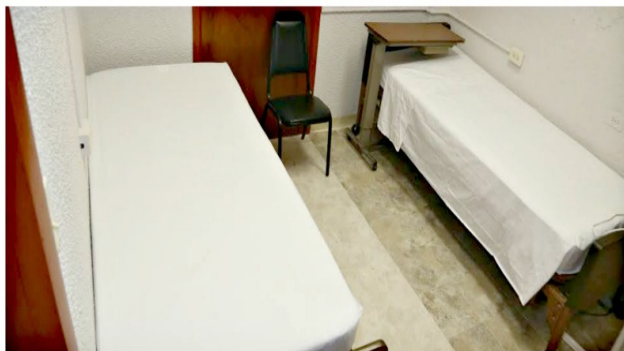


The Virgin Islands Consortium

Charlotte Amalie High School Classes Of 1962 And 1966 Give Back To Alma Mater In Big Way

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ST. THOMAS -- Principal Alcede Edwards of the Charlotte Amalie High School (CAHS) held a dedication ceremony at the school on Thursday, Sept. 22 to recognize the generous contributions of the alumni classes of 1962 and 1966 that afforded the installation of the school's mascot on the gymnasium floor and the full renovation of the nurse's office, respectively, according to the Department of Education.

School administrators, district officials, alumni class members and students gathered in the Career Center for the special ceremony followed by a tour of the two spaces. "You are here because you all have given to your alma mater," Mr. Edwards opened the ceremony by saying. "The Class of 1966 has designed the nurse's office; they have put

all the amenities in there that a sick person can become well just by viewing it," he said with levity. You don't get sick when you go in there; you get well on sight. Thank you so much."

Additionally, Mr. Edwards praised members of the Class of 1962 for their contribution to the enhancement of the school's athletic program. "To the Class of 1962, you guys want to stay young so you decided to put your investment into the gymnasium" he began. "Mr. Wess, class president, decided you've got to know whose house you're in, so he contracted a world-renowned artist in Mr. E'Bas to put down the emblem of the Mighty Chicken Hawks."

Mr. Edwards also acknowledged the CAHS PTA for gifting a driving lawnmower and gas vouchers to the school to aid with year-round maintenance of the grounds.

Harry Daniel, a representative of the Class of 1966, said 12 class members—nine women and three men—refurbished the five-room nurse's office within a 2-1/2 week period during the summer months. He later pointed out that the class had pledged \$6,000 to renovate the space, but came in under budget because members completed the renovations themselves.

"We are honored to have done such a wonderful job for our alma mater," he said during prepared remarks.

Indeed, the work was a wonderful labor of love. From laying down new tiles and applying fresh paint, to installing new office equipment and appliances in the waiting area, kitchen, bathroom and two examination rooms, class members proudly displayed their handiwork during a walkthrough of the office, affectionately dubbed a 'penthouse suite'. A plaque recognizing the Class of 1966 has been affixed to an office door in the renovated space.

School nurse Geraldine A. Walters-Buncome, who worked alongside Class of 1966 members to complete the office before school opened on September 6, expressed her gratitude. "To you, the Class of 1966, I have had the pleasure to work alongside you during the summer," she said. "I thank the Most High for inspiring minds, and we are hoping that the classes to come will surpass what you have done and they will continue the legacy of giving back to the community."

During remarks, Ecedro Wesselhoft, a representative of the Class of 1962 and retired CAHS teacher, passionately outlined his and his classmates' reasons for giving back. "Our main concern is the children of the Virgin Islands, mainly the children of St. Thomas, where we reside," he said. "Whenever we give money or donations to the school, it has to be for the students."

Thomas Brutvan, chairperson of the CAHS physical education department, said, "I want to thank Mr. E'Bas, who did the painting. The kids are excited after seeing the painting [in the gymnasium]. There's a lot of energy there. I also want to thank the alumni Class of 1962 for their persistence. We talked from the end of school last school year and Mr. Wess was persistent in making sure the job was completed."

Chicken Hawks cheerleaders and athletes representing various sports teams greeted ceremony attendees with a receiving line, complete with pompoms and cheers, as they entered the gymnasium to view the freshly airbrushed mascot on the hardwood floors. A

plaque was presented to members of the Class of 1962, 16 of whom attended Thursday's ceremony.

Casmore E'Bas, a CAHS teacher and well-known local airbrush artist, completed the three-panel masterpiece within a three-day period from September 16-18, 2016. The work comprised of the Chicken Hawks logo airbrushed onto the center of the basketball court and under each basket. Mr. E'Bas will donate a portion of his compensation for the project to the school's art program.

Kifani Hendricks-Carey, representing the St. Thomas-St. John office of the insular superintendent, thanked the alumni classes for their generosity. "The Department of Education welcomes any opportunity to partner with alumni and other members of the community to maintain our schools and show the pride that we all have in them," she said. "I commend you for your continued support."

The reigning Miss CAHS Le'Deyjahn Belle, a senior, served as mistress of ceremonies. Members of the CAHS choir sang the National Anthem and Virgin Islands March.