



Next Step to Success Weekly Update

A Message from our Executive Director



James Harris

As we enter Week 20, we're excited to share the continued growth of Next Step to Success through an expanding list of community partnerships. We are proud to welcome Brighter Horizons Foundation of Hope and Andre Brown of Spectacular Ink Comics LLC to the NSTS family. Both partners bring creativity, mentorship, and unique opportunities that will add real depth to our programming and open new pathways for our youth to explore their talents and potential.

Please be sure to mark your calendars for our official Ribbon Cutting this Wednesday at 4:00 PM. This special event is an opportunity to tour our facility alongside our Student Ambassadors, meet our amazing staff, students, and community partners, and see firsthand the environment we've built to support youth success.

Guests will also enjoy a delightful food treat prepared by Chef Brittany. We're also excited to offer an opportunity to support NSTS through our Brick Fundraiser. Community members can purchase a commemorative brick on site, helping leave a lasting legacy while directly supporting our students and programs.

The event will be held at our new home, the former "Christ the King School", located at 3401 Tidewater Drive, Norfolk, VA 23509.

Please RSVP via the link: [NSTS Ribbon Cutting Ceremony RSVP](#)

We look forward to celebrating this exciting new chapter with you and sharing all that is possible when a community comes together to support its youth.

James Harris, Executive Director



Introducing our Student of the Week



Omarion

Meet Omarion, 10th-grade student from Granby High School who has been part of the Next Step to Success community for the past year. Known for his sense of humor and love of being around friends, Omarion enjoys English class, gaming in his free time, and listening to music whenever he can. NSTS has become a place where he feels connected, supported, and inspired as he thinks about their future and what success means to him.

1. What is your name and grade? **10th -Granby High School**
2. How long have you been a part of Next Step to Success? **1 year**
3. What do you like most about coming to NSTS? **Seeing my friends**
4. What is one goal you're working on right now? **What I want to major in college**
5. Who inspires you the most, and why? **Coach Nicole**
6. What is your favorite subject in school? **English**
7. What activities or hobbies do you enjoy outside of school? **Gaming**

8. What's your favorite book, movie, or song right now? **Movie: Friday**
9. What does success mean to you? **Feeling like I made it in life.**
10. If you could give advice to another student, what would it be? **Don't let the world restrict your dreams.**
11. What do you see yourself doing in the future (career, dreams, or big goals)? **I would like to be a photographer.**
12. Share a fun fact about yourself most people don't know! **I love to listen to music**
13. Is there someone at NSTS (staff or peer) who has made a big difference for you? **Coach Nicole**
14. If you could describe yourself in three words, what would they be? **Funny, Lazy and Laugh a lot!**
15. What makes you proud of yourself this week? **I have not been in any trouble this week.**

With dreams of becoming a photographer and advice rooted in not letting the world limit your goals, Omarion is focused on finding his path and staying on track. Inspired by Coach Nicole and proud of the progress he continues to make, Omarion defines success as feeling like he truly made it in life. His journey is a reminder that growth happens one step at a time—and that having the right people and support along the way makes all the difference !

NSTS Leadership Insights



Education Update
Carly Gelles

As a reminder, report cards are expected to go home this week or early next week. Once they are available, we encourage families to share a copy with us so we can continue supporting each student's academic progress and goals.

We also want to remind families about our partnership with Tidewater Community College (TCC). Through this program, students have the opportunity to earn four industry-recognized certifications in the restaurant industry, providing valuable skills and credentials that support both college and career pathways. If you would like more information or have questions about the program, please don't hesitate to reach out—I'm happy to share additional details.

Finally, it is scholarship season. We strongly encourage students to actively seek out scholarship opportunities and stay mindful of upcoming deadlines. I am available to support students with scholarship searches, applications, and any other educational needs as students plan for their future.

As always, please reach out to me at cgelles@nextsteptosuccess.org with any concerns you may have to ensure we are meeting your child's academic needs.



Programming Update **Kaelyn Hundley**

This week at Next Step to Success, we were excited to kick off a brand-new partnership with the Chrysler Museum. Our youth had the opportunity to meet the staff they will be working with and begin engaging in creative projects, including designing their own calendars. Each youth created a unique design for every month, showcasing their creativity and individuality.

In addition to our new partnership, some of our youth enjoyed fun and interactive activities with their coaches, such as career bingo and slime making. Our ongoing programs, including basketball and karate, also continued this week, keeping everyone active and engaged.

We hope everyone has a safe and warm weekend!



Operations Update **Muhanma Ernesto Garcia**

Save the Dates

- Wednesday, January 28, 2026 - NSTS Ribbon Cutting Ceremony (4:00pm)
- Wednesday, January 28, 2026 - Family Resource Night (5:30pm)

Follow • Share • Support

Stay connected with Next Step to Success! Follow us on social media for program updates, celebrations, and highlights. When available, we would also appreciate you leaving a Google review to share your family's experience and help other families learn about NSTS.

Weather Advisory & School Updates

Please be advised that an upcoming weather system this weekend may potentially impact school operations and after-school programming next week. At this time, Norfolk Public Schools is closely monitoring the situation. We are taking proactive steps to ensure continuity of learning and clear communication with families. Please continue to review all emails and text messages for the most up-to-date information regarding school schedules and NSTS program operations.

