Transitioning Together

After I started teaching at Raleigh Charter, I had a conversation with my students about the jobs they would like to have after graduation. They, of course, turned the question back on me, and asked, “What would you do if you could have any job in the world?” I thought about it for just a moment and then answered them truthfully, “This one!” I couldn’t imagine a more fun job than teaching at Raleigh Charter. Now that I have transitioned into the role of our new principal, I can answer that question the same way. Being the second principal at RCHS really is the best job that I can imagine.

In 2001, I joined what was already a thriving faculty in the school’s third year. Each day was a transition and brought with it a new problem or possibility, and teachers worked hard to respond in ways that focused on the school’s mission, creating a place for learning. Talking with Dr. Humble through the years about what was really important at Raleigh Charter, he always stressed the value of having a committed, caring, and talented faculty. In this leadership transition, the Board of Directors has made it a priority to preserve the school’s culture. This challenging task is uppermost in my mind: we need to preserve our culture while continuing to fulfill our mission. I am grateful to work with such a talented and dedicated group. Much of my energy and effort during this transition will focus on providing them with the tools they need to continue their amazing work.

I have found that the most exciting part of my work day is the same thing our alumni talk about over and over and when they reminisce about their time here. I get to be in classrooms and see great teachers teach: Amy Koch excitedly telling her class about an experiment, Charles Montague’s students sharing their US History lampoons with their peers, Steve Busonik enlightening his students on the history of the English language, and Mark Slattery describing, in Spanish, the joys of the New England Patriots. On Flex Days, I watch Bob Hussey gleefully breaking popsicle-stick bridges, Barbara Soloman helping students with Fraction Action lessons, and Dave Palmieri heading out to the museum with the ninth graders to begin their artifact project just as Tracy Greenwalt did fifteen years ago.

At the heart of a Raleigh Charter education are teachers and students joyfully growing and learning together everyday. My job is to ensure that we continue to grow together, that we continue to imagine a better world and a better school and strive together to get there. I can’t imagine a better job.

Why did you decide to make this transition?  
Dr. Humble: I felt that, at this time, at a certain age, there is a retirement benefit to doing this, as well as a time of understanding as we age, we tend to slow down a little bit. I wanted to focus on a couple of things a day as opposed to eighteen things a day and so I made the decision to make that change.

What impact do you hope to have as a teacher and a college counselor that you may not have had as principal?  
Dr. Humble: I want everybody — whether as principal, as teacher, as college counselor — to follow their bliss... to maximize their talents, be able to take their talents and develop them and be able to grow and to see the unlimited possibilities for their future.
Spanish teacher, Rebecca (Hahn) Flammia, and her husband welcomed a son, Matthew Dominick Flammia, on May 22, 2015.

You may remember some of RCHS Science Teacher Amy Koch’s little ones during your time here. They’re growing up! Here: Frank (Amy’s husband), Noah, 11, Maddy, 8, and Amy.

Dr. Amy Marschall, RCHS English and German teacher, is now also serving as the Director of Student Support. In this role, Amy will collaborate with faculty and staff members to examine, assess, and enhance our school’s support systems for students.

Joyce Felder joined her husband, Kenny, here in 2012. Kenny has taught at RCHS since 1999 (the very beginning!), while Barbara Solomon, his mother, has taught at RCHS since 2000. All three teach in the Math Department, while Joyce also teaches Physics. Two of the Felder children (Mary Felder ’12 and Ben Felder ’15) are RCHS graduates.

Office Administrator and Data Manager Linda Hash welcomed her first grandchild, Phillip David Burnett, this fall! Phillip is the son of RCHS alumna Lisa Hash Burnett ’05.

Linda is also the mother of two other RCHS graduates; Leslie Hash ’07 and David Hash ’10.

Science Teacher Whit Hames has two Phoenix currently enrolled at RCHS: Nicholas ’19 and Anna ’16. Whit has taught science here at RCHS since 2000.
Bonnie Frye Hemphill ’04

Bonnie is moving to Seattle from Portland, Maine. “We’re heading west, at least for a few years, for my husband’s new job: he’ll be directing impact capital investment for the Nature Conservancy there. (Which is awesome.) Once we’re landed, I’ll be finding my next career chapter accelerating cleantech policy, climbing many mountains, and knitting new hat patterns.”

