

# Podium 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

## Mission

To empower youth ages 11 - 19 as confident and capable writers, communicators, and leaders to succeed in school, career, and in life.

## Community Services

- Weekly after-school and summer workshops
- Quarterly youth publications and showcases
- Annual teen professional development

The 2022 - 2023 school year and summer have been all about growth. This is the largest number of students Podium has served in its history! **In 2023, Podium expanded to a new region and built new partnerships to serve over 1,000 children and teens in Greater Richmond and the Tri Cities.** Podium's weekly, year-round programs uniquely ask youth to write about their goals and hopes, so they can practice the writing skills they need in college and their future careers. Together, we will continue to help thousands of youth excel in school, set goals for their future, and define and plan their post-graduation success!



*Here's the difference you can make in 2024:*

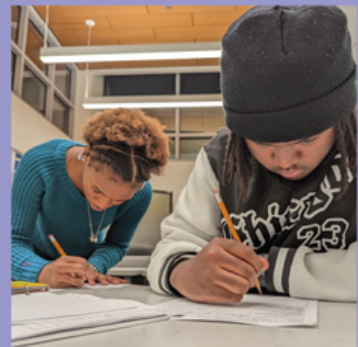
*Help us grow to serve over 1,200 youth from Greater Richmond and the Tri Cities.*

*Elevate youth opportunity and education by donating securely today at: [podiumrva.org/donate](https://podiumrva.org/donate)*



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Vicki Yeroian".

*Vicki Yeroian, MSW,  
Executive Director*



# Youth programs are at the center of what we do.

## This year, Podium served more than 1,000 youth!

From Sept 2022 - August 2023

<b>20</b> weekly programs	<b>286</b> middle schoolers
<b>8</b> publications	<b>749</b> high schoolers
<b>5</b> pilots & popups	<b>1,035</b> youth served
<b>3</b> showcases	

### Who attends Podium programs?

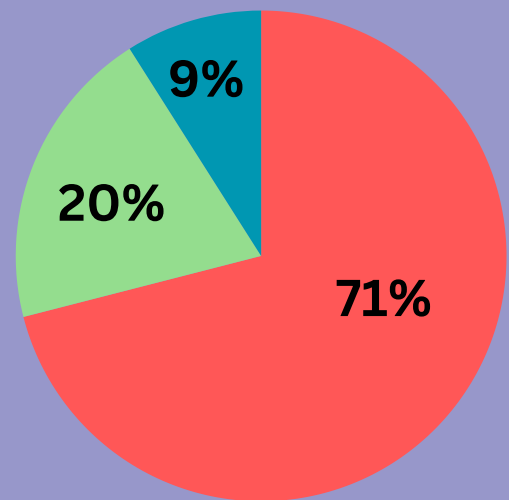
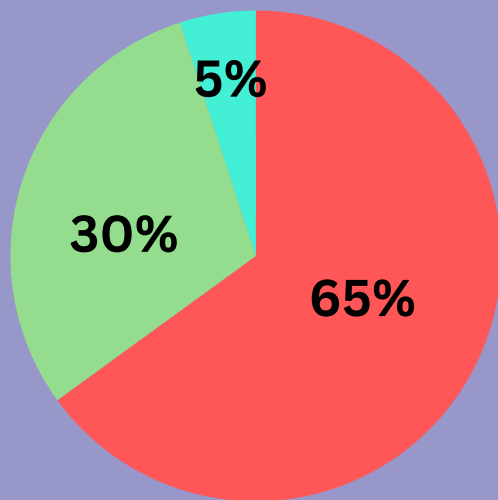
<b>73%</b> African American	<b>54%</b> girls
<b>15%</b> Latino American	<b>39%</b> boys
<b>8%</b> 2+ races/ethnicities	<b>7%</b> nonbinary
<b>3%</b> European American	<b>40%</b> LGBTQIA+
<b>1%</b> Native American	



### Podium served youth from the following areas:

During the school year

During the summer



■ Richmond City   
 ■ Eastern Henrico County   
 ■ Hopewell City   
 ■ Petersburg City

## Of Podium's Adolescent (ages 11-14) Participants:

91%

are now more comfortable and relaxed when they write

88%

passed their 8th grade SOL test (compared to a 39% regional pass rate)

80%

now use writing as a tool to solve problems

## Of Podium's Teen (14-19) Participants:

92%

passed their 11th grade SOL test (compared to a 39% regional pass rate)

91%

are on track to graduate on time (within 4-years)

85%

now use writing to reduce stress and to clarify their thoughts and feelings

## Programs Offered:

### For youth ages 11 - 14:

**Common Cent\$:** Provides the space to explore critical concepts within financial literacy while building healthy communication skills.

**Loving Our Languages:** Creates a supportive space for multilingual youth to express and process experiences in both English and their native languages.

**Prep Your Next Step:** A program to assist 8th graders preparing their transitions to high school.

**Teen Scene:** Promotes wellness, self expression, identity, and confidence through focused and fun writing workshops.

### For youth ages 14 - 19:

**College and Career Prep:** Teens work with mentors to prepare applications for jobs and colleges, practice interviews, and create resumes and cover letters for post-graduation success.