Staying Connected - Daily Updates

To ensure we have all information up to date on a daily basis, please remember to:

- Call the main office at 757-995-2111, or
- Email mgarcia@nextsteptosuccess.org

Thank you for your continued partnership and support!



Bricks That Build Futures



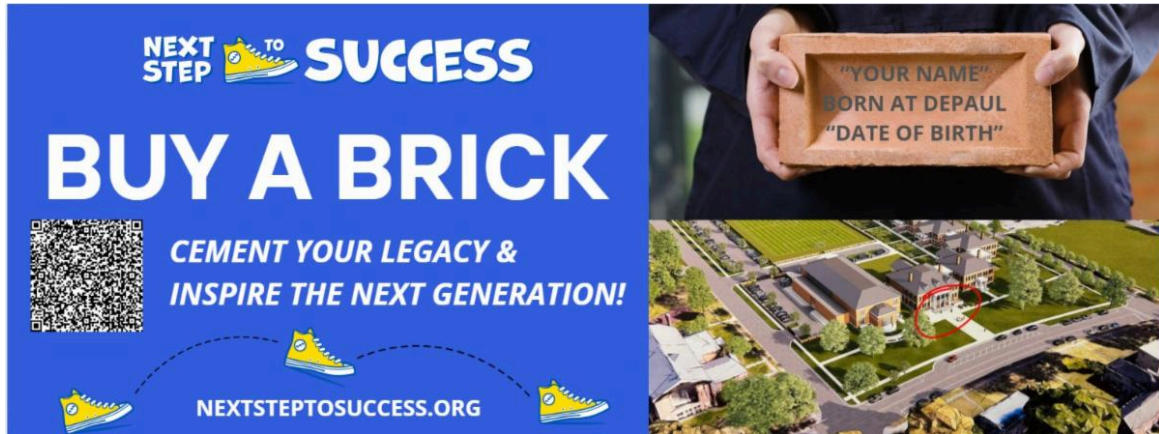
For generations, the St. Vincent de Paul House has stood as a place of compassion, service, and hope in our community. Originally established as a resource for families and individuals in need, the building has long been rooted in the belief that everyone deserves dignity, support, and the opportunity to move forward. Today, that same spirit lives on through Next Step to Success, as the space continues to serve as a foundation for growth, learning, and second chances.

Through the NSTS Brick Fundraiser, we invite our community to become a permanent part of this legacy. Each engraved brick represents a name, a family, a business, or a message of encouragement—laid literally into the path of progress at the St. Vincent de Paul House. Funds raised through this campaign directly support NSTS programming, helping us provide enrichment, mentorship, and life-changing opportunities for youth and families in Norfolk.

The images below offer a preview of the engraved bricks and the location where they will be permanently installed. Bricks will be laid along the walkway at the St. Vincent de Paul House, creating a visible and lasting tribute to the individuals,

families, and supporters who believe in the mission of Next Step to Success. Each brick becomes a meaningful part of the path forward, symbolizing community support and shared commitment to building brighter futures.

Your brick is more than a donation—it's a lasting symbol of belief in our mission and the people we serve. Join us in honoring the past while building the future. Purchase a brick today and leave your mark on a place where the next step toward success begins.



Culinary Corner



From the Coordinator of Culinary Arts, Chef B

Hi Team & Families! 🙌❤️

Chef B and the crew are cooking up another **fun and flavorful week**, and we're excited to share what's on the menu! 😊🔥

✨ This Week's Lineup ✨

- 🍝 **Monday: Classic Lasagna** — cozy, cheesy, and always a hit!
- 🌮 **Tuesday: Chicken Elote Bowls** — bold flavors with a street-corn twist!
- 🍗 **Wednesday: Wings & Wedges** — crispy, savory, and totally crave-worthy!
- 🍲 **Thursday: White Bean Chicken Chili** — hearty, warm, and full of comfort!
- 🍖 **Friday: Tenders & Loaded Mash** — the perfect way to end the week strong!

☀️ **Weather Watch:** We're keeping a close eye on the weather this weekend to make sure everything runs smoothly and the week ahead stays on track. We can't wait to serve up these meals and see everyone enjoy them. Thanks for being such an awesome community—we love cooking for you! ❤️💛

Upcoming Events & Community Updates



Leave Your Mark. Build Their Future.
Buy a Legacy Brick for the St. Vincent de Paul House.

Your brick isn't just engraved—it becomes part of a story. A story of hope, community, and the belief that every young person deserves a strong foundation. Whether you're honoring someone special, celebrating your family name, or spotlighting your business, your personalized brick will live permanently on the new St. Vincent de Paul House campus. Every brick supports the growth of Next Step to Success youth programs, turning your contribution into real opportunities for Norfolk's young people. It's a simple way to leave a legacy—and an unforgettable impact.

[Buy a Brick](#)

NEXT STEP TO SUCCESS

BUY A BRICK

CEMENT YOUR LEGACY & INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION!

[NEXTSTEPTOSUCCESS.ORG](#)

"YOUR NAME"
BORN AT DEPAUL
"DATE OF BIRTH"



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