

THE
STUDENT FIRST
PROJECT, INC.

Dear Friend of Career Jam,

Thank you for supporting Career Jam™ and helping us provide this incredible opportunity for Capital Region students to explore the diverse career pathways offered in our community. Together, over the last seven years, we inspired over 16,000 students and made a lasting impact on the community's workforce development pipeline. There is much ahead and we are excited about the future of Career Jam!

In 2024 we are realigning our business in order to expand to other regions of New York State and beyond. We established a nation-wide non-profit, The Student First Project, Inc. to aid the achievement of our Career Jam goals and further our impact by invigorating parallel programs. Below we will share the vision for The Student First Project, Inc. with you and a brief personal update for context on the crucial timing of this launch. **We are asking for your support as we navigate this season of transition and the next phase of our growth.**

Many of you may know, Ryan Van Amburgh, founder and CEO of Career Jam has been battling cancer (mesothelioma) for the last eight years. Perhaps some of you were unaware, as Ryan refused to let cancer define him.



Image 1: Van Amburgh's at Yankee Stadium - Ryan and his wife Aarika, and their kids Carter and Sophie



Image 2: Recent picture of Ryan, with his wife Aarika, being cared for at home by his family.

In early September, Ryan was hospitalized for a week with pneumonia and over the past few months has been hospitalized again multiple times for an array of health complications. His most recent scans revealed progression of the disease not only in the areas where he was originally diagnosed, but into various sites on his bones. His doctors' prognosis is that he will not survive longer than six months.

The Van Amburgh family has incredible faith in God and have acknowledged the hope, joy, and miracles in the midst of great hardship through out Ryan's journey with cancer. They are trusting God no matter what.

Ryan is a visionary leader. He has a long history of connecting people and organizations to execute incredible ideas and plans that impact his community in extraordinary ways. By establishing The Student First Project, Inc. alongside Career Jam we are poised to preserve Ryan's legacy and progress his vision into the future. Our goal is to allow him the opportunity to see his dream of this nonprofit realized while he is still with us. Amazingly, he had it all ready to go before he fell ill. The approval for our 501c3 came through in early October while he was hospitalized. Simultaneously, a Career Jam event was happening without him for the first time ever!

Over the Summer, Ryan hired a team of talented professionals that believe in the mission, share his passion, and are committed to Career Jam. In his absence this past Fall, the Career Jam team ran two seamless events at Tec-Smart and at Hudson Valley Community College, in partnership with our friends at Ten80 Education who run the prep rally. They are ready for what's next!



Image 3: Career Jam Team (right to left), Keith VanVeghten, Event Manager; Meagan Masti, COO; Kate Manley, VP of the Capital Region (not pictured, Kayla Archer, Admin & Comms)

Our nonprofit organization, The Student First Project, Inc., will help fund existing initiatives through Career Jam along with establishing parallel programs in the near future. Aarika Van Amburgh will spearhead the non-profit as Executive Director to carry on the Van Amburgh family values of community and education. Serving others is at the heart of who they are and what they do.

The Student First Project, Inc. exists to transform students' lives by prioritizing their needs, aspirations, and potential. Every student deserves equal access to a quality education and opportunities regardless of their background or circumstances. We believe education is more than academics; we must nurture the holistic development of students by dedicating resources to strategic initiatives and programs which will empower them to reach their full potential.

Please consider lending your financial support to seed The Student First Project, Inc. Your donation will support countless students and will carry on the Van Amburgh family legacy! In the months to come we will continue to grow support through grants, foundations, and corporate sponsorships, forging ahead with great plans for future growth.

Make a Year-End Donation Online

Please make checks payable to 'The Student First Project, Inc.' and mail to The Student First Project, Inc., 1252 Saratoga Road, Ballston Spa, NY 12020. We would also be incredibly grateful if you helped by sharing this opportunity with your network.

With deep gratitude on behalf of Ryan and the Van Amburgh family. Have a wonderful holiday season and a Merry Christmas!

The Student First Project, Inc., 1252 Saratoga Road, Ballston Spa, New York 12020, United States

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