

The Academy Times

Vol. X-VII

New Beginnings: 2010 Class Graduates

Students from the class of 2010 celebrated the end of their high school years with more than 1,200 family, friends and well-wishers. It marked the start of their adult lives and a sense of enthusiasm filled the air as students talked about their plans to attend college, continue their studies at Job Corps, join the military or work full time.

Robert Costello, vice president of Materials Acquisition and Management at Lockheed Martin Missiles and Fire Control, gave the commencement address, kicking off the ceremonies with a bit of humor, paraphrasing Vice President Joe Biden's comment about health care reform, saying graduation was "a big deal."

On a more serious note, he advised students to work hard, listen, act ethically, respect others, be passionate and bold, and enjoy life and time with family and friends.

"Where you are starting today is limited only by the limits you place on yourselves," said Costello, who shared memories of growing up in a humble surroundings. "From there to here today."

The Marine Corps veteran attended college while working as a tool and die maker. He praised his family's emphasis on the value of education, love of country and not to rely on others. He reflected on the fact youngsters from wealthy families often enjoy a better start in life.

"I also believe that people who exhibit leadership, integrity, ethical behavior and imagination can and do offset that initial advantage," Costello said. "Success can be achieved but not without some of the attributes I described. ... Enjoy life's journey. It is unpredictable but usually very rewarding."

A Student Reflects

Senior Briana Johnson delivered the student reflections' address, sharing her story about how the school helped her grow.

"I was given the opportunity to get involved and be recognized for me—not as an average teen," Johnson said. "I also had the opportunity to turn hope into reality."

Johnson encouraged her peers to not fear the future, but to use their time to show the

world that the Workforce Academy class of 2010 can overcome obstacles and succeed in life.

An Employer Reflects

Johnson's employer also spoke. Krista Gates founded AIW, a professional procurement firm, in 2000. Last year, she hired Johnson and has not been disappointed. AIW treats Johnson as a member of the team, expecting much and giving even more. In addition to teaching her skills and being a mentor, Gates helped Johnson take part in the school's New York field trip and has contributed to Johnson's success in many ways.

"The more you know, the more valuable you are," Gates said. "We taught Briana Quick Books and how to handle customers. She shares all of the responsibilities of an employee. We feel fortunate to have her as part of the team."

This school year, Gates plans to hire another Workforce Academy student to work in shipping and receiving, while retaining Johnson in her current role, handling customers, invoices and computer recordkeeping, as she attends Valencia Community College.

"I'm glad we won't have to say goodbye," said Gates, who grew up fast at the age of 15 following her mother's death. Now that she's in a position to help, coaching and mentoring young people has become a hallmark of her success. "It's important to have adults in your life to provide guidance. I want to help someone not have to start at the bottom, but to give them a hand up."



Robert Costello, a vice president at Lockheed Martin Corp., gave the commencement address



Briana Johnson shared her perspectives about her high-school career.



Krista Gates, founder of AIW, discussed her experience as a business partner.

Students Honored with Scholarships and Awards

Twelve students received \$1,000 scholarships and 14 received awards of recognition. Those students are:

Karen & Jim Bassarear Scholarship
Katherine Perez
Henry Burden Memorial Scholarship
Stacy Martinez



Chief Operating Officer Carl Merrell presents Richard King with his scholarship.

DEI Scholarship
Therion Coston
Pete Hartsaw Memorial Scholarship
Christian Ford and Caley Knai
Nancy Hughes Memorial Scholarship
Marcus Porsche
Marion T. Jones Memorial Scholarship
Briana Johnson
Thomas Family Foundation Scholarship
Geneva Culbertson
Troy Thatcher Scholarship
Christopher Alicea
Nita Trumbower Memorial Scholarship
Richard King
WAA You Are a Business Scholarship
Richard Rivera and Adriana Torres

Award Recipients

Algebra II Student of the Year
Marcus Porche
American Government Student of the Year
Matthew Jones
Anatomy & Physiology Student of the Year
Katherine Perez
Business Internship Student of the Year - Group "A"
Claraines Hernandez
Business Internship of the Year - Group "B"
Ariel Hernandez
Business Law Student of the Year
Trecia Morris
Business Management Student of the Year
Rachel Outing
Consumer Math Student of the Year
Christopher Alicea
Economics Student of the Year
Deondra Mincey
English 4 Student of the Year
Stacy Martinez
First Aid Student of the Year
Precious Gray
H. O. P. E. Student of the Year
Ashley Mann
Team Sports Student of the Year
Moses Clement
Weight Training Student of the Year
Creg Kennedy

Color Guard Opens Ceremony



The U.S. Air Force Color Guard presented the colors of the United States at the start of the graduation ceremony.

Workforce Advantage Academy thanks the men for taking the time to present the flag.

Seniors Surprise Founder



A group of seniors presented Workforce Academy founder, Ken Hartsaw, with a collage depicting his favorite team, the University of Florida Gators, winning the national championship.

"It was a complete surprise," Hartsaw said. "I was overwhelmed with emotion. It's wonderful."

Workforce Advantage Academy

Our Mission

Our mission at Workforce Advantage Academy is to create learning environments for high school students, particularly those rising juniors and seniors who desire a different approach to reach their potential. Through attendance at Workforce Academy, our students develop the academic, employment and social skills they need to build rewarding lives and promote positive change in their communities.

