

# RICHLAND NORTHEAST HIGH SCHOOL

## ANNUAL REPORT 2009

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From the RNE School Improvement Council  
Ralph Schmidt, Principal  
Mary Butler, Chair

### Introduction

Each year, Richland Northeast High School and the RNE School Improvement Council review the school's goals and achievements, then create an annual report for the Cavalier Family and community. Publication of an annual report is mandated by the Education Finance Act of 1977, the Education Improvement Act of 1984, and the Elementary and Secondary Academic Act (Act 135) of 1993.

The 2009 Annual Report, presented here, gives parents and the school community an overview of RNE's achievements during the 2008 – 09 school year and updates the goals set in 2007 – 08. We welcome your response.

### From the principal

We are wrapping up another year during which I'm pleased to report that we've moved from success to success, measurable in any number of ways. My favorite is this: our students enjoy coming to school. They are engaged in their classes. They smile. We see education at RNE as a partnership between teachers and students, in which faculty and staff strive to model the behavior, can-do spirit, and attitude toward life-long learning that we hope to instill in our children.

Along with our reputation as a diverse and creative learning community, we also are known for our Cavalier Family spirit, which this year was tested by the loss of two of our most beloved faculty members. Like our triumphs, our sorrows draw us closer together and help us teach the value of mutual support in times of need.

It goes without saying that in the coming year we will continue to pursue our ultimate goal of molding our students into the educated, productive, happy citizens of tomorrow.

Regards,  
Ralph Schmidt

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## And . . .

Horizon Senior Connie Ding won the Hollingsworth Scholarship at Furman University. The total value of the scholarship exceeds \$100,000 over four years.

Horizon Senior Hannah Bise won a Certificate of Merit from The Columbia Scholastic Press Association, a national student press organization sponsored by Columbia University.

Horizon Senior Samantha Disharoon won a full scholarship to Presbyterian College.

Palmetto Center for the Arts Visual Arts Senior Zeb Virkus won a 2009 – 2010 Congress-Bundestag Scholarship, for a full year of study in Germany.

Freshman Walter “A. C.” Reed played in the Harbour Town Cup, a pro-am tournament. His coach/caddy was Bobby Collar, RNE's head golf coach and a special ed teacher.

Elaine Sudduth was the April recipient of Richland Two's Culture of Excellence award.

iLink teacher Charles Vaughan won first place for poster presentation during Graduate Student Day at USC. He focused on how Web 2.0 technology affect collaboration in a tenth grade Global Studies class. His co-researchers were his third-period iLink Honors Global Studies II students.

## Mission statement

Richland Northeast High School, in partnership with the community, will ensure challenging academic opportunities that advance positive individual growth and prepare responsible global citizens. We believe that:

- Every member of the school community has a responsibility to maintain a safe environment.
- Every student can achieve academic success in an appropriately rigorous academic program.
- Every student can develop competence in the areas of technology, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, communication and teamwork.
- Every student must be responsible and accountable for his or her own learning and actions.
- Every member of the school community should contribute to an environment that fosters mutual respect.
- Every member of the school community has a responsibility to be civically engaged in the local and global community.
- Every student can become artistically literate.
- Every student has the opportunity to choose from a variety of extracurricular and community service activities that will encourage growth outside the classroom setting.
- Every student can achieve a high level of health and well-being.

## Goals and objectives

The Richland Northeast High School faculty and administration are continuing to implement the school's five-year improvement plan. The plan identifies three overall goals:

- Reduce the achievement gap in test scores between minority and Caucasian students
  - Ease the transition to high school for Freshmen and military students
  - Move toward implementation of the Small Learning Communities model
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## RNE by the numbers

**\$8,668,018:** amount of scholarship money awarded to Seniors in 2008

**\$7838:** amount spent per pupil

**17,100+:** number of cans collected in 2008 by students for HOPE for the Holidays

**26:** number of Seniors honored by the Columbia Urban League Young and Gifted Program in 2008

**43:** number of AP Scholars, Scholars with Distinction, Scholars with Honor, and National Scholars in 2008

**90:** number of teachers with advanced degrees

**32:** number of National Board Certified Teachers

**104:** number of 2008 graduates eligible for LIFE scholarships

**3:** number of National Merit Finalists in 2009

**4:** number of National Achievement Finalists and Semifinalists in 2009

**18:** number of consecutive years that our Model UN won a first-place award at the National Model UN Conference

**4:** number of times in the past nine years that the American High School Theatre Festival chose RNE's Theatre Department to represent the U.S. at Scotland's Edinburgh Fringe Festival

**1:** number of other Midlands high schools that made Newsweek's top 1,000 four times

**The only Richland Two high school** that made Newsweek's best 1,000 list four times in a row

**The only Midlands high school** with an arts conservatory magnet

**The only Midlands high school** with a convergence media program

**The only Midlands high school** named a Creative Ticket National School of Distinction

**The only Midlands high school** offering more than two dozen AP courses

Ten Seniors were named USC Aiken Scholars: Stephan Albrecht, Kyle Brown, Carson Burney, Amber Cheslak, Ladeidre Harmon, Mitch Henry, Phabian Mascutto, Regan Mercer, Allison Minsk, and Chaine Turner.

