

# NJ SEEDS

VOLUME I  
ISSUE 3  
MAY/JUNE



## MEET SEEDS

**DAVID ALLYN  
DIRECTOR OF  
EDUCATION**

### Q What drew you to SEEDS?

For as long as I can remember, I've felt that educational opportunities should be separate from family background. When I was teaching at Princeton University, I was asked to design a class at Princeton on the History and Philosophy of Educational Reform.

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## Congratulations Graduating SEEDS Scholars!

By Brianna Williams-Massey, SEEDS '10,  
Perkiomen (Lower) '12, Perkiomen '16

*The following is an excerpt from Brianna's 8th Grade Graduation speech*

**I**t is time for change and more challenge. We will be glad to move one more step closer to independence and not have someone standing over us, for what seems like 24/7 telling us to get out our Math homework or to read ahead.

With independence comes more responsibility, but I am sure we are ready for it. Our middle school years prepared us for the challenges in high school and eventually the real world. We might think the teachers babied us, but trust me; we are going to miss these days when work becomes a burden and when we need help with studying for APs, SATs, and college applications. In the long run, we will realize the teachers here only did things for us because they care and want us to succeed. Some students do not get the same opportunities that we get, so we

should take full advantage of our opportunities in life.

Thank you to the people in our lives who have sacrificed a lot for us to be here today. Thank you to all of our families. Without our families none of us would be here. Moms and Dads, you are wonderful and thank you for raising us and giving your love and support. We have become beautiful young ladies and gentlemen. Personally, I would like to thank

my mom for being a strong young woman. I am not always the best child in the world, but I do appreciate everything she has done. I know that even though he is not walking on this Earth, my dad is always looking over me from above. In middle school and now in upper school, I

want to show my parents, grandparents, and other family members that everything they have done has encouraged me to do my best and make them proud. To the class of 2016, we are moving on and we will be senior graduates in no time. We are finally here and we made it through Middle School!



**Britney Wilson, SEEDS '04  
with President Obama**

## MAKING THE JUMP: GETTING INVOLVED IN HS

**WAYS TO GET INVOLVED  
INTRAMURAL SPORTS**

**ACADEMIC CLUBS**

**STUDENT GOVERNMENT**

**HONORS SOCIETY**

**CLUB SPORTS**

**DORM COUNCIL**

**FORM YOUR OWN CLUB**

**F**reshman year of high school is an exciting time, full of chances for new experiences and exciting opportunities. When it comes to beginning high school, the big question is, "how do I make the most of my four years?" While you are mapping out your ideal path, the one thing to remember is that you are your own best advocate. Do you want to study abroad? Then contact the study abroad advisor. Do you want to be on the soccer team? Then go meet with the coach to arrange to attend tryouts. No matter what your idea of the perfect high school experience is, the only way that you are going to make it a reality is to go out and grab it.

Whether you know exactly what you want to be involved in or not, joining different clubs will give you the opportunity to be exposed to a variety of new experiences. Not only do clubs give you the chance to meet new people with similar interests, they also allow you to explore academic interests outside of the classroom. Academic clubs will allow you to determine if you would find a particular field satisfying for further study.

Being an involved member of your high school community for four years will show college admissions officer the type of student you will be if accepted. Getting involved in clubs early on and staying committed to them will make you an even more desirable college applicant than before.

The bottom line is that if you want to enjoy high school, it is up to you to take full advantage of your time on campus.

# GRAD ISSUE

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# Internship Profile: Israa Saber SEEDS '09, Kent Place '11

**Q: What is the Mountain School of Milton Academy?**

The Mountain School is a semester program in Vermont at which 45 students live and work on an organic farm. We lived, worked, and went to school all in the same place. We did everything on the farm from feeding the animals to taking out the trash. It eventually felt like it was our home.

**Q: How has the program impacted you?**

I have become more open and talkative around people that I do not know very well. I have also become more confident

and I have realized I have a passion for environmental issues.

**Q: What was one of your favorite aspects of the program?**

**"IT FEELS GREAT TO HARVEST POTATOES IN THE AFTERNOON AND THEN EAT THEM FOR DINNER THAT NIGHT"**

I absolutely adore the idea of eating what you pick. It feels great to go out and harvest potatoes in the afternoon and then find out that you're having those for dinner that next night. It gives you a feeling of self-satisfaction.

**Q: What is one of your favorite memories from your time in the program?**

I will never forget the people. They are the most amazing surrogate family that I could ask for and I am sure that I'll hold on to those friendships forever.

