

Interview with Principal Stallworth

Background (place of birth, previous position before (Power and Grace)?

I am a native Floridian born in Marianna Florida. I grew up in Pensacola Florida. My mother an English school teacher for 31 years and an entrepreneurial father who was a realtor/property investor, as well as, a stock investor. Before leading Power and Grace Preparatory Academy I was blessed to serve as Principal for a local private Christian School for eleven years under the direction of the late Pastor Jimmy Terry, Sr.

Why did you decide to open Power and Grace?

I adore children and without question I want to do my part to see them succeed in life. I also want to fulfil our academy's mission: Our mission is for each of our students to grow intellectually and maximize the attributes of power and grace through the intentional, high expectation of educational instruction, leadership development and Christian doctrine. Furthermore, by embodying this mission we believe that Education is the antidote to ignorance, the champion of hope, the weight that can level the scale of justice, and the fuel that can take a rocket of dreams to outer space!

When did your career in education begin?

My initial employment after graduating from Florida State University, began at the Florida Education Association headquarters in Tallahassee Florida. I worked directly for the Director of Development and Training. Through this position I continued my love and respect for the profession of education and garnered even greater respect for the masterful art of teaching. We asked educators what they did to successfully educate students, why students did not succeed and how we could make education better not only for students but for teachers alike. We worked to inform and inspire educators to continue their journey, no matter how long in the profession, to be excellent educators and leaders of their classrooms.

What excites you most about education?

P-O-S-S-I-B-I-L-I-T-I-E-S!! Many people think that the computer is the end all of intelligence. I dare say that it is a knock-off of the human brain! When we do not prejudge young people the possibilities are endless for their achievement. Education holds infinite possibilities! It is so exciting to be better than yesterday and inspired to see a brighter tomorrow. In the hands of a skilled educator teaching will evoke a student to be a lifelong learner! After all if you stop learning you stop living and growing.

What is one challenge you had to overcome during COVID-19 in your current role?

One challenge has been the adoption of a new educational delivery for elementary school students from March-May 2020. We, as educational professionals, had to accept that at the beginning we were not good at virtual teaching! We made a collective decision that for our students we must get better! We achieved this goal together working as a team. We are stronger as a team because of that journey. When you know better you do better!

What is your favorite song? What a Wonderful Life by Louis Armstrong / Always & Forever by Heat Wave

What is your favorite quote? “If you show me a student that cannot learn, I will show you a teacher that cannot teach.” – Marva Collins

What legacy would you like to leave on the field of education? I want to be remembered as a bridge builder. You see education of the past to present in my opinion, has opened a disparity gulf between the have and the have-nots. We as educators, citizens of the greatest nation in the world the United States of America must build educational bridges that will span this gulf to deliver students to the shores of educational success. This is our obligation to this generation! This is best embodied in the poem penned by Mr. William Dromgoole, “The Bridge Builder”

THE BRIDGE BUILDER

Will Allen Dromgoole

An old man traveling a lone highway came in the evening cold and gray, to a chasm vast and deep and wide, through which was flowing a swollen tide. The old man crossed in the twilight dim, the swollen stream held no fears for him. But he turned when safe on the other side and built a bridge to span the tide.

“Oh, man,” cried a fellow pilgrim near, “you’re wasting your strength with building here. Your journey will end with the ending of day. You never again must pass this way. You have crossed the chasm deep and wide. Why build you the bridge at eventide?”

The builder lifted his old gray head. “Good friend, in the path that I have come,” he said, “there followeth after me today a youth whose feet must also pass this way. This chasm which has been as nought for me to that fair-haired youth might a pitfall be. He too must cross in the twilight dim. Good friend, I am building this bridge for him!”

This is the legacy that I desire to leave on the field of education.

-Mrs. Katobwa B. Stallworth, M.Ed.