



Q4 NEWSLETTER

RICHMOND'S WRITING AND COMMUNICATION
NON-PROFIT FOR YOUTH

FALL PROGRAM RECAP AND LOOKING TO THE WINTER

BY CANDACE WEATHER, MULTI-REGIONAL PROGRAMS DIRECTOR

Autumn is the best season. Partially because of the beautiful colors, the falling leaves, and the fact that we can all finally pull out our favorite jackets and scarves. These things are great, but the real highlight of the fall season is Podium RVA's program session. It sets the tone for the school year, and, needless to say, we are off to a great start! We hosted five high school programs, six middle school programs, and one pop-up program with Petersburg community partners Hebron VA and Communities in Schools (CIS) at Vernon Johns Middle School. We started with a new 21st Century site in Henrico, John Rolfe Middle School, and worked with the Metro Richmond Boys and Girls Club to pilot weekly programming at the Northside Boys and Girls Club. We are so proud to have worked with 285 youth this fall, and we are so excited for all that's to come in the new year!

Currently, our plans for the winter are to continue hosting programs in all four of our service regions: Richmond, Henrico, Petersburg, and Hopewell. On top of all middle and high school programs continuing with us through the winter session, Podium will also be working with Higher Achievement to support their Love Out Loud Richmond poets, hosting another pop-up with Hebron VA at Blandford Academy in Petersburg, and piloting workshops with CIS of Petersburg to mentor youth in their Girls With Pearls and Guys With Ties leadership programs. We are all bundled up and excited to continue serving as consistent and reliable youth mentors across Greater Richmond and the Tri-Cities this winter!

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YOUTH WRITING TOGETHER AT
GEORGE WYTHE HIGH SCHOOL

END OF YEAR CELEBRATIONS: SUPPORTER AWARDS AND OPEN MIC NIGHT

BY VICKI YEROIAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Podium is wrapping up 2023 with a lot to celebrate! On Thurs, Nov 2nd at New Market, Podium hosted its third annual Supporter Awards Night to recognize the hard work and dedication of its Board of Directors, Young Professionals Board, and its community partners, staff, and volunteers! Podium was honored to present leadership with certificates of appreciation and commemorative Podium lapel pins (red of course)! Here are a few honorable mentions I'd like to shout out:

- **Armani Hall**, our Board Chair
- **Kerry Swarr**, our Board Secretary and Nominations Committee Chair
- **Kim Eley**, our Board Events Committee Chair
- **Saa'dia Douglas**, Podium's Finance & Development Committee Chair
- **Scott Hammer**, Podium's Governance Committee Chair & Trustee
- **Jill Olson**, Podium's YP Board Vice Chair
- **Kayleigh Crandell**, Podium's YP Board Events Chair
- **Candace Weather**, Podium's Multi-Regional Programs Director
- **Erin Mills**, Podium's Communications & Events Director



RECOGNITIONS AT THE 2023 SUPPORTER AWARDS NIGHT

I'd also like to shout out **Target Store #2436**, more commonly known as *the Target on Laburnum*. They've been partners with Podium for over a year by providing school supplies in-kind to our after-school programs. This fall, the Target team went above and beyond all expectations and donated 10 tubs filled with pencils, erasers, glue, pens, markers, crayons, binders, and so much more!



Not only can Podium stock its programs for most of 2024, it will give out extra supplies to its partner schools as well! *We are so grateful for the generosity of Target Store #2436, and a special thank you to Hope and Jesse for making sure youth across Greater Richmond have access to the school resources they need!!*



On Thurs, Dec 7th from 6:30 - 8:30pm, Podium hosted an incredible Open Mic Night with Gallery 5! Poets from the Richmond School of the Arts came out to share their loves, fears, reflections, and their stories! Students shared pieces they wrote solo and pieces meant for two or more performers. And in true Podium fashion, we welcomed several youth mentors and after-school program facilitators up to the stage as well. All in all, it was an incredible night, and we can't wait to partner with Gallery 5 on open mic nights, youth, and family events in the future!



SOME MOMENTS FROM OUR OPEN MIC AT GALLERY 5

Are you looking to get more involved with Podium next year? Sign up to [volunteer](#) or learn more about [Board](#) or [YP Board](#) service today!

GIVING TUES & CHRISTMAS UNDER THE CLOCKTOWER GIVE BACKS

BY ERIN MILLS, COMMUNICATIONS & EVENTS DIRECTOR

Podium had a busy, beautiful, and bright end of year season in 2023. In November, Podium RVA participated in Giving Tuesday, the largest international day of giving to nonprofits each year. For some context, Giving Tuesday 2022 raised \$3.1 billion in the US alone. This year, the Podium family raised more than \$1,000 in support of the youth that we serve. We are so thankful to our dedicated supporters who help to make Podium's work possible.

Alongside Giving Tuesday, Podium also participated in RBI's annual Christmas Under the Clocktower event at Main St. Station. Our Young Professionals Board worked together to decorate our tree in a lovely and eclectic theme of red and gold that capsulates Podium's energy beautifully. We had an incredible time during the opening ceremony and are so thankful for everyone who helped us reach third place in the donation competition with a total of \$2,400 raised by Dec 17th!

You are what makes Podium's work possible. It is with your yearly dedication and support that always ensure we end the year strong. You can feel satisfied knowing that your contribution is going to directly benefit the youth in your community. Thank you, and we are so excited to head into 2024 with you by our side! Looking to get more involved now? *Please save the date for Podium's next virtual event, our Flash Fiction Competition: Leap Year Edition on Thurs, Feb 29th!*



CHRISTMAS UNDER THE CLOCKTOWER FESTIVITIES

Check us out online at
www.podiumrva.org



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