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Richmond Academy Alumni & Friends Newsletter

OFFICIAL VOICE OF THE RA ALUMNI & FRIENDS ASSOCIATION

RA in Bloom

REBECCA SAVOY ('22)

The last quarter was always the most fun time for me as a Richmond Academy student. I struggled with spring fever as the temperatures finally started rising, and I could see the trees blossom as I daydreamed while staring through the windows. Between prom, concerts, field trips, and more, there were so many things to look forward to! Somehow, those last nine weeks seemed to pass in the blink of an eye, especially as I inched closer to graduation. In this newsletter, you'll see what I mean as you read about everything RA students have been up to lately, from winter formals to film festivals, pie day to pasta dinners, and everything in between. You'll also get to meet Ms. Keisha Wallace, one of my favorite people ever, and learn how she was divinely led to Richmond Academy. We're so blessed she's a part of the team. Happy reading!



Is there anyone you know who should be part of the RA Alumni & Friends Association? Send them this link: https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/PNo9W0x/alumniandfriends

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"I THINK THE SMALLER ENVIRONMENT ALLOWED ME TO BE 'SEEN'... THAT'S MY GOAL WHEN I TEACH."

Alumni Spotlight

KEISHA WALLACE (ATTENDED)

Keisha Wallace is an educator, entrepreneur, and expressive creative whose career spans engineering, tutoring, and the arts. Her journey reflects a passion for learning, creativity, and following purpose wherever it leads. Learn how God has played a role in her journey to RA.

Q: When did you attend Richmond Academy, and what stands out most to you from your time there as a student?
A: I attended RA my freshman year of high school 1995-1996. I was excited about RA before I started attending. My middle sister attended her freshman and sophomore year before I got to Richmond Academy, and I would tag along with her to all of the events that RA had. I felt like I was a student even before I actually was. It was the events outside of academics, like vespers and social activities, that I enjoyed the most. They felt fun and safe and allowed me to sit in that feeling of being a kid.

Q: Were there any teachers or experiences at RA that particularly left an impact?
A: My science teacher was Mr. Robert Fetters, and I loved his class. I still remember questions from his tests! They pushed my intellect and allowed me to think critically. When he taught us the constellations, he blacked out the room and poked holes into black construction paper and then placed that construction paper on a projector so you could see the constellations on the ceiling. Even now, I can look up at the sky and point out the Big Dipper and Little Dipper. I took Home Economics and learned how to sew. It was so cool! I made my own shorts and kept them through college. Mrs. Maddox was my English teacher, and she was amazing. She supported this belief that I still have that I can do anything. My time at RA definitely supported how I learned. That's not to say I didn't have any teachers that didn't resonate with my learning style, but even that teaches you something.

Q: How did RA's smaller environment impact your school experience? Did it influence how you learn or connect with people today?
A: I think the smaller environment allowed me to be "seen." That's always been big for me, and that's my goal when I teach. I want to "see" every student that stands before me. I want to know how their mind works so I know how I should communicate the ideas and concepts to them. The smaller class sizes made school have more of a family vibe.

Q: Were you involved in any extracurricular activities?
A: This part is a little fuzzy. I think basketball, and I know I did music. I think I was in choir.

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Q: Summarize your career path post graduation. What unexpected twists came about, and what are you doing now?

A: My path has been completely curvy! When I was at RA, I wanted to design roller coasters. I did end up getting my degrees in engineering and applied mathematics, but then I started out working with Nissan North America. I enjoyed that job. It taught me efficiency, productivity, and time management. But in time, I had this feeling that God wanted me somewhere else, so I followed that leading back to Richmond. I knew I had a knack for teaching, and something said that's where I was supposed to be. People thought I was crazy, because the pay scale isn't exactly the same. But, I believe that if you follow your passion, which is ultimately a Divine calling, God will work out the particulars and bless you beyond your wildest dreams. Now, I own a successful educational support company. We provide in-person tutoring throughout central Virginia, Maryland, and Leon County, FL, in addition to online tutoring. We've expanded to provide a variety of resources that aim to positively impact our community at large. We're currently launching a Learning Management System and an Educational Marketplace which I'm super excited about. My goal is to go as far as I can in the delivery of education. Outside of that, I followed my passion for the arts, and I work as a voiceover artist, actress, and a composer for TV/Film. That allows me to be creative in another way, and use all my talents. That's a goal of mine—to make use of all that I've been given. God wouldn't give you something that He didn't want you to actively use. As I've practiced my talents, God has opened doors. I'm excited to see what other adventures lie in store for me!

