

## Brother's Keeper Program Inspires Students to be Future Leaders

Vertus introduced The Brother's Keeper Program in July. The initiative started with nine students chosen by the leadership team based on their accomplishments and clear potential to be school leaders. The program was set up to expand student leadership opportunities at Vertus. By participating, students gain experience in public speaking, planning and executing activities, fundraising, and meeting people throughout Rochester. In September, they represented Vertus in their red blazers at the Genesee Valley Club for a discussion on the benefits of charter schools in Rochester. Recently, they raised \$400 from Vertus Board and community members, as part of a broader Vertus effort that raised \$2,500 for families resettling in Rochester from Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico. They have also worked on their public speaking skills by talking in front of a large group about their experience at Vertus, as well as when making announcements in front of the entire Vertus student body.

Scott Rogerson, Student Services Program Manager and advisor of the Brother's Keeper program, has enjoyed working with these students to generate new ideas to improve student culture, attendance and peer mentorships. "In the months I have been working with this group, I have been continually impressed at the willingness of these men to take on extra assignments, to take risks in order to grow, and to be role models," said Rogerson.



## FOR VERTUS' FIRST GRADUATION CEREMONY!

June 23, 2018 at 2:00pm  
Nazareth Hall Auditorium  
1001 Lake Ave.



### ABOUT VERTUS

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

Vertus High School is currently accepting applications for enrollment for students in 9th and 10th grades.

To learn how to apply for this or next year, visit [www.vertusschool.org](http://www.vertusschool.org), or call (585) 747-8911 or email [info@vertusschool.org](mailto:info@vertusschool.org).



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

# THE VERTUS VOICE

## Winter 2017

## Vertus Students Visit Northeast Colleges

In October, James Daniels, a Lead Preceptor at Vertus, Jason Willis, Special Education teacher, Mark Broz, Social Studies teacher, and Teresa



Long, a Vertus parent, led a trip with nineteen students to visit five colleges throughout the northeast. Often students can only see our local colleges like Monroe Community College, University of Rochester, Rochester Institute of Technology and Brockport. However, if a student cannot see himself in any one of these fine institutions, he may think college is not for him. The goal for this trip was to give students the opportunity to explore more diverse options so they might see that there is a school for them. The trip encompassed large, small, urban, rural, public, and private schools.

The schools visited included Edinboro University in Edinboro, Pennsylvania, Mercyhurst College in Erie, Pennsylvania, Howard University and George Washington University in Washington, DC, and Fordham University in New York City.

When speaking with students after the trip, some of the feedback fortified the goal for the trip. "This trip....can only be described as eye-opening," said Shandan Jones. "After exploring Washington DC and New York City, I don't wanna go back to the ROC. Everything is so different," said Justin McGill.



This experience was designed to encourage our students to look beyond their immediate environment when choosing their path and hopefully expanded their outlook to help them choose their own path.



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## Julie Locey Named Principal



Julie Locey has recently been named the Principal of Vertus High School. Ms. Locey joined Vertus in May of 2016 as the Director of Post-Secondary Readiness and was later promoted to Director of Academics. As Principal Ms. Locey's primary responsibility is to oversee all day-to-day activities of the school, including the development and support of all teachers, preceptors and deans, as well as curriculum, parent engagement, school culture, and discipline.

Prior to joining Vertus, she has worked in a variety of roles as an educator, including teacher, campus minister, dean, vice principal. Most recently she spent nine years as the Principal of Bishop Kearney High School, a local high performing school. Ms. Locey brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in working with high school students and in preparing them for graduation and post-secondary success.

Ms. Locey has her Bachelor's Degree in History and Elementary Education at SUNY Geneseo, a Master's Degree in Education and Human Development from State University of New York College of Brockport, and her School Administration Supervisor Certification in Educational Leadership and Administration from the University of Rochester.

## A Message From The Principal

The school year is off to a strong start! Our young men are learning and developing in character every day. I wanted to review a few important things about our program:

- Our students spend about half their time every day in traditional classroom courses and about half their time working on individualized lessons on the computers in our learning labs, supported by Teachers and Preceptors. This mix allows every student to have the traditional classroom experience in addition to working at his own pace on material that meets him right where he is.
- To graduate, students must earn 22 credits and pass five Regents exams over four years. We monitor students' credit status regularly and inform parents when students are not on track to graduate in four years. Current state requirements require five Regents tests for almost all students to graduate – the old "local" diploma has been dramatically restricted. We are proud that our Regents pass rate last year was very close to the state average and double that of the Rochester City School District. If your student has a Regents test coming up, please encourage him to review the material at home.
- We have teacher office hours every Tuesday and Wednesday after school, when any student can stay and get help from a teacher. Students are always welcome at office hours!

