

Reach High Scholars Program

26 Old Locke Road
North Hampton, N.H. 03862

June 29, 2013

Dear Friends of the Reach High Scholars Program:

As the school year comes to a close, we would like to bring you up to date on developments in the fifth year of the Reach High Scholars Program ("RHSP").

RHSP is an independent NH Nonprofit Corporation and has an application pending to be exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. RHSP encourages Raymond Middle School and High School students to "reach high" in their pursuit of an education. It provides the financial resources needed for its initiatives at no cost to the School District.

In Five Years, RHS has Exceeded Raymond's Results at Highly Competitive Colleges in the Prior 244 Years.

Raymond was founded in 1764. In the 244-year history through 2008, 18 RHS students graduated from one of a list of 85 highly competitive colleges. That record has been exceeded in the five years since RHSP started.

The graduating classes of 2009 through 2013 have 19 students attending or going to one of those colleges. Most of them have significant financial aid packages with relatively small amounts of debt and need-based grants of up to \$50,000 per annum that, over four years, will have an aggregate total value of about \$2 million.

Fourteen additional students who were active in RHSP are attending other top colleges. The historical list and the names of the 33 students are on the RHSP website (www.reachhighscholars.org) under "About Us."

Choices

From the beginning, we emphasized the advantages of visiting 15 to 20 colleges, applying to 10 to 12 and, hopefully, ending up with acceptances that give a few choices at the end. We also pointed out that 22 highly competitive colleges are in New England, with the advantage of being within three hours of Raymond and therefore in a comfort zone closer to home.

The results have been fascinating. Of the 33 students who had been active in RHSP, seven went to or are about to start at UNH and the other 26 are doing the same at 19 different colleges in eight states, including nine in New York State, and one each in Minnesota and Pennsylvania. Most of them report in from time-to-time. They are very happy with their choices and doing extremely well academically, without any evidence of homesickness.

The Class of 2013

Five members of the Class of '13 will be attending colleges on the highly competitive list: Rachael Faust at St. Lawrence University, Katie Gray at University of Rochester, Amanda Lundergan at Trinity College, Hope Palattella at Connecticut College and Shaun Spinney at Carleton College. Ginny Harmon and Rob Meade, each of whom was accepted at a highly competitive college, have opted for UNH.

Control Your Destiny
www.reachhighscholars.org

PSAT/SAT Boot Camp

RHSP has sponsored a PSAT/SAT Boot Camp for the past four years. The classes take place on Saturday mornings in the fall and winter. In the past, SAT scores over 2000 had been rare at RHS. In the last three years, there have been eleven students with scores in the range of 2060 to 2300. This has a meaningful impact on acceptances at top colleges.

Starting in the fall of 2013, the Boot Camp will be conducted by Academic Approach (“AA”), which is headquartered in Chicago with offices in New York and Boston. They will build upon the excellent job done over the first four years by Debbie Harmon and Sue Spinney, parents of students in the Raymond schools.

AA provides PSAT, SAT and ACT preparation in classrooms, online and in individual sessions for students from a wide range of economic backgrounds. They work with public schools, charter schools and private day and boarding schools, including Phillips Exeter Academy, which currently is their only other NH client.

The Academic Approach course will have 15 sessions for which RHS students will pay \$250, with reductions available on a need basis. Similar courses normally would cost \$1,200 to well over \$5,000. AA will have its costs covered and work for no profit. On the proposed fee structure, there will be a shortfall to be made up to AA by funds to be raised by RHSP.

Details of the Academic Approach Boot Camp have been promulgated to students and parents by Mr. Beitler, the Principal, and the RHS Guidance Office.

Summer Enrichment Programs

Summer academic enrichment programs provided by top educational institutions have played a significant role in the Reach High Scholars Program. They encourage the students to enjoy learning and to take control of their own academic destiny. These programs are an important steppingstone to good colleges for RHS students.

This summer 62 Raymond students will attend enrichment programs. Nineteen high school students will attend boarding programs of two to five weeks duration at Dartmouth, Phillips Exeter Academy and St. Paul’s School. Almost all of them attend with substantial financial aid, only a small portion of which comes from Raymond-related sources. In addition, 43 middle school students and high school freshmen will participate in **Raymond Roundtables**, an enrichment program in Raymond conducted by Phillips Exeter.

Five members of the RHS Class of 2013 (Nicholas Clark, Tayler DiLeo, Briana Draper, Kathryn Gray and Hope Palattella), who have been in the **Summer Enrichment at Dartmouth (SEAD)** program since their freshman year, will attend Dartmouth for two weeks this summer with emphasis on preparing them in their last month before leaving for college.

We are delighted to have been invited by SEAD to send another four-year cohort of eight members of the RHS Class of 2016 to begin this summer. That group consists of Shae Costello, Cam Evans, Katie Faust, Tatiana Galvao, Kayla Gangi, Jade Morris, Wesley Oates and Jake Parenteau.