**Q: Would you recommend the program to other SEEDS scholars?**

I would definitely tell anyone who is remotely interested to apply. It is such a wonderful opportunity. I would give anything to go back and I am sure that all other graduates of The Mountain School feel the same. I am sure that anyone who goes will think that it is the best experience of his or her life.

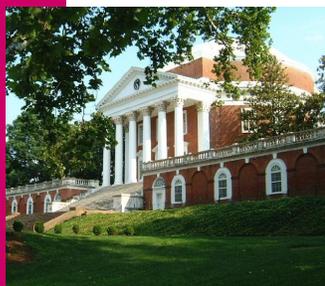
**Remember to check the SEEDS internship manual for information on the Mountain School and other exciting programs.**

**If you need a copy of the manual, email Edaine Murray at [emurray@njseeds.org](mailto:emurray@njseeds.org)**

## COLLEGE PROFILE:

# UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

**F**ounded by Thomas Jefferson as the first nonsectarian American university, the University of Virginia continues to rank among the nation's top schools ([click here for the U.S. News Profile](#)). With roughly 14,000 undergraduates, the university offers academic excellence in a large, public school environment.



One SEEDS scholar, Horace Allen SEEDS '05, UVA '12 based his decision to apply to the university on the fact that that he "admired the grounds and the legacy that the school's founder,

Thomas Jefferson, left behind." Ultimately, Allen's decision to attend the university and to recommend it to other SEEDS scholars came

down to the school's ability "to provide need based financial aid as well as opportunities for its students to work and make extra money."

Located in Charlottesville, Virginia, the university may be difficult to visit for many New Jersey students. However, with the help of a dedicated alumni community, Virginia offers a program known as "UVA Visits You," that allows students from all around the country to get a taste of what the school is like by visiting with admissions officers as well as alumni and current students. In the past, "UVA Visits You" has made stops in Edison, NJ; New York City; and Philadelphia. [Click here](#) for updated tour dates as they become available.

Another alternative to a campus visit is an online tour, available by clicking [HERE](#)

## VIRGINIA BY THE NUMBERS

**14,039 Undergrads**

**33% Acceptance Rate**

**#25 in Best National Universities**

**#1 in African American graduation rate. Near top in all minority graduation rates**

**97% Freshman Retention Rate**

**100% of financial need met for 100% of students**

## The Next Step: a SEEDS Alumna's take on College Life

*Kirk Reinoso, Guest Editor*

*Nyasia White, SEEDS '05, Emory '15*

**Kirk** How have your study habits changed in college?

**Nyasia** College classes move at a much faster pace than those in high school and the material is definitely more complex. Reading the assigned texts is a big part of academic success. Every day I try to dedicate a few hours to reading and reviewing notes. I definitely had to

work on my time management skills and develop a sense of how to study for certain classes.

**K** How is the homework load compared to high school?

**N** The work in college isn't really homework in the traditional sense. Much of the work for my science classes never has to be turned in but has to be done in order to succeed in the class. The amount of studying I have to do has tripled, but the number of assignments to turn in has lessened.

**K** Do you get homesick?

**N** I was very homesick when I first came to school. I have no family in the South so it was a big transition. Speaking from

experience I don't think you ever stop missing being home, but making friends and staying active helps.

**K** How is the transition away from home-cooked meals?

**N** I spend more money on food than anything else in college. I really miss having home cooked meals. Emory gives a wide variety of foods to choose from for meal swipes, and I also have "Dooley Dollars" to spend on campus food vendors. I'm a very picky eater so I mainly live on pizza and fries, but if you're willing to try new thing the cafeteria's food gives lots of options.



**Kirk, SEEDS '08, is currently a senior at Seton Hall Prep and will be attending Villanova this fall**

## CONGRATULATIONS FROM THE SEEDS STAFF

You have crossed the bridge of opportunity now continue to let your wings soar and fly into success.

- Danielle Carlos, Assistant Dean of Programs

It's only the beginning for the Class of 2012! SEEDS is very proud of this class, and we look forward to hearing about your future success in high school. Remember to always wear the SEEDS name well!

- Congrats! Bernie Sarlo, Associate Director of Placement

Congratulations and best wishes for the future. Middle school graduation is a time of fond memories and excited anticipation of the next steps in your education. Build upon your successes and continue to be brave in your pursuits.

- Andy, Director of Placement

Congratulations Class of 2012!! SEEDS is so proud of you, and we wish you much success in all of your future endeavors! Continue to make SEEDS proud!"

