



Q3 NEWSLETTER

RICHMOND'S WRITING AND COMMUNICATION
NON-PROFIT FOR YOUTH

SUMMER PROGRAM RECAP & FALL PROGRAMS BEGIN

BY CANDACE WEATHER, MULTI-REGIONAL PROGRAMS DIRECTOR

Our summer session brought us so many amazing opportunities. We hosted five high school programs, three middle school programs, and two pop-up programs with community partners -- the Petersburg National Park and Battlefield and Partnership for the Future. On top of our regularly hosted programs at 21st Century Community Learning Centers, we also piloted a new program at Varina High School in Henrico County and hosted daily programming at the Downtown Richmond YMCA's Camp Edge. We worked with the Metro Richmond Boys and Girls Club to provide weekly programming at their Southside and Petersburg clubs and with Partnership for the Future to continue our Writing Mentorship Project (WMP).

The WMP pays high school interns over the summer to grow their leadership and mentorship skills while helping us facilitate our middle school programs. Our writing mentors also have the opportunity to participate in our annual Teen Professional Conference (TPC), which is truly a highlight of the summer! We bring industry professionals, college students, and local entrepreneurs to speak on panels and lead workshops that prepare our high school students for post-graduate life. At this year's conference, we worked with almost 40 students from Armstrong, Richmond High School for the Arts (formerly known as George Wythe HS), and Huguenot high schools! We are so glad to impact the community in a meaningful way while having a great time with our youth in the process. Podium worked with 166 children and teens this summer!

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YOUTH AND MENTORS WORKING TOGETHER AT THE TEEN PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCE (TPC)

This fall, we have a packed schedule like never before. We are hitting the ground running in Richmond, Henrico County, Petersburg, and Hopewell cities! Coordinating our presence in these communities is no small feat, and we are thrilled to expand our reach to more youth across the region. We know that what we do matters! Podium is hosting six high school programs and six middle school programs this fall. We will also pop-in several times this school year with our new community partner, Hebron VA, at Vernon Johns MS and Blandford Academy in Petersburg. We are so excited to get to know a new round of students and to nurture new partnerships!



TPC DAY 2 GROUP SHOT



YOUTH COLLABORATING ON TPC DAY 1

KICKERS GIVE BACK & END OF SUMMER PICNIC RECAP

BY AERIN MILLS, COMMUNICATION & EVENTS DIRECTOR

On August 19, 2023, Podium hosted our End of Summer Picnic & Giveback Night in partnership with The Richmond Kickers, our professional soccer team in Richmond! The Podium family had an absolutely incredible time, and we are so thankful to The Kickers for being generous hosts and partners. We also enjoyed delicious and healthy food from Arroz RVA.

Podium's end of summer picnics are always action-packed events we look forward to each year. By welcoming youth and volunteers back to the school year, we ensure that they know they are supported every step of the way. Combining the picnic with a giveback event created an awesome opportunity for folks to both support Podium and have a great time doing it. What an excellent way to kick off the new school year! With over 30 tickets sold, we are grateful to everyone who makes up our proud Podium family. We can't wait to host more events with our community look forward to seeing all you incredible people there.



PODIUM STAFF, BOARD, YP BOARD, AND FAMILY HAVING A GREAT TIME WITH THE RICHMOND KICKERS

PODIUM CONNECTS WITH THE LARGER COMMUNITY!

BY VICKI YEROIAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Podium RVA supports local opportunities to uplift and embolden the voices, perspectives, and experiences of the youth and families we serve. Over the last few months, we have been busy making new connections and helping mission aligned organizations do just that! Here is just a snapshot of some of the projects we've been working on:

#1. Podium connects the Black History Museum & Cultural Center of VA with the Armstrong Center for Empowerment. Together, both groups will be working on a Black excellence in Richmond multimedia project! This school year, keep your eyes peeled for some incredible Wildcats visiting key historical sites. They will blend the art of monolog with the history and imagery of significant people and places as a tribute to Black legacy and leadership across Richmond. Podium also thanks the Black History Museum for co-sponsoring Podium's 8th annual Teen Professional Conference. This year's conference served 38 teens from Armstrong, George Wythe, and Huguenot high schools, and our students had an incredible time completing the scavenger hunt the museum put together for them throughout their exhibits!



#2. Podium connects Richmond Independent Radio WRIR with the Bulldog Academy and HSSA! This summer, WRIR worked with Richmond Public School students to draft and create their own podcasts. Starting in October, WRIR will be back monthly throughout the school year at both George Wythe and Huguenot high schools to continue creating youth directed and recorded podcasts. These shows will be broadcast on the radio for the greater community to learn from the reflections and words of our Southside youth. Additionally, WRIR will feature Podium youth writing by airing our journal pieces, selected and read by Podium alum and Journal 13 and 14 designer, Destiny Hall Harper! Stay tuned to FM 97.3 to hear our youth in action!



#3. Podium connects with Gallery 5! This spring, Podium and its long-time partner GLSEN RVA shared table space at Gallery 5's community mixer. This networking event was part of Gallery 5's continued work to build more opportunities to support Richmond youth and families. Currently, Podium is working with Gallery 5 to help them put on one of their first youth open mics this December! Stay tuned on our socials for more details - we'd love to have you there to support our youth performers and public speakers!

Gallery5

#4. Podium builds its regional networks! Podium recently joined two groups to grow its partnerships and plant firm roots in its new service areas of Hopewell and Petersburg. Podium is thankful to The Cameron Foundation for supporting the *Tri Cities Collaborative*, a monthly gathering of community organizations and community-minded businesses to support Hopewell, Petersburg, and Colonial Heights. Podium is also thankful to The Community Foundation for a Greater Richmond for supporting the *Central VA Literacy Collaborative*. A monthly network of literacy focused organizations serving 8 geographic regions across the state, Podium is a proud new member. In fact, our Executive Director was voted Co-Chair of the Central VA Literacy Collaborative in August!

If you know an organization we should be partnering with, or if you want to partner, reach out and make that connection happen!

Check us out online at
www.podiumrva.org



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