



**Alma Bella Foundation**  
Nurturing Beautiful Souls Through  
Education, Art, and Community

# **DONOR PROSPECTUS**

This booklet provides an overview of our identity and our mission. We are dedicated to fostering mutually advantageous connections with every member of our community. Our enthusiasm grows when we have the support of the ideal corporate team, as it opens doors to exciting opportunities.



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# Welcome

## DR. DEBI GRAVES

### Founder of Alma Bella Foundation

Dr. Graves, a dedicated and experienced educator with 25 years of service as a middle school public school teacher, currently imparts her extensive knowledge to fellow educators at the college level.

She founded Alma Bella Academy with the aim of supporting the youth in her local community. Subsequently, she established the Foundation to ensure that the Academy's resources would be accessible to all community members.



At the academy, students benefit from academic tutoring while also having the opportunity to engage in artistic pursuits such as painting, pottery, and sewing. Additionally, the academy organizes educational summer camps with themed programs and organizes visits to numerous historical sites across Virginia. The academy also works with older members of our community as well as adults with learning disabilities.

### Why Become a Corporate Sponsor

- Your sponsorship reflects a dedication to enhancing educational opportunities for local youth and fostering the overall well-being of our community.
- Through this partnership, we aim to strengthen the academic and extracurricular programs at the academy while demonstrating a combined commitment to investing in the future of the community we serve.

As a corporation deeply committed to our community and the principles of corporate social responsibility, we offer you the opportunity to partner with the academy. By aligning with the academy's mission, you will not only enhance your corporate image but also contribute to the growth and prosperity of the community, creating a brighter future for all.

# Our Mission & Vision



## Our Mission



At Alma Bella Academy, our mission is to provide a nurturing and inclusive environment for beautiful souls through education, art, and community where students can thrive academically and artistically. We are dedicated to fostering a dynamic learning center that empowers students to reach their full potential.

## Our Vision



Our vision at Alma Bella Academy is to be a beacon of academic and artistic excellence, creating a brighter future for our students. We envision a world where every child, regardless of their background or abilities, has the opportunity to flourish and develop their full potential. We are dedicated to fostering a vibrant and inclusive community where learners of all ages, from the very young to the elderly, and including adults with intellectual disabilities, come together to share in the joy of learning, creativity, and personal growth. At the heart of our vision is a strong sense of community, where the community can gather, connect, and thrive as they collectively embrace the transformative power of education and the arts.

# Our Philosophy



At Alma Bella Academy, our philosophy is deeply rooted in our unwavering commitment to nurturing the potential within each child, creating an environment where education and artistic expression flourish harmoniously.

**01** Holistic Growth: We believe in the holistic development of our students. Education is not just about academics; it's about nurturing the mind, body, and spirit. Our philosophy encourages intellectual growth, emotional intelligence, and social development.

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**02** Individualized Learning: Every child is unique, and we embrace this individuality. Our approach is centered on personalized learning, recognizing that each student has their own pace and learning style.

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**03** Artistic Exploration: Art is an essential part of the human experience. We encourage artistic exploration because it fosters creativity, self-expression, and a deeper understanding of the world.

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**04** Inclusivity and Diversity: Our philosophy is founded on the principles of inclusivity and diversity. We believe that every student, regardless of their background or abilities, has the right to a quality education and the opportunity to explore their creative potential.

# Our Philosophy

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**Community and Collaboration:** We view education as a collaborative effort. Alma Bella Academy is not just a school; it's a community. We believe that when students, families, and staff come together, the educational experience is enriched and meaningful.

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**Empowerment:** Alma Bella Academy is a place where students are empowered to shape their own future. We provide the tools and guidance for them to take ownership of their education and artistic endeavors.

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**Lifelong Learning:** Our philosophy emphasizes that learning is a lifelong journey. We instill a love for learning, critical thinking, and a curiosity that extends far beyond the classroom.



Our philosophy is a guiding light, directing us toward the creation of confident, well-rounded individuals who not only excel academically but also make a positive impact on the world through their creativity, empathy, and pursuit of knowledge.



## Our Story

In 2020, amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Dr. Graves, a veteran public school teacher, noticed her middle school students facing numerous challenges. They were falling behind academically and struggling socially and emotionally. Through discussions with her students, the idea for Alma Bella Academy was born.

Her students wanted a place outside of school with fewer rules to reconnect with friends, get academic help, and engage in exciting activities. Dr. Graves, drawing on her own childhood experience with art, saw the potential for art to help her students. She believed they needed a safe, nurturing environment for creativity, academics, and friendship.

When it came time to christen her Academy, she turned to her students for inspiration. A Hispanic student asked for a meaningful name and inquired about the essence of teaching to Dr. Graves. She described her 25-year journey of teaching beautiful souls, and the student said "beautiful souls" translates to "Alma Bella," in his language and thus Alma Bella Academy was born.

Determined to make the Academy accessible to everyone, Dr. Graves created a non-profit foundation and covered costs for students in need. To this day, they offer 100% scholarship fulfillment.

The Academy offers afterschool enrichment programs that teach organization and study skills, academic guidance, and art projects. They also run a Summer Camp with diverse activities. Field trips broaden students' horizons.

