Diligent Clayton senior makes deep impression on the school community

Clayton High School 2018 graduate Elliot Bobo has made quite an impression on the CHS community over his four years there.

“We’ve been fortunate to have Elliot as part of the Clayton community,” said Carroll Lehnhoff-Bell, CHS Learning Support Director. “Everyone on campus knows him for his positivity and as a model of what a diligent student is. He will surely be missed, but we are a better place because of him, and we wish him all the best after graduation.”

Kirkwood junior succeeds in field hockey and academics

Kirkwood High School rising senior and VICC participant Taiye Joseph has found success in the school’s girls field hockey program, while maintaining academic excellence.

Taiye was among 11 teammates who were named to the Keith Waldman Optimal Performance Associates/National Field Hockey Coaches Association’s 2017 High School National Academic Squad.

The High School National Academic Squad program recognizes high school junior and senior student-athletes who have achieved a minimum cumulative, unweighted GPA of 3.50 out of 4.0 or the equivalent through the first quarter of the 2017-18 school year. Over 2,770 field hockey players from 344 high schools achieved the honor this school year. The program honors students who play sports while still excelling in their studies.

Taiye plays forward, alternating among all three offensive positions for the Pioneers. She was consistently one of the top three finishers in timed runs this year, said her coach, Dana Opperman. The 2017-18 year was Taiye’s first year on the varsity team; she played on the junior varsity team the previous year. The Pioneers finished the 2017 fall season with 14 wins and 10 losses and 7 and 1 record in their league.

Elliot comes from a hard-working, dedicated family who have done a great job instilling in him the notion of doing his best and giving his all. He has persisted through the challenge of difficult classes and has remained willing to focus on his academics despite his heavy work schedule. Elliot is known for being thoughtful toward his teachers, his peers and the school community. One could always find Elliot in the stands at basketball games, football games or track meets cheering on his Greyhounds. He also often was found sitting with his classmates helping them through an assignment; in the hallways smiling and greeting his teachers, inquiring how their day has been; or in his classrooms adding to the richness of his courses, Lehnhoff-Bell said.

While at Clayton High School, Elliot worked two jobs. He remained dedicated to the Youth Employment Service (YES) program with the St. Louis Science Center throughout the duration of the four years, experiencing several different fields of science. He also held a part-time job at a retail store near school. A fashion lover, Elliot bleaches and distresses his own clothing. He will attend Tennessee State University this fall.

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Each spring, the participating VICC schools districts choose an outstanding graduating senior from each high school to represent the students’ achievements and the schools’ exemplary efforts in preparing them for the future. These are the 2018 outstanding graduates.

Kirkwood High School
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Headed to Webster University in the fall to study physical therapy, DeAntae Henry has demonstrated through his academic achievement at Kirkwood High School that he is more than prepared to be successful. One teacher described him as “an incredibly kind young man with a heart of gold and unstoppable talents.” The fact that he is a four-year recipient of Kirkwood’s African-American Achievement Award attests to his hard work and dedication in the classroom. DeAntae also plans to minor in music at Webster University and is an active member in his community and Project X, a St. Louis organization that helps young people who want to pursue careers in music.

Mehlville High School
Da’Reyana Hopkins
attended the Mehlville School District since fifth grade. During her senior year, she attended a half day at Mehlville and a half day at South County Tech, studying health sciences. She is OSHA-certified and CNA-certified and has received her Patient Care Tech certification. At school she was involved with the freshmen orientation program, Konnect, and participated in cheerleading and track and field. Da’Reyana followed a college preparatory curriculum with Honors, Dual Credit and AP courses, maintaining a 3.6 weighted GPA and 24-composite ACT. Da’Reyana has been recognized by the Future Medical Science Students of the Year and the National Society of High School Students. Outside of school, Da’Reyana was employed after school working 25 to 30 hours per week. Da’Reyana plans to attend Spelman College, majoring in biology/pre-med. She hopes to become a neonatal surgeon and dreams of providing international medical care to children in Third World countries.

