SUMMER PROGRAM RECAP & FALL UPDATE
BY CANDACE WEATHER, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Reflecting on what a great time we had this summer, Podium served 147 youth across 7 programs in Richmond City and Henrico. We also had the pleasure of partnering with Mayor's Youth Academy and Partnership for the Future to host two high school interns. They assisted with our middle school programs, which included Prep Your Next Step at Wilder MS and Fairfield MS, as well as a theatrical program with the Southside Boys and Girls Club. We also brought Power of the Pen to Highland Springs HS, John Marshall HS, Armstrong HS, and George Wythe HS. Of course, ending the summer with a bang, we hosted our annual, two-day Teen Professional Conference for 38 students; overall, we had an amazing time!

Just as the leaves do, we are falling for our fall program lineup. Podium is so excited to be back in the saddle with our partners, some old and some new. Our Power of the Pen programs are returning to George Wythe HS, Armstrong HS, John Marshall HS, Highland Springs HS, and starting new at Huguenot HS. Partnering with NextUp RVA, our Lucille Brown MS programs will feature Podium's newest financial literacy curriculum entitled "Common Cent$." Needless to say, we are all about the Benjamins here at Podium, and we want our students to build those skills too! Continuing partnerships with the Boys and Girls Club of Metro Richmond, we will assist teens with their Youth of the Year competition. We always have the greatest time workshopping speeches and essays with their young leaders. Finally, Podium is launching a pilot program with Peter Paul Community Center focusing on social action and self care. We are so excited to be back with our youth for another full season!

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On October 6, 2022, Podium RVA hosted our 4th Annual RVA Celebrity Dish, and we are still riding the high! The evening was nothing short of a success! With 120 people in attendance, and more than $30,000 raised, YOU helped us by supporting 11 different after-school programs this Fall, and securing six different scholarships for first generation college students in our community. We also shared 8 raffle prizes and 3 auction items with several different amazing people. Prizes included, self-care baskets, local gift cards, Richmond Symphony tickets, and much more!

We would love to give a special shoutout to our honorees of the evening; Dr. Arthur Kellermann, CEO of MCV Health; Kathy Kahlson, VA Air National Guard, Fire Captain; and Stephanie Lynch, RVA City Councilperson. Thank you to the evening's sponsors, McGuire Woods and Tyro Partners. Your support makes what we do possible.

Finally, a massive thank you to Charmeya McMurray the evening's special guest speaker! Charmeya is an alum of Podium's programs and gave a beautiful and inspiring speech about what Podium means to her. Stay tuned to Podium's socials to catch a recap of the evening, including her incredible speech! Thank you, Richmond. See you next year!
PODIUM SUPPORTS YOUTH IN UGANDA WITH THE NAMUGGA MABEL FOUNDATION

By Vicki Yeroian, Executive Director

This summer, Podium elevated the voices of our children and teens to a global level. The Namugga Mable Foundation is a nonprofit located in Kampala, Uganda, that works to create a better living for those who lack necessary resources. They provide day to day basic needs, promote good health to the community at large, and help children learn to read and write. Writing and communication are vital skills that everyone should have access to, from Greater Richmond to across the globe. That is why Podium teamed up with Namugga Mable to send writing supplies along with 55 Podium journals to help Ugandan youth learn to read and write from our teen writers.

Take a look at the impact we made with the Namugga Mable Foundation this summer. Next year, we hope to support their teens by printing and sharing a Podium zine filled with their writing and stories. Stay tuned for Podium's first international publication!
Throughout August and into September, Podium hosted our 2022 Back To School virtual campaign. This campaign worked to combat literacy learning loss. Learning loss as a result of COVID-19 has caused an all time high in setting back learning for all students, and especially for students of color and from lower income households. Many children started school last fall a full-year behind expected literacy gains, and most schools across Greater Richmond have since reported their lowest levels of reading and writing test scores in years.

Welcoming youth back to school prepared for a successful year of study is our top priority this fall. Podium family and board members stepped up to raise $1,450 and reached 72% of our total goal for the campaign! This critical funding helps Podium provide resources for hundreds of youth attending Podium’s 11 after-school programs this fall! Podium also provided awards for the individuals that made the largest impact during the campaign.

Our Presidential Award for Top Virtual Fundraiser goes to Young Professionals Board Event Chair Kayleigh Crandell!

The A+ Honor Roll Award, for the person who got the most new people to follow Podium, goes to Board Member Paula Harris!

An Honorable Mention goes to Young Professionals Board Vice Chair Jillian Olson, MSW!

Check us out online at www.podiumrva.org