**Power of the Pen:** Promotes youth development through writing and communication workshops with a primary focus on writing as a tool for positive personal expression.

**Surviving the Teenage Years:** Where youth discuss and work through challenging topics with supportive mentors and peers.

**Teen Professional Conference:** A multi-day summer program for teen leaders to explore diverse career fields while engaging in professional development and advanced writing workshops.

**Writing Mentorship Project:** High school upperclassmen participate in a 6-week intensive summer internship to expand their project management skills, confidence, and professional experience.

"When I am stressed, I can release all of that through my writing."

-Naomi L.,  
Armstrong High School



# Our Events



On May 20, 2024, Podium hosted our inaugural **RVA Citywide Scavenger Hunt** sponsored by Village Bank! During this event, 10 different teams competed against one another to amass points in an exciting expedition that spanned the city. Podium friends and family had great time coming together at Main Line Brewery for drinks and food as the points were tallied. With 40 guests in total and more than 150 image and video submissions, the RVA Citywide Scavenger Hunt was an incredible day to remember!

- **Event impact: \$4,500**

## Trivia Night at Starr Hill

March 14th



Podium's Young Professionals Board hosted a trivia giveback night at Starr Hill Brewery. Drinks flowed and fun was had all around during the competition!

- **Event impact: \$500**

## Scholarship Awards Night

June 5th



Podium presented 4 new and 2 returning graduates with Anne F. Waldruff Excellence in Education scholarships in June. Congratulations to new scholars Debbie Gomez-Rivera, Miyah Miller, Tyler Jei Steele, Adriana Keyes, and A'Landa Macklin!

## Kickers Game & Picnic

August 19th



This year, Podium collaborated with The Richmond Kickers to fundraise for fall programs. The Kickers split ticket purchases with us, and we had an absolute blast!

- **Event impact: \$100**

## Christmas Under the Clocktower

December 1st



Christmas Under the Clocktower is a tree decorating competition where supporters vote with their dollar. Podium came in 3rd place during this year's competition!

- **Event impact: \$2,900**

# Financial Position & Activity

Podium ended 2023 with a 90-day emergency cash operation reserve and provided \$35,000 in scholarships to seven college-bound students. Concluding 2023, Podium raised 100% of its annual expenses and anticipated expenses for the start of 2024.

In-Kind Donations: 2023 total estimated value: **\$10,000**

## Podium's 2023 Expense Breakout

<b>39%</b>	staffing	<b>7%</b>	administrative costs
<b>31%</b>	youth programs & publications	<b>1%</b>	community events
<b>21%</b>	Pedestal Fund	<b>1%</b>	marketing

## Volunteer Hours

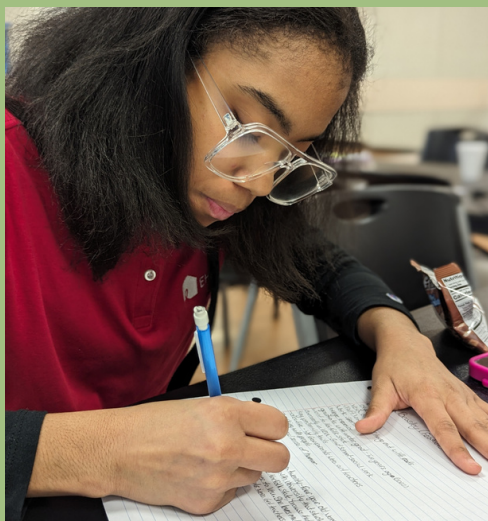
Podium could not reach as many youth in Richmond without the dedicated support of volunteers to help with programs, communications, and events.

**28** total volunteers      **20** program mentors, **1** admin, **1** communications, & **6** professional conference guest speakers

**665** program hours      **1742** office hours

**2407** total volunteer hours, or more than **100** days!

2023 total estimated value: more than **\$48,000**





# Trustees, Board Members, & Staff

## Podium RVA Trustees

David L. Robbins, Podium Co-Founder  
Scott Hammer



## 2023 Board of Directors

### Executive Leadership

Chair, Armani Hall  
Vice Chair, Verenda Cobbs  
Secretary, Kerry Swarr  
Treasurer, Dre'mon Miller\*

### Membership

Benjamin Shute  
Kim Eley  
Gwyneth Hagan  
Lorraine Blackwell  
Paula Harris  
Saa'dia Douglas  
Scott Hammer  
Shirtiera Lynch-Johnson  
Trevor Bragdon  
Trina Willard

## 2023 Young Professionals Board

### Executive Leadership

Chair, Brie Roberts  
Vice Chair, Jillian Olson  
Treasurer, Kavin Jackson\*  
Events Chair, Kayleigh Crandell

### Membership

Dean McKnight  
Erika Misseri  
Lorin Hoisington  
Phyl Demetriou  
Sarah Pentecost  
Tristan Wynn\*

## 2023 Staff

Vicki Yeroian, MSW, Executive Director  
Candace Weather, Multi-Regional Programs Director  
Erin Mills, Communications & Events Director\*  
Andi Balch, Bilingual Program Lead, 22-23 school year  
Jean Anderson, Program Lead, year-round  
Robert Owens, Program Lead, summer 2023  
Atticus Johnson, Program Lead, 23-24 school year\*  
Destiny Hall Harper, Journal 14 Illustrator & Designer\*

\* Podium Alum

“Writing is important to me because I struggle with expressing myself, so whenever I am writing, it makes everything else feel ten times easier.”