Finally, I want to reiterate how important it is for students to attend school every day. Students whose attendance is 90% or better are almost always on track to graduate. Research is clear that students who attend less than 90% have a far lower chance of graduating. If your student is missing more than 1 day every two weeks, he is at risk. Please partner with us to ensure your student attends school, on time, every day.

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

Warmly,

Julie Locey

## VERTUS MONTHLY AWARDS

### Man of the Month



**Darrell Wilson**  
**September 2017**

### Man of the Month



**Joshua Cabasquini**  
**October 2017**

### Team of the Month



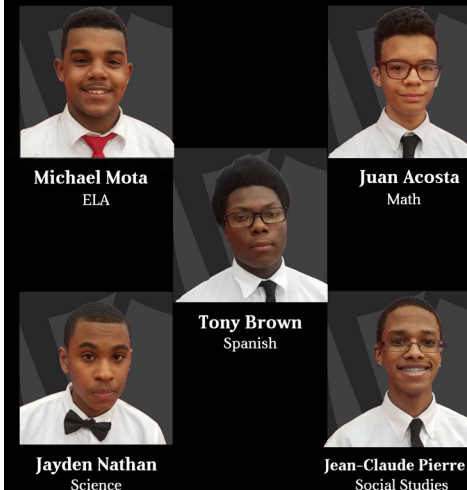
**Team Nesmith**  
**September 2017**

### Team of the Month



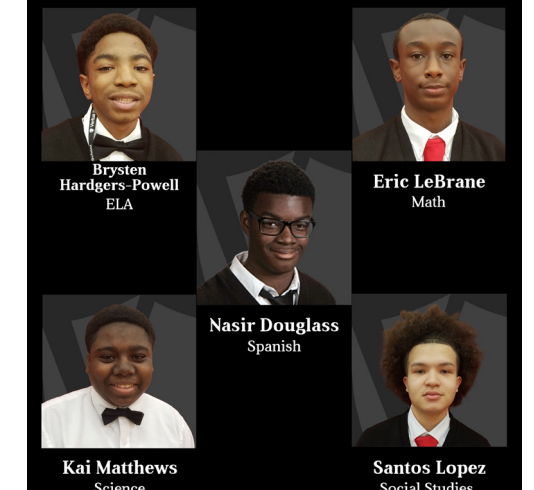
**Team Rice**  
**October 2017**

### Vertus Scholars



**September 2017**

### Vertus Scholars



**October 2017**



## Thank you E3 Rochester, The Farash Foundation and Summers Foundation for your Support!

Last June, E3 Rochester, a grassroots community-based, non-profit organization that recruits, launches and supports high-quality public charter schools in Rochester, donated \$100,000 in financial support Vertus. These funds have been used to support Vertus' overall program, including their recruitment efforts. E3 has also supported our school by sharing their marketing expertise.

Also, in July Vertus was honored with a \$100,000 grant from The Farash Foundation, for general operating support. The Farash Foundation is an organization that believes in the importance of education and understands the power of entrepreneurial creativity.

In August, the Summers Foundation awarded a grant to Vertus that is being used to fund student employment in the Vertus Re-NABLE program. These funds are essential to providing students the opportunity to learn about leadership, 3-D technology, community service, and job training.

The e-NABLE program at Vertus began as a two-year summer job program designed and developed with the FOSS@MAGIC LibreCorps initiative and sponsored by Red Hat, Inc. The lab offers a unique synthesis of job training, technology development, and humanitarian service.

Since July, led by instructor Melvin Cruz, an engineering student from Honduras, Vertus students have produced and helped design four 3-D printed personalized arms with hands for recipients in Central America. In early November, the devices were presented in a high profile event to recipients in Teguligalpa, Honduras. This Fall, students made 40 "Gripper Hands", which were invented by Re-NABLE staff, produced by Vertus students on Vertus' 3-D printers, and finished and tested by Vertus students. In November, these prosthetic hands were distributed to 40 people who lost hands, mainly in industrial and agricultural accidents, in India.

Also, in November, Re-NABLE at Vertus' staff released a Filament Fault Detector, which our three resident inventors, Skip Metze, Melvin Cruz and Jon Schull, invented to make life easier for 3-D printer users globally.

In addition to creating 3-D designs,

students are also learning to operate, maintain, and make simple repairs on 3-D printers, to assess amputees' needs to personalize hand and arm designs, and to manage their time and



work with supervisors and co-workers. Students are gaining a strong work ethic and ultimately discovering the joy of community service.

