



# Vertus Charter School

*COURAGE, LEADERSHIP, RESPONSIBILITY*

2 AUSTIN ST.  
ROCHESTER, NY 14606

MARCH 2015  
VOLUME 2

## From Our CEO

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

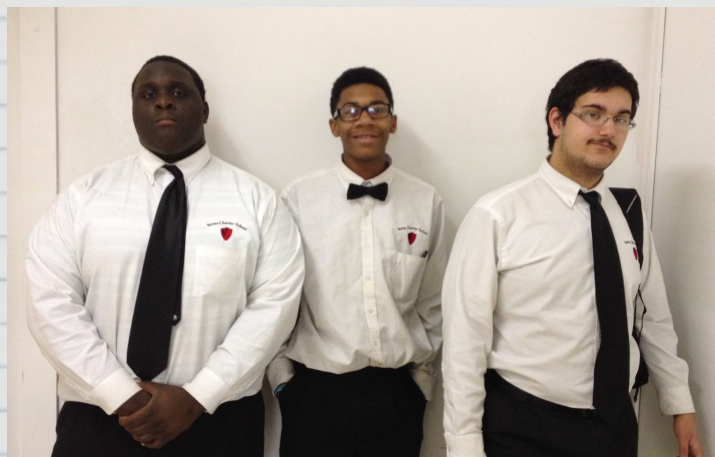
**April 6, 5:00pm-7:00pm** (Mr. Johnson, Mr. Bray,  
and Mr. Duesler's teams)

**April 7, 5:00pm-7:00pm** (Mr. Kadar, Mr. Peavy,  
Mr. Daniels, and Mr. Woods' teams)

These are a vitally important opportunity for families and staff to connect and discuss the individual progress of every student. Please be sure to attend.

This quarter, our Vertus men have been participating in hands-on learning activities twice a week between 3pm and 4:30pm. These activities include Music, Technology, Maker Space, Art, Chess, and Odyssey of the Mind, among others. All are designed to engage students in creative projects where they can build confidence, camaraderie, and career and academic skills. See p. 3 for an in-depth article on the Technology Program; we will feature other activities in the months to come.

We can't believe the Vertus year is half over! As of April 6, our students will be halfway through their 9th grade experience as Vertus students. We could not be more proud of their accomplishments thus far and the young men they are becoming.



## Vertus Students Participate in RIT's Career Explorers Experience

From February 16 to February 20, the three young men pictured above—Christian McClain, Savon Scott, and Bradley Austin—spent a week at the Career Explorers Experience at the Rochester Institute of Technology.

This program is designed to give high school students hands-on experience with career options in the STEAM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art/Design, and Math). It also provides participating students with exposure to RIT's faculty, labs, equipment, and active research projects, all of which are truly world-class.

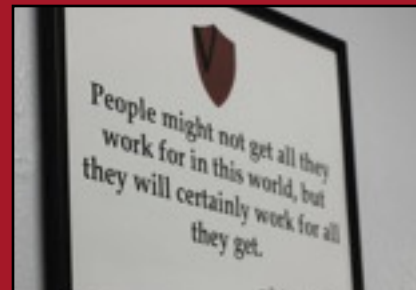
Our Vertus men were a credit to their school and greatly enjoyed their week at RIT. We are proud of their hard work and enthusiasm!



**HANDS-ON LEARNING:** Odyssey of the Mind students prepared for their competition in March.



**SEPTEMBER THROWBACK:** Students worked together to help assemble Vertus' basketball hoops.



**SUGGESTIONS FOR NEWSLETTER STORIES?** Contact Naomi Geier at 585.481.4499 or [ngeier@vertusschool.org](mailto:ngeier@vertusschool.org).

# Local Sports Venue Generously Donates Use of Space to Vertus

Monday through Thursday at 3pm, Vertus students gather downstairs in the multipurpose room, catching up with their friends and eagerly awaiting the next phase of the day. Each learning team stays at Vertus two days a week and participates in hands-on learning activities. On the other two days, that team boards the Vertus bus (see p. 3) and goes to Total Sports Experience, better known to our students as TSE, on Elmgrove Rd. in Gates.

TSE is owned by the Gallina family; Evan Gallina reached out to Dr. Mac after hearing about Vertus and was immediately interested in getting involved. After Mr. Gallina came to visit and met many of our students and staff, his family made a formal offer that allows Vertus students to use the TSE space for free four days a week from

3pm to 4:30pm. Our students have been going to TSE regularly since January.

The TSE facility is spacious, well-constructed, and conveniently located about 10 minutes from Vertus when traveling in our new bus (see p. 3). It includes indoor fields with AstroTurf, extensive outdoor field space, a basketball court, and a state-of-the-art fitness center.

Students and staff alike are deeply grateful to the Gallina family for their generosity! Physical activity is good for the mind, body, and spirit, and our Vertus men have already benefited tremendously from having such a well-appointed place to exercise on a regular basis. We look forward to their continued activity at TSE throughout the remainder of the year.

