

# Report Card

News, events and information about The READ Center

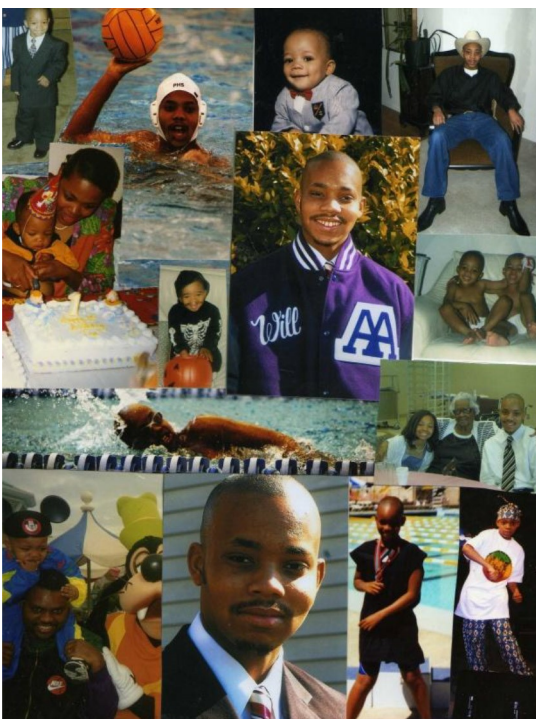
Spring 2017

## The Will to Thrive: A Portrait

"Will is our 'miracle son'," says William Anderson, Jr., father to William Anderson, III, READ Center student, and aspiring artist. Will was born with low platelets and experienced head trauma during birth, resulting in brain injury. He was later diagnosed with cerebral palsy and ADHD, and experienced hearing loss as a child. "After we relocated from California to Michigan when Will was 11, his reading skills seemed to regress," says William. The family moved to Richmond in 2011 and discovered The READ Center. After some time on a waiting list, Will started taking classes in 2014.

"Will looks forward to coming to class. He really likes his instructors and the social interaction. There would be a major void in his life without these opportunities," said William. Will empowers himself to learn and grow. "I want to be like other men," he says. Will hopes the skills he is honing at The READ Center will help him to eventually secure a fulfilling job. His ultimate dream is to own his own art studio.

Will developed an interest in creative pursuits from an early age, spending hours mastering the craft of Lego® building.



His specialty is building big rig truck creations, and Will's abilities as a Lego® builder are in-demand. From Will, (with help from his father): "I got my first taste of truly believing that I had a gift for art when I won the medal for Best Architectural and Engineering structure in the High School category for my design ("Big Willy's Truck Stop") in the



**Will at the opening reception for the Milk River Arts: Flow exhibit where his artwork was showcased. To learn more, visit [milkriverarts.org](http://milkriverarts.org)**

Annual Ann Arbor District Library Lego® Contest. All of my life I have been fascinated with building and creating things with my hands."

Will is especially interested in African culture, art, and music. He is a drummer with the Ezibu Muntu African Dance Company, and his paintings were recently featured in an exhibit with Milk River Arts. "[My dad] has offered to help me explore turning my passion and artwork into my own business," says Will. William is working with Will to help him secure funding to purchase materials so he can develop an art portfolio for submitting to art galleries.

"I know I'm his mother, but I think Will is such an interesting person," says Elsie Harper-Anderson.

*Continued on next page*

## Celebrating READ Champions During Volunteer Week



Join us for Tutor Appreciation Happy Hour April 26

The READ Center has amazing volunteers and we are so thankful for who they are and the impact that they have on our students' lives. To express our gratitude in person, we're planning a get-together to do just that. READ Volunteers are cordially invited to a **READ Tutor Appreciation Happy Hour** at the new Hattie Mae's Restaurant (1601 Willow Lawn Dr. #840, Richmond, VA 23230), formerly the American Tap Room, on Wednesday, April 26 from 5pm-7pm. Hors d'oeuvres provided, and cash bar. If you can make it, please RSVP via phone at 804-288-9930 or online at <http://bit.ly/TutorHappyHour>.

National Volunteer Week, April 23— April 29, is an opportunity to recognize and thank volunteers who lend their time, talent, voice and support to causes they care about in their community and around the world. Their stories serve to inspire others to take action and discover their collective power to unite in making a difference. **Thank you for all you do!**

### A Portrait... Continued

I'm in awe of how he views the world." Elsie is writing a memoir about Will's life, titled "Finding a Place for Will: Young, Black, and Special." She shared an excerpt with us:

*"As he stood on the podium in the rain, he had a facial expression that I had never seen before. It was strange at first and I could not think of a word for it. Later, when I got the pictures back (in the days before digital images) I realized that the look was pride. That Saturday afternoon in the rain as Will took the podium to receive his first medal for swimming in the Special Olympics, for the first time in his life he was truly proud of an accomplishment. I still display that picture in my den and every single time I look at it, I smile because I knew that something changed that day. He gained a sense of pride and confidence that he would build on for the rest of his life."*

April is National Poetry Month

### When Giving Is All We Have by Alberto Rios, 1952

*One river gives  
Its journey to the next.*

We give because someone gave to us.  
We give because nobody gave to us.