Vertus continually seeks financial support so we can do more for our students. Funding opportunities include extracurricular clubs and our intramural sports program, establishing our new track team in the Spring of 2018, school uniforms, employing students in our Re-NABLE 3D printing lab, weekly student awards for attendance and academic progress, laptops for students, and field trips. If you or your organization is interested in helping Vertus' students, please contact Perry White, Director of External Affairs at 585-747-8911.



**Re-NABLE  
Lab Technician  
of the Month**

**October**

**Victor Figuero**

## Upcoming Family Conference Nights

**Our spring semester family conference nights will be  
February 6th and 7th at Vertus**

Family conference nights give families a chance to discuss their student's progress toward graduation and review their student's academic growth with Vertus staff.

It's very important to us to keep our promise to meet with every family three times a year to review student progress and growth in character, so we strongly encourage all families to attend!

## Congratulations to the following students for receiving a new tie:

Students earn ties to signify academic advancement and growth in character. Ties progress from black, to red, to striped, to professional.

Ibn-Sami Alim, Elijah Butler, Luis Diaz, Marco Gonzalez, Tajmere Grice, Edward Hughley, Rasheen James-Giles, Eric Lebrane Jr., Anthony Perez, Nathan Sinclair, Quentin Sloan, Anthony Smith, Quamayne Holmes, Lee Cooper, Marquis Floyd-Stanley, Paris Fox Jr., Jakeith Mosley, Jean-Claude Pierre III, Brandon Rios, Antonio Rucinski, Josiah Holloway, DeVon Davis, Cory Kearns



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## Vertus Students Highlighted During Mayor's Luncheon



On October 23rd, five students from Vertus were highlighted during the Annual Mayor's Luncheon, an event that helps raise money for the United Negro College Fund. During Mayor Lovely Warren's speech, the students were commended for working hard and being role models for our community. Afterwards, students were able to shake hands with the Mayor and even capture this exciting occasion by taking a picture with her.

From left to right: Vertus Head Dean, Joe Carter, Roshawn Murraine, Clovis Meickle Jr, Mayor Warren, Ethan Miller-Wilcox, Joshua Berry and Jean Claude-Pierre.

## Fran Schenk Named Director of Blended Learning

Fran Schenk, former Vertus Chief Academic Officer and Science Teacher, has been named the school's new Director of Blended Learning. Ms. Schenk is responsible for all online aspects of our program, including curriculum, and working with Ms. Locey and others to develop an integrated blended learning program that combines online and classroom instruction. She is also responsible for monitoring our learning data to ensure all students are making progress and getting the help they need, as well as supervising our Teaching Fellows who manage our learning labs.

Ms. Schenk has been with Vertus since its opening in 2014. She is an expert in teaching and learning in our blended learning curriculum, including our online courses through Edgenuity. Ms. Schenk has many years' experience teaching at the high school and college levels, as well as tutoring students for Regents exams and other important tests.



## Vertus Kicks Off After-school Clubs



New this school year, Vertus has developed a club and intramural program. Program goals include supporting students' passions, developing skills, and building school spirit by tapping into students'



interests. An array of clubs and intramural sports are available, including astronomy, music, slam poetry, chess, TPS, video game, strength and conditioning, and community service, as well as flag football, bowling, golf, and basketball. Participating students are asked to follow two

principles: With club advisors' support, students are expected to take full ownership in guiding their learning and experiences. Students also are expected to present a project that represents their work at the end of the quarter. This could include a concert showcase, mural, or other similar creative work.

Staff at Vertus believe in the value of extracurricular activities for our students. "It is important to provide an outlet on campus for students to participate in things they care about, ultimately generating excitement about coming to school," said Leah Sneed, Student Programs Manager and coordinator of clubs.



(Students in the Community Service club organize Thanksgiving food items for Rochester families in need)

## Vertus High School's 3rd Annual Blazer Ceremony

The Blazer Ceremony honors those students who have shown a commitment to Vertus' virtues with a red blazer, the symbol of belonging to the Vertus community. For a student to earn a Vertus blazer, he must have an attendance rate of 85% during a set timeframe, memorize the Vertus creed, and introduce himself Vertus style. Dr. Leigh McGuigan, CEO of Vertus will speak at the event, as well as guest speaker, Hezzie Simmons, Chief Financial Officer and Vice-President of Administrative Services at Monroe Community College.

**The Blazer Ceremony will take place on Saturday, December 9, 2017 from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. at Vertus.**

