



The Vertus Voice

Winter/Spring 2021-22

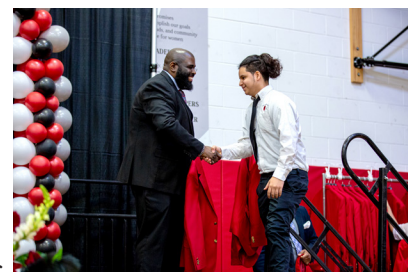
Vertus Charter High School • 21 Humboldt St. , Rochester NY, 14609 • (585) 747-8911

Induction Ceremony

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our annual Induction Ceremony was put on hold for the past two years. On March 26th, the tradition continued, and students participated in one of our most prestigious events that solidified their spot as official Vertus young men.

Students, families, and staff joined together to celebrate our students as they walked across the stage to get their own Vertus Blazer which symbolizes they have adopted the Vertus way (Attendance, Vertus Creed, Character). Mr. Wade Norwood, a Rochester native and New York Board of Regents member, delivered a

message to our families and students, inspiring them to reach for the stars as they wear their blazers proudly and defy the odds that are placed against them. It is great to see the young men walk through the halls proudly in their Blazers and know that they are official members of the Vertus family.



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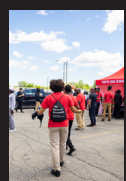
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a message from the CEO

Message From the CEO:



If the 2021-2022 school year has shown me anything, it has shown me that humans are resilient. After over 500 days of doing school differently due to the pandemic, Vertus students and staff have proven that nothing can get in the way of reaching our goals.

Our staff makeup of 62% men, 45% black, and 10% Hispanic reflects the demographics of our student body and is a cross-section of the real world. We work together to create an environment where our young men can see their future possibilities and the living proof of people who look like them. Watching our young men become “Leaders of Character” due to their hard work and our staff’s work is just amazing. Returning to our time-honored traditions, like the Blazer Ceremony, and even regular everyday occurrences such as morning meetings have brought our community back a sense of normalcy. They have

helped us continue our focus on moving forward. The structure and routine we have at Vertus provide a sense of security for our young men, which allows them to focus on their academic and character growth and, ultimately, graduation.

I am incredibly thankful to be the school leader at Vertus, and it is particularly gratifying this spring, after so much turmoil, to be preparing for the Class of 2022’s graduation. Our seniors have worked hard to make it to this point under challenging circumstances. To say I am proud of the young men and the men they will become is an understatement. Thank you to everyone who has contributed to that success, including staff, parents, and the students themselves. It is time to celebrate the success of this year and begin planning for next year’s success.



COLLEGE & CAREERS

Senior Plans



Seniors in the graduating class have applied to various colleges across New York State, including Roberts Wesleyan, SUNY Geneseo, SUNY Brockport, RIT, U of R, and Alfred State University. Monroe Community College continues to be the most popular choice amongst our seniors, offering students the flexibility to live at home and attend tuition-free with the NYS Excelsior Scholarship.



GENESEO
THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



UNIVERSITY of
ROCHESTER

Many graduating seniors intend to enter a trade or go straight to work upon graduation. The ITEC Training Program at the Isaac facility continues to be the most popular choice of trade schools; many of our alumni have completed the training program. Two graduating seniors have committed to joining the Marines and Army National Guard after graduation.



ROBERTS
WESLEYAN COLLEGE



Monroe
Community
College
STATE UNIVERSITY
OF NEW YORK





EVENTS

Senior Banquet

Vertus held our first ever Senior Banquet on May 24th. Our Seniors, along with their families, joined Vertus staff members in a celebration of their accomplishments. Several scholarship recipients were announced, along with our Valedictorian and Salutatorian.



Spirit Week

Vertus students got an opportunity to take a break from the uniform this year during Spirit Week. There were different themes for each day of the week for students to express their school spirit with style (Comfy day, Sports day, Warrior Day, Formal day, flashback Friday). We got to see a different side of students that week. It was great to see how they interpreted the different themes and made them their own. Various fun activities also accompanied each day to help students let loose before the new semester started. We look forward to seeing how these themes turn out next year!



in SPORTS



Winter Sports Recap

Basketball

Vertus returned to a full basketball season this year playing 20 regular-season games. Coach Franklin's final year leading the varsity team finished the regular season re-

cord with an 8-12 record. Vertus secured the #8 spot in the class B2 Sectionals tournament and hosted Wayland-Cohocton in the first round. The Vertus Warriors advanced to the quarterfinals after defeating Wayland-Cohocton 68-42. This was the 2nd team in Vertus history to win a sectionals game. The team traveled to #1 Dansville for a crushing 53-56 loss. The team was led by Senior guard Gerod Jackson who averaged 12.1 points/game and Sophomore Forward Reginald Pough who averaged 11.1 points/game, 10.9 rebounds/game, and 1.3 blocks/game. We would like to thank all that each of our 6 seniors contributed over the past few years, you will be missed! Vertus would also like to thank Coach Franklin for the countless hours you have dedicated to our school and basketball program over the past 7 years!