## TOTAL SPORTS EXPERIENCE



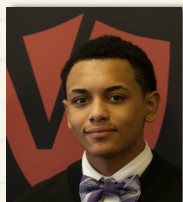
*Above: Keith Ponder shoots from the three-point line.*



*Below: Daniel Garcia plays quarterback as Lashawn Cason defends.*

## VERTUS SCHOLARS: ACADEMIC STARS

Vertus Scholars are students who have received an award for academic excellence in a particular subject; the teachers work together every month to select these young men. Congratulations to all of them for their outstanding accomplishments!



Adonis Garcia  
Math



Kishad Griner  
ELA



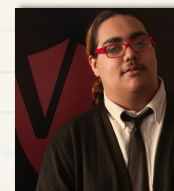
Giovanni Cintron  
Math



Jaekwon Chisolm  
Social Studies



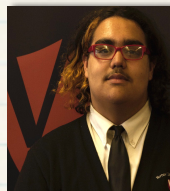
Eh'vion Douglass  
Math



Antonio Rucinski  
Social Studies



Bradley Austin  
Science



Antonio Rucinski  
ELA



Jakeith Mosley  
Science



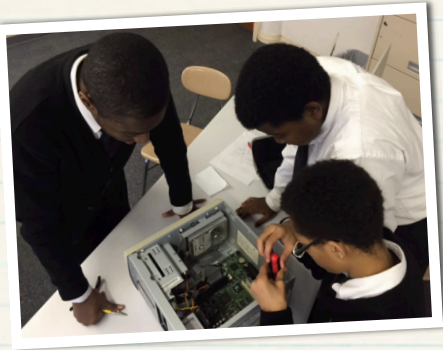
Lashawn Cason  
ELA

October 2015

November/December 2015

January 2015

# Vertus Technology Program Prepares Students for the Future



by Jamaal Peavy and  
Naomi Geier

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Technology has become a deeply integrated part of our daily lives and our current generation of young people has a foothold on the industry. At Vertus Charter School, we are equipping our Vertus men to be lifelong contributors to the world of technology.

In the Technology Program, we have learned how powerful computers are and what they are comprised of. The Tech Program students are now working on a project where they build a computer. This will be done by researching and making selections on PC components, complete with data and specification sheets. They will also be required to develop a presentation for the faculty on why their design is the best. The winning group will be able to build their computer, which will be funded by Vertus.

The Tech Program is also working with Khan Academy, a well-known online education tool, to provide students with a Computer Coding Course titled Introduction to JavaScript: Drawing and Animation. This course is designed to introduce students to the creative opportunities associated with computer coding. Through the completion of this

course, the young men will earn a certificate signifying competency in basic JavaScript coding.

"It's fun, but hard," said student Miguel Miranda, describing the Tech Program's JavaScript course. Students begin by creating basic animations—a moving ball, for example—and "you gotta figure out how to put the punctuation in the right spot or some things won't move right."

"Researching parts to make our own computer has been my favorite part so far," said student Carlos Gonzalez.

"Learning everything behind building a computer and everything behind the technology has been exciting."

We hope to put many of our students on paths to successful careers in information technology, a field that will provide many stable and well-paying jobs in Rochester and across the country.

## Did You Know?

- Employment of computer support specialists is projected to grow 17 percent from 2012 to 2022, faster than the average for all other occupations surveyed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- The median annual wage for computer network support specialists was \$59,090 in May 2012.
- Most computer support specialists have full-time work schedules; however, many do not work typical 9-to-5 jobs. Positions in information technology often offer flexible schedules and the ability to freely manage one's own time.

## Introducing a New Member of the Vertus Family!



Vertus owes a debt of thanks to local businessman Dutch Summers and the John and Jayne Summers Foundation for this beautiful bus, which will help us bring our Vertus men to many exciting places around Rochester!

# MEET OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Bryan Hickman,  
Chairman**

Turnaround CEO in the manufacturing sector and co-founder of E3 Rochester, Inc.



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Divisional Director of Technology and Program Operations, Urban League of Rochester, and Pastor at Greater Harvest Church.



**Todd Oldham**

Vice President for Economic Development and Innovative Workforce Services at Monroe Community College.



**Ty Kelly**

Director of Youth Development for Wegmans Food Markets.



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John Batiste, Ret.**

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**Dr. Steve Jacobs**

Professor and Associate Director of the Center for Media, Arts, Games, Interaction & Creativity (MAGIC) at the Rochester Institute of Technology.



**Mike Mandina**

President of Optimax and Chairperson of the Finger Lakes Advanced Manufacturers' Enterprise (FAME).

## About Vertus

Vertus Charter School prepares leaders of character for the community and the workplace through career preparation, personalized curriculum, and strong relationships. Vertus Charter School is a tuition-free, public charter high school for young men.

## About Our Newsletter

This newsletter is brought to you by Naomi Geier, Career Program Manager and English Instructor. Please feel free to contact her at 585.481.4499 or [ngeier@vertusschool.org](mailto:ngeier@vertusschool.org) with any questions or feedback.



OUR CO-FOUNDERS: Mr. Perry White, Director of External Affairs, and Dr. Leigh McGuigan, CEO.