



December 14, 2020

Dear Friends:

Greetings! As we approach the end of a challenging year, we want to share our thoughts on its impact for the Reach High Scholars Program.

RHSP's Mission and Adapting to Change

The Reach High Scholars Program exists to help students reach higher in their educational pursuits than they had imagined possible. Our mission takes on new meaning as we all sense that society is at an historic turning point that can create one-time, life-defining possibilities.

Even before the COVID pandemic, the economy was not working for many Americans and income differences were increasing. The nature of work has changed dramatically in recent decades. In the past, value came from efficiency in repetition (assembly lines, law firms). People learned a skill (banker or baker) and repeated it for life in a workplace with many walls. All this was dying before COVID and the trend has accelerated.

Value now comes from contributing to and adapting to change. The skills needed are the opposite of those required in the disappearing world of repetition. There is high demand for people with changemaking skills and demand is withering for those without them. Change creates opportunities.

Learning has become a life-time endeavor involving the acquisition of new skills many of which do not exist when one is a student in high school or even in college. Learning never ends; it is the new pension. RHSP exists to help students see the new game and acquire the skills needed to thrive in it.

2020 and the Impact of COVID

Starting in March, it became impractical to meet with students and parents in person and we adapted to communicating by phone, email, Skype and Zoom about the various initiatives of RHSP and the college process. In addition, the school buildings were not available for our Test Prep and Raymond Roundtables. We have successfully reacted to these challenges and continued our expansion to neighboring towns to compensate for the shrinking student population throughout the State. We intend to continue this expansion effort.

Test Prep. In our Spring 2020 SAT Boot Camp for juniors, we created with Academic Approach a method for individual tutorials by their instructors using the internet and phone, which continued into the fall to cope with the oft-cancelled SAT Tests. For the spring of 2021, we will have SAT and PSAT courses led by AA teachers, using Zoom. The schedule leads directly into the NH Mandatory SAT and PSAT tests in late March. For the first time, students from Epping High School and Coe-Brown Northwood Academy, located in nearby towns, have been invited to participate in the courses.

Raymond Roundtables. For the past ten years, RR, our summer academic enrichment program for rising 8th, 9th and 10th graders, has been conducted in collaboration with Phillips Exeter Academy. This summer, because our Harkness tables in the Middle School were not accessible, it was conducted

as a “Virtual Harkness” experience Using Google Classroom. The classes were taught by instructors from PEA and others from the Raymond area who have been Harkness-trained. We had 28 students in total - 18 from Raymond, six from Epping, two from Exeter and one each from Derry and Fremont.

College Tours. Because most colleges have closed their admission offices to visitors, we have developed a system of “virtual tours” of our recommended schools. Most of the schools now offer virtual versions of campus tours, specific interest tours and information sessions. RHSP works with students to develop lists of 15-20 colleges based on their interests and academic qualifications. After doing a virtual tour and information session, they complete a research form with data on the college that will be helpful as they continue their college search and decide where to apply.

Summer Boarding Enrichment Programs. Last summer, over a dozen RHSP members were accepted in summer boarding academic enrichment programs at Brown, Phillips Exeter and St. Paul’s. All those institutions cancelled their residential programs due to COVID and replaced them with on-line courses, which were taken by four of our students. Four others opted to accept a deferral of their PEA acceptances to 2021. We have several students interested in these programs in 2021, but, as of now it is unclear in most cases whether courses will be offered on campus, on-line or a hybrid of the two.

Strategic Plan

We are currently engaged in a strategic planning process to address the important issues that include COVID, the shrinking school populations in NH and the age of the current Chairman.

RSHP Resources

RHSP’s philosophy is that money should not be a roadblock to a great education; top colleges have plenty of financial aid. We use our resources to help students get through the starting gates.

Our operating expenses are covered primarily by the Board of Directors. Other donors support the boot camps, Roundtables and college visits, which have shortfalls due to our concessionary pricing and generous need-based aid. Some donors also give directly to the summer partners to support aid to our students.

In the spirit of the holiday season, we welcome help in this pioneering education effort through gifts to our tax-exempt charitable organization. They truly are gifts that keep on giving. Donations can be made by (i) a check sent to: P.O. 982, Raymond, NH 03077, (ii) bank wire transfer (by emailing me for RHSP’s account details) or (iii) or via PayPal or a credit card by clicking [here](#).

Attached is a summary of our outcomes to date. We hope this will give some sense of the overall effort in which many of you have participated and generously supported. We look forward to keeping you posted and maintaining your enthusiasm for helping RHSP students control their academic destiny and reach higher in pursuit of education.

Warmest regards and best wishes for the holidays,



John F. McDaniels
Chairman
Reach High Scholars Program
jmcdaniels@reachhighscholars.org

Reach High Scholars Program

Outcomes Achieved Over Past 11 Years

Pre-College Outcomes

- 336 students have participated in Raymond Roundtables.
- 338 students have participated in RHSP's PSAT and SAT Boot Camps.
- 176 RHSP members have done boarding summer academic enrichment programs (typically for two to five weeks) at Brown, Dartmouth, Phillips Exeter and St. Paul's. They had financial aid of over \$862,000 (28% of which was contributed by RHSP and supporters).

College Outcomes

- 103 RHSP members have gone to four-year colleges. Fifty-three of them went to highly resourced colleges ("HRCs") (top 3% in the country); compared to 18 who had gone to similar colleges in the prior 90 years of RHS. Twenty-one others have gone to UNH.
- The 53 had small amounts of debt and need-based scholarships and grants of up to \$69,000 per year that, over four years, will have a total value of over \$7.1 million.
- Those 53 students were 6.1% of all RHS graduates during 2011-20. Based on available information, only two NH high schools (Hanover and Portsmouth) have sent higher percentages to HRCs.
- Colleges attended by RHSP students include: Bard (2), Boston College, Brown, Carleton, Colby, Connecticut College, Dartmouth (3), Hamilton (3), Hobart & William Smith (6), Holy Cross (4), Lafayette, Mount Holyoke, Northeastern (2), Rensselaer Polytechnic (3), St. Lawrence (3), Skidmore (3), Trinity (2), UNH (21), University of Rochester, Union (3), Wheaton (5) and Worcester Polytechnic (6).
- The HRCs emphasized by RHSP have high (85-95%) 4-year graduation rates. Thirty-four RHSP members have attended those colleges in classes that graduated through 2020. **Thirty-one (91%) graduated in four years.** Most are from low- or middle-income families that have paid not more than \$10-20,000 per year and the students, on average, have less than \$30,000 of debt. The national average for college graduation in four years is about 40%.

Post-College Outcomes

- RHSP alumni who have finished college have gone on to impressive careers. Four are working on or have completed Ph. D degrees (one of whom is now a Professor of Astronomy at RPI). Two are pursuing Masters' degrees. Two were the first and second in the history of Raymond to receive Fulbright Scholarships to study and work abroad. Several are working in high-tech companies, including Amazon, Athenahealth, BAE Systems, Hexcel and IBM Watson.

Return on Investment to Donors

- Cash contributions from individuals and charitable institutions to RHSP and its Summer Enrichment Partners to-date have totaled approximately \$407,000. Of that amount, \$252,000 has gone to the summer enrichment partners and \$155,000 to RHSP.
- The \$7.1 million of scholarships and grants received by our 53 scholars attending HRCs is a 17.4X multiple of the \$407,000 of cash contributed to RHSP and its summer partners; **a wonderful return on the investment of our donors.**