Senior Basketball Players:

Daymeir Cain • Turhan Davis • TajMeik Hawkins
Gerod Jackson • Trevor Scott • Earlington Walker

The Vertus Athletic Department proudly announces the new leadership of our basketball program. Coach Anthony Givens has been promoted to Head Varsity Coach and Coach Norris Woods will serve as the Head JV Basketball Coach. Both will advise and oversee basketball operations going forward.



Indoor Track & Field

The 2021-22 indoor track season consisted of 8 track meets followed by Sectionals and State Qualifiers. Meets were held at R.I.T, Brockport, and Houghton Colleges. Our team was led by Sectional Champion Rahmier Westbrooks in Shot Put. He also finished 5th in the weight throw at sectionals and holds both the indoor shot put and weight throw records. We also had Freshman Mattias Shaw break the school record in the 55M Hurdles and finish 5th at Sectionals. The 4x200 relay also finished 5th after being ranked 9th and having to race alone. Corey Hill also became our first high jumper and set a new indoor school record.





in SPORTS

Baseball

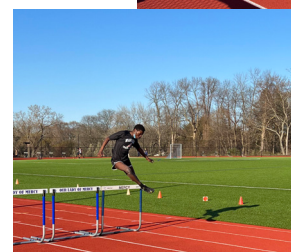
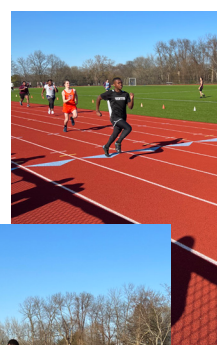
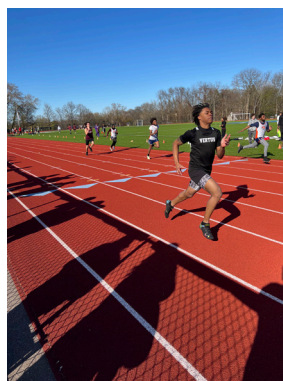


The Vertus JV baseball program was under the new leadership of Head Coach Maurice Rice. Coach Rice, Primetime 585, and the Rochester Community revamped the Vertus baseball program by generating equipment donations for our team. The new equipment and partnership with Next Pro Training set up a great restart for our baseball program. The baseball team played a 10 game season, winning 4 of the 10 games. Coach Rice is already planning to continue the growth of the revamped program with offseason workouts and training sessions.



Outdoor Track & Field

The 2021-22 Track & Field season consisted of 5 PPL/RCAC league track meets, 5 invitationals, followed by Sectionals. Track & Field is one of Vertus' fastest growing athletic programs. This years Track & Field team had 23 student-athletes competing in various events. Our team was led by Junior Rahmeir Westbrooks and Sophomore Malachi Jones. The Track & Field team had 10 student-athletes qualify to compete in the Section V Sectionals meet. Junior Rahmeir Westbrooks placed 3rd in the shot put event.



Fall Sports

Registration will begin on July 23rd; we are offering the following fall sports for the 22-23 school year:
Varsity Cross Country • Varsity Football • Varsity Soccer

To find out more about a particular sport or the sports qualification process, please contact our Athletic Director Rich Maez at 480-241-3071 or rmaez@vertusschool.org
Please visit <https://vertus.rschooleams.com/> for up-to-date information on all athletic dates and times.