Jacob Tobia ’10

“I recently transitioned out of the middle school classroom, where I was teaching 6th grade language arts, into a position in the Office of Undergraduate Retention at the University of North Carolina. The new position still allows me time in a classroom setting — right now I’m teaching a seminar for junior transfer students — but it also gives me the opportunity to be involved in a number of research initiatives and experiences that are unique to a higher-ed environment.”

Cassie (Wise) Williams ’08

“This spring I got married, and I am graduating this winter from the Navy’s nuclear power training program and moving to San Diego to serve on the USS Carl Vinson.”

Peter Smith ’02

“I recently left the Raleigh nonprofit world to become Co-owner and Chief Operating Officer of bruks bars, a healthy snack bar startup based in Charlotte, NC. We make allergen-conscious snack bars with real food, the perfect combination of my interests in health, nutrition, exercise, entrepreneurialism, and delicious food. Check us out at www.bruksbars.com, taste a bar from a local retailer or via our online platform, and enjoy some tasty, healthy snacking!”

Kendra Fortmeyer ’04

Kendra has recently published a fiction chapbook with Awst Press called The Girl Who Could Only Say ‘sex, drugs, and rock & roll.’ She currently lives in Austin, Texas, pursuing a master’s degree in youth librarianship and teaching creative writing to teens at Skybridge Academy.

“After graduating college, I spent a year in France teaching English to high schoolers and traveling as often as possible in my time off. After making my way back to the US this summer, I have since been doing part-time work for a startup, LearnerNation (a platform used by companies to train employees), while using the rest of my time to job hunt and debate whether or not to return to France for graduate school!”

Ashcon Livingston ’10

“When I first moved to New York a little over a year ago, it was for a fellowship at a global LGBT business advisory firm called Out Leadership. After ten months of working there, the fellowship came to an end in June, and I had to figure out my next move in the Big Apple. Happily, I can say that things worked out, and I’m now working under the Executive Director of the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice, an international foundation that provides $3.6 million of grants annually to grassroots queer organizers across the world!”

Sharon Levine ’05

“This spring I got married, and I am graduating this winter from the Navy’s nuclear power training program and moving to San Diego to serve on the USS Carl Vinson.”

“After graduating college, I spent a year in France teaching English to high schoolers and traveling as often as possible in my time off. After making my way back to the US this summer, I have since been doing part-time work for a startup, LearnerNation (a platform used by companies to train employees), while using the rest of my time to job hunt and debate whether or not to return to France for graduate school!”

ON THE MOVE: RCHS Alumni
Thank You to Our 2014-2015 Phoenix Fund Supporters!

Gifts to last year’s Phoenix Fund totaled $319,700. Contributions were received from alumni, alumni parents, current parents, students, friends, grandparents, corporate matching gift programs, foundations, and even the Raleigh Charter High School Student Government Association (SGA). In addition, a wide array of in-kind gifts filled needs without adding costs to our limited budget.

Though contributors often ask what items were purchased with donated dollars, the most important use of the Phoenix Fund is allowing our school to remain small and our student-teacher ratio to remain low. Financial support also ensures we can attract and retain our excellent faculty. With fluctuations and limitations in state funding, donations allow us to continue to be the school our families are seeking and our alumni experienced. Our small school, and the many benefits that come from being small, are only possible with support from our community.

From our students and faculty, thank you to the contributors below and on the following pages for gifts received from July 1, 2014 – June 30-2015.


Forever Phoenix
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Emily Blackwell ’04
Chris Carnes ’15
Shelby Cox ’14
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Mary Breen
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Howard and Noelle Browne in honor of Jerie Hobbs and 2014-15 teachers
THE VALUE OF THE EDUCATION PROVIDED TO RCHS STUDENTS IS IMMEASURABLE. WHAT MONETARY DONATION COULD I GIVE THAT WOULD MATCH THE GIFT MY DAUGHTER RECEIVES? THAT, TOO, IS IMMEASURABLE. SO, I GIVE AS I AM ABLE IN MANY WAYS, INCLUDING MONEY AND MY VOLUNTEER TIME.

