

The BUZZ at

BAAM

Building African American Minds

Fall
2022

Welcome Back to BAAM: Xavier Rahim

This summer, Xavier Rahim joined the BAAM Staff as a member of our Workforce Development team.

Xavier is a native of Easton and was part of the first class of BAAM students. We

are so pleased to have him back! Xavier worked his way through Chesapeake College, some of our readers may recognize him from Scossa in Easton, and



then on to Salisbury University where is just a few credits from graduation. In addition to assisting Mrs. Daly and Dr. Bell in developing the plans and curriculum for the Workforce Development program, Xavier can be found at the BAAM Center in the afternoons working directly with our middle school students. Our hope when BAAM was founded by Derick and Dina Daly was that our students would achieve success and stay in the area to serve as models and mentors to the next generation. Xavier is the embodiment of that hope. As we say, **“BAAM has no alumni, it’s BAAM for life.”**

New BAAM Programming

Youth Workforce Development Program

As we posted in our last newsletter, Dr. James Bell, noted Eastern Shore educator and school administrator, joined our team as the Director of Instruction, Academic Support and Community Wellness. In addition to serving as BAAM’s liaison to the Talbot County Public Schools, Dr. Bell will be developing our new *Youth Workforce Development Program*. This program, using “seed” funding provided by HMS Host and the Truitt Foundation, will create a curriculum centered around workforce readiness in the 21st century. Aspects of this program are currently being introduced to our middle school students with an eye to future expansion to the wider community to include an adult workforce development component. As a first step in this process, Dina Daly, BAAM Executive Director, Dr. Bell, and Cassandra Vanhooser, Talbot County Economic Development and Tourism Director, are planning a business resource fair for current business owners and anyone interested in learning more about starting a business. The event is scheduled for on Saturday, January 21, 2023 at 10:00 a.m. at the BAAM Athletic Center.

Your Wellness Matters!

BAAM has received two significant grants from the Talbot County Health Department and the Talbot Family Network (https://talbotcountymd.gov/talbot_family_network) for *Your Wellness Matters!*, a physical and mental health support program for youth, adults and families who are most likely to be at-risk of experiencing factors associated with poor health. This initiative will provide information and actionable steps to develop a healthy lifestyle. The work associated with *Your Wellness Matters!* will be planned and executed by the newly formed BAAM Community Wellness Council (BCWC) co-chaired by Dr. Bell and renowned Talbot County oncologist, and BAAM Board Member, Dr. Mary DeShields. The BCWC has invited a number of local human services and education groups to assist with this project. The first step in this program focuses on intensive training for “peer facilitators” that will deliver a variety of health-related messages focused on preventive care and healthy choices. *Your Wellness Matters!* is part of the Health Disparities program sponsored by the Talbot County Health Department. Currently we have two community facilitators (a mother-daughter team) in the training program. Other groups involved in this effort include the Mid Shore Community Mediation Center and Choptank Community Health.

Save These Dates!

BAAM will be sponsoring several community-wide events in the coming months. Check our website www.baaminc.org for details and up-to-date information. All events will be held at the BAAM Athletic Center.

BAAM Christmas Party **DECEMBER 20, 2022**

This year the Party will be held in association with Chesapeake Multi-Cultural Resource Center.

Talbot County Business Resource Fair **JANUARY 21, 2023**

An event for small business owners and entrepreneurs.

BAAM Presents — A Night of Elegance **SATURDAY, FEB. 11, 2023**

Live music, dancing and fun. Ticket information will be available soon.

BAAM Career Fair **FEBRUARY 25, 2023**

BAAM Fest Saturday
MAY 13, 2023, 12-4 PM
Moton Park, Easton



Architectural rendering of the BAAM Academic Center, courtesy of RAUCH, Inc.

BAAM Academic Center in the News!

The soon to be built BAAM Academic Center was on the front page of the Star Democrat on October 16, 2022. The occasion was the approval by the Maryland Board of Public Works of two bond bills totaling over a million dollars to assist in the construction of the Academic Center. These bills included approvals for \$800,000 allocated by Governor Larry Hogan as well as a \$250,000 grant requested by State Senator Addie Eckardt and Delegate Johnny Mautz.