Alma Bella Academy educates the whole child, offering a non-denominational Bible Study once a week. They also provide meals to ensure no student goes hungry while at the Academy.

They rely on community partners' generous donations to provide these services, extending their support to adults and those with disabilities.

Join them on this meaningful journey as a community partner.

# Meet Our Team

Welcome to Alma Bella, where our team is more than just educators; we're dedicated mentors, passionate advocates, and compassionate supporters. As a close-knit team of professionals, we're committed to nurturing the potential in each and every student who walks through our doors. Allow us to introduce you to the heart and soul of Alma Bella, the individuals who bring our vision to life and inspire positive change in our community.



## Dr. Debi Graves

### President

Dr. Graves dedicates countless hours each week to volunteer work, including tutoring students and assisting them in creating inspiring works of art here at the academy, a testament to her unwavering commitment to empowering and uplifting the next generation.



## Holly Schwarz

### Vice President

Mrs. Holly, exemplifies unwavering dedication and selflessness. Her tireless commitment to both the academy and its students is nothing short of remarkable. Every spare second she has, she willingly volunteers, offering her time and talents generously.



## Ms. Val Tillies

### Secretary

Ms. Tillies, our delightful Secretary at the Alma Bella Foundation, doubles as our in-house volunteer comedian, keeping us in stitches with her remarkable sense of humor. Her presence not only fills our days with laughter but also contributes immensely to the positive atmosphere at our academy.

# Meet Our Team

## Mrs. Heather Taylor Treasurer

Mrs. Taylor serves as our esteemed Treasurer at the Alma Bella Foundation. With her extensive financial acumen and keen sensibilities, she plays a pivotal role in guiding us towards making prudent financial decisions, particularly in how funds are allocated to ensure the sustainability and long-term growth of our organization.



## Mrs. Janine Hoffman Math Tutor/Volunteer

Mrs. Janine generously dedicates her Mondays to volunteering and provides invaluable mathematics tutoring to our students. With more than 30 years of classroom experience under her belt, as a retired teacher, she imparts her wealth of knowledge and a deep commitment to nurturing each student's self-worth and self-confidence, especially in the realm of mathematics.



## Mrs. Joy Sickinger Director of Fundraising and Grant Writing

Mrs. Joy, our dedicated Director of Fundraising and Grant Writing at the Alma Bella Foundation, is unwavering in her commitment to securing the necessary funds. Her relentless efforts are aimed at ensuring that every child in our community, regardless of their parents' financial circumstances, can partake in the enriching activities offered at our academy.



## Mrs. Ann Gill Volunteer

Mrs. Gill, affectionately known as Grandma Ann, had a remarkable 50-year teaching career, has now embraced her role as a cherished grandmother figure to the students at our academy in her retirement. Though she'll forever be a teacher at heart, her warmth and loving kindness radiate as she engages with our students. Whether she's imparting her sewing skills, providing valuable social studies tutoring, or adding a delightful twist to a game of Twister, Grandma Ann's presence enriches our students' lives in countless ways.



# Our Programs



## Classes

The academy offers classes in: Sewing, pottery, painting, stained glass, and seasonal crafts

## After School Enrichment

The academy provides homework help, as well as the ability to paint, create pottery pieces, and sew in addition to seasonal crafts.

## Teaching Academy

The academy offers classes for new teachers or any teacher who would like to learn new tricks of the trade.

## Outreach

Social and emotional health are addressed through art therapy and suicide prevention. The academy also works with adults with intellectual disabilities as well as memory care for the elderly.

## Bible Study

The academy offers youth and adult Bible Study classes each week.

## Field Trips

The academy takes students on field trips to points of interest and historical sites across the state of Virginia and Washington D.C.

## Summer Camps

The academy offers themed summer camps Monday-Thursday each week of the summer. The camps focus on team-building, STEAM, painting, pottery, and sewing.



# After-School Enrichment

The Academy offers a safe, nurturing environment for elementary & middle school students during those critical hours when school ends and parents arrive home. When students get to the academy after school they are warmly greeted by our loving staff. The students run to grab and fill out their “munchie” sheet and choose what they would like for their after-school mini meal. Students choose between Ramon noodles or a sandwich, chips or popcorn, and a drink. Students take a break from school to share about their day and eat. Laughs are always on the menu as the kids decompress from the day. After their mini meal students receive homework help, pottery, painting, sewing, jewelry making, and seasonal craft-making opportunities. In addition, the Academy provides a safe "no phone zone" for students to disconnect from technology and reconnect with their creativity!



## Tutoring

“Being able to do my homework with my study group makes me want to make the highest grade possible and if we get stuck on something there is always a teacher there to help.”

-Erica 6th Grade



## Creativity

“I need to create every day. When I don't it makes me sad. On the days I come to Alma Bella I know I am going to be happy because I know I will be able to create something.”

-Leah 8th Grade



## Friendship

“My best friends are at Alma Bella. We get to eat together, do homework together, and make stuff together. We laugh and talk and I felt so loved and accepted here.”

-Taylor 7th Grade