monthly AWARDS



Man of the Month



David Thaxton
November 2021

Man of the Month



Treyvon Brown
December 2021

Man of the Month



Ja'Kond King
January 2022

Man of the Month



Jael Duran
February 2022

Team of the Month



November 2021

Team of the Month



December 2021

Team of the Month



January 2022

Team of the Month



February 2022

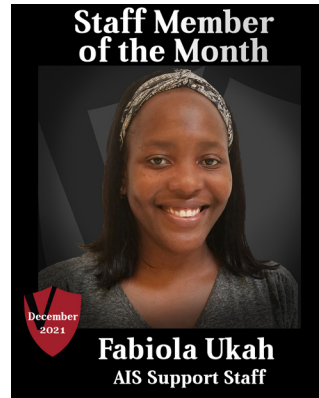
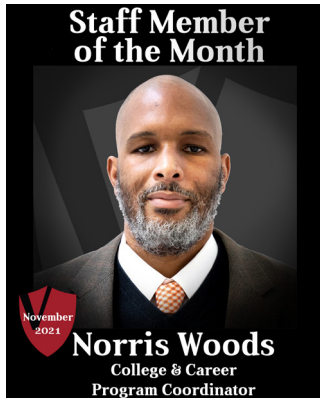
Vertus		Scholars
Damien Blackwell ELA	Demencio Houston Social Studies	Jeremiah Cruz Math
Deyne Hayes Science	Earlington Walker Spanish	Raymond Smith Art
Zacariah Randall Athlete		
November		2021

Vertus		Scholars
Julio Owens ELA	Malachi Jones Social Studies	Brian Holloway Math
Alex Rodgers Spanish	Ricky Perea Science	Brandon Burgess Art
Darnell Santos Athlete		
January		2022

Vertus		Scholars
Derek Lee ELA	Nasir Newsome Social Studies	Josue Vicente Math
Jayden Ridley Spanish	Raphael Porchea Science	Jerrontay Dawson Art
Rahmeir Westbrook Athlete		
February		2022



month AWARDS cont.



Man of the Month:

Exemplifies the virtues and 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.

come be a part of the #VertusDifference



Student Spotlight: Shaheim Thomas



Shaheim Thomas is a model of consistency in the Career Lab and has been since the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year. He has shown great determination with his school work and how he is going about preparing for life after graduation. Mr. Thomas aspires to become a part of the Rochester Police Department, where he can take his consistency and fortitude into the Rochester community and be an example of how one carries themselves. When his Preceptor, Mr. Yarbrough, speaks about Shaheim and the relentless efforts he put forward during his senior year, it is clear that the drive and grit he has at a young age will serve him well when he one day takes the oath to protect and serve.

in ACADEMICS



Vertus Esports Lab



A new esports program at Vertus High School focused on educating our digitized youth — and in less than two months, has already elevated student engagement and collaboration. And it is the first Esports program in Rochester to offer high school credit toward graduation. The Vertus Esports Lab was created in early February with the National Esports Association (NEA), under the direction of NEA president

and CEO Lori Bajorek and educator Charles Colleran, made possible via a grant from the Daisy Marquis Jones Foundation. Many Vertus students participate in the esports program offered during the sixth, seventh, and eighth periods. The STEM program focused on the game Minecraft and NEA's "Build Your Community" program. Vertus students are building their communities and homes and are actively learning about green energy, electricity, architecture, and geometry. After a brief learning

curve, all of the students involved have completed the first building challenge and speaking presentation with flying colors! On presentation day, each student gave a memorable speech describing their build while answering their peers' critical analysis and critical thinking questions. In a short amount of time, the students have become their community inside the classroom. They are organizing a Smash Bros. tournament, organizing all aspects, from designing the logo, recruiting students, coordinating

with administration, and hopefully broadcasting play-by-play on the live stream on Twitch. The buzz that the Esports class has continued to build as the semester moves on. We are excited to expand the program moving forward in the future!

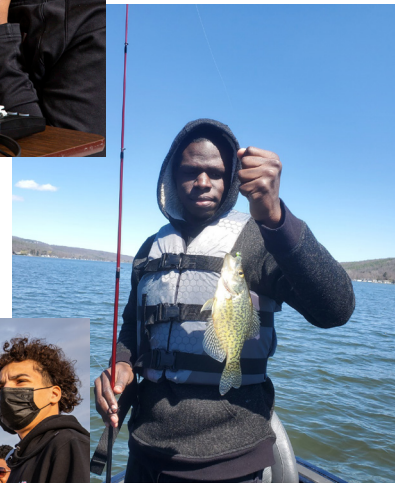
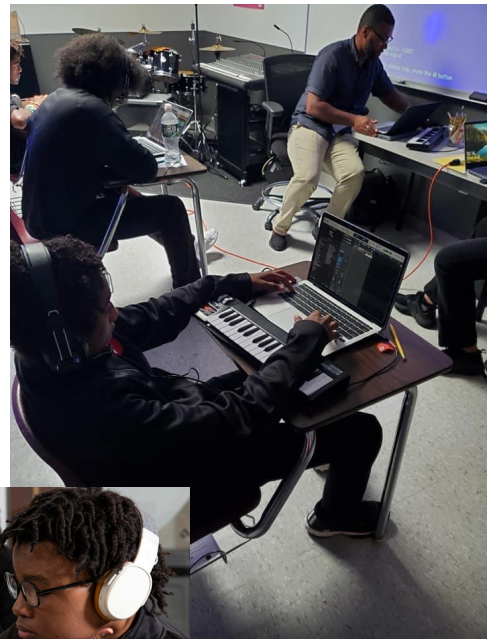




