



## Annapolis Arts, Sports, and Leadership Academy (AASaLA)

**ANNAPOLIS ARTS, SPORTS, and LEADERSHIP ACADEMY (AASaLA)**, launched in 2015, is a structured enrichment and leadership program designed to assist students in maintaining their academic standing during the summer months while preparing them for the upcoming school year. Former Anne Arundel County Public Schools Board Member and Administrator, Carlesa Finney, led a team of educators in developing the academic and leadership program for AASaLA. The program engages students in academics and practical experience in the subjects of spelling, reading, writing, math, science, technology, public speaking, and financial literacy, plus the arts and sports, to teach leadership skills, character development, and sportsmanship. Volunteers are integral to the success of AASaLA. They assist in the academic, arts, and sports components; guiding and encouraging participants to do their very best.

In 2015, from June through August, 180 Annapolis and Anne Arundel County students ages 8 to 18 participated in the 10-week program with 3-hour sessions held on Thursdays and Saturdays. Each summer, since the program launch, there has been a steady increase in the number of youth participants and volunteers plus enhancements made to program offerings. The commitment to continue the leadership component throughout the school year has been met through a partnership with the Annapolis Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. During the 2017-2018 school year, up to 50 individuals have participated in weekend program activities including, monthly Leadership Academy sessions, family engagement activities, community outreach activities, and more.

Youth are registered for the program with an understanding that they must commit to the entire program (the league and/or arts and leadership component) and parents/guardians must engage in planned youth and adult activities. The cost of the summer program is \$250 per child. Parents are required to pay \$30 and sponsors support the balance. Students participate in sports and/or activities pertaining to the Arts, academics and leadership development. All students are exposed to historical and current professionals in various fields, engage in hands-on activities, and create one or more exhibits and/or presentations to be displayed or presented in the culminating event during the final week of the program. Students will receive uniforms, an academic packet that includes a leadership book and other supplies, and a certificate, medal or trophy. Nutritious meals and/or snacks are provided for all sessions.

**Men Aiming Higher, Inc. (MAH)**, a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, created in 2009 to mobilize young men ages 8-29 through educational and leadership training, youth development coaching programs, community service projects, strengthen communities, families and businesses through economic development. During its 9-year history MAH has provided 400 youth and young adults Summer jobs through its annual job fair in partnership with Shoppers Food & Pharmacy, served 5,500 families through its annual Thanksgiving food drive, provided life coaching for over 7,000 youth and young adults, and hosted an annual health clinic that has supported over 3,300 people throughout the region.