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# IN | SIGHT

*A Newsletter from Bishop John T. Walker School for Boys*

SUMMER | 2020

EDUCATION IS THE DOOR TO OPPORTUNITY

BISHOPWALKERSCHOOL.ORG

## James Woody's Farewell Message

ADMIN NEWS

**W**hen the Bishop John T. Walker School for Boys (BWS) first opened its doors to students in the fall of 2008, the country was in the throes of the Great Recession—a devastating economic downturn that caused countless people to lose their life savings, jobs, and homes. Tragically, 12 years later, the world is enmeshed in a global pandemic that threatens the health and well-being of millions, straining world economies, and rapidly upending the way we live our daily lives.

In the decade and a quarter between these two cataclysmic moments, the Bishop Walker School became a place of refuge for boys whose lives are often buffeted by treacherous storms, even when the world around them appears peaceful and prosperous.

At BWS, many unsung heroes have worked faithfully and anonymously in the development of the Bishop Walker School and its mission, away from the glare of the spotlight, performing tasks for which they've gained little acclaim. While I am exceedingly grateful for each individual and group that has toiled and sacrificed over these years, I owe a singular debt of gratitude to one person in particular.

**Valerie, my wife of 45 years,** has been—in addition to a keen and generous chronicler of the school's history through her professional photography services—the anchor who has kept me grounded to our mission. She has been a counselor whose advice has been wise, honest, and empathetic; a trusted confidant who has witnessed my disappointments, doubts, and fears with compassion and without judgment; and a cheerleader who, in the face of daunting tasks, always made me feel I was up to the challenge. When I look back across all the special moments, both monumental and mundane, I will see her fingerprints on each one and cherish how she chose to immerse herself so fully in the fulfillment of my calling.

As I conclude my tenure at BWS, I am filled with gratitude for the opportunity to play a part in such an audacious undertaking. I am honored to have gotten to know so many of you, and will think of you often.

The school is on solid footing and I leave it in strong, capable hands. By the grace of God, and with your continued support, BWS will weather this current crisis, just as it withstood the one during which we were launched. The boys who look to us



for refuge are counting on you to provide an anchor that will hold them fast as they cling to their dreams of a future full of promise and possibility. I know their trust is well placed, and look forward to cheering everyone on as you continue the important work that has both inspired and united us.

James R. Woody  
Executive Director & President





# Annual Dinner Provides Critical Funds at the Start of COVID-19 Pandemic

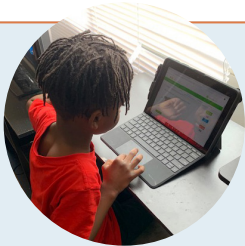


**T**hank you so much to the more than 770 people who attended the Bishop Walker School Annual Dinner on March 5, 2020 at the Washington National Cathedral! Thanks to our incredibly generous Underwriters, Sponsors, and guests, **we raised over \$300,000 on the night of the event. This brings our total raised to date for the 2020 Annual Dinner past a record-breaking \$1 million!** Thank you to the Annual Dinner Committee, whose leadership had such a huge impact on the success of the Dinner. A special thank you to all those who Raised their Paddles in support of the school! *Your largesse has enabled us to continue serving our scholars and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic. We have provided families Chromebook laptops and Giant gift cards, and adapted*

*our programming for distance learning.*

The evening honored our founding Executive Director & President, James R. Woody, during his final year of service to the school. Additionally, *Securing Their Future* campaign co-chairs Tony Parker and John Thorne announced the conclusion of the school's \$6.5 million capital campaign and the naming of the school's campus at THEARC as the **James R. Woody Campus** of the Bishop Walker School. This special honor appropriately reflects James' legacy and his myriad contributions to the school. James concluded the evening speaking of his tenure as founding leader. If you were unable to attend or want to relive the Annual Dinner, you can find photos and video footage at [bishopwalkerschool.org/AD2020](http://bishopwalkerschool.org/AD2020).

*Save the date for next year's gala event on **Tuesday, February 23, 2021!** with the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, The Most Rev. Michael Curry!*



## COVID-19 UPDATE

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have converted our brick and mortar operation into an online learning program nearly overnight. Head of School-elect **Mike Molina** has been working closely with the administrative team to prepare for both summer and the coming school year.

To help families experiencing loss of income (approximately 35% of our families were at risk of food insecurity before this crisis, a figure that could double in coming months), we gratefully accept assistance for families in need, as well as for adapting our programming to social distancing.

Please visit [bishopwalkerschool.org/onlinegiving](http://bishopwalkerschool.org/onlinegiving) or contact Director of Development David A. Shepard at [dshepard@bishopwalkerschool.org](mailto:dshepard@bishopwalkerschool.org) to make a donation.



### HERE'S HOW WE ARE ADAPTING, WHILE BEING MINDFUL OF OUR COMMUNITY'S VULNERABILITIES:

- Faculty is engaging our scholars through distance learning.
- We have insured that all students have daily access to a computer and the internet.
- Scholars receive daily face-to-face instruction, work in small groups, have regular check-ins and bi-weekly video tutoring, and attend virtual chapel.
- Summer Learning Program will be expanded, to make up for loss of classroom learning.
- Support staff and parent ambassadors have conducted wellness checks with current and alumni families.
- THEARC partners (DC Central Kitchen, Martha's Table, Children's National) will continue to distribute food and treat patients.
- Rev. Tim Malone, our Chaplain & Counselor, has delivered approximately \$3,000 in Giant Grocery gift cards to date to our most vulnerable families.



# BLACK HISTORY MONTH



**B**WS celebrated Black History Month several ways this February. First, the BWS Chorus visited **St. Andrew's Episcopal School** (a Maryland school founded by Bishop Walker) to sing during their Black History Month service. Mr. Harris, our Director of Outplacement & Graduate Support, preached. Throughout the month, our wonderful team of librarians featured a curated selection of books about prominent African Americans and encouraged our scholars to explore as many of them as possible.

Black History Month culminated with our annual Black History Month Program in THEARC East. Our Fourth Grade scholars hosted a **Blacks in Wax Museum** in the lobby. Each student chose an important black figure from history or popular culture to research and then act out in a living wax museum. After the Blacks in Wax Museum, all the students attended a special performance by the **Coyabaa Dance Company**, which invited students and teachers to join them on stage.



Roberto Clemente



Tuskegee Airman



Usain Bolt



Bishop John T. Walker

**Blacks  
in Wax  
Museum**



Michael Jackson



Malcolm X



Ray Charles



Emmet Till

## St. Columba's and Reading is Fundamental



**O**ur longtime partners **St. Columba's Episcopal Church** and **Reading is Fundamental** visited our K-2 scholars early this spring. They read African folk stories to the boys, brought African animal-themed snacks, and gave each boy a book of their choosing to take home.





BISHOP JOHN T. WALKER  
SCHOOL FOR BOYS

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NON PROFIT  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
DULLES, VA  
PERMIT NO. 3



LIBRARY



## PUPPET THEATER ENHANCES BWS LIBRARY

Thanks to a generous donor, our team of Volunteer Librarians was able to purchase a puppet theater to enhance story time for our youngest scholars. Before distance learning began, our Kindergarten and First Grade classes enjoyed several puppet shows, including *The Three Little Pigs* and *The Tortoise and the Hare*.



**For more pictures like these, and to read more stories about the Bishop Walker School and its programs, please visit [www.bishopwalkerschool.org](http://www.bishopwalkerschool.org) or follow us on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter**