We give because giving has changed us.  
We give because giving could have changed us.

We have been better for it,  
We have been wounded by it—

Giving has many faces: It is loud and quiet,  
Big, though small, diamond in wood-nails.

Its story is old, the plot worn and the pages too,  
But we read this book, anyway, over and again:

Giving is, first and every time, hand to hand,  
Mine to yours, yours to mine.

You gave me blue and I gave you yellow.  
Together we are simple green. You gave me

What you did not have, and I gave you  
What I had to give—together, we made

Something greater from the difference.

# READ at the Richmond City Justice Center

The Richmond City Justice Center (RCJC) men's program has been going strong since October 2016, and the women's program started in March 2017. The dedicated RCJC tutors have worked with a total of 11 men and 4 women since the start of the program. The RCJC program provides literacy services to residents and encourages them to continue with The READ Center once they are released. We had our first student register after leaving the RCJC in March. We look forward to many more making the leap.



## New Tutoring Partnerships

The READ Center is partnering with **Henrico County Public Schools Adult Education** programs to pair READ tutors with GED students to help with reading and writing. There are opportunities to work one-to-one with students at Mt. Vernon Complex in the West End and Highland Springs Complex in eastern Henrico.

Also, if you have a heart for high school students, READ is partnering with **Richmond Public Schools** to provide tutoring support for two programs, Aspire Academy and ISAEP:

- ♦ **Aspire Academy** is a non-traditional high school program located at the Richmond Technical Center (2020 Westwood Avenue, Richmond VA 23230) that provides students with academic, attendance, and/or behavioral challenges the opportunity to obtain a high school diploma through a modified school schedule and blended learning model.
- ♦ **Individualized Student Alternative Education Plan (ISAEP):** This program is designed for those students ages 16 to 18 and enrolled in high school programs that are having difficulty finding success in a regular classroom environment. Included in enrollment (but not limited to) are career school counseling, mandatory enrollment in a GED preparation program, and career and technical education.

**If you are interested in volunteering for these programs, please contact Dawniece Trumbo, Education Program Manager at 804-288-9930 or [dawniece@readcenter.org](mailto:dawniece@readcenter.org).**



**The READ Center continues to meet BBB Accredited Charity Standards and has renewed its accreditation through 2019.**

## Staff Spotlight



**Nausha Brown Chavez**  
**Program Assistant**

Please join us as we welcome Nausha as the new Program Assistant with The READ Center. Nausha comes to us with over seven years of experience with a literacy agency in Atlanta. She is passionate about adult literacy, and looks forward to meeting all of the wonderful READ supporters.



**Who is the Smartest in RVA? Find Out at The Bee!**

## **The Great Richmond**



**UNION** 2017 Presenting Sponsor

The Great Richmond Trivia Bee is nearly here! The Trivia Bee replaces The READ Center's annual Spelling Bee, and we promise it will be a lot of fun. If you would like to attend, you can still get tickets online or at the door. There are still a few team slots also! Tickets are \$20 each, which grants you admission and a chance to play along with the game. Snacks and a cash bar will be available. The Trivia Bee is The READ Center's signature fundraising event, so your support is greatly appreciated. Help us spread the word—Find and share the event on our Facebook page. Thank you, and we can't wait to find out who the smartest company in RVA is!

**Thank you to our 2017 Sponsors:** Union Bank & Trust, UPS Freight, GAAP Dynamics, Columbia Gas, iHeart Media, and Allegra Richmond.

### **The Details:**

**Wednesday, May 3, 2017 · 6:00pm Team/Volunteer Reception · 7:00pm Let the Games Begin!**  
Visit our website [www.readcenter.org](http://www.readcenter.org) to purchase tickets online.



**The winning team: Group photo of READ students, teachers, tutors, and staff at the annual Super Bowl Tailgate Celebration in February.**

### **New Tutor Trainings**

**April 18 & 19—5:30pm to 8:30pm**  
at Partnership for Families  
[Session is full!](#)

**May 17—10:30am to 5:30pm**  
at Ginter Park Library  
Sign up at [www.readcenter.org](http://www.readcenter.org) or  
call 804-288-9930

### **Year-End Celebration**

**SAVE THE DATE:**  
**June 14 & June 15—TBA**

[Celebration of READ Center students' accomplishments & tutor appreciation.](#)