



The Vertus Voice Spring 2019

Vertus Charter High School • 21 Humboldt St. , Rochester NY, 14609 • (585) 747-8911



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Vertus in the Media

Vertus is a school that truly embraces its student's creative gifts and talents. Not only does the school acknowledge the students gifts and talents, but also helps cultivate them. Through recent recruiting efforts Vertus is shining a light on the talents of our students. An example of this is shown through a new opportunity that has developed known as The Vertus Way: From Boys to Men. This is Vertus High Schools first ever FM radio show, which airs live on 100.9 WXIR every Saturday at 3pm. Through this



show, our young men will provide a platform for the youth of Rochester to be heard. The mission of this show is to provide insight on social issues from the perspective of the youth. Hosting this show is Vertus' own Josiah Holloway, Xalen Lucas, and Tyreese McMillian-Harris.

In other recruiting efforts, Vertus has launched a vlog series titled "Testimony Tuesday".

In which, students, staff, parents, and alumni share what their experience has been like with Vertus and how the school has impacted their lives. The goal of these videos is to share and to shed light on what Vertus has to offer.



During the Month of February, three Vertus students were selected to be a part of the GoodSchoolsRoc television commercial.



For this commercial, students Joshua Thompson, Isaiah Cotton-Aiken, and Hector Otero Vega promoted Rochester Charter schools. After filming the students were given a tour of the news station and were introduced to meteorologists, news anchors, various technicians, and engineers.

At Vertus, we are a school that not only believes in our students, but also strives to provide unique opportunities for them. In addition to graduating, our young men will be well equipped and prepared to succeed in life.

a message from the PRINCIPAL

As we draw closer to celebrating our second graduating class I continue to reflect on how our program allows for each student to prepare and choose their own post-secondary path. While many of our young men are interested in college, some are not, and we work hard to ensure that they are prepared for the career of their choice.



- Our young men applied and have been accepted to two year schools such as Monroe Community College, Genesee Community College and four year schools such as Le Moyne College, SUNY Brockport, Roberts Wesleyan, University of Buffalo, St. Johns University, St. Bonaventure, Virginia State University and Rochester Institute of Technology.
- Two of our young men will move on to the military, two will move into the second year of the Career Pathways Program in partnership with REOC and become firefighters upon completion of that program; one will join an apprenticeship program with Local 13, and three will move into training for HVAC careers.

Our guidance department continues to build relationships with community partners that allow us to offer exposure to various trades and post-secondary careers. We offer the OSHA training course for those students interested in construction. This allows them to have a necessary component of the hiring process completed before graduation. We currently have programs in the work for health care careers and other certifications that will prepare our young men for a successful life after Vertus.

We are very proud of our young men and thankful that we've had the opportunity to expose them to schools and career options throughout New York State and beyond thanks in part to donations from the community and our Board's fundraising efforts.

We love educating your young men. Thank you for trusting us with them.

Warmly,
Ms. Locey

from GUIDANCE



CLASS OF
2019

SAVE THE DATE

For Vertus High School's
Second Graduation Ceremony

June 22 at 2:30pm
Hochstein Performance Hall
50 N. Plymouth Ave.

Graduation rehearsal will be Thursday, June 20
from 10am to noon at Hochstein

STUDENT ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY
More information will be sent home in early spring

This month we marked 100 days to graduation with our seniors; we have a wonderful group of young men who are eager to make their mark on this world! The guidance department has been busy filing applications and the FAFSA to ensure our men are ready to take that next step. Many are still unsure of their final destination; but we can report college acceptances to Alfred State University, Lemoyne College, St. Johns University, Buffalo State, Monroe Community College, Genesee Community College, and Virginia State University.

Our junior class hit the ground running this spring by attending the NACAC College Fair where they were exposed



continued from GUIDANCE

to over 250 colleges and universities from across the country. The event gave our students the opportunity to meet with college admissions counselors and financial aid advisors about their future plans. In addition to the college fair, the guidance department organized campus tours of Brockport College, Monroe Community College, and Nazareth College. During the tours, students checked out dorm rooms, met with professors and even got to eat lunch in the cafeteria (because food is important!). The junior class is set to take the ACT test this spring and continue their hard work in the classroom. There is no doubt that they will be ready for their senior year.



