



R.B. Stall High School

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Media Release

R.B. Stall celebrates Tirzah Nyamutsaka as the 2024 valedictorian

Charleston, SC – Executive Principal of R.B. Stall High School, Steve Larson describes this year's [valedictorian](#) as a once in a generation student.

"Immediately when you see her walk in a room, it is brighter, it is more fun," said Larson. "There is a level of intelligence that surrounds her and you just know you are around someone special."

Larson said while he knows how intelligent Tirzah Nyamutsaka is, he said that's not even her most important trait. He said she is a connector.

"I believe that her job on Earth is to make other people feel great about themselves because that's what she does, every single day," said Larson.

Nyamutsaka is proud to have been named the valedictorian and was not shocked that she holds the distinction. She put in the work to earn a weighted 5.143 grade point average. What she is having a hard time understanding is that the image in her mind of what a valedictorian is, doesn't match who she is as a person.

"I always thought a valedictorian would be super smart, make all As, never have to study or try too hard," said Nyamutsaka. "That's not how I would describe myself."

Nyamutsaka was a student who performed at a very high level, asked for help, asked questions, and took advantage of all the academic resources offered at Stall.

Sara Newer is an AP Human Geography and AP World History teacher. She was Nyamutsaka's teacher in ninth grade. She said Nyamutsaka was a student who was very comfortable asking for help and one who could think through things and work them out herself. Newer also added that her academic intelligence is balanced by her emotional intelligence.

"She is an exceptional human being," said Newer. "She has an amazing family support structure and that has helped develop who she is as a person."

Larson is proud of Nyamutsaka and said she will go on to change the world because of her capabilities.

"We purposely get to know our students at R.B. Stall," said Larson. "It's not just our responsibility, the kids that we have here draw us to them. Tirzah, in particular, is unique. I just had to know her."

They have gotten to know each other since Larson became the principal of Stall in 2022.

"I didn't know she was a genius," said Larson. "It didn't matter to me, of course. I just saw somebody really cool that I wanted to not just get to know, but I wanted to help facilitate her success. I wanted to be a part of it."

The embodiment of service

Newer said Nyamutsaka embodies service and doing for others. She said her academic motivation was also to benefit others.

"She truly believes that her hard work and the success story that accompanies it, may benefit others, especially her siblings," said Newer.

Nyamutsaka admits this is true.

"I am the oldest of four siblings and I hope they (and others) see me and have the confidence to accomplish great things too," said Nyamutsaka. "My classmates also inspired me to work hard. I look up to so many of them. They encouraged me to put myself out there and be creative, and do more than I think I can. So, I did."

One form of creativity that Nyamutsaka enjoys is crocheting. Nyamutsaka considers it an outlet for many things while her friends and family see it as a talent.

"I've been told I could go into business and sell my creations," said Nyamutsaka. "For now I just enjoy making gifts for others. I like giving gifts to people."

Shawn Goulouze teaches AP Government and is a recipient of one of Nyamutsaka crocheted sunflowers.

"She likes how it makes people feel when she gives them a gift," said Goulouze. "Her entire personality is about helping others and doing for others."

Goulouze said it is very rare that you get a student like Nyamutsaka that is well rounded and puts in 100 percent every day.

"She asks questions, which in turn helps the others in the class," said Goulouze. "She is a high achiever, but is humble about it. She is such a kind soul."

Larson agreed.

"Why it is easy to vote for Tirzah as a great human is that her shine does not take away from anybody else's," said Larson. "She adds to the shine."

The world is lucky to have her

Nyamutsaka plans to go to Charleston Southern University to become a nurse and eventually go to veterinary school.

"Nursing is part of Tirzah's constant effort to help others," said Newer. "It aligns with who she is. She is going to touch so many lives through her life."

Larson said that Nyamutsaka recognizes that she is a unique player in a complex environment.

"Not only is she highly intelligent, but has the ability to connect with other people, feel confident in who she is and what she's there to do," Larson commented. "That's very, very different than most people."

Newer described Nyamutsaka as the type of child she would want if she had kids.

"She's kind, loving, and the most wonderful human being," said Newer. "If you know her, you are lucky. If you got to teach her and watch her grow up, you are lucky. She has brought me so much joy. The world is lucky to have her."

"I've been lucky"

"I've put in the work, but I have also been really lucky," said Nyamutsaka. "Stall has incredibly supportive teachers, lots of resources and they've helped me tremendously. I'll be forever grateful that my teachers saw the potential in me when I didn't see it in myself."

Nyamutsaka said her high school experience prepared her for the next chapter of her life as she pursues higher education.

"My teachers have been so supportive and willing to dedicate their time to student success," said Nyamutsaka. "It is rigorous and challenging but that's what has prepared us academically for college."

Nyamutsaka added that her family's support has meant a lot as well.

"My parents immigrated to the United States from Congo and Zimbabwe and in those cultures, family is everything," Nyamutsaka explained. "My family has always been supportive of my efforts so it means a lot to me that my siblings can see me excel. I hope it motivates them to apply themselves."

Goulooze said he has witnessed how supportive Nyamutsaka's family is and called that very crucial.

"It is so powerful that Tirzah does something not for herself but to show her family what is achievable," added Goulooze.

Larson said it won't be Nyamutsaka's intelligence that he remembers after she's gone and her picture hangs on the walls of Stall as the 2024 Valedictorian.

"I'll remember her for the way she made people feel every single day," said Larson.

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About the Charleston County School District

Charleston County School District (CCSD) is a nationally accredited school district committed to providing equitable and quality educational opportunities for all its students. CCSD is the second-largest school system in South Carolina and represents a unique blend of urban, suburban, and rural schools spanning 1,300 square miles along the coast. CCSD serves approximately 50,000 students in 88 schools and specialized programs.

CCSD offers a diverse portfolio of educational options and specialized programs delivered to the students of CCSD through neighborhood, magnet, IB (international baccalaureate), Montessori, and charter schools and programs. Rich educational opportunities for students include programs in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); music and other creative and performing arts; career and technical preparation programs; military; dual credit; and many more.