

New Website!



This fall, UP RVA premiered a brand new website. As the organization grows, it is important that our website reflects the stories and successes of our students. Please take the time to check it out and pass it along to friends and family.

Many thanks to Katherine Schutt, Jason O'Hara, and the folks at 28 Media for their tireless efforts in the redesign!

Executive Director's Corner

As I write this at my desk at the Anna Julia Cooper School, I can hear the librarian in the next room reading "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" to a rapt audience of lower school students. My favorite part of the Grinch's story is when, in the end, the goodness of the people of Whoville impacts the Grinch so much that his heart literally grows. Similarly, each year that I am with UP RVA, I feel as if my heart grows, too. The drive of our students, the partnership with our parents, the tireless work of our staff, the collegiality of school and community partners, and the benevolence of our supporters



never cease to amaze me. As 2024 comes to an end, I want to offer my sincerest thanks to the people who play such a pivotal role in UP RVA's success. My ever-growing heart is eternally grateful for each and every one of you.

Greg McCandless

Building Community...

Sunday "All-Call" events bring together UP RVA students, families, and staff.

High school students are busy! Homework, sports practices, theater rehearsals, and part-time jobs all compete for a student's attention, along with family time and other social obligations. Now multiply that by 27 students and 5 different high schools, and you can imagine the challenges UP RVA faces when trying to find time to gather as a community. Yet the effort is always worth it as we prioritize fostering a sense of belonging.



This year, UP RVA launched Sunday "All-Call" events. Occurring every 4-6 weeks, the Sunday All-Call allows families and staff to gather for intentional programming, followed by a potluck dinner. Previous and future All-Calls will focus on the following programming:

- Small group meetings with families and their respective independent school administrators and faculty.
- College Admissions and Professional Career Panels.
- Scholarships, Financial Aid, and Financial Literacy.

So much of the success of UP RVA is based on the strength of our relationships with students and families. Sunday All-Calls are another great example of this!

News and Updates

Holiday Cheer!

UP RVA students, families, staff, and supporters recently gathered for our annual holiday celebration!



On December 13th, UP RVA held its annual Holiday Celebration. Current high school and college students, alumni, families, staff, and supporters all gathered for fun and fellowship. Students received gift bags generously provided by **Hynson Marvel and our friends at Grove Wealth Partners of Raymond James**, and families were able to take home delicious granola provided by **Rainbow Trout Kitchen**. UP RVA wishes everyone a peaceful and safe holiday season!

Academic Success!

UP RVA High School Students Kicked the Year Off with Exceptional 1st Quarter Grades

3.33

Median High School GPA

3.81

Median 9th-Grade GPA
(vs. 3.22 1st Quarter GPA in 23-24)

Students Giving Back

UP RVA students believe it is important to give back to their communities and each year, we provide community service opportunities for them. Prior to the Thanksgiving break, a number of UP RVA high school students visited Liberation Veteran Services, a non-profit shelter that provides housing and food for veterans experiencing housing insecurity. We provided a chili dinner, and students were able to eat with the residents and hear their unique life stories.

Recently, a small number of high school students also gave their time to HomeAgain, one of Richmond's oldest homeless services organizations. Students helped wrap donated gifts for the children of residents. UP RVA is always thrilled to support these community partners and provide opportunities for our students to give back.

UP RVA Professional Mentor Program

In January, UP RVA will be launching our Professional Mentor Program. This is an opportunity for us to match UP RVA college students with professional mentors in their field of interest. Professional mentors will assist students in resume development, identifying job shadows and internships, as well as other networking opportunities- all in an effort to add to the student's marketability upon college graduation. If you are interested in becoming a professional mentor, please reach out to Caitlyn Carpenter at ccarpenter@uprva.org for more details.

Stay Connected

UP RVA is incredibly grateful for our generous supporters. Please consider partnering with us today and following us on Instagram to keep up with what we're doing every week!

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