At Vertus, our focus is on setting students up with a life plan. In addition to college exposure, we like to also focus on job skill readiness and trade school programs. Vertus is exposing our sophomore students to job building platforms through the career website called Pointii. Our guidance counselors use this program to work with students on resume building skills and job exposure in the Rochester area. This month, students toured Optimax and Isaac Heating and Cooling. There are a number of apprenticeship programs that help students build the foundation for success. The spring semester will continue to bring success and opportunities for our young men. The future is bright!

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upcoming EVENTS

School Sponsored Clubs

We have some great before and after school clubs running this semester:

Open Gym with Mr. Fogle, Mr. Nesmith, and Mr. Cox – Daily from 7:30am until 8:15am

Strength & Conditioning with Mr. Hill
Monday and Tuesday after school

Video Game Club with Mr. Cox
Wednesday from 4:00pm – 4:45pm

Audio Recording Club with Mr. Hassett
Wednesday 4:40pm – 5:30pm

Volleyball with Ms. Santiago-Boyd will resume in early April

Bus passes are available for those students participating in after school clubs.

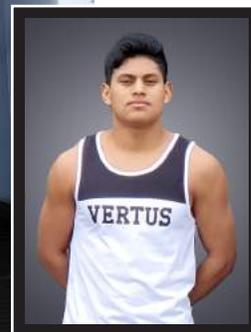




The Vertus baseball program is in their 3rd season of Junior Varsity play. Head coach Marc Zoyhofs-ki is in his 2nd year as the Warriors coach. He is assisted this year by Preceptors Andrew Colon and Ter-rence Connell. As the program progresses we look forward to competing at the Varsity level in the future.



Student Athlete Spotlight



Juan Tomas-Torres works dili-gently everyday to get better as a student and ath-lete. Excelling in all his classes and Edenguity courses all while learning them in a third lan-guage in which he continues to conquer. He's dedicated, extremely coach-able, and always has a smile on his face. He was the cap-tain of the varsity soccer team and is a key member of the varsity track & field team.

Vertus High School will have their first ever Outdoor Track & Field team this spring. They will be compet-ing in a competitive B Class. Head Coach Kyle Abron and assistant coach Aubrey Sheffield have many suc-cessful years of coaching in Section V between them and they are excited to build a new program here!



monthly AWARDS

DECEMBER

Man of the Month



Andy Nguyen
December 2018

Team of the Month



Team Colon
December 2018

Vertus Scholars



December 2018

JANUARY

Man of the Month



Bryan Echevarria
January 2019

Team of the Month



Team Banks
January 2019

Vertus Scholars



January 2019

FEBRUARY

Man of the Month



Alejandro Ramirez
February 2019

Team of the Month



Team Colon
February 2019

Vertus Scholars



February 2019

Man of the Month:
Exemplifies the virtues; he is nominated by his Team and the finalist is chosen by school leaders

The Team of the Month:
Chosen by school leaders based on attendance, academic progress, and contributions to school culture.

Vertus Scholars:
One student per core subject chosen by the department; they exemplify grit in pursuit of academic excellence.



Community Service Initiative

As our first-year Vertus students entered St. Joseph's House of Hospitality Homeless Shelter, I could clearly see, one by one, the expression on their faces changed. Instantly changing from one of boyish silliness and the left-



over laughter of dumb jokes to one that was very serious. As we took our tour of the homeless shelter, our young men started asking very thoughtful questions. They wanted to know how people end up in a homeless shelter, how do they fit all their belongings into such a small space and how do they get out of the cycle of homelessness? The tour concluded and we entered the kitchen where we prepared to serve the bag lunches Vertus students had put together. Our students listened intently to the directions given by the kitchen staff. At this point, our students took the lead; they divided into groups, assigned stations

and created a plan of action based on the directions they were given. Students handed out the lunches and made it a point to be respectful and kind. As a group, they thought the people they were serving should be allowed more than one lunch. The ride back to school was different than the ride there. The tone was quieter, maybe even somber. There were many conversations about how we can help them more. Some of the students recognized some of the people in the shelter because they had seen them on the street or even see them regularly in their neighborhood.



