostle Paul, who shared vulnerably about his own journey in Philippians 3:12: *“Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.”*

**“Between Two Worlds” (<https://cac.org/daily-meditations/between-two-worlds-2020-04-26/>)



Celebrating the Class of 2022

For the first time since 2019, Church Hill Academy's graduation ceremony moved from Carlisle Avenue Baptist Church's parking lot back inside the sanctuary! On June 17, we gathered with families, friends, students, faculty, staff, and board members to celebrate the Class of 2022.

Even though the pandemic impacted three school years of their high school experience, each student pressed forward to cultivate their abilities and reach their goals. This fall, all 10 graduates will continue their education at the following institutions:

Michaela Alexander,
Richard Bland College

Derrick Atkins, Jr., Central
Carolina Community College

Keyonte Goodman,
Peru State College

Rondell Hinnant, Jr.,
Virginia Union University

Avant Johnson,
Old Dominion University

Tyrell Moore, Jr., Northwest
Kansas Technical College

James Patterson,
St. Thomas Aquinas University

Zakhia Smith, University of
Maryland Eastern Shore

Wendall Tomlin, III, Baltimore
City Community College

Andrew Wyche,
Reynolds Community College

We're so proud of these students and the incredible young adults they've become. As they boldly echoed their class verse (Romans 8:31), *"In view of all this, what can we say? If God is for us, who can be against us?"*

We're so grateful

Through the generosity of our friends and partners, we exceeded our spring fundraising goal of \$22,000 in honor of the Class of 2022! Combined with a matching gift contributed by several donors, you gave \$44,824 in support of Church Hill Academy.

These gifts will impact the students following in the Class of 2022's footsteps at the Academy. We're so grateful for your partnership and how it will open up learning opportunities in the school year ahead. Thank you!

Watch a recap of graduation day at chatrichmond.org/cha-graduation-2022.



Increase Your Impact

Make a greater impact through your generosity—without spending more! CHAT participates in two Virginia programs that allow taxpayers to receive a 65% tax credit in exchange for a qualifying donation that provides education to a low-income student. Through these programs, donors are able to support educational opportunities while realizing a significant tax savings.

To learn more, contact CHAT's Chief of Development & Operations, Jackie Griggs (jackie.griggs@chatrichmond.org) or visit chatrichmond.org/virginia-income-tax-credits.

New Horizons Ahead

June was a month of celebration as we wrapped up the school year across our programs and recognized the achievements of students. In the Workforce Development Program, we held a special event honoring our young adult staff who completed the training component of their employment in our small businesses:

Michaela Alexander,
Front Porch Cafe

Rondell Hinnant Jr.,
Front Porch Cafe

James Lowery, Legacy Farm

Zakhia Smith, On Point Prints

Diamond Winslow,
Front Porch Cafe

Each of these team members has demonstrated competence in attendance, presence, and communication skills and is prepared for a professional work environment. While we're saying farewell to some of them, you'll continue to see a few familiar faces (when they're not away at school!). We're also excited for James's transition to Crew Member as he steps into a new level of responsibility with Legacy Farm.

Whatever professional paths they pursue in the future, we're confident these five will continue to shine.



CHAT

Church Hill Activities & Tutoring