Q: You continue to stay involved with Richmond Academy in a variety of ways. What drew you back, and what does the ongoing connection mean to you?

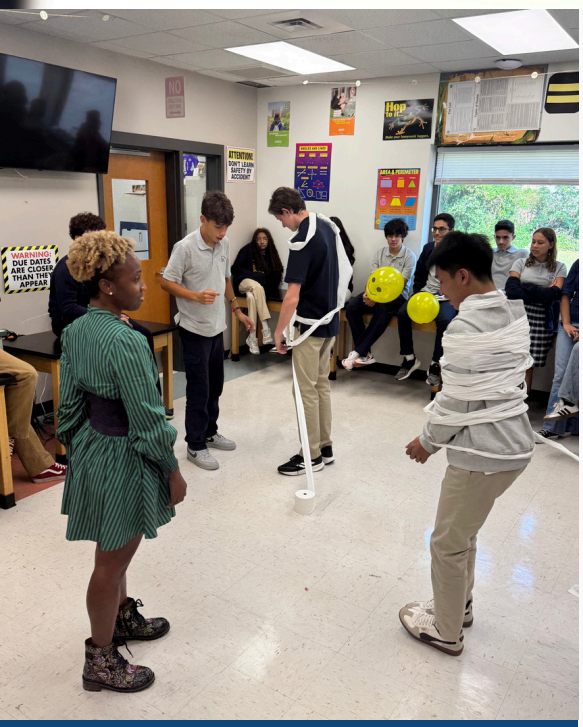
A: Well, it was an interesting twist that connected me back to Richmond Academy. When I moved back to RVA, I was offered an engineering job at UPS, but I decided to decline it, and start working at Richmond Public Schools. After a year of working there, I felt like I was supposed to be somewhere else. I didn't know where, though, so I took a leap of faith and left. I had a friend who worshipped on Sundays, and he asked me if I knew of a church that his congregation could rent out. I instantly thought of Patterson Avenue. Pastor Banks was the pastor then. I took my friend by the church to see if they were open to renters. The pastor knew I used to attend RA, and he asked me what I was doing at the time. I told him that I was in education. Coincidentally (or providentially) enough, RA was lacking a math teacher just a week before school was supposed to start, so they asked me to step in. It was all Divinely ordered. The ongoing connection with RA tells me that this

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Keisha's ninth grade yearbook photo

"GOD WOULDN'T GIVE YOU SOMETHING HE DIDN'T WANT YOU TO ACTIVELY USE."



Learning with Ms. Wallace is never boring!

"CREATIVITY IS THE LANGUAGE OF GOD."

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is where I'm supposed to be. It also means that there's a mission/job that He has for me at RA, and I'll be there until that job is complete, and/or that lesson is learned. I feel safe at RA. I like the positive energy here.

Q: How does creativity show up across the different areas of your work?
A: It shows up in everything! It's in the way I'm inspired to teach a lesson based upon the learners that sit before me. It's in the way I have to pivot in my communication style working in public vs. private schools. Creativity shows up in fusing math and music together. It shows up in songs I write, acting jobs I get, and in the way I work to reach every student. Creativity is the language of God.

Q: Looking back, in what ways do you feel your time at Richmond Academy helped prepare you for life?
A: RA has taught me so much about how life will open up to you if you stay true to yourself and the light God created you to be. I walk with a confidence that no matter what people may initially feel about me or how they may initially treat me, I have the inner power to make any situation sweet like honey. It's all in how I decide to respond. I learned this from both favorable and unfavorable experiences at Richmond Academy, among others. From my perspective now, I can see how everything I experienced was worked out for the good.

Q: What is one piece of advice you would like to share with current Richmond Academy students?
A: Savor your time. Don't be so quick to see it to completion. There's a reason why you're here! Enjoy your friends and the simplicity RA brings. You're building an inner strength and fortitude that will aid you in accomplishing your goals. God wouldn't bring you here for no reason. Meditate on that reason, and allow the experience to have its perfect work.