RCHS CREATES A LEARNING EXPERIENCE SECOND TO NONE. THE TEACHERS ARE FULFILLING THEIR AVOCATION NOT THEIR VOCATION. THEY MAKE EACH INTERACTION MEANINGFUL AND LEAD THE STUDENTS TO DEVELOP THEIR OWN MEANINGFUL INSIGHTS. RCHS DOES NOT “TEACH TO THE TEST” — IT TEACHES FOR LIFE.
WE ALL WANT GREAT TEACHERS WHO INSPIRE OUR CHILDREN WITH THE LOVE OF LEARNING — NOT FOR GETTING INTO A GREAT SCHOOL, NOT FOR GLORY, BUT PURELY FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF KNOWLEDGE. THAT IS WHAT RCHS TEACHERS ACCOMPLISH! I HEAR FROM BOTH SIDES HOW INSPIRATIONAL THE TEACHERS ARE THERE. THAT IS THE REASON I CHOSE TO SUPPORT FINANCIALLY THE SCHOOL: TO MAKE SURE THIS EXTRAORDINARY VALUE STAYS INTACT.

I WOULD LIKE FOR RCHS TO CONTINUE TO BE AVAILABLE TO MY KIDS AND OTHERS IN THE FUTURE. I BELIEVE THE SCHOOL ENCOURAGES THOUGHTFULNESS, LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, WHICH I VALUE.
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Mr. Rob Weintraub
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Raleigh Charter High School Foundation Contributors
Capital Campaign donors have been previously recognized.
Current Parents
Subramanian, Chitra, and Abichiran Baskaran
Howard and Valerie Berinson
Parag and Sonali Birla
The Bradley Family
The Hager Family
The Ledford Family
The McSorley Family
Rashmi Mehta
Eric and Diana Parsons

Help Us Meet Our $325,000 Goal for the 2015-2016 School Year!

I could not have dreamed of a better school for our daughter. The education, engagement, respect and encouragement to develop all of her interests and talents is deeply ingrained in the fabric of the school. At RCHS, she is surrounded by students and teachers who love the process of learning and discovery and that has helped her blossom in a way I didn’t think possible. She feels at home when she is at school. What more could a parent want for their child’s education?

I support the Phoenix Fund not just because of what RCHS has meant to my student but because I believe all students should have an opportunity to have this experience. By providing Raleigh Charter the financial ability to be successful, they are able to provide educational success for their students and set an example for other schools about how best to educate our children.

To show your support for our school, please consider making a gift to the 2015-2016 Phoenix Fund using the Blue Card and envelope enclosed here. You may also visit our website to donate online and learn about the many ways you can contribute to Raleigh Charter High School.

www.raleighcharterhs.org/giving
UPCOMING DATES

December 4, 2015
Artifact Museum, 4-6 pm (All are welcome!)

January 4, 2016
Annual Alumni Winter Coffee, 1:30-3 pm

January 29 - February 29, 2016
Application Period for 2016-2017 School Year

January 29, 2016
Open House for Prospective Families, 5:30-7:30 pm

February 4, 2016
Open House for Prospective Families, 5:30-7:30 pm

February 26 - March 5, 2016
RCHS Drama Presents “Much Ado About Nothing”

Don't forget: Siblings of RCHS alumni may be eligible for sibling preference in the RCHS Admissions Lottery!
Visit www.raleighcharterhs.org for more information.

March 11 and 18, 2016
Flex Days

March 26, 2016
Admissions Lottery, 10 am

April 15, 2016
Interdisciplinary (ID) Flex Day

May 13, 2016
Community Work Day

June 4, 2016
Graduation, Meymandi Concert Hall, 4-6 pm

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Earn money for RCHS! Visit our website to learn how to connect your frequent shopper's cards.
Click on the “Parents” tab and select “Fundraising.”