

Leadership Day at the Capitol



Trevor Franklin and T.J. Beck
Scranton School District

2022 Alternative Education



Arkansas Association of Alternative Educators

www.arkaltdedu.org

ArkansasEd.org

National Anthem

Sung by: Raphael Overturf, Mena High School

Pledge of Allegiance and Preamble

Led by: Manfield Middle School Tiger Academy Students

Awards

**Presented by: Arkansas Association of Alternative Educators (AAAE)
and Alternative Education Office at the Arkansas Department of
Education Division of Elementary and Secondary Education**

*"I didn't know I was
capable of achieving
this."*

Zaniah Dafney, Cardinal Enrichment
Academy (Camden Fairview)



*"We have our ups and
downs in life, this
classroom always gets us
through."*

Bryson, Tiger Academy
(Mansfield)





A Letter from ADE-DESE Alternative Education Office

Arkansas Alternative Education Leadership Day at the Capitol is all about celebrating the successes of our state's hardest to reach at-risk students. Students are nominated for the Diamond Award by their teachers and administrators for displaying diligence, perseverance, sensitivity and resiliency. The selection committee is made up of board members from the Arkansas Association of Alternative Educators and members of the Arkansas Department of Education, Division of Elementary and Secondary Education - Alternative Education Office. Each year, the selection committee agonizes over choosing the winners from all of the nominations, and this year was no exception. The biographies on the following pages, which were submitted by the individuals nominating the students, tell the story of the students' struggles and triumphs, and explain why decision was so difficult to make. In Arkansas we are proud of each and every one of our Alternative Education students.

Arkansas Department of Education
Division of Elementary and Secondary Education
Alternative Education Office



They believed they
could...so they did!



Alexis Bumgardner Sheridan School District

Alexis Bumgardner entered our alternative learning program at Sheridan in the fall of 2021. She came to us as a struggling learner, was behind in her credits, and struggled with social skills. She was very shy and had a hard time asking for help. By the end of the first year in our program, Alexis had regained all her lost credits and was passing all of her classes. The greatest strides she made were in improving her social skills and overall attitude. Her parents reported that the confidence she was building at school transferred to her home life. During this school year, Alexis has led her peers in group projects and inspired other students to do their best.



Cole Pickle Elkins School District

Even though Cole Pickle had some problems early in his life, he has always had a positive in his life - music. When things weren't going well for him, he would often turn to music. Even in the sixth grade, he was creating his own rap music as a way to express himself. There was a time in Cole's life when academic struggles caused him to need some extra help. Many students resent help, but Cole took advantage of the help offered to him. He started working harder at school and made an effort to make peace with others. He continued to work on his music.

Cole is now genuinely invested in his education. He participates in class, asks questions when he needs help, completes his work, and shows respect for others. He helps with other students, and his creative work shows that he is excited to learn. Cole is enjoying success at school, in his relationships with classmates, and with his music. He always treats others with kindness, no matter what their differences might be. Cole is exactly the type of student that makes teachers not want to give up when all of the challenges that educators face become overwhelming.



Jacob Boyster

Hackett School District

Jacob Boyster joined the STAR Academy at Hackett Public Schools two and half years ago when he was in the fifth grade. At first, academics was not his primary focus; however, his priorities soon began to change. Even though, he struggled more than others, he showed persistence and learned to reason to solve problems. His organizational skills, and social skills shifted to show positive impacts academically.

Jacob is developing into a young leader who is organized, responsible, trustworthy, and able to ask for help when needed. He reasons out problems and understands the positive or negative outcomes. Instead of being a follower, he is a leader. He stops to think things through, listens, and cooperates without becoming frustrated. Jacob is evolving into a young man with a good work ethic and integrity. He often displays his maturity and wise decision making skills by choosing to make the right decisions regardless of what his peers are doing. He is learning many lifelong skills that he applies regularly. Jacob is one of our fire marshals at school and often volunteers when the agriculture instructor needs extra assistance with a project. He loves to work in our outdoor classroom. When new students join our program, Jacob shows his outgoing personality by stepping in to give advice and making them feel included. His teachers report enjoying having conversations with Jacob about his hobbies such as camping, fishing, and four-wheeling. His social and emotional growth is commendable.



