THE RVA CELEBRITY DISH WAS A HOME RUN

BY VICKI YEROIAN, MSW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This year, Podium's 2nd annual Celebrity Dish looked a little bit different. Hosted at The Diamond, home of the Flying Squirrels, the evening hosted guests seated down on the field, in suites, and watching from the comforts of home! With combined viewership of over 100 guests, Podium was thrilled to honor Senator Jennifer McClellan, Soulidify CEO and Chairman BK Fulton, Squirrels Baseball VP Todd “Parney” Parnell, and beloved Richmond preschool teacher Anne F. Waldruff, each for their unwavering commitment to helping Richmond youth find and share their voice.

Podium would like to share special thanks. First, to J. Shawn Durham as our evening’s MC and to alumni speaker Destiny Brown for her power testimony. Next, to our event sponsors Xponent21 and McGuireWoods, and to Podium's Co-Chairs, Eddie Camp, Jerry Howard and co-founder David L. Robbins. Finally, thank you to our evening’s hilarious Dishers and to all of our guests who collectively helped Podium raise over $17,000 for youth programs this fall and winter!

The Dish also served as the official kick-off of The Pedestal Fund, a scholarship and sustainability campaign to elevate education and opportunity for youth in the greater Richmond area. Want to learn more? Let's connect to talk about how you can make a meaningful contribution to The Pedestal Fund and the Anne Waldruff Excellence in Education Scholarship in its inaugural year!
FALL & WINTER PROGRAMS: A VIRTUAL WORLD

BY CHELSEA JACKSON, PROGRAMS LEAD

Since the fall semester began, Podium has been working with Next Up and ACE to host two amazing programs: Prep the Next step for youth ages 10 - 14 and Power of the Pen for youth ages 14 - 19. Each program is designed to identify writing as a tool for personal expression. In Prep the Next Step, middle school students practice skills that can help them prepare for and navigate through that next step of high school. Youth practice how to form healthy friendships/relationships, time management and ways to destress. In Power of the Pen, high school students practice skills like poetry, debates, commentary, journalism, financial literacy and more.

Both programs provide youth a creative outlet they can use to express themselves. Podium is proud to work so closely with such talented students.

Additionally, on Saturday, Nov 7th, working with the amazing folks at Partnership for the Future, Podium RVA hosted back-to-back Social Justice and Community Advocacy workshops virtually for high school sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Executive Director Vicki Yeroian talked with over 100 teens from 20 different schools across Richmond City, Henrico County, Chesterfield County, and Goochland County.

While Vicki shared definitions of social justice, intersectionality, and the major forms of advocacy, youth participants shared their experiences on social injustices, how they have gotten involved in their communities, and what they hope to impact moving forward.
It could be a fictional story, an opinion piece about something happening in their community, poetry, or something else. Stipends are awarded for each article published. Podium's four alumni contributors for 2020 are Destiny Hall-Harper, Kavin Jackson, Ra'Jahne Harris, and Tristan Wynn.

Please keep a lookout for our newest online publication, The Podium, to be released the first week in December, and join me in celebrating the achievement of Podium alumni.

**Check us out at podiumrva.org!**

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**THE PODIUM, NEW ONLINE PUBLICATION, FEATURING ALUMNI 18 - 21!**

**PODIUM BOARD OF DIRECTORS' ADVISOR FOR THE PODIUM PEDESTAL FUND CO-CHAIR**

Podium awards stipends for written contributions to our newest online publication, *The Podium*.

The Podium provides opportunities for Podium alumni ages 18 - 21 to showcase their talent while gaining a toehold into the world of professional writing. This publication will initially start as a blog on the Podium website. Inspired by local publications such as Style Weekly, RVA Mag, River City magazine and others, *The Podium* is for Richmonders and will be published on a regular basis.

Alumni contributors shape the direction we take with the content. This isn’t necessarily a lifestyle publication. The role of being a contributor is to write something substantive and their own. There is no right answer as to “what should I write?”