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## STEPS-2-SUCCESS LEADERSHIP TRAINING INSTITUTE BOOKER T. WASHINGTON HIGH SCHOOL NORFOLK, VA

### Message from the Director



Steps-2-Success, Inc. is a non-profit organization, whose mission is to empower youth to become strong and capable leaders.

The definition of a leader is one who empowers others to accomplish a specific goal. However, many of our youth have no goals.

While many youth are excelling in many aspects of their lives; there are still those who have no dreams, and no ambitions for their lives. The youth today have more to deal with than just school. For instance, some students are the caretakers of the siblings in their homes because the parents are working two jobs to make ends meet. Some live in dangerous neighborhood where shootings are common-place.

S-2-S will help these youth to dream again, and to see beyond their present circumstances. Our goal is to reach youth around the U. S.

We hope that you will catch our vision and pray, as well as support our mission. Our mission is to "Help our youth reach their destiny, one step at a time.

Fifteen high school students participated in the Steps-2- Success, Inc. Leadership Institute which was held at the Booker T. Washington High School in Norfolk, VA, February 5 - June 18, 2008, where Mrs. Cynthia Watson is the principal. Using the curriculum from the Tiger Woods Start Something Foundation, and the Sean Coveys 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens students learned ways to improve their attitudes toward school and their relationships with others. In addition, they learned about leadership, goal-setting and achievement, and the steps necessary to fulfill their goals.



The students also participated in activities that taught them the dynamics of team work. One of the most emotional lessons was that of "Mentors, Heroes and Role Models." The individuals the students named as their mentors, heroes or role models, and the reasons why they chose these individuals were quite moving. In lieu of choosing celebrities as their role models, many of the students chose God, family members and close friends as their role models.

Using the skills and techniques they learned regarding teamwork during the institute, the student planned, organized and implemented a stuffed animal drive to give to the children at the Children's Hospital for the Kings Daughters in Norfolk, VA.

The students planned, organized, and implemented the closing ceremony for the 2008 Institute. The guest speaker for this auspicious event was Mr. Vincent Darby, Principal of the Granby Elementary School. This year's students prepared and presented PowerPoint presentations depicting what they learned during the 12-week institute to an audience that consisted of their families, friends, administrators.

Upon completion 10 students were rewarded with internships or shadowships in the career path they will pursue after high school.

# Steps-2-Success Made A Difference In My Life

- Wayne Credle

When Mrs. Gresha and Mrs. Krystal first laid eyes on me, they were laying eyes on a gentleman that had made excuses for himself, that was failing a math course, and had no idea, where his life was going, or what he wanted to do. He just knew that it was going to be ‘successful’, because that’s the cliché that is placed on many young peoples’ future.



Mrs. Gresha Lewis and Mrs. Krystal Roberts wanted to know, “Successful—at doing what?”, and what is it going to take to get you there. About four months later, Mrs. Gresha Lewis laid her eyes on me, and she was

able to see a high school graduate, who passed his math class, who was able to write a published article for Mix Magazine, who now attends Virginia Wesleyan College for Computer Science, and thanks to them, Journalism.

When I first thought about this program, I honestly had my doubts. By the time you’re a senior in high school, you have already heard just about all of the speeches and lectures about your future, about not having sex, and about not doing drugs, so I wasn’t interested in hearing about what I couldn’t do. However, when these two individuals stepped foot into Classroom 123, they could care less about what we could not do, in actuality; they worked with what we could do, and how much more we could achieve.

Each of us was selected because of our GPA’s were low, but our potential was high. I doubt if anyone had a 3.0 in the class. We would start by eating first, sharing our day, our thoughts and doubts, as well as our insight. Next we would do a group activity, followed by group discussion to drive home the lesson that was meant to be learned that day. Next we would focus on our classes. Sponsors from Norfolk State University were brought in to help us in the areas of math, and science. and mandated steps that we must climb or endure in order to get there? This gave everyone that academic boost, as well as answered any questions that we needed. Lastly we would meet with our teams to discuss our individual community service project—this year we donated stuffed animals to the children at the Children’s Hospitals for the King’s Daughters. This gave us the opportunity to help others

and to make a difference in the life of those who were in needed of encouragement. Of course, I thought, this would be a breeze for a person like me. I had a steady GPA, I stayed out of trouble, I was graduating, I went to church, and I was one of the leaders in the classroom. So, commonly used in jail, “What are you in for?” What was my story?

Mrs. Gresha and Mrs. Krystal emphasize, that regardless of if you want to be a singer, a carpenter, a scientist, a model, or a doctor—it is possible that you will get there, but it takes one thing: A STEP!

My mom had died four years ago, and soon after, my father took custody of my sisters five, count them, five kids. Four boys and one girl, and we won...

When you raise five kids, there’s hardly one question that two women can ask that you can’t answer, but these two succeeded. While focusing on their future, I saw sight and concern with my own. I was about to graduate, and I had no idea what college I was going to, or what I was majoring in. “You have a week”, was the response I got to that—the statement that “you’ll find it in time” has elapsed. In that week, I believe I fell in love with the passion to write. Since then, my writing has taken me from my seat at Booker T. Washington, to the podium of my own high school graduating.

From this program, I learned that it truly is a STEP to success. We all have our own goals that we wish to reach, as well as a divine purpose that He wants us to achieve, but triumph, does not come in a specific time, its not something you have to wait for, triumph comes with trial, when your undivided attention is required, and when you have to risk it all to gain it all. And, when I look at these two women, I can’t help but say thank you, because I have gained it all.

So if you haven’t had a chance to enroll your child in this program, no doubt that they can still achieve success—that’s not the purpose of the program, success is something that can be obtained, sometimes without much effort—but how many of us had to learn the hard way, that no matter how much success one has or will obtain, they’re distinct and mandated steps that we must climb or endure in order to get there?

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