Jasmine Monge

Wynne School District

Jasmine Monge is a student who exudes excellence in the classroom. She strives every day to display her strong work ethic and reach her full potential. Jasmine is a compassionate, responsible, dependable, and determined leader. She always gives her best effort on assignments, group discussions, and classroom participation. She helps other students who need support with the academic curriculum and shows compassion by supporting her classmates who are struggling socially and emotionally. Jasmine promotes positive behavior by being an example to her classmates and encouraging them to make prudent choices. Whenever her teacher asks for volunteers, Jasmine is always one of the first students to be willing to help. Jasmine's abilities to overcome adversity, promote positivity in the classroom, actively participate in classroom activities, and give her best effort daily demonstrate that she is an extraordinary student.



Levi Canada

Scranton School District

Levi Canada joined the Scranton ALE program when he was in the eighth grade. When he entered the program, he was dealing with some very difficult emotional baggage and was making poor choices in an effort to mask his emotional fragility. His anger was especially evident in his interactions with teachers and other authority figures. Previous to his referral to the ALE program, Levi was referred to the office numerous times for being disrespectful and showing a lack of impulse control. He had been diagnosed with ADHD and ODD, was on many different medications, and was receiving counseling from many different counselors. None of this was effective enough to make a real difference for Levi, and it was difficult to see through his poor behavior.

Upon entering the ALE program, Levi's teachers realized he was very capable and intelligent. They provided him with the proper educational support to help him be successful academically. He began to develop supportive relationships with peers and adults.

Levi is now a successful senior. His improved attitude towards education is evident. He attends the career center in Russellville and is responsible enough to maintain good grades both there and in high school. Upon graduation, Levi plans to attend ATU Russellville and take courses related to becoming a wildlife biologist, park ranger, or game warden.



Michael Hall

Conway School District

Michael entered his senior year needing 12.5 credits in order to graduate. He was referred to the Conway HUB Program because there was no way for him to complete such a monumental number of credits in a traditional educational setting in one year's time. Michael has attended four different high schools in the past four years. Orphaned at a young age, Michael has lived with various families and family members over the years. This resulted in a lot of upheaval in Michael's education and life.

Michael is over eighteen years old, but he still aspires to graduate from high school, so that he can enter the military. He is a hard worker who completed all of his first semester work before it was due. He maintains good grades and works a job. His positivity continues to amaze his teachers and peers. After he graduates from high school, Michael plans to pursue a career in the United States Marines.



Nevaeh Barro

Conway School District

Nevaeh Burro moved to Arkansas in August and was told that she was being retained in the eleventh grade and had received no credits. Then, Nevaeh found out that she was pregnant. She was six months pregnant when she was referred to Conway HUB. She began at Conway HUB with a great attitude, despite health issues with her pregnancy. Her schedule looked scary, as it included so many classes, due to her having to repeat her eleventh grade year. She never missed a day of school and always worked hard in all her classes. When Nevaeh became physically uncomfortable due to her pregnancy, she was allowed to use a recliner in the common area, and she never slowed down. She worked on her assignments at night, on weekends, and during school breaks. Nevaeh was determined to complete all of her work before the baby arrived, but that didn't happen. She delivered her baby early and was again working on assignments just days after returning home from the hospital. Nevaeh completed all of her coursework a month early and earned remarkable grades. During Christmas break, Nevaeh started working on assignments for the second semester of the school year.

Nevaeh is now a single mother and is working a new job. Still, she attends school consistently and completes her school work on time. She is an inspiration to her teachers and peers. After she graduates from high school, Nevaeh plans to pursue a career in the medical field.



Raphael Overturf

Mena School District

Raphael Overturf became a student in the Mena Alternative Education Program during his ninth grade year. He has endured a very difficult home life since he was a young boy. Raphael had attended multiple schools before coming to Mena School District. He is a talented young man who lacked positive role models. As a middle school student, Raphael began to make decisions which negatively affected life. In the ninth grade, Raphael committed a criminal offense. Due to his criminal activities and his refusal to attend school regularly, he was enrolled in the alternative education program at Mena High School. While in the alternative education program, Raphael continued to work on his current classes and was assigned classes that he had previously failed. Raphael began working diligently to complete all his classes, and his attendance was outstanding. Since then, Raphael has become an exemplary student.

