

The Climb

Fall/Winter 2016

Jacob's Ladder, Inc.®

One rung at a time

JACOB'S LADDER

Celebrating 25 Years

On Sunday, April 24, 2016, Jacob's Ladder celebrated 25 years of serving at-risk, intellectually gifted middle school children. The celebration was held at the University of Richmond, Jepson Alumni Center with a reception following. Over 200 guests attended to honor this most important milestone. Jacob's Ladder has impacted the lives of 325 Climbers who have progressed through the program to date.



Speakers for the Celebration Graduated Climbers, two who serve on the Jacob's Ladder Board of Directors, and a Parent/Summer Faculty member.



Graduated Climbers from the Genesis Group



Group Picture of Celebration



JACOB'S LADDER

**Summer Enrichment Camp
Richard Bland College
of the
College of William & Mary
July, 2016**

Sixty Climbers attended the summer residential enrichment camp for the month of July on the campus of Richard Bland College in Petersburg, VA. These gifted children were inspired by the following academic enrichment classes: Think Ink, Let's Build It, Savage Interviews, High-Key Math, Poetry is Lit, Potpourri, I Love Myself, Magnificent YOU!, Make It A Habit!, History Now!, Power of the Pen!, Jumping Fleas & Frets, Storytelling, Human Anatomy, Faux Stained Glass, Electric Sparks, YAM Sessions (Youth & Money), iSpark, Wire Action Figures, Ace an Interview, Youth Philanthropy, Ancient Hieroglyphics, and Printmaking Workshop.



JoAnne Ruffa, Camp Director

"Rising As We Climb" was the theme for this summer's enrichment camp. Along with a staff of 20, and a half-dozen or so different teachers each week, our Climbers transitioned to a new venue for the month of July. We welcomed 15 new Climbers to Jacob's Ladder this summer. A total of 60 middle school aged youngsters in grades 5-8 enjoyed dorm life and campus activities at Richard Bland College. This year was the first time summer camp had been held on a college campus. We even had the RBC basketball team members help with the afternoon recreation time and interact with our Climbers. There is a big focus on the arts at summer camp.



There were weekly art classes and music classes such as ukulele and morning Yoga stretching. We had a professional storyteller with us for two consecutive weeks. She worked with a large number of our Climbers, who put on a "Storytelling Concert," offering their individual stories to a larger audience. Emerging public speaking skills, confidence, and poise are all evident. Jacob's Ladder is a place where children can leave their worries behind, make lasting friendships, learn to swim, practice daily living skills, share in academically enriching classes, and just HAVE FUN. Senior Climbers visited the College of William & Mary and the University of Richmond prior to graduating from the program. Jacob's Ladder is celebrating its 25th year, and the track record is impressive!



Theater is a main focus. At the end of week 3, the children put on a short version of the musical "Footloose." It was quite successful.

Nicole Pearson, Academic Director

The highlight of camp for me was watching so many teachers come in and out each week with such varied subjects and backgrounds. It was exciting to watch the Climbers get so much exposure and hands on experience with subjects they do not get an opportunity to explore during the regular school year. "Footloose" was another huge highlight! Watching the Climbers grow in self-confidence through the rehearsal process and then shine in a musical theater performance is an experience we all won't soon forget!



Eight Senior Climbers graduated from Jacob's Ladder and entered high school in the fall.

"For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord; plans for good and not for evil, to give you a hope and a future." – Jeremiah 29:11

Palmer Castrodale Activities Director

We had a wonderful and eventful summer camp with full days! We were welcomed into our new space at Richard Bland College and took advantage of the wonderful facilities. Our Climbers experienced classes in college classrooms with the latest educational technology and participated in recreation time with the RBC basketball team in the gym where they practice and play. The suite-style dorms also gave the Climbers a taste of college life. In addition to the beautiful facilities, the faculty and staff of Richard Bland College were incredibly welcoming and accommodating. In conjunction with Climbers' morning classes and recreation time, Climbers participated in swim lessons and activities planned by their RAs. These included an Amazing Race simulation, Experimental Science, Jeopardy, and Etiquette. On weekends, Climbers went on a field trip to Jamestown, hosted Family Day, played in a fire truck's aerial spray, and had a blast swimming at Hadad's Lake. In the limited spare time between the daily schedule and weekend activities, we had a Jacob's Ladder Talent Show and Coffeehouse, Field Day, Storytelling Concert, and Christmas in July. Climbers spent their month at camp busy with academic, social, and recreational enrichment. There is never a dull moment at Jacob's Ladder!