Workforce Academy believes that genuine self-esteem comes from academic accomplishments that are recognized and celebrated along with personal fulfillment through strides of independence – being employed, productive citizens.

Our Administrative Team
Kenneth E. Hartsaw, Jr.
Belinda B. Jones
W. Carl Merrell

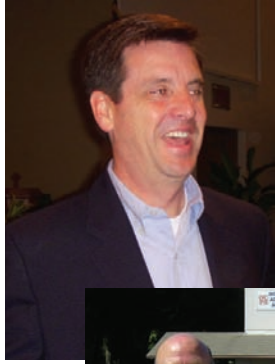
Chief Executive Officer
President/Principal
Chief Operating Officer

Contact us at: 407-898-7228

Workforce Advantage Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

Attention from Community Leaders

Former state legislator and candidate for Orange County School Board Chair Bill Sublette met with students and shared his positions about education. He expressed optimism about possibilities for improving the school system, so it helps all children develop their talents, whether academic, athletic or trade skills.



Orange County School Board Vice Chair Daryl Flynn visited the school and liked what she saw. She also presented diplomas at the graduation ceremony.



Orange County Supervisor of Elections Bill Cowles engaged students in a lively discussion about voting and the electoral process. He explained the four requirements to vote—being

18 years of age or older, a U.S. citizen, and having not been declared mentally incompetent nor convicted of a felony. He passed out voter registration forms, so students could sign up. Then he held a mock election, so students could experience the voting experience with real machines.

Top: Bill Sublette

Middle: CEO Ken Hartsaw, Principal Belinda Jones, and School Board Vice Chair Daryl Flynn

Far right: Bill Cowles

Below: Students vote in a mock election



Appreciation from the Troops



On behalf of all Workforce Academy students, Calisia Marks, Ashley Mann and Olivia Jackson accepted from Ken Cardenas, founder of Rochelle's Boots on the Ground, a flag flown on September 11, 2009 by the

Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 169 during an Iraq mission to rescue wounded soldiers from an infantry unit and take them to a hospital. Students had packed and shipped 100 care packages to the soldiers last year. The flag and a plaque served as a token of the squadron's appreciation.

OUC Leaders Mentor Students



Audrey Brown, CPS, EdD, senior human resources consultant at Orlando Utilities Commission, discusses job descriptions, applications, resumes and interviewing skills with Workforce Academy students, as part of the OUC/YMCA Teen Achiever program.

B-Ball Reins at Workforce



The Workforce Phoenix basketball team enjoyed a successful inaugural season with the Junior Magic league, earning the city championship. The students continue to practice, with rising seniors attending basketball camp at the University of Florida to hone their skills for the 2010-2011 season.

A Holiday Cultural Exchange



Workforce Advantage Academy students and staff celebrated the holidays with a multicultural luncheon on the last day of class before the winter break. Participants brought in food prepared in the traditional style of their countries of origin, making for a delectable sampling of favorite dishes from around the world.

Field Trips—Near and Far

Students visited the Big Apple this year, visiting Ellis Island, the Statue of Liberty, the United Nations, Times Square and West Point. They took in



Workforce Academy students visit Battery Park in New York City.

a Broadway play and watched the rebuilding taking place at the site of the World Trade Center.

The English class attended a matinee of the Orlando Shakespeare Theater's *Hamlet*.

Before the holiday season, school officials supervised student visits to shopping centers to apply for work.

Offering students the opportunity to explore the world around them—near and far—broadens their horizons and presents a chance to grow and learn

not possible sitting in a classroom.

In 2009, Workforce Academy took a group of students to Washington, D.C., to see the legislative and judicial branches of government in action and to take in the other historic sites in the nation's capital.

Off to a Good Start

Twelve Workforce Advantage Academy students received Bridges to Success scholarships at Valencia Community College. The scholarships cover the cost of four years of college education, two at Valencia and



two at a four-year university. The college awards the scholarships based on financial need, academic talent and special interests.

Valencia Community College Transitions Coordinator Natali Shulterbrondt (center) congratulated Briana Johnson (left) and Stacy Martinez, B-group students, on receiving a Bridges to Success scholarship.



Right: A group scholarship recipients include (from left to right) Lateria Lampkin, Avione Johnson, Treca Morris and Patrice Alexander.

Students Make the News

Do you have a news item for us or a story you would like us to share with others?

If so, please email the idea to:

news@workforceadvantageacademy.com.

Workforce Advantage Academy will soon email supplementary news summaries to keep you informed between mailings. If you would like to receive them, please email us at:

news@workforceadvantageacademy.com.



Top: Dottie Geniotto at Lake Howell Chiropractic with Alison Okamoto

Right: Kristin Shutler, firm administrator and human resources director at deBeaubien, Simmons, Mantzaris & Neal with Geneva Culbertson.



The *Winter Park/Maitland Observer* and the *East Orlando Sun* ran stories about Workforce Advantage Academy and its unique internship model. Reporter Karen McEnany-Phillips spent an afternoon talking with students Alison Okamoto and Geneva Culbertson about balancing work and school responsibilities and their career goals.

The article highlighted the academy's stunning academic performance and the opportunities it offers students to learn on the job, in a supportive environment.