Raphael excels in choir, earning All Region and All State awards for his participation and talent. He is a member of two bands, playing lead guitar and singing lead vocals for both bands. Due to his positive attitude and perseverance, Raphael maintains good grades and is well liked by his teachers and peers.

Ronnie Rhinehart

Mansfield School District

Ronnie Rhinehart began Tiger Academy after transferring from a larger school district where he was in trouble for aggressive behaviors and gang affiliation. He began in traditional classes as a new student in Mansfield School District. Ronnie rapidly began displaying risky behaviors and earned a serious suspension that could have been an expulsion. When Ronnie began Tiger Academy, he had a challenging attitude, but he was also very inquisitive. Ronnie had to give almost everything the "taste test" to determine if it was genuine or not because his trust factors were highly sensitive and protective. Through the daily social skills lessons as well as flexible and structured discipline, Ronnie began to experience academic, social and emotional success. He asked many questions and developed skills through participation in the daily lessons. He began to risk asking for help in front of his peers, participate openly, and encourage others. His grades began improving. In the beginning, all of Ronnie's classes took place in Tiger Academy. After his first semester, Ronnie began to transition back to traditional classes.

Ronnie now participates in Tiger Academy for one academic class and one elective. He maintains a 100% in traditional eighth grade pre-algebra and is an honor roll student. He is an athlete on the football team, participates in many school activities, and is a leader in every essence of the word. Ronnie has overcome earlier childhood fears, anxieties, impulsivity, and learning deficit areas to be a leader among his peers. Ronnie is the litmus test of what is "cool" at Mansfield Middle School. He uses his influence to positively lead his peers. All of Ronnie's teachers speak highly of him and his positive, caring attitude. He has learned to talk about issues that bother him and to make good decisions.

Treveon Ringo

Pine Bluff School District

Treveon Ringo has overcome so many challenges in his life. He dropped out of school during his senior year of high school. This year, he decided to come back and finish his education.

Treveon comes to school every day ready to complete his classwork, as well as, to discuss, learn, and understand why the work he completes in school is important for his future. He demonstrates perseverance, a passion for learning, a positive outlook, and determination. Treveon surrounds himself with people who support and encourage him. Even after completing his classes, Treveon continues to come to school to work on job skills, building his resume and cover letters, and conducting himself in job interviews. He is a positive influence on his peers and on the teachers who work with him. He is determined to forge a path to a better future.

