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NJ's First Early College Middle and High School Opens in Trenton

[Trenton, NJ] -- On August 22, 2018, Achievers Early College Prep Public Charter School (Achievers) officially opened its doors to its founding 6th grade class.

To celebrate this momentous occasion the founders, Efe Odeleye and Osen Osagie, are hosting a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Thursday, October 18, 2018 at 12:30pm. Achievers is located in the South Trenton neighborhood of Chestnut Park at 500 Smith Street.

Achievers' vision is to create a pathway to STEAM—Science, Technology, Education, Digital Arts and Mathematics—careers for African American and Latino students in the Trenton Community. “At the New Jersey Charter Schools Association (NJCSA), our mission is to ensure that all students have access to educational choices that move them closer to a bright future. We look forward to Achievers joining the ranks of public charter schools that have served our students well. With its focus on STEAM and early college, we are certain that parents and students will benefit immensely in the city of Trenton” Rick Pressler, Director of School Services at NJCSA.

Achievers Early College Prep aims to offer students in grades 6-12 the unique opportunity to take a two-year course of study in STEAM fields following the 10th grade, enabling students to redefine the high school experience and graduate with skills, experiences, and content mastery that's significant to them in the marketplace and the world beyond.

Currently, Achievers is working with its students to build their literary skills by utilizing a novel-based ELA curriculum, coupled with a project-based learning model. Larry Patton, head of School at Princeton Charter School and founding board member at Achievers says the school fills a void that Mercer County, and Trenton, in particular, has attempted to address for some time. “Getting more diverse students into STEAM and STEM fields is a laudable task that needs to start early. There's no better way to diversify the STEM talent pipeline of the future than to start now, in middle school.”

Clara Haskell Botstein, Associate Vice President of the Bard Early Colleges, agrees. “We are thrilled to see this new early college middle and high school in New Jersey providing access to a free college education and thereby giving students a tremendous leg up on postsecondary success. We know from our experience at the Bard Early Colleges that students can do college work at an earlier age, and that doing so increases their success in high school and through their postsecondary pathways. Achievers is making its mission to show the Trenton community--and the community at large--that Trenton students are more than capable of taking charge of their futures by the impressive accomplishment of working towards a college degree during secondary school.” Bard College has an



early college high school in Newark, NJ, and looks forward to supporting the success of Achievers Early College Prep as it joins the growing network of early colleges in the State.

The founders of Achievers are fully committed to the idea that it takes a village to raise a child and are excited to engage in this work with so many invested school community stakeholders. “We are thrilled that we were able to open up our doors. Commissioner Repollet, the team at the Department of Education, and our founding parents were instrumental in helping us to open up this year on solid footing” said founders, Efe Odeleye and Osen Osagie.

Achievers Early College Prep will operate with 90 sixth-graders for the 2018-2019 school year and grow to 270 by the 2020-2021 academic year.

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Achievers Early College Prep is New Jersey’s first public charter school providing students in grades 6-12 the opportunity to earn, at little or no cost, up to 60 transferable college credits upon matriculating high school.