-Najah W., Armstrong HS

# 2023 Donor List

Podium's work is made possible through the generous monetary and in-kind donations made by the people on this list. Because of the critical support from our community, Podium is able to ensure consistent, trustworthy programs at schools and community centers for youth year after year.

## Literary Leaders

**\$20,000+**

Cameron Foundation  
The Community Foundation for  
a Greater Richmond  
Henrico Education Foundation  
REB Foundation  
Richmond City School Board

## Our Cornerstones

**\$5,000 - \$15,000**

The City of Richmond  
CultureWorks  
Dill Family Foundation  
Herndon Foundation  
Memorial Foundation for Children  
Richmond Memorial Health Foundation  
Robert & Anne Waldruff

## Monumental Supporters

**\$2,000 - \$4,999**

Christmas Under the Clocktower  
Dave Guarnieri & Kristin Walinski  
Logophile, LLC  
NextUp RVA  
River City Givers

## Pillars of Success

**\$750 - \$1,999**

Enterprise Holdings Foundation  
Harman Claytor Corrigan &  
Wellman  
Hopewell City Public Schools  
Kinsale Management  
Partnership for the Future  
Paula Harris  
Randy and Burgel Harritan  
Scott & Janet Hammer  
Village Bank

## Foundational Friends

**\$250 - \$749**

Armani Hall  
Ben Shute  
BloomEd LLC  
Canal Capital  
Dean McKnight  
Design to Learn Consulting  
Hunt Whitacre  
Impact Makers  
Janice Evans  
Jeff Olson  
Jeffrey Yeroian  
Jillian Olson  
Jim & Bobbie Ukrop  
John Jay Schwartz  
Kayleigh Crandell  
Kerry Swarr  
Kim Eley  
Lainey Raynes  
Liz Moore and Associates  
Lorraine Blackwell  
Prosperity Financial Services  
River City  
Saa'dia Douglas  
Trevor Bragdon  
Vicki Yeroian

## Pals of Podium

**\$1 - \$249**

Abstract Title Services, LLC  
Amanda Boise  
Amazon Smile  
Anna Allen  
B. Gray  
Barbara Fultz  
Beverly Keller-Skalski  
Bianca Guerrero  
Brad Pearce  
Brie Roberts  
Carmen Wicker  
Carol Farmer & William Hartlove III  
Charles Steelberg  
Charlotte Roscher  
Chris Riddick  
Commonwealth Chapter NSDAR  
Coupon Birds  
Daniel Cassiday  
Dan Moore  
David Ambrose  
David Cochran

Dawne Brooks Gulla  
Deborah Hawkins  
Deirdre Condit  
Demi Barber  
Devon Jones  
Donald Nebergall  
Donna Rosenthal  
Ed & Cathy Murphy  
Ed, Leah, Alex, Wesley, &  
Maddie Carter  
Erika Misseri  
Fidelity Charitable  
George & Rosa Wells  
Gregory Waller  
Gwyneth Hagan  
Jaime Small  
Jean Tillery  
Jeff Baldwin  
Jennifer Hammer  
Jillian Swain  
Jimmy Comer  
Johnnie O'Neal  
Katelyn Lacey  
Katharine Herndon  
Kavin Jackson  
Kristen Blevins  
KWE Publishing  
Lacey Faunce  
Lillian Bunton  
Linda Gantt  
Lindy Bumgarner  
Liz Ernest  
Lorin Hoisington  
Lori Zyla  
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Thalhimer  
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Marni Pilafian  
Melissa Patek  
Merck Foundation  
Michele Hadfield  
Oliver Stone  
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Peter & Alica Hirata  
Phyl Demetriou  
Rachel Patek  
Rachel Yantis  
Rebecca Ortega  
Retha & Jose Valderas  
Richmond Kickers Pro  
Soccer Club  
River City Consulting  
River City Podcast

Robert & Susan Maranto  
Robert Hoffman  
Ronda Walker  
Ruth Twiggs  
Ryan Costa  
Sarah Pentecost  
Sonia Crandell  
St.Helena Neighborhood  
Association  
The Stadlers  
Starr Hill Beer Hall  
Tanner Brantley  
Terry Drankiewicz  
Thomas Anderson  
Thurston Moore  
Trina Willard  
Tristan Wynn  
Tyla Allison  
Veronica Reid  
Vicki Vogt  
Wendy Beckner

## 2023 Community Partners:

- Richmond City 21st Century Community Learning Centers
- City of Richmond Non-Departmental Fund
- Henrico Education Foundation
- Hebron VA
- Higher Achievement
- Hopewell City Public Schools
- Metro Richmond Boys & Girls Clubs
- NextUp RVA
- Partnership for the Future
- Petersburg National Park
- Peter Paul Development Center
- The Well