Sharon Owens and Anne Richardson each won 2008 Sparkleberry grants. Richardson's grant will lower costume expenses for the dance and vocal music programs in Richland Two and provide lesson plans and assessment that address the South Carolina Visual and Performing Arts Dance Standards. Owens' grant — "I Podcast, You Podcast, We All Podcast, and Students Learn" — enables four teachers of 9th graders to podcast review lessons for their students using the new Blackboard system in hopes of improving their students' passing rate. In addition, Sharon Owens received an RNE Education Foundation grant for two Smart Airliner slates to use with the Smartboard and a Books-a-Million National Grant of books on digital photography, Photoshop techniques, animation, video editing, and fashion photography.

Kim Johnston was the only teacher selected from South Carolina to participate in the summer Folger Shakespeare Institute for Teachers workshop in Atlanta.

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Senior Philip Thomas was selected by the Richland County Public Library to have his work published in *Kids in Print*, a collection of stories, poems, and art.

Mary Catherine Newman's artwork was part of the Art Teacher Invitational Show at Columbia College.

Science teacher Kimberley Norris-Jones was selected to be in Who's Who this year in two categories: Education and Military.

Two of Angela Randle's CATE classes participated in the U.S. Department of the Treasury's fall 2008 National Financial Literacy Challenge, competing against more than 75,000 high school students nationwide. Junior Gervon Sligh scored in the top one percent, winning a National Financial Literacy Award medal. Ten other RNE students scored in the top 25 percent: Jabari Alston, Karen Ekeh, Alaina Graves, Alexander Greene, Diamond Jackson, Raymond Jones, Dariane McClerklin, Bradley Spell, Tiesha Staley-Fogle, and Christopher Williams. All were in Mrs. Randle's Business and Personal Finance class.

Craig Duensing, director of PCA Vocal Music, served as guest clinician for the Lancaster School District.

For the third year running, Martin Gallery, in Charleston, presented a show of 22 works by PCA Visual Arts students.

### **RNE Student Government brings home the gold**

RNE's Student Government won the Gold Award at the South Carolina Association of Student Councils. The students received the highest award for all the activities they sponsored during the school year. They also won three individual awards for outstanding projects completed this school year.

Representing RNE at the conference were Amanda Belton, Rob Borucki, Joe Brook, Caleb Brown, Senna Desjardins, Jonathan Franklin, Emily Padget, Nick Tafel, Jarvius Tisdale, Brendane Tynes, Kelly Wiley, and Evy Zamora.

### **RNE artists sweep statewide Scholastic Art Competition**

Once again, Richland Northeast art students took top awards at the South Carolina Scholastic Art Competition. This year, RNE students won a total of 12 awards — putting RNE among the schools with the highest number of winners.

Palmetto Center for the Arts Senior Lyla Shlon won four of the awards: a Gold Key for her overall art portfolio, the American Vision and Voices Award for her painting "Substance Abuse," a Silver Key for her painting "Rodenstock One," and an award for her drawing "Nine." Allison Minsk, also a PCA Senior, took two awards: a Gold Key for her art portfolio and an award for her painting "Pasture Mates."

Richland Northeast's three Gold Key and American Vision winners advanced to the National competition.

### **PCA writers win three top SC Young Poets prizes**

Richland Northeast's Palmetto Center for the Arts Literary Arts students took three of the five prizes in the statewide South Carolina Young Poets Prize competition, hosted by the South Carolina Poetry Initiative.

Overall, fifty poets submitted more than 150 poems. Senior William Dye won Grand Prize and \$100. Junior Emily Padget won First Place and \$75. Freshman Geoffrey Corvi won an Honorable Mention and \$25. Barbara Thomson, director of the PCA Literary Arts program, is their teacher.

The winning poems will be published in the next issue of *Yemassee*, a University of South Carolina literary journal.

### **Twelve art students, two teachers win at SC State Fair**

Twelve RNE art students won awards at the South Carolina State Fair this year. In addition, RNE visual arts teachers Mary Catherine Newman and Catherine Trosclair tied for the High School Teacher Award, given to the teacher with the most student winners.