Tyler Chaisson, Amanda Dupuis and William Harmon will be at the **Phillips Exeter Academy Summer School** this year and Cameron Corriveau and Jessica Robey will be attending the **Advanced Studies Program at St. Paul’s School**. Each of these programs is for five weeks.

Raymond Roundtables, which was started in 2010, will have three math and two English courses. The math classes and one of the English classes will be conducted by faculty members from **Phillips**

Exeter Academy, employing their world-renowned “Harkness Method” of teaching. The courses will meet on 12 consecutive weekdays in July.

As an important development this year, Rebecca Sharrow, an English teacher in the Middle School, will teach the other English class. She has had a PEA tutorial on the Harkness Method, will attend the Humanities Institute at PEA this summer and uses a Harkness table (donated to Raymond by PEA) in her classroom.

The Harkness Method is a student-centered seminar style of learning in which the teacher guides and fosters discussion amongst the students who are sitting at a round table. Students learn to take responsibility for their education, to listen to each other and to explore the potential of their academic and intellectual abilities.

Financing

The overall philosophy of the Reach High Scholars Program is that money is not a roadblock to a great education. The best colleges have significant amounts of financial aid, which significantly reduces the necessity for local resources to help needy students attend them. The key is to have the colleges accept a student, which is a competitive, but not insurmountable, process. We direct our resources toward increasing the likelihood of acceptance, helping students get to and pass through the starting gate.

The various initiatives of the Reach High Scholars Program have attendant costs. Many of them are relatively small in amount and manageable locally by contributions.

Summer enrichment programs are extremely important tools in our assistance to Raymond students. There are hundreds of them in the country of varying degrees of quality. Most of them are very expensive and few have significant financial aid.

We are fortunate to have established relationships with summer enrichment programs that have need-based aid policies second to none in the country when it comes to generosity. However, each of them has an aid capacity that is finite. To augment their generosity, they encourage communities and school districts to make contributions within their means. We have been clear with each of them that Raymond and its school system have limited financial resources but that we do our best to raise funds for them.

Commensurate with that position, we have maintained contacts with a limited number of charitable organizations, companies and other philanthropists that have strategies consistent with the initiatives of the Reach High Scholars Program. Some of them, being aware of our activities, have approached us offering to help. Our normal practice is to accept donations only for committed or budgeted expenses to be incurred by RHSP or a summer enrichment partner on behalf of Raymond students.

The summer programs of Brown, Dartmouth, Phillips Exeter and St. Paul’s have provided about \$264,000 of financial aid to Raymond students during the past five years. Over \$87,000 (33% of the total aid) has been reimbursed by RHSP and charitable institutions and individuals that have supported its efforts.

RHSP has raised an additional amount of about \$12,000 through contributions and fees from students in its PSAT/SAT Boot Camp, most of which has been used for its operating expenses, and in small increments on its various initiatives.

Volunteers

The Reach High Scholars Program is a volunteer army and we always need help from parents, faculty and other people interested in our goals. Our initiatives currently start after the seventh grade and continue through the high school years. Parents of children going up that ladder are encouraged to

become familiar with our activities and objectives, to spread the word throughout the community and to participate. Because once students go off to college their parents deserve a rest, we are constantly in need of new volunteers at the bottom of the ladder.

It is extremely valuable to have parents who can take students (in addition to their own child) on college visits as some students have parents not in a position to do this, primarily because of job commitments. We reimburse a portion of expenses for such trips. (And, the parents who do the trips learn a lot about the colleges.)

Website

Our website (www.reachhighscholars.org) is user-friendly and contains a considerable amount of helpful information on the college process. It is maintained *pro bono* by a good friend of the Reach High Scholars Program with some assistance from a professional website designer.

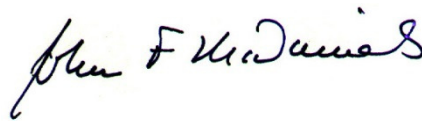
RHS is #1 Among Southeastern NH High Schools in Sending Students to Highly Competitive Colleges in 2011-13

Our Newsletter last June had a table showing that the percentage of the RHS Class of 2012 going to highly competitive colleges ("Overall Score" of at least 60 in U.S. News & World Report, America's Best Colleges) was higher than for any other high school in Southeastern NH. A single year is always susceptible of being deemed a fluke. We now have most of the relevant data for 2011 and this year for the seven largest schools in the area (Dover, Exeter, Portsmouth, St. Thomas Aquinas, Spalding and Winnacunnet).

During 2011-2013, 6.5% of RHS graduates went to highly competitive colleges whereas, based on the available information, the other schools were in a range of about 1.5% to 3.5%.

Hopefully, this will give some sense of the overall effort in which so many of you have participated and generously supported. We look forward to keeping you posted and maintaining your enthusiasm for helping Raymond students.

With best regards,



John F. McDaniels