- Rachel, Admissions and Placement Officer

Middle School has given you the opportunity to prove yourselves – and you have; time and time again. Now, you have the opportunity to create opportunities for yourselves and others. You are entering a rare time in life when you are singularly responsible for deciding how to spend your time: What to study, who to spend your time with, and what you want your impact on the world to be. Enjoy it! And, please keep in touch with SEEDS! We have had the honor of watching your developments and successes these past four years; we are looking forward to what comes next. Congratulations!

- Kate, Dean of Guidance

Congratulations! You have not only survived middle school – probably the biggest challenge any human being can face – you have done so with grace and style. Your high schools are lucky to have you. Keep showing the world what it means to be a graduate of SEEDS!

-David, Director of Education

**SENIORS!**  
**REMEMBER THAT THE**  
**SENIOR DINNER IS JUNE**  
**24TH**  
**Details to follow...**

## YOUR GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

**WHAT YOUR ADVISOR CAN DO**  
 HELP YOU PICK CLASSES  
 WRITE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SUMMER PROGRAMS  
 POINT YOU IN THE DIRECTION OF ON CAMPUS RESOURCES  
 GIVE ACADEMIC ADVICE  
 ACT AS YOUR SCHOOL LIAISON

Stepping onto a high school campus for the first time as a student may seem like an intimidating endeavor. Unlike your eighth grade year of middle school, during which you knew all of your teachers and had mentors to rely on, your initial time on campus may, at first, seem isolating. In reality, this is not the case. You are not alone once you start high school. Most people starting high school with you will not know nobody else on campus either. Beyond the simple idea that you aren't alone socially, you are not alone academically either.

**GET INVOLVED EARLY AND OFTEN DURING YOUR FRESHMAN YEAR**

Your academic advisor or guidance counselor is an invaluable resource during your four years of high school. Getting to know your advisor could open the door to summer opportunities, sound academic advice, or your first foray into the college search. To get in touch with your advisor, check for posted office hours on their office door or on their faculty profile online (this is also a good chance to learn a little about him or her before your meeting). All teachers will have posted office hours that are there to be taken advantage of. If your advisor doesn't know you, they can't help you.

All of your advisor's help and resources are there for the taking, so stop in during the first week of school to get to know them. A quick chat or a letter to introduce yourself could go a long way!

### MEET SEEDS DAVID ALLYN

*Continued from p1*

As I prepared the syllabus for the course, I became inspired by programs like SEEDS. SEEDS makes the American Dream real.

**Q What are your Responsibilities at SEEDS?**

I oversee educational programming and guidance services for SEEDS students. My goal is to ensure that every SEEDS student is on track for success.

**Q When might students need to contact you?**

Students should contact me when they have suggestions regarding any SEEDS program. I am always eager for input from students!

**Q What is your favorite part of your work here?**

My favorite part of working at SEEDS is seeing students realize their dreams. What could be more fulfilling than that?!

# INTERNSHIPS

## FINAL REMINDER—APPLICATIONS DUE JUNE 6TH

The New Jersey SEEDS Community Engagement Internship matches talented high school scholars with community based nonprofit organizations in New Jersey. For six weeks, students will be afforded an opportunity to gain hands on experience in the nonprofit sector by actively participating in the daily operations of their matched organization. Throughout the summer, students will be working on a capstone project that they will present to the New Jersey SEEDS community.

And, this great experience is paid! **SEEDS high school scholars who intern with New Jersey-based nonprofit organizations** earn **\$8.00/hour for up to 125 hours for a total of \$1,000** (minimal taxes will be deducted). Interns' schedules will vary based on their site, but all internships will begin following a **mandatory 3-day orientation/service component** at the start of the program.



For details on this or any other internship, contact:  
**EDAINE MURRAY**  
 GUIDANCE OFFICER  
 INTERNSHIP COORDINATOR  
 New Jersey SEEDS  
 Tel. 862.227.9131  
 Fax 973.642.5175  
 emurray@njseeds.org

### Who:

High school students and rising college freshmen

### What:

An internship designed to connect students with non-profit organizations throughout New Jersey

### Where:

New Jersey Non-Profit Organizations

### When:

July-August  
 (Exact dates TBA)

### How:

Send completed applications to Edaine Murray

**DEADLINE:**  
**JUNE 6TH, 2012**

**REMEMBER YOUR  
 INTERNSHIP MANUAL**

## LOOKING AHEAD: COLLEGE PREP BY HS CLASS SUMMER 2012

### SEEDS SUMMER: On Track for College

Begin visiting colleges during school breaks

Read the newspaper, attend a play, and read a book you didn't get a chance to during the school year

Colleges want to have real discussions during your interview. Being engaged intellectually over the summer will be a great foundation

