

Building Minds...
Changing Lives

ADVANCEMENT JOURNAL
AUGUST 2024



THANK YOU TO OUR RETIRING USI BOARD MEMBERS

We would like to recognize, thank, and congratulate three individuals who recently retired from the United Schools of Indianapolis Board of Directors. USI acknowledges and extends its gratitude to Mike Mason, Mike North, and Madeline Priest for their dedicated service to the network and notable contribution to USI's mission of providing a high-quality education to families in underserved communities of Indianapolis.

Mike Mason served with distinction on the Board from 2018 to 2024, providing invaluable insights and perspectives to the Academics Committee. Mike recently retired as Senior Vice President, Lilly Connected Care and Insulins for Eli Lilly & Company.

Mike North served with distinction on the Board from 2017 to 2024, providing invaluable insights and perspectives to the Finance Committee and as Treasurer of the Board of Directors. Mike is a Partner at Katz, Sapper & Miller.

Madeline Priest served with distinction on the Board from 2021 to 2024, providing invaluable insights and perspectives to the Finance Committee. Madeline is a Managing Consultant at Bondry Consulting.



Building Minds...Changing Lives

GALA RAISES \$100,000

The *Building Minds...Changing Lives* Gala was held on Thursday, May 2nd at Vision Academy Riverside. We greatly appreciate the Zink Family Foundation's patronage of our schools and students and willingness to be the event's presenting sponsor. The event's cocktail party was sponsored by Katz, Sapper & Miller.

The highlight of the evening was a presentation of USI's "Making a Difference" Community Service Award to Marianne Glick for her community leadership during the past 40 years. **Proceeds from the event exceeded \$100,000, which will be used to enhance the programming at our schools.**

During the event, the Excellence in Education Awards were presented to honor teachers and staff whose actions and positive attitudes result in student academic growth and proficiency. The Excellence in Education Award was started in 2010 when Anne

and David Knall made a substantial contribution to establish a fund recognizing teachers that show passion and demonstrate a deep commitment to the schools' mission. Each Excellence in Education Award winner is recognized at the *Building Minds...Changing Lives* Gala and receives a \$2,500 stipend.

Teachers are nominated by their colleagues, and this year, we received a record number of nominations. The 2024 Excellence in Education Awards recipients are (pictured below, from left to right): Keambi Thomas from Avondale Meadows Middle School, Maryanne Woodring from Avondale Meadows Academy, Sydney Smith from Avondale Meadows Academy, Stacey Brown from Vision Academy, and Joshua Horne from Vision Academy.





AMA WELCOMES **AUNYE HOCKETT**

Aunye Hockett has recently transitioned from the Principal at Vision Academy Riverside to the Principal at Avondale Meadows Academy. Aunye was born and raised in Indianapolis, and she was named after French leather goods luxury designer Etienne Aigner, as her name translates to “beautiful gift” in French.

For as long as she can remember, Aunye wanted to be a teacher. One Christmas, she received a chalkboard which she then used to teach daily lessons to her dolls and stuffed animals. She graduated from Lawrence Central High school and studied education at Ball State University. After graduation, she taught 2nd grade at IPS School #22 for one year, then at Pike Elementary for seven years. During this time, Aunye received her master’s in teaching and administration.

In 2014, she was working at a summer camp and had a chance encounter with Ian Yearwood, the Principal at Vision Academy in Riverside, which was set to open that year. After meeting Mr. Yearwood, she agreed to become a “founding teacher” at Vision Academy. In her first year, she taught 3rd graders math, science, and social studies and was named the school’s first Teacher of the Month.

In 2015, Principal Yearwood asked her to consider moving from teaching into administration, and she was named Vice Principal of Vision Elementary. In 2022, Aunye was promoted to the Principal of Vision Academy Elementary School, and in 2024, she was named the Principal at Avondale Meadows Academy. Aunye said that she will miss “her Vision Family” and especially all of the students she came to love.

“ I like to push myself and find new challenges. Avondale Meadows Academy is a bigger school, and working with a new staff and students will be invigorating. ”

**GOOD LUCK TO AUNYE
ON HER NEW ADVENTURE!**



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AVONDALE MEADOWS | VISION ACADEMY

ENHANCING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

USI once again held a summer academic remediation camp in each of its schools. 300 students participated in the camp that made remarkable progress in improving both reading and math scores. For reference, national averages found African American and Latino achievement declined up to 15 points from previous national percentiles in math and 10.5 in reading. For students that attended summer remediation camp, math scores improved by 8.5%. As for reading scores, camp attendees improved by an average of 8%.

Each summer, the camp has proven to be an effective way to significantly improve reading and math skills by alternating in person and individual tutoring sessions, followed by online group sessions. This camp is an important strategy in helping underperforming students curb summer learning loss.

It costs about \$400 per student to run the camp. We solicit funding from individuals, corporations, and foundations to support this most important program. Last summer, \$75,000 was raised, which provided the

funding for 185 students to attend the camp. **Every \$400 donated provides the funding for another student to attend the camp.**