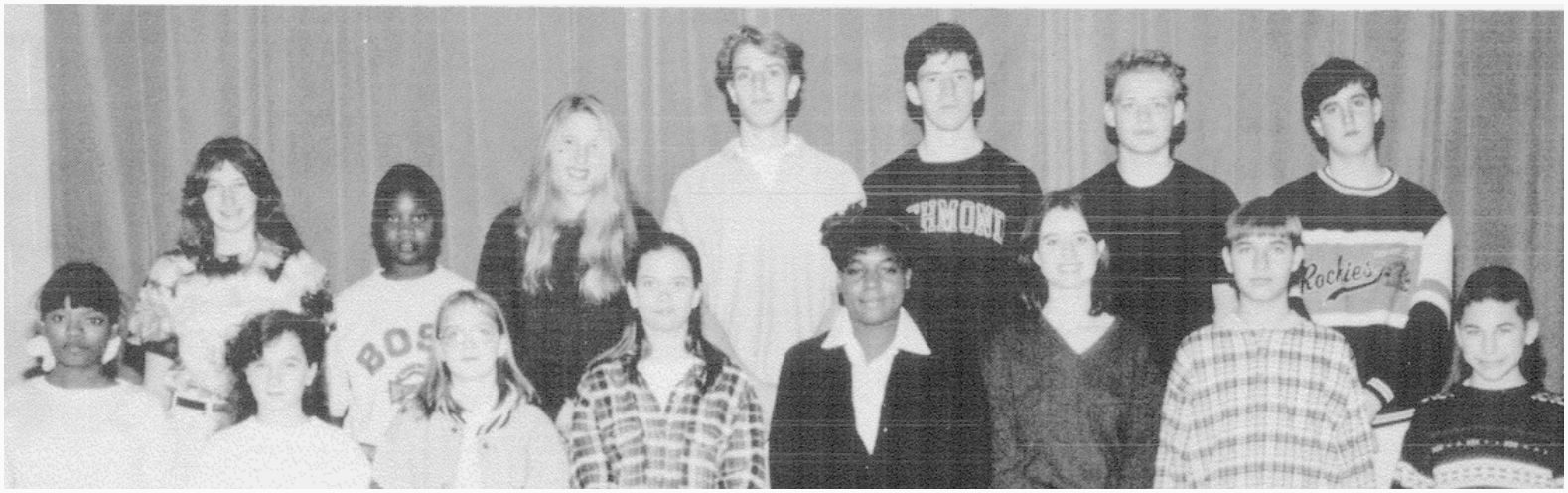


Photo Timeline

See highlights of what Richmond Academy has been up to lately!



Winter Fest

The annual Winter Fest was so much fun! Funds from the Silent Auction go to support Partnering for Eternity.



Reading Day

Classes spent the entire day enjoying fun adventures in reading.





Winter Formal

The Student Association hosted a beautiful winter banquet.





Christmas Concert

A night of beautiful music from the choir and bells groups rang in the Christmas season.





Dinner Theater

Students in grades 3-5 performed a musical while guests feasted on a delicious pasta meal.



From Henrico to Hollywood

LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

In just a couple weeks, students in Mr. Suarez's videography class will be flying out to southern California on a very special trip to showcase their creativity on a national stage.

The group will be attending and competing in the Sonscreen Film Festival, an annual event held in Loma Linda, California that brings together student filmmakers from across the country. Founded in 2002, Sonscreen was created to support young creatives who are passionate about using film to tell impactful stories.

What makes Sonscreen unique is its strong focus on students. The festival showcases dozens of student films, offers workshops led by industry professionals, and creates networking opportunities for participants to connect with other filmmakers who share their passion.

For many students, it's their first time seeing their work screened outside the classroom. But RA's videography program is no stranger to this experience. In 2024, Mr. Suarez's class submitted a film that won "Best High School Short." This year, the team has been working hard on "Weakness," another inspiring short film, continuing to build a tradition of storytelling, creativity, and excellence.

As students prepare to share their work and learn from others in the field, the excitement is building. For these young filmmakers, Sonscreen is more than a competition. It's an opportunity to grow, connect, and take the next step in their creative journey. We're so excited for them!

Check out RA's 2024 winning entry here: "His Blessing"







The team prepares to shoot another scene.



Upcoming Events:

April 14: Home Soccer Game

April 18: Choir & Bells at Courthouse Road SDA Church

May 2: Spring Concert

June 4: Kindergarten & Eighth Grade Graduation

June 7: Senior Graduation

Dates are subject to change. Check out our live calendar at https://www.rasda.org/calendar/



Pi(e) Day

March means that it's time for one of RA's most beloved traditions: PI DAY!!! It's always a very successful fundraiser for the Senior class, as nothing brings as much joy to the little ones as throwing a tin of shaving cream at one of the big kids. Enjoy these hilarious photos!



Looking Ahead

The 2025-26 school year is just flying by and will be over before we know it! We're incredibly blessed to share that we are budgeting for 170 students next year, as enrollment continues to increase. We're so grateful for your prayers for the RA community and can see the impact first-hand.

We Want to Hear from You!

Have any alumni-related questions, comments, or updates? Contact us at alumni@rasda.org!