BAAM also received a grant of \$500,000 from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development as part of their Community Legacy Program. These grants were the direct result of sustained effort by Executive Director Dina Daly. All of us at BAAM are so grateful to Dina! As we are sure you are aware, the costs of construction have risen significantly since our first plan for the Academic Center. As a result, while we have exceeded our initial funding goals, we must continue to raise funds to keep up with inflation. Please consider donating to the BAAM Academic Building Fund. You can do so online at <https://baaminc.org>

BAAM ACADEMIC CENTER: Beyond the Drawing Board

With the selection of Willow Construction of Easton, Maryland as our general contractor and with the continued work of RAUCH, Inc. architects, there has been significant progress toward the construction phase of the Academic Building. In mid-October, we submitted our building plans to the Town of Easton. We hope to have a response soon and a date for groundbreaking in January, 2023. Stay tuned to our web page as well as the BAAM Facebook and Instagram accounts for updates.



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BAAM After School Programs

While BAAM has been steadily expanding its services to the community – one program at a time – the heart and soul of BAAM remains our elementary and middle school tutoring work. As planned, we have expanded the BAAM for Girls program to include both 1st and 2nd grade. We expect to build out the program yearly up to 5th grade. There are currently six 1st graders and 10 2nd graders in the program. Additionally, we have ten 5th graders acting as aides to the program. The curriculum for the girls includes mathematics and computer coding (using the Code Monkey program), Tai Chi as part of our health rotation, handwriting practice (1st grade) and vocabulary building with writing exercises (2nd grade). The highlight of each week is often the Wednesday reading event with Ms. Michelle Beerley and Willie the Labrador.



Mentoring takes many forms at BAAM. Dr. Bell with middle schooler Darnell Sewell.



Our new 1st grade BAAM boys class.

The elementary school boys program currently has 38 members (grades 1-5). Two years of CoVid reduced our numbers in what is now our 3rd and 4th grade cohorts, but with robust 1st and 2nd grade class sizes we are slowly working our way back up to the standard enrollment of 40-50 students. Middle school BAAM continues to grow and now has 23 members.

Our “usual” after-school programming for the boys elementary school program focuses on academics and social and emotional learning (SEL) skills, including a large component of public speaking. As part of the SEL facet, we review our students work both in the classroom and at BAAM. Each Thursday we hand out Student of the Week Awards for attendance, academics and behavior. At the end of the school year we present Student of the Year Awards for the students with the most weekly awards. Finally, while most of our road trips occur in the summer months, we also provide opportunities to see new things during the school year. This November, a group of BAAM students

attended the Mid-Shore STEM Festival at Chesapeake College.

Under the guidance of Dr. Bell, we are in the process of restructuring the curriculum for the middle school program. The areas that are under development include: Business and financial literacy, STEM projects and culinary arts. In addition, we will begin a chess module on November 15th. This semester’s book study is “Rich Dad, Poor Dad for Teens” by Robert Kiyosaki.



Recent winners of the Student of the Week Awards (from left): Chase Powell (5th), Carter Clark (4th), Cayden Lewis (3rd), Jaylon Thomas (2nd), Walker Greene (1st). Also pictured are Board President Bill Ryan and Program Director Deborah Short.



BAAM girls at work in the classroom.

Summer Program Wrap Up and Future Plans

As noted in our summer newsletter, a busy BAAM Summer Camp program was planned and we are happy to report that it was successfully executed. One of our goals each summer is to provide opportunities for our campers to experience the wider world. Camp trips this summer were too numerous to list here but included the Smithsonian African-American Museum, the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, Oriole Park at Camden Yards and adventure games at the Tardigrade obstacle course and Sandy Springs Park. Along with our weekly trips to the Murphy Pool at Moton Park, we partnered with the Sink or Swim (SOS) program (<https://sossinkorswim.org>) to provide swimming lessons to our students. Late in August we returned to Camp Pecometh in Centreville for a full weekend of family camping, swimming and fishing.



BAAM Summer Camp on and in the water at Le Gates Cove in Easton.

Even though the Chesapeake Bay is all around us, many of our BAAM students have had only limited experience on the water. The evident joy they exhibit on the occasions we have accessed the Bay motivated us to find ways to broaden this experience. Currently, BAAM is working with a consortium of local organizations to develop an “on the water” program tailored to the needs and



Captain Lloyd Devigne and Mariah Pitts at the helm of the “Estelle Marie” during our visit to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum.



Summer camp trip to the University of Maryland Horn Point Laboratory in Cambridge.

experience levels of our children. At the BAAM Open House, held just before school opening in August, we distributed a survey asking for input on the activities of most interest to our children and their parents. The most popular choices were swimming, canoeing/kayaking and fishing. BAAM is in the process of developing a program along these lines – to start in the summer of 2023 – to get our kids on the water. If you are interested in supporting this effort, please let us know and also stay tuned for more information.