A big thank you and a Jacob's Ladder "Clump" goes to the Menokin Foundation for providing this year's printing and binding of the Climber Memory Book.

2016 High School Grads

Climbers who graduated high school in 2016, who completed the Jacob's Ladder program, are attending the following institutions as freshmen: University of South Carolina, Randolph-Macon College, Virginia Tech,

VCU, Christopher Newport University, University of NC - Chapel Hill, J. Sargeant Reynolds, and U.S. Marine Corps.

Climber Appreciation Letter

August 15, 2016

"Dear Mr. W. Aubrey Hall,
Thanks so much for letting me come to Jacob's Ladder again this year. I can't wait for next year! Every year I learn new things and have so many new experiences. I made so many friends and I can't wait to see them again. Without Jacob's Ladder there are so many things I wouldn't be able to try, or people I met. Thank you so much for founding Jacob's Ladder!"

– Lily, Grade 6, King William County

Jacob's Ladder Fast Facts

- Celebrating 25 years encouraging intellectually gifted, at-risk students
- 325 Climbers graduated since 1991
- 60 Climbers, 2016
- 4-year commitment by families
- 50% rural, 50% urban areas of VA
- 27 teachers in summer program
- 18 resident advisors
- 4 weeks summer enrichment camp \$2,880 per child
- Year-round advocacy program \$1,325 per child
- \$4,205 per child for one-year \$16,820 4-year investment provided by Jacob's Ladder at no cost to families
- 94% of Climbers enter college
- \$12+ million in scholarships awarded Climbers to date

JACOB'S LADDER

Financially Speaking

We have exciting news to share with you! Recently, we received approval by Virginia's Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) to offer a credit against VA income taxes for qualifying contributions to Jacob's Ladder. The tax credit can be up to 65% of contributions of \$1,000 or more. It applies to gifts made after July 1 of this year. For more information, contact Jacob's Ladder at 804.758.0712.



Jacob's Ladder

24th Annual Golf Classic

In the spring, Jacob's Ladder will hold its 24th Annual Golf Classic at the Golden Eagle Golf Course in Irvington, VA. Bring a friend to support a worthy cause. Details to follow.



JACOB'S LADDER

Oyster Tasting

September 25, 2016

Rappahannock River Oyster Company hosted the 6th Jacob's Ladder Annual Oyster Tasting at Merroir Restaurant, Locklies Marina on Sunday, September 25th to benefit the at-risk, intellectually gifted children served by the program. First Tennessee Foundation sponsored the event for the fourth year. Great weather, delicious bi-valves, and loyal supporters continue to make this event an unbeatable combination. "Out On A Limb" provided their unique style of great music. Thank you, supporters of Jacob's Ladder. You make it happen! The event netted \$8,700.

Jacob's Ladder is a pro-active enrichment program serving children who are gifted and at risk for over 25 years.



JACOB'S LADDER

Valley Oyster Tasting, Dinner, and Dessert Auction

October 23, 2016

A second fund-raising event was held at Rockbridge Vineyard in Raphine hosted by Board Members, Mrs. Bruce Hemp and Dr. Kathy Tucker, to benefit the children of Jacob's Ladder. This event netted \$7,000!

FROM THE EXEC'S DESK

As we close 2016, we look forward to an exceedingly eventful 2017 in the life of Jacob's Ladder. The Board Search Committee has narrowed some 27 applicants for the Executive Director's position down to a very talented few. I have full confidence that whomever is chosen will, with the backing of a very active and committed Board of Directors, take Jacob's Ladder to new levels of success. Of course, you are the key to that success! You have supported the program because of the wonderfully gifted children it engages and the wonderful opportunities you make possible. And you may be asked to deepen your commitment as new and possibly more effective opportunities are found. Your loyalty and generosity to Jacob's Ladder over these last 25 years have been amazing. Please resolve to continue your support of these children who will have so much to offer our world as they grow in the knowledge they are loved and respected.

Merry Christmas!

W. Aubrey Hall, Executive Director