Oakville High School
Porshia Spradley
spent her high school career in the Mehlville School District and is deserving of Outstanding Senior recognition. She had the unique perspective of attending both Mehlville and Oakville high schools, where she participated in choir, student council and theater. Slowly, she began to focus specifically on acting, where it’s safe to say she’s found her passion. Porshia lights up when she is creating and performing and intends to pursue a career in television. Outside of school, Porshia keeps busy with her job, is quick to point out how beneficial her acting training is when handling unexpected situations and collaborating with fellow employees. She will major in mass communications at Langston University. She has set high goals for her future, as one day she intends to follow in the footsteps of Oprah or Ellen and host her own talk show.

Parkway South High School
Graduating with a cumulative grade point average of 4.0, Leiana Boldon has successfully proven that academics have always been her first priority. Leiana has emphasized that through the VICC program she has learned grit and perseverance are essential to achievement. While a student at South High, Leiana not only maintained her stellar GPA, but she did this while participating in Link Crew, French Club, track, Youth in Government, choir, drama and Peer Teaching. Her ongoing tenacity has helped her map out her goals, which include fall enrollment at Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois, with a double major in business management and music.

Parkway Central High School
DeAndre Campbell would be an accomplished student in any school district, but coming to Parkway gave him exposure to different cultures and a chance to step outside of his comfort area. During the past four years, he was an exceptional athlete and played on both basketball and football teams. He also played baseball for two years and managed to squeeze in track and Link Crew for one year, while maintaining a grade point average exceeding 3.0. He consistently pushed himself academically and took additional AP courses during his academic career; this allowed him to graduate with 28 credits instead of the normal Parkway standard of 24. DeAndre was accepted to several schools, but he enrolled at Florida Southern College, where he will major in criminal justice.

St. Louis Community College at Forest Park
Mariama Donaldson
admitted into St. Louis Community College at Forest Park in High School for the cosmetology program. With hard-work and years of high school, she attended South County Technical High School. India always showed kindness and loyalty to those she keeps close.

Brentwood High School
India Ne-Col Brown
was a strong, extremely talented, intelligent and delightful student at Affton. She showed her amazing leadership skills as dance team captain and choreographer and as a Class Officer for the Class of 2018. She participated in the St. Louis Center for Advanced Professional Studies program (STL CAPS) this year and has excelled in the Health and Medicine field. From her medical career exploration, Malahja has fully committed to helping others and becoming a nurse. She is pursuing a degree at Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia. Affton High is extremely proud to honor Malahja as our VICC Outstanding Graduate as she is an inspiring role model to others.

Bayless High School
Rene Kina
was an outstanding Bayless High School student. He was an active member of the Bayless High School National Honor Society. In addition, he participated in multiple athletic teams throughout his four years at BHS. He competed in track and field, football and volleyball. Rene also was a member of the DECA Club and a state qualifier. His academic accomplishments are equally impressive. He completed multiple college credit courses including: AP English, Dual Credit European History, Dual Credit German III, Dual Credit Psychology, Dual Credit Sociology and Dual Credit American History. Bayless High School is proud to designate Rene Kina as our 2018 outstanding senior. We wish him continued success in his college endeavors.

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Alivia Dixon
Eureka High School
represents Eureka and the VICC program well as the staff choice for the VICC Outstanding Graduate Award. She has been very active at Eureka in the W2W mentoring program and with groups like E2Y2, the school’s student equity group, which hosts social justice dialogues with teachers and central office and school staff. As a recipient of the Glory of Missouri award, she was honored in February along with 13 other classmates on the Missouri House of Representatives floor. She also was a Renaissance and A+ student and was a health sciences student at South County Tech school.

Alysia Lockhart
Lafayette High School
is proud to honor a amazing Lancer, Myiah Hall, with the VICC Outstanding Senior Award. In addition to being a gentle, friendly spirit and an incredible person, Myiah has been a highly invested and involved student in Lafayette’s school community. She was a dedicated band member and cheerleader for four years, an illustration of Myiah’s outstanding character. Myiah was a member of Lafayette’s track and field team, was selected to participate in the Gateway 2 Change program, was a Link Crew leader, and was selected to participate in Lafayette’s Challenge Day. Extending her dedication to service beyond school, Myiah is a member of Jack and Jill, a community organization supporting mothers as they raise strong, healthy children. Her devotion to service is evident in her career plans — she will attend the University of Missouri–Kansas City’s nursing program in the fall.