### RISING 11TH GRADERS

Keep a pen and notebook with you at all times to jot down application essay ideas as they come to you

Start thinking about how you would like to answer the Common App questions

Visit colleges over break

Ask SEEDS to help you get in touch with SEEDS alumni at schools that interest you

Now that you've finished middle school, here's a list of what to expect in the years ahead

**CONTACT SEEDS  
 IF YOU NEED  
 HELP PICKING  
 SCHOOLS THAT  
 WOULD BE A  
 GOOD FIT FOR  
 YOU**

### RISING 10TH GRADERS

Attend the SEEDS college fair on June 16  
 RSVP to Kate at  
 klevine@njseeds.org

Begin visiting colleges during school breaks

Familiarize yourself with the Common App questions

### RISING 12TH GRADERS

Keep your grades up; your final year matters too

Visit schools that you might be interested in including in your final list

Keep up your SAT studying and look at possible test taking dates at your school

**REMEMBER  
 YOUR  
 12-MONTH  
 CALENDAR**



# I Can't Live Without Momma's Cooking

by Honoria Wah, SEEDS '10, Science Park '14

Don't get me wrong  
Don't feel offended  
I can't live without my momma's cooking  
It's not you or the food  
I'm just not in the right mood  
When my momma's not around

She makes any food  
Come to life

I eat from others  
But it can't be compared to that of momma  
There's something peculiar about her dishes  
Its like-  
They envelope you  
From head to toes  
Taking over your soul

Her broccoli tastes like chicken  
My taste buds are perplexed  
When tasting momma's cooking  
They function just right  
It's just challenging  
To enjoy delicious flavors all at once  
The aroma of momma's recipes  
So tense to the olfactory sense  
Its stirs hungry souls from beyond

When sadness creeps in  
All I ponder over is biting into a fried chicken  
My momma prepared

I'm sick  
My momma's food has contaminated me  
I can't live without it  
It cures any depression  
Destroys any unhappiness  
It is invincible  
My momma's cooking  
It is irrevocable

Mmmm. Momma's cooking

## Time (Who Am I?)

by Anthony Pryor-Calloway,  
SEEDS '07, Delbarton '13

Our paths are different and some desires are the same  
Some of us fall short but just who is to blame?  
Some say live life as if it is game  
While others struggle to realize who they really are even though they have a name

I cannot waste any more time  
"You can do anything" oh what a cliché line  
It is ironic how standing out and dreaming big seems like a crime  
As people attempt to tear those dreams down and make sure you fall behind  
All I can say is stay strong  
Fighting for your heart's true desires can do you no wrong  
So as long as you do not stop it will not be long

## MAR/APR Bullying Issue Response Letter

by Abraham Lawal, SEEDS '08, Seton Hall Prep '12, Kenyon '16

Bullying is not easy to define when it comes to young men. At an all-boys' school like the Prep, many of the students engage in name-calling and rough-housing. To most of us it's all fun and games, no harm meant. Young men will make racist comments, sexual slurs, and insults on each other's physical state, but, for the most part, we really don't take it seriously, or at least say that we do not. However, at what point do we draw the line where such activities are acceptable and where such activities cross that line?

What happens when the bullying goes too far and a student is forced to keep his or her emotions bottled up? Students may just laugh along with the teasing, outwardly showing a nonchalant attitude, keeping all of the hurt inside, waiting to explode. That was once me. In middle school, kids used to ridicule me because of my weight and the fact that I wore braces. I would keep quiet and laugh along because I didn't know what else to do. After every comment, I'd get angrier and angrier, not knowing how to respond because reporting the bullying to the teacher was taboo at that age; who wants to be friends with a snitch? Instead of advocating for myself, I let the anger build slowly before I blew up. It was in a Spanish class that a student insulted me and I decided I couldn't handle it anymore. I quickly got up and yelled at the kid, hurling my own insults and banging my hand on the desk. During recess, my classmates commented on how different and out of character I was. I wasn't my usual self since the bullying threw me over the edge.

Every time I see someone being bullied, I look back on my experience and realize that people's outbursts don't always come out like mine did. Instead of shouting for it to stop, the bullied may move to suicidal tendencies or inflict serious harm on others. Bullying is important to stop. People of all ages need to realize how harmful and how serious a few hurtful comments can be.

**WE WILL BE SHOWCASING students' creative work throughout the newsletter. To see your photography, artwork, poetry, or fiction featured in upcoming editions, send your work to [ckuusisto@njseeds.org](mailto:ckuusisto@njseeds.org)**