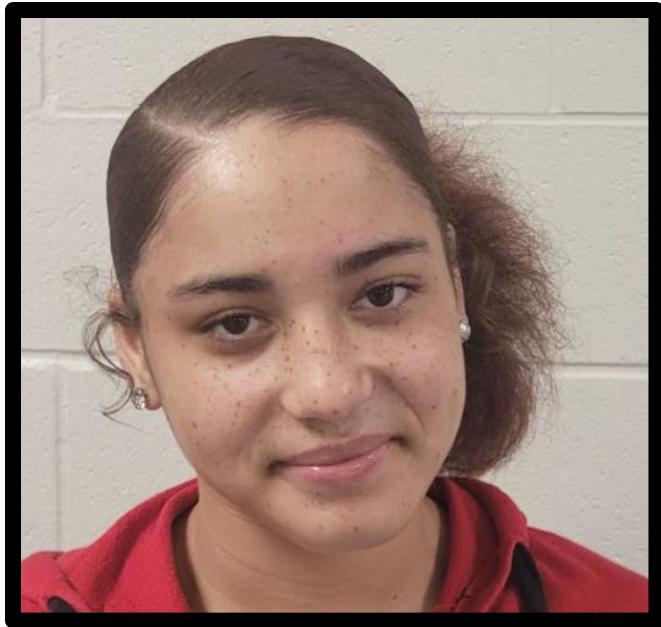


Zailen Brown

Camden Fairview School District

Zailen Brown was placed into the alternative learning environment at Champions' Academy because he had a serious discipline incident that could have resulted in expulsion from school. Separate from that incident, he chose inappropriate friends, struggled academically, and had multiple incidents of verbal abuse. Zailen needed help obtaining appropriate communication skills in both school and social settings. He often stated that he didn't like school and everyone wanted him "to get in trouble." Initially, Zailen's family felt like the alternative learning environment would worsen his behavior. However, participation in a strong support group at Champions' Academy was beneficial for him. Zailen received emotional support from his school mentor and school counselor. The social emotional learning course that he attended at Champions' Academy helped teach him the social skills he needed to respond positively to instructors and peers.

Zailen has since transitioned back into the traditional classroom environment. His teachers report how well behaved he is in class. To ensure his improved behavior continues, he meets with his school mentor weekly.



Zaniah Dafney

Camden Fairview School District

Zaniah Dafney began at Cardinal Enrichment Academy in September of 2021. She exhibited signs of anger and frustration which had a huge impact on her ability to maintain appropriate behavior and to learn. Zaniah had six major discipline issues during the first four weeks of school. She was retained in ninth grade and had only 4.5 total credits.

During the past four months at Cardinal Enrichment Academy, Zaniah has made major strides both academically and behaviorally. She has earned 5 total credits and now has a total of 9.5 credits. She is back with her tenth grade cohort and only lacks 1.5 credits to be considered an eleventh grader. She has all A's and B's for the first time in her academic career. Zaniah stated, "I didn't know I was capable of achieving this." She is currently in 2 advanced classes and is excited about the challenge.

Zaniah meets with her mentor weekly and her attitude and overall outlook on her education has vastly improved. She has had no major behavioral issues and has completed all of her behavior goals. She has transitioned out of Cardinal Enrichment Academy for four out of seven periods and is doing exceptionally well.

Awards

Top Composite Scores: ELA, Math, and Science

Sloan- Hendrix	Rose Bud
Lead Hill	Blevins
Bentonville	Clinton
Mount Ida	Carlisle
Heber Springs	Pottsville
Booneville	Elkins
Magnolia	Cabot
Eureka Springs	

Math

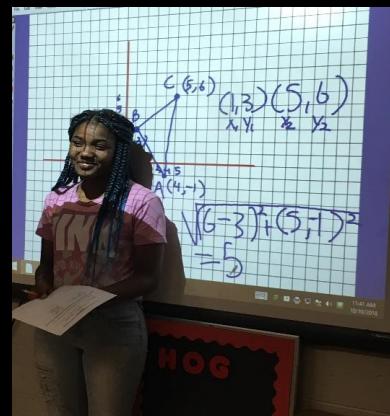
Nemo Vista	Bauxite
Augusta	Lamar
Rogers	Elkins
Genoa Central	
Westside (Craighead County)	
Lakeside (Garland County)	
Jacksonville North Pulaski	

ELA and Math

Horatio	McCrory
Lawrence County	Hackett
Atkins	Bismarck
Harrison	Mansfield
Pulaski County	Bryant

ELA

Marmaduke	Maynard
Bergman	Dewitt
Conway	Dover
Monticello	Decatur
Fayetteville	
Mulberry/ Pleasant View	



Banner

New Horizons is a K-12 alternative education program that provides educational support to students who are struggling to be successful in the traditional classroom setting. It is located on the Lake Hamilton School District campus. New Horizons is housed in its own building with individual classrooms divided by grade level (K-4th grade, 5th-6th grade, 7th-8th grade, 9th-12th grade). In addition, there is a classroom dedicated to students who are enrolled in the credit recovery/GED preparation program.

New Horizons offers small class sizes and personalized learning for each student. Flexible scheduling and alternate pathways to help the students succeed are utilized. New Horizons offers traditional classes, credit recovery classes, GED prep, and social/ emotional learning classes. Students are given the opportunity to attend National Park Community College in the afternoons and to participate in extracurricular activities and clubs on the traditional Lake Hamilton campus. New Horizons employs terrific teachers and support staff that care about the needs of every child and help them navigate through their everyday life challenges.

