



THE LOOP

Virginia Beach Friends School Alumni Newsletter: September 2021



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

BY: ALEX DWORETZKY (2014)

CAMERON HOW: Class of 2016

The Virginia Beach Friends School has a long list of notable alumni with successes that run the gamut. For every VBFS alumni, success means something different. The common threads in these differences for all Friends School students, past or present, are the Friends Testimonies (Simplicity, Peace, Integrity, Community, Equality, and

Stewardship). In the end, regardless of which Testimony speaks to you more than another, it's the Community testimony that forever binds all Friends School alumni. For Cameron How, class of 2016, it's this idea of community that sustains him to this day.

In speaking with Cameron, one can instantly tell his philosophy toward life is exemplified by a Quaker approach. Cameron embodies and imbues S.P.I.C.E.S. in every community he embraces. It all started for Cameron in the first grade when he was attending a local public school that prided itself on a disciplinary system guided by apples and trees. If a child misbehaved, an apple was removed from the tree denoting the child's misbehavior (the fallen apple). He told his younger brother Tristan, who eventually attended Friends School as well, "Just keep your head down, stay inside your own space, and you will thrive in school." Cameron's parents both quickly agreed, it wasn't how they wanted their children educated.

Fortunately, for Cameron and his brother, their parents found Friends School. Before attending VBFS, Cameron was considered introverted. However, after his first day of school at Friends, the introvert disappeared leaving an extrovert excited to talk about his experiences at school. Finally, Cameron found a school where he could express his whole self through various outlets like art, music, and athletics. Cameron referred to the school as "inspiring this divine spark of Quakerism" in every one of its students, especially himself.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT CONT.

While at VBFS Cameron was an exemplary student, both academically and athletically. He reflected on Teacher Steve, a middle school science teacher, who at the time coached the middle school basketball team. Teacher Steve, in the wonderful VBFS tradition of trying to field an athlete with all students regardless of ability, encouraged Cameron to sign up for the team despite never having played organized sports. This experience totally transformed Cameron's high



school life. Basketball gave him a voice in Middle and High School that he hadn't had before. It was through basketball that Cameron was pushed outside his normal comfort zone. Ultimately, Cameron would go on to be a critical part of the Friends School athletic program earning a starting spot on the varsity squad all four years of high school. He saw basketball as a core identity marker, and he thrived in this space. Cameron's success on the court was mirrored by his success in the classroom. At the end of his years at Friends School, he graduated with a 3.98 Grade Point Average, along with being the valedictorian of his class and a member of the National Honor Society.

After VBFS, Cameron found his way to The College of William and Mary graduating in 2020 with a major in philosophy, and a minor in management and organizational leadership. Cameron's impact at William and Mary reflects the same life-long passion for learning that was instilled in him while at Friends School. Upon graduating college, Cameron received the Sullivan Award, an award given to only two seniors at graduation in "recognition of influence for good, taking into consideration such characteristics of heart, mind, conduct, and demonstrating a spirit of love and helpfulness to others" (William and Mary). At VBFS, we call this the "Let Your Life Speak" Award. Clearly, Cameron impacted the William and Mary community in the same way he impacted Friends School, by letting his life speak for itself.

Cameron How truly has the propensity to embrace and thrive in any community to which he belongs. This is what makes him the embodiment of a Virginia Beach Friends School Alumni. We are very proud to call him one of our own, and we thank him for his inspiration! Cameron currently works for Deloitte as a Human Capital Business Analyst and is actively working on a federal human resources implementation for the Department of Commerce.



CAMP RECAP

Summer with Friends was wildly successful this season. Week 9 had the largest turnout all summer with a total of 62 campers registered! Camp themes included All Ball, STEAM, Under the Sea, Culinary Creations & more. VBFS has greatly benefitted from this revenue stream, and we are happily introducing more and more families to our academic program through Summer with Friends. A huge shout out goes to our Athletic & Special Programs Director, Jason Weast!

PLAYGROUND

The relocation and refresh of the VBFS playground has been completed. THANK YOU to Meeting! We couldn't have done this project without their support. Look for young smiling faces enjoying the updated greenspace this Fall!



GARDEN REFRESH

Teacher & Master Gardener, Rachel Griffith, has been hard at work giving our garden area a facelift. Come check it out, as it looks nothing short of phenomenal. Our Garden Program will be in full swing and we are thrilled to provide additional outdoor learning.



DEI

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION

School Committee members attended a Virginia Association of Independent Schools workshop. A large focus was on a professional development concept referred to as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). The curriculum at VBFS naturally aligns with DEI simply based on the importance of the Quaker testimonies. VBFS strives to continue placing emphasis on our values based education that stems directly from our relationship with Meeting.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment rests near 155 students. More inquiries and applications are expected during the first few weeks of school. A majority of our programs are at full capacity with waitlist options, as we are mindful of our selective growth.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Follow us on social media outlets. VBFS has a very active presence with daily postings about school happenings.

Instagram: @friendsschoolvb

Be sure to join our Facebook Alumni Page: "Virginia Beach Friends School Alumni"