in ACADEMICS

Electives

During the 2021-2022 School year, Vertus offered a wide variety of electives that appealed to our students' interests. Electives included various art programs such as: Music Production, Acapella/Choir, Digital Media, Mural Arts, and Creative Writing; students got to showcase their work through different outlets including live events hosted by Vertus and displays set up around the school. We implemented entrepreneurship and trade programs, such as Barbering and Construction, that featured hands-on activities and skill building that could lead to certification pathways. We also successfully launched our first ever eSports and Robotics programs, where students were exposed to STEM and game-based learning. If you are interested in learning more about our elective programs, please visit vertusschool.org and set up a tour today!



in the COMMUNITY



Black History Month

Vertus celebrated Black History Month by not only learning about the past but celebrating modern day minority leaders, business owners, and artists. We kicked off the month with a “Carlton Wilcox Live Band” performance and a celebration of Black Excellence. Later in the month, the students met with Erica Thomas from “The Brown Suga Co.” Not

only did she deliver an excellent presentation on entrepreneurship, but each student received some cookies from her bakery to sweeten up the day!



3-Point Shooting Contest

In February, Vertus had their first-ever 3-point shooting contest. What made this event special was we invited local law enforcement agencies such as RPD, MCSO, and NY state police to participate. This contest was an opportunity to build relationships between our students and law enforcement.



Women's History Month

The Vertus Creed states, “We respect and care for Women.” So in March, we did our part to show our appreciation for Women. We had special guests join us for the morning meeting like Jamie Saunders, the Ceo of United Way. Dr. Shanai Lee has a fellowship to find ways to improve our Rochester schools. We also had Sabrin LeMar, the first black female to lead Rochester Legislation. We also honor all the Women staff that work here at Vertus. Danielle Ponder graced our morning meeting with her

beautiful voice. We finished the month by staff members' mothers in for the last day of the month.





in the COMMUNITY

Second Annual Community Fair



Vertus High School's 2nd Annual Community Fair was a great success, bringing our families and the community together to obtain valuable resources and insights into the work-force. During this outdoor event on our campus, Vertus hosted over forty



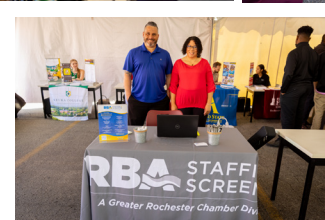
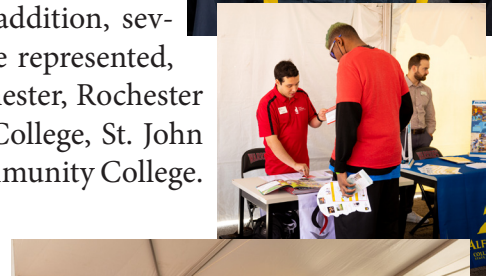
vendors, including Monroe County Department of Human Services, Liberty Resources, Common Ground Health, AVS Consulting, Ironworkers, Rochester Police Department, and other local and military agencies. In addition, several local and state colleges were represented,



including the University of Rochester, Rochester Institute of Technology, Keuka College, St. John Fisher College, and Monroe Community College.



Vertus is dedicated to student health, well-being, and ability to learn, and events like the Community Fair support its mission of developing leaders of character. We greatly appreciate our many community partners for showing up and providing families with resources that can provide them with better opportunities and support.



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Spot the 6 Differences in the Photos Below:



APPLY TODAY!

Seats are available for the 2022-23 school year. If you wish to enroll your student, apply online or schedule a tour at vertusschool.org. Or you can contact our Senior Recruiter, Michael James, (585) 481-4503, mjames@vertusschool.org



School choice is YOUR choice!

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