



Meet The Staff



Charity Peterson
Lead Career & Life Skills Coordinator

**"The Power of Connection:
How GAPS Fosters a Supportive
Learning Environment for
Students Through Alumni and
Community Engagement – Get
the Scoop Inside!"**

Greetings, students, and families! I am Ms. **Charity Peterson, the Lead Career & Life Skills Coordinator** of GAPS. I was born and raised in Chicago, IL, but I moved to IN in 2007. Unfortunately, in 2009, I lost my husband in a hit-and-run accident. As a widow, I raised my two beautiful children, one of whom is now a U.S. Airman and the other recently graduated from high school with honors. I am also an alumna of Purdue Northwest.

I started my career journey with GAPS in October 2022, and since then, I have had the pleasure of connecting with some of the most brave, intellectual, and promising students.

My mission is to educate through life experiences, encourage, and empower students with the highest level of respect and integrity. I am committed to utilizing my educational background in Human Service to help pave a pathway and bridge the GAPS to success for all of our students.

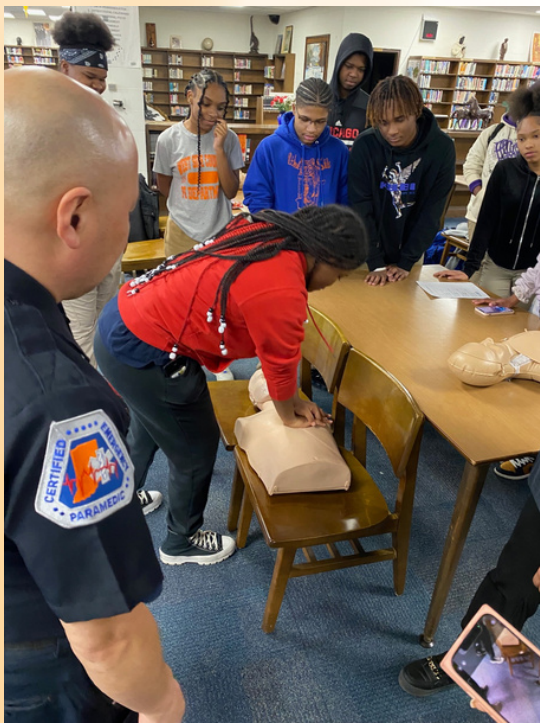
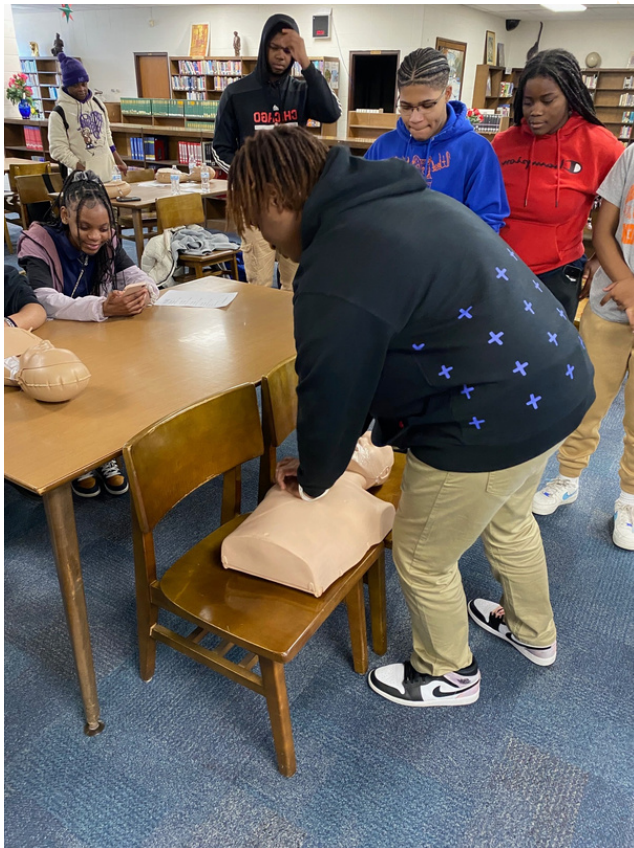


Student Spotlight

Career Exploration

EMS TRAINING - During a recent workshop, students had the opportunity to further learn about the exciting and rewarding field of emergency medical services (EMS). Mr. Serrano, a representative from the Gary Fire Department, brought CPR mannequins to the session so that students could practice hands-only CPR. In addition to the hands-on practice, students also watched informative CPR training videos on YouTube.

