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Students pass on knowledge

Charter teens tutor at Prestige Academy

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Regina Reynolds, 16, of Wilmington, gives a high-five to Timothy Miller, 11, of Wilmington, as they work on multiplication Tuesday. Students from the Charter School of Wilmington are mentoring students at Prestige Academy. / EMILY VARISCO/THE NEWS JOURNAL

Written by **Nichole Dobo**
The News Journal

WILMINGTON — Prestige Academy student Robert Hall finished his multiplication homework after school with time to spare.

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The 11-year-old was excited because this meant he'd get to play a round of Blokus, a logic game, with 16-year-old Celine Robinson, a Charter School of Wilmington student.

The pair are among dozens of students who take part in weekly mentoring held at Prestige Academy on Thatcher Street. Charter students, who have no shortage of their own homework each night

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For many years, Charter students have volunteered at other schools to help tutor and mentor. Last school



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Morgan Wright, 13, of Bear, (left) and Anthony Foster, 14, of Wilmington, test out their robot that qualified their team for the finals round at the University of Delaware. / EMILY VARISCO/THE NEWS JOURNAL

year, however, Charter school leader Chuck Baldwin worried there wasn't going to be enough money to continue. Grant funding from the Delaware Mentoring Council, Barclays Bank, the Delaware Community Foundation and the state Parent Teacher Association helped keep it afloat.

On Tuesday, leaders from these groups visited Prestige to see the mentoring in action. They were there to celebrate National Mentoring Month and spotlight a partnership at Prestige that dates back to 2008.

"We are very fortunate you are here spending time with our students," said Jack Perry, school leader at Prestige.

Parent Raishod Orr, who has a 13-year-old son at Prestige, said he's noticed a huge difference in his child since he started taking part in the mentoring. He used to struggle with math, but this year he improved enough to place in honors math.

"He wants to be here because of it," Orr said.

Charter, located in Red Clay Consolidated School District, is a nationally ranked high school that focuses on math and science. Prestige is the state's only all-boys middle school, and it aims to help at-risk children. Both schools are charter schools, which are tuition-free public schools that are meant to serve as options outside the traditional school system.

Charter high school students also mentor at elementary schools in the Christina and Red Clay school districts.

New this year, Charter students helped a group from Prestige work on a robot project to enter into a robotics competition. The group qualified to move on to the statewide round of the competition – something that's no small feat for a first-time team, said Charter math teacher Cheryl Potocki.

Charter student Rocco Bisciegli, 16, said he loved helping with the robotics team because he enjoyed the activity when he was in middle school. It's not easy to teach someone how to do something, he said. Through mentoring, he learned how to coach someone so that they can learn independently with just a little guidance.

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"I really enjoyed this," Price said. "When I was younger, I played with Legos a lot. It was so much fun to build this."

It's exciting to learn how to create the robots, said Lamar Price, a 13-year-old Prestige student who said he was drawn to the project because of his longtime love of building.

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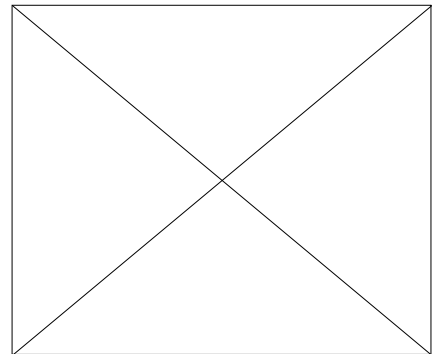
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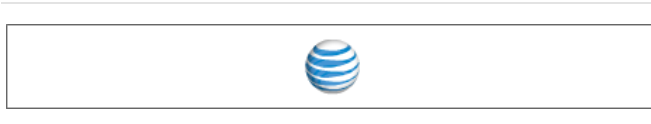
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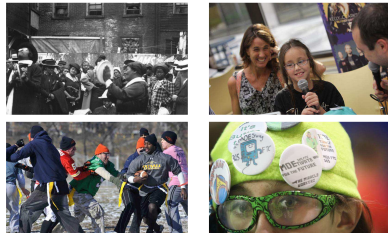
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