 Gloryanna Christian
Marquette High School
knows she is a force to be reckoned with, in fact she said if there is one thing she learned from participating in the VICC program, it’s perseverance and patience. While most underestimate her by her small stature, Gabrielle has learned to use that misconception to her advantage, shattering stereotypes along the way. While at West High, she was pushed to take challenging classes and, while they didn’t always end with an A, she persevered and achieved one of her goals, enrollment at St. Louis University with a major in English literature.

Gabrielle Thompson
Parkway West High School
is a health sciences student at South County Tech school. She also was a Renaissance and A+ student and was a role model among her peers, she is known for encouraging and motivating others to achieve their potential both personally and academically. During her four years in high school, Glo was passionate about creating a more inclusive school environment. She was a valuable member of the Student Equity Leadership Group and the track team. This extremely focused and goal-oriented student achieved the following during high school: student of the month, most valuable sprinter, and the creator of the school’s first Black History Month production, an overwhelming success that will become an annual event. In her community, Glo is a teen ambassador at the St. Louis Science Center’s Youth Exploring Science program. She won an essay contest sponsored by Made Moguls for her essay on creating a foster care business to change the world. This fall, Glo will attend Harris Stowe State University, pursuing a career in social work.

Jourdyn Brooks
Rockwood Lafayette High School
was an exceptional student leader and outstanding academic, musical and athletic performer. Alysia ranked in the top 10 of her class, was on Student Council and in the National Honor Society for music and the National Honor Society for academics. Jamie received several Renaissance awards for her grades. In addition, she played alto saxophone in both the jazz and marching bands and sang with the a cappella group A Ladies. Jamie has received a scholarship from the University of Missouri–Kansas City, where she plans to study bioscience with an emphasis in biomedical science. Ultimately, she hopes to study biomedical engineering.

Jamie is full of laughter that brings light to everyone she encounters. This fall, Selena will attend the Elber College of Management at University of Arizona, majoring in entrepreneurship with a minor in psychology.

Myiah Hall,
Parkway North High School
was a member of Lafayette’s track and field team, was selected to participate in the Gateway 2 Change program, was a Link Crew leader, and was selected to participate in Lafayette’s Challenge Day. Extending her dedication to service beyond school, Myiah is a member of Jack and Jill, a community organization supporting mothers as they raise strong, healthy children. Her devotion to service is evident in her career plans — she will attend the University of Missouri–Kansas City’s nursing program in the fall.

As is our tradition, in the fall issue of the ParentLink, we have the opportunity to celebrate and recognize several of the outstanding graduates of the VICC program. These students are merely a representation of the many students who have recently graduated from the program.

Graduation is an exciting time. It marks both an ending and a new beginning. For the students recognized in this issue, all of their hard work has now paid off. We are proud of them and look forward to celebrating their ongoing achievements in life as well as celebrating the achievements of all of our students.
The Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation (VICC) staff includes five counselors/social workers who can assist families with issues related to their school transfers. Counselors are happy to respond to concerns and/or questions from parents or students regarding any issue that would interfere with the success of a child in the school setting, such as attendance, disciplinary issues, curriculum, achievement or other concerns. They also can provide counseling assistance for students and help parents understand their educational rights. Counselors generally are assigned according to the first letter of the student’s last name. They can be reached by calling 314.721.8422 and dialing the extension number below, or via email.

**Emergency Communication System**

In consultation with parents regarding transportation and their child’s participation in the Voluntary Transfer Program, the Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation uses a telephone broadcast system to communicate with teachers in many participating school districts. This system, provided by School Messenger, allows VICC to quickly send all households and parents a pre-recorded message by phone within minutes of a transportation emergency or unplanned event that could significantly delay a child’s pick-up or drop-off time. These emergencies include traffic jams, bus breakdowns, inclement weather, accidents or incursions. Destined from time to time to communicate general preparedness messages and reminders. This system will simultaneously call a home and one additional cell phone or alternate number for each student’s family who needs to be contacted and will deliver a message from Tami Webb. In order for you to receive such messages it is critically important that we are provided accurate and up-to-date telephone information.

**Transportation Information**

Transportation to and from school is provided by the Voluntary Interdistrict Choice Corporation so long as your child goes to a school in the correct attendance area. The phone number for the transportation office is 314.721.8057. Transportation cards with the bus stop location and time are mailed to all transit providers about two weeks before the start of the school year begins in the fall. If you do not receive your card by one week before the start of the school year, contact the principal at your school or your child’s bus driver. The transportation staff does not send cards to parents or guardians. Additional cards can be obtained by contacting the district contact person at least two weeks before the start of the school year. Each student will receive a transportation card that includes the student’s picture, driver’s license or identification number for parents to keep the school as well as the district contact person informed of any changes in either the home phone number or the cell or alternate/emergency phone number for your child. Also, be sure to respect that this information be forwarded to the transportation staff.