This workshop is just one of many in a series that students are completing throughout the month of May. Upon completion of the workshops, students will become certified in CPR, giving them valuable life-saving skills that they can use if ever needed. Through this program, students are gaining a greater understanding of the important role that EMS workers play in our communities, and are learning the skills necessary to make a difference in the lives of others.



WELL!
Done!

Congratulations to the following students for being recognized as **March Students of the Month:**

- *Devin Hassan*
- *LaDarrion Newell*

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Student Spotlight

Social Emotional Learning

A HAPPY PLACE - Social and emotional learning (SEL) is all about understanding and managing our emotions. Mr. Alicea is a great example of how SEL can help us. He shared his life story with GAP students, talking about how he overcame tough experiences from his childhood. Instead of letting those experiences bring him down, he used them to make his life better. That's what SEL is all about - turning tough situations into strengths.

Mr. Alicea's business, "A Happy Place," shows that he wants to make everyone feel good when they're there. This is also what SEL is all about - being kind and understanding to others. When we do this, we can build good relationships with people, and feel better about ourselves too.

By learning about SEL, students can manage their emotions, set goals, be kind to others, make good choices, and more. This helps them do better in school, get along with people better, and feel happier overall. SEL is a great thing to learn, and they can use it throughout their lives!



Congratulations



GAPS Student, *Tierra Taylor* won the **Women's History Essay Contest Winner**.





GAPS Calendar Of Events

DATE	CATEGORY	TOPIC
April 26, 2023	Career Exploration	Careers In The Park Services
May 3, 2023	Career Exploration	LAW Camp
May 4, 2023	Financial Literacy	Rap & Real Estate
May 9, 2023	Career Exploration	Intro To EMS/Fire Service
May 16, 2023	SEL	A Happy Presentation
May 17, 2023	Financial Literacy	Rap & Real Estate

**The Power of Connection:
How GAPS Fosters a Supportive Learning Environment for
Students Through Alumni and Community Engagement**

GAPS is focused on empowering students with the tools, resources, and opportunities they need to succeed. Our commitment to fostering connections between alumni, businesses, and community stakeholders has a huge impact on students' lives. By providing interactive workshops and activities, GAPS ensures that students not only learn valuable information but also have the chance to apply it in real-life situations. This creates a solid foundation for their future career paths.

What's really exciting is that these workshops cover different career pathways, and students are always eager to learn and explore new opportunities. Best of all, many of these career options are available right in their own community, which means they can build a network of support and connections that will last a lifetime.

At GAPS, providing an authentic experience for students is important. That means being receptive to their feedback and interests and tailoring workshops accordingly, within the guidelines of the program. With GAPS, students can follow their passions and interests while gaining the skills and knowledge they need to succeed.