Leadership is an intricate thing. Many people say it is something that you are born with and either you have it or you don't. At Vertus, we believe something different; we believe that leadership is a strength we all have and it needs to be developed and leaders also need to be trained. In today's educational system, there is a lack of opportunity to teach and cultivate the leadership skills that the youth of Rochester need. At Vertus, our mission is to create Leaders of Character for the Community. We believe that the skills of leadership are something you can grow, but this growth requires opportunity. During Intersession, students participate in a number of community service projects.



Our first and second-year students create and serve lunches for those in need as well at St Joseph's Homeless Shelter. Our third-year students organized a community-wide blood drive and our fourth-year students will participate in a Habitat for Humanity build. When students get involved in community service, they not only help others but they expand their world view and develop empathy. To be honest, a lot of the people they help look like them and come from the same parts of the city they do. Students often comment on how they are thankful for what they do have and question how they

can make a bigger impact and help more people. The first step of true leadership is to be able to see outside yourself, outside your wants and needs, and to realize there is more to the world than just you. Vertus students soon realize that their actions can have a positive impact on the city and the people in their community. Martin Luther King Jr said that "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?"

Giving the student the opportunity to plan, execute and lead community-based projects is key to creating empathic leaders. While the community does benefit, we believe that our young men benefit more.



in the COMMUNITY

Open House

In the month of February, Vertus held a community open house event where staff, students, families, and community members united for a day of fun. An array of exciting activities were set to launch as many people swiftly entered the doors.

Lead Preceptor, Levi Bennett captivated the attention of a large audience while showcasing his musical gifts in a drum clinic. He then utilized his wealth of knowledge and transitioned the session into an engaging drum clinic; it was clearly evident that Vertus has top notch talent on staff.



Simultaneous to the drum clinic, Preceptor Shaq "AOR" Payne drew the attention of a great audience of his own, showcasing his talent in spoken word. Payne's thought provoking metaphors and precise delivery enthralled the crowd.



The eventful open house also drew a large audience for the SITOO Dreams Classic 3on3 basketball tournament sponsored by non-profit organization, SITOO Dreams Corp.

For this tournament 14 teams competed for trophies, shirts, and bragging rights. After several triumphant battles, one team prevailed; congratulations to the Champions

Cesar Ostolaza, Jarel Dixon, Eric LeBrane, and Quanmel Granville. Competitions then spilled over to a few classrooms, where people competed in PS4 video game tournaments.



Just when the already exuberant open house was thought to reach its peak, people were then drawn to the cafeteria where they were met by lively music provided by 105.5 The Beat/97.5 LA Mega's DJ Freddy Colon.



Though the music lured people in, the enticing aromas of Munchies Roc City Empanadas kept them there. Business owner, Munchie prepared a nice spread of food including various empanandas, rice, jerk chicken, pulled pork sliders, cornbread, and macaroni & cheese.



In the midst of all the excitement, Vertus staff did a great job providing tours and welcoming inquiring families with open arms. Overall, this event was a true testament to the Vertus difference.

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@HighVertus

Spot the 5 differences between the two photos below:



APPLY NOW!

Applications are now being accepted for the 2019-20 school year. Apply online at vertusschool.org or call our Senior Recruiter, Michael James, (585) 481-4503



STAFF SPOTLIGHT

Levi Bennett started as a Preceptor at Vertus 2 years ago and has recently been promoted to the Upper Level Lead Preceptor. Levi graduated from Nazareth College with a Bachelor's degree in Business Management; he then decided to pursue his love for music. Levi traveled the world with different bands and artists like The Campbell Brothers, Robert Randolph, Najee, and Roses and Revolutions for over 15 years. During this time, Levi also opened up his own music production company and studio, Blive Music Productions, and produced records and songs for commercials, TV shows and other recording artists such as Chris Blue. His music has been featured in ads for Allstate Insurance and the NBA Streets Video game.

Levi has always combined his passion of music with his passion for the youth of the city of Rochester. Being a successful product of this city himself, he has always wanted to find a way to give back and pour into the youth here and felt like Vertus was a great place to do that. Levi believes that every student has a different success plan and he is devoted to helping each student develop and execute that plan. He often will tell his students to get in "Lion Mode", so that they understand that they should be attacking their schoolwork with laser focus: no excuses and with the heart of a lion. Levi hopes that this mindset 100% will drive of his students will graduate on time, with flying colors, and guide them wherever life takes them.