**Student Responsibilities**

Students are to board their bus/cab only at their assigned stop. They must arrive at their designated pick-up location 3 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time, and remain at least 15 minutes after the pick-up time, before calling the transportation staff at 314.721.8057 for advice on alternative transportation. If your child is not at the bus/cab stop a full 5 minutes before the scheduled arrival time and does not wait for the full 15 minutes after the scheduled time and misses the bus or taxi, it will be your responsibility to get him or her to school. The transportation staff does not send alternative transportation in such instances. All students must be visible at their assigned location and have a tag. Also, all students must get off at their assigned stop on their route unless an exception was granted by VICC prior to the pan. For the safety of all children, students must obey general safety rules as well as those established by the district they are attending. You should obtain a copy of your school’s bus regulations and review them with your child.

**PARENT Responsibilities**

Transportation may be augmented with traditional taxi cabs in the daily operation of transporting students. These individual providers will be under the direct supervision of our service providers, St. Louis County/Yellow Cab and Laclede Cab. All drivers will be certified to the Missouri Department of Education by VICC.

**Parent Responsibilities**

If you normally meet your child at the bus stop, be sure he or she understands what to do if you are not there. If the transportation route to which your child is assigned does not operate in a timely manner, or other problems arise, please communicate with the VICC transportation office. It is important for parents to keep the school as well as the district contact person informed of any changes in either the home phone number or the cell or alternate/emergency phone number for your child. Also, be sure to respect that this information be forwarded to the transportation staff.

**If You Move**

If you move during the summer, call the principal at the county school your child has been or will be attending to update your district’s contact person immediately. All districts have central office personnel who work during the summer to handle such situations. Please remember, it takes up to 10 working days to make a transportation change. If you are going to move during the academic year, be sure to notify your building principal or district contact person at least two weeks before the move. If you move outside of your school’s attendance area, you will need to request a transfer to a school in a new attendance area, or else provide your own transportation in order to remain at your original school.

**General Safety Rules**

• Obey the driver promptly.
• Smoking, eating or drinking are not permitted.
• Remain seated until the bus arrives at your stop.
• Refrain from using loud or obscene language.
• Do not damage the bus/cab in any way.
• Do not stand on the bus/cab or out of the windows.
• Do not exercise, lean, legs, hold or hands out of the windows.
• Do not tamper with the emergency door except in the case of a real emergency and only under the instruction of the driver.
• Folding, unfolding, or otherwise load disturbances are not permitted.
• Avoid the Danger Zones next to the bus where the driver can’t see you. This distance is approximately 10 feet around all sides.
• If you cross the street after you get off the bus, wait for the driver’s signal to you and then cross in front of the bus.
• Don’t try to pick up something dropped near the bus because the driver might not see you.
• Remember that other motorists don’t always stop for a stopped school bus. Exercise caution when getting on and off the bus.
• Never run back to the bus, even if you dropped or forgot something.

**Student Safety**

Help us protect your child as he or she travels to and from school. Certain types of children’s clothing can create a hazard as your child exits the bus. Especially dangerous are jacket and vest shoulder straps, long backpack straps, long scarfs or any other loose clothing. Such clothing could become caught in the bus handrail, door or other bus equipment as the child exits the bus. Please take the time to check your child’s clothing. Also talk with your child about the behavior and safety rules.

**TREPASS Policy**

To bolster the safety of students riding buses to school, the Board adopted the following trespass policy: “Trespass occurs when anyone boards a school bus without prior approval from VICC. Any VICC-designated person (including students), contractor or other staff whose job responsibilities require him/her to be on a school bus shall be authorized and shall not be considered trespassing. Only with prior approval from VICC or a contractor may a parent, guardian or member of the general public be allowed on a bus at any time.” Be sure to review the transportation section in the Voluntary Transfer Program Handbook (pages 8-17) with your child before the start of school. To get a handbook, please call 314.721.8422, ext. 3012, or visit our website: www.choicecorp.org.