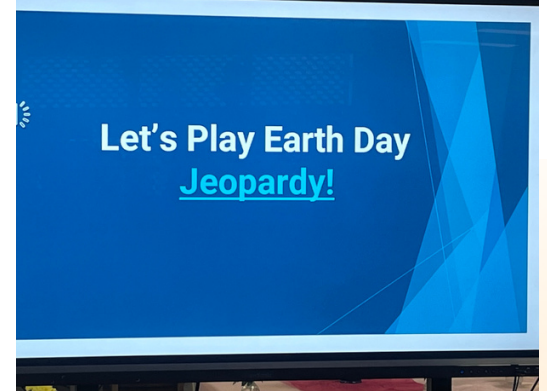




Student Spotlight



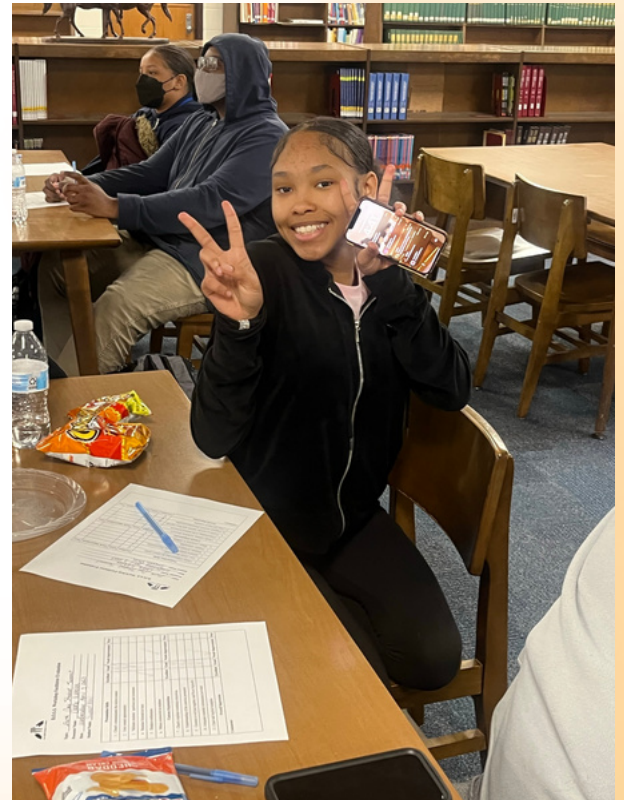
Career Exploration



EARTH DAY: STUDENT SUMMIT - On April 5, 2023, GAPS students were treated to a workshop leader, Dana Wesolek, who shared some fascinating facts about Earth Day. Ms. Wesolek explained that Earth Day is an annual event that takes place on April 22nd to raise awareness about environmental issues and promote environmental protection.

She also talked about the impact that littering and pollution have on the world. Did you know that trash and pollution can harm wildlife, pollute our air and water, and contribute to climate change? That's why Earth Day is so important! It encourages people to think about ways to protect the environment, such as reducing waste, conserving energy, and supporting eco-friendly initiatives.

The goal of Earth Day is to inspire individuals and communities to take action to protect our planet for future generations. By learning about Earth Day and participating in its events, we can all do our part to make the world a better, healthier place for everyone. The students even got to play "Earth Day Jeopardy," which made the learning even more fun!





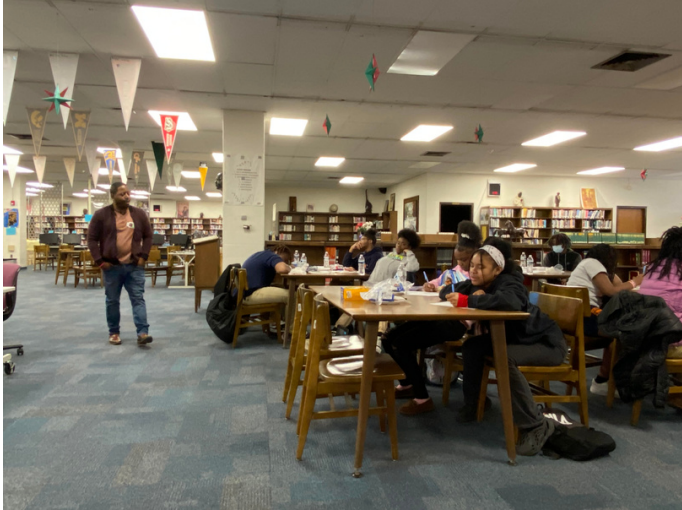
Student Spotlight

Financial Literacy

RAP & REAL ESTATE - Mr. Erik Roberts, a licensed Real Estate Agent and Investor with Coldwell Banker, is also a Rap recording artist who provides corporations with licensed music. He shared some of his music videos on YouTube under the name "Sycosis " with the students.

Encouraging self-reflection, Mr. Roberts asked students to list 10 aspects of their identities. For instance, 1. I am a student, 2. I am a sister, and so on. Additionally, he demonstrated how to find valuable information on life after high school, with a focus on work-life post-graduation, using the website IAsk.ai.

The tone of the session was informative, inviting, and encouraging, providing students with helpful insights and resources.



On March 31, 2023, **Reniya Adams, Nigel Brooks, and Clinton Stokes** received the **Civil Duty Award** special award from Indiana Senator, Eddie Melton. This award honors students who have shown through their words and actions that they have the qualities and characteristics that we want all students to have! How cool is that? Keep showing off those amazing qualities! **We at GAPS are so proud of each of you.**





GAPS Student Workshop Facilitator Request

Are you ready to make a difference in the lives of young people in your community? Join our GAPS program and share your skills, knowledge, and abilities with high school students. As a volunteer, you'll inspire and guide the next generation, helping them develop the skills and confidence to succeed. [Don't wait - sign up now and be a part of something truly meaningful!](#)

2023-2024 West Side Leadership Academy Career Fair Registration Form

Are you passionate about empowering young people to achieve their career goals? Join us for our upcoming fall 2023-2024 Career Fair at West Side Leadership Academy! As a partner, you'll have the chance to share your expertise, network with students, and help shape the future of our community. [Fill out the form today](#), and join us in providing Gary students with the skills, resources, and opportunities they need to succeed!



News Bytes



HOUSE APPROVES 5 MEMBER APPOINTED SCHOOL BOARD FOR GARY

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BORROWING MORE FOR COLLEGE THAN YOU CAN REPAY

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