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### **PCA Theatre sweeps Theatre Association Festival awards**

PCA Theatre students Janel Bess, Bianca Davis, Crystal Stewart, Rashida Beach, Jasmine James, Raamon Bryant, Whitney Sullivan, Kelly Gibbons, Yotum Almor, Jalissa Fulton, Torron Grimes, Chandler Weinecke, Hermon Whaley, Jasmin Wilson, Sherdan Covington, Trey King, Jordan Jones, Lisa Houck, Morgan Grooms, Alexis Mercado, Catherine Ann Taylor, Karli Wells, Katie Lott, Dawn Bussell, Madeline Warrington, Abbie Pearman, and Tyne Freeman competed at Palmetto Dramatics Association/South Carolina Thespians Festival, taking first place in the original play, short film, duet acting, solo musical, ensemble theatre, and original monologue, competitions, superiors in production and acting, second place in ensemble and readers theatre, and third place in solo acting. In addition, five PCA Theatre students were chosen to compete at the International Thespian Festival, in Lincoln, Neb.

### **Padget is first runner up in regional Poetry Out Loud contest**

Junior Emily Padget was the first-place runner-up in the Poetry Out Loud Midlands Regional Competition. Representing Richland Two, Padget competed against contestants from 18 South Carolina counties. She read “No Coward’s Heart Is Mine,” by Emily Bronte, and “Planetarium,” by Adrienne Rich. Padget is a student in two of RNE’s magnet programs, Palmetto Center for the Arts Literary Arts and Horizon.

### **National Symphony taps José Carrión for teacher fellowship**

The Richland Northeast orchestra director spent four weeks last summer in Washington, DC, with the National Symphony Orchestra, which chose him for its summer Teacher Fellowship. Carrión, a candidate for a Master’s in Performance at the University of South Carolina and associate principal bassist of the South Carolina Philharmonic, was nominated by the South Carolina Arts Commission and was the only music teacher in the state selected for this individually designed program.

### **Model UN places third at Nationals**

Our Model UN team won the second place research award and third place team award at the National Model UN Conference in New York; 150 teams from around the world competed.

### **The State features four PCA poets**

The State selected four poems by PCA Literary Arts poets for inclusion in its National Poetry Month issue: William Dye’s “Six Ways of Looking at a Fallen Tree Trunk”; Ben Catoe’s “art”; Ashley Cohen-Burnell’s “My South”; and Geoffrey Corvi’s “When Sorrow Comes to You.”

Lynn Washington did two presentations at the Magnet Schools of America Conference — one with Ralph Schmidt, RNE’s principal, on publicizing core values through the broadcast program. PCA Dance Director Dr. Anne Richardson did a presentation on how PCA Dance students are using podcasting.

PCA Literary Arts, through its partnership with USC’s Split P Poetry program, presented a session at the South Carolina Book Festival. It was the festival’s only poetry-writing session just for high school writers, and PCA Literary Arts was the only high school group to have its own session.

Our ninth annual HOPE for the Holidays service project ended with a record number of donations: 17,176 cans of food, 149 coats, 161 people (61 families) adopted, \$1100 to send two children to Camp Kemo, and 125 new toys for Palmetto Children’s Center for Cancer and Blood Disorders. Student co-chairs were LaQunya Baker and Chelsea Eversmann; Kim Sanders was faculty advisor.

A poem by PCA Literary Arts Junior Sara Simpson won second place in the Carl Sandburg Lincoln Poetry Contest for 9th – 12th graders.

A poem by Barbara Thomson, PCA Literary Arts director, won second place in The South Carolina Poetry Initiative’s 2009 Single Poem Contest.

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**Richland School District Two**  
**Richland Northeast High School**  
A Twice-Recognized Blue Ribbon School  
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Ralph Schmidt, principal

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## About the Richland Northeast School Improvement Council

### Who we are:

- A group of parents, teachers, students, administrators, and community representatives working to improve programs and conditions at RNE
- State law requires that each middle and high school have its own SIC

### What the SIC does:

- Meets monthly
- Prepares the Annual Report to Parents
- Advises the principal
- Co-sponsors, with the Education Foundation, the annual Fresh Start Breakfast for new parents
- Helps plan RNE's annual Beautification and Clean-up Day

### When we meet:

- Meetings are open to the public and take place on the second Thursday of each month during the school year at 6:30 p.m. in the Main Office Conference Room. Check the online school calendar

### More information:

- Mary Butler, SIC chair
- Margaret Schilit, RNE assistant principal, [maschilit@richland2.org](mailto:maschilit@richland2.org)