

# 2023 GRADUATE OUTCOME SURVEY



## Featured Graduate

This year's featured grad is Nelson Cropper. Nelson graduated from The Harbour School at Baltimore in June 2020. He is now in his second year as a full-time additional adult assistant for Baltimore County Public Schools. He is assigned to Harford Hills Elementary School. He works with kindergartners and first graders. He helps students learn to count, identify letters and their sounds and gives guidance about kindness and compassion. Nelson assists the teacher by working with small groups, and he also pulls individual students aside to work on particular areas of need. The kids love Mr. Nelson. He is also an active member of The Harbour School alumni club. He sings in his church choir and is active in bowling, dancing and basketball. Based on his regular emails, "Mr. Nelson" also loves to cook. Nelson loves the work he does with the littlest children. He helps them focus on their strategies to write in their assignment books. He helps students at lunch, specials and recess. Nelson looks forward to the start of each school day. Mr. Cropper reports that he "feels like the awesome adult assistant" as he helps students make good choices.

## Wrapping Up Year #41 Looking forward to # 42

### A MESSAGE FROM DR. JACOBS

The 22-23 school year marked our 41st year as a school. Harbour has not only survived, we have thrived over the years. One of the many amazing things about our school is how well our graduates do, surpassing not just other graduates with disabilities but many plain grads as well. We know this because unlike other schools, we go back and check in with our grads and their families. We have the courage to do this, most schools do not.

First of all, look at the number of students who have graduated from high school. Many of those students would not have prevailed in a more traditional program. Secondly, an examination of alumni progress shows many of our past students have earned post-secondary degrees. Thirdly, like many Americans they have not stayed in one place. Alumni report in from Hawaii, Texas and the upper northwest. The reach of our school is long.

Many of our alumni have moved into a full adult life. Some are married with grown kids of their own. The reach of a school and a school staff is very long. It is not unusual for staff to "bump" into our grads out in the world. Perhaps as a plumber who shows up to make a repair and announces he is a Harbour grad. Or perhaps as someone with a post-secondary degree who applies for a job at Harbour and gets it!

Recently, one of our long time teachers (20 years) lost her battle with pancreatic cancer. The outpouring of emotion from students and staff, some traveling significant distances to be at the funeral, makes clear the influence of this school and its staff on the lives of us all. Our school was the venue for the post-services reception. That teacher's portrait is now in the balcony in the great room at our Annapolis campus.



*Nelson Cropper, 2020 Harbour School Graduate*

## HOW MANY GRADS DID WE REACH?

Through June 2023, 701 students have graduated from The Harbour School.

Eight of our alumni are deceased. Five of our graduates are medically unable to work.

Through mail solicitation, on-line surveys and follow-up phone calls we were able to reach 514 of our graduates or 74.1%, up from 74% last year.

This survey goes all the way back to 1991, our first graduating class.

## GRADS WORKING AND IN SCHOOL

A total of 83.4% of our grads reported working. This is up from 67% two years ago. The longer the alumni were out of school the greater the likelihood that they were working. Alumni in the 1991-2019 classes report that 91.2% are working. The study showed a rise in the number of students in post-secondary from the last survey. Only 33% of all grads were in school, but 56.1% of recent grads were in school. Students with disabilities are disproportionately impacted negatively by online instruction and most institutions of higher learning went online during the pandemic. As schools have reopened in person, it has impacted the number of alumni who are back in those classrooms.

## GRADS LIVING INDEPENDENTLY

According to a 2013 study by Shaun Heasley reported in Disability Scoop, only 17% of people with autism ages 21-25 have ever lived independently. The current majority of our students has autism. Our alumni are also experiencing the trend of their non-disabled peers who seem to be returning to the comfort and low-cost of living with their parents. Even with the current trends, Harbour grads exceed the expected with 35.9% living independently. The huge jump in rental costs has added to this issue. Additionally, the number of funded supported living arrangements is going down.

## MARYLAND RECENTLY RELEASED DATA ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN MARYLAND

These data are not encouraging. In May of 2019, before our survey but also before the pandemic, 22.2% of people with disabilities were engaged in individual competitive employment. Compare this number to 84.5% of Harbour grads. We were eighteen months into the pandemic when these data were gathered. The percentage of employed was down about .5% year over year. Only 40 people were self-employed, .4%. In the Maryland study the largest percentage was 55% who were engaged in facility based non-work. Probably some sort of care center. Altogether the study looked at 11,412 people down just over 200 from two years ago. The largest increase was in community based non-work, again probably some sheltered work in the community. Harbour puts a great deal of emphasis on preparing our students for life after Harbour, whether that be in a job, post-secondary education or both. Some have criticized the school for not emphasizing test scores enough. But until someone can show the school data that correlates post-secondary success with high standardized test score, the school will keep believing in our own data.

## HOW DO WE COMPARE:

	THS	MANSEF	NTLS2
# of students:	621	210	12,000
Post-secondary	37%	57%	31.9%
Employed	84.5%	53%	48%
Criminal involvement	.2%	13%	Unknown



## THE HARBOUR SCHOOL BELIEVES IN OUR STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILIES. THIS IS WHAT THEY HAVE TOLD US.

- The Harbour School prepared me to continue my education to receive two degrees.
- Harbour helped me more than you think. It gave me confidence to obtain my social and educational development.
- My parents would say this school was a lifesaver for me. I really loved school, but needed more help when I graduated.
- I want you to know that Harbour “saved his life”. He is a totally different person after attending the school. He graduated from culinary school, interned at the Manor Tavern and is still working at Santori’s. I cannot say enough about Harbour! It not only saved his life but saved the entire family. He is truly a wonderful, responsible, young man.
- I still keep in contact with Dr. Jacobs via email and I cherish this connection. The Harbour School helped me to develop skills to advocate for myself. The high school listened to my concerns and put me in math classes more in synch with my ability. I am proud of my college degree.
- Unfortunately I was terminated from my job at Becton Dickinson on April 30. My training in Excel at Harbour helped me to in getting this data entry position.
- Harbour School prepared me very well for life after school, it builds my sense of independence and desire to work and live fully. I also loved how dogs were part of the school.
- I am working at the FDA
- I’m an Anne Arundel Community College class of 2021 graduate. I am currently employed at ChicFil A in Severna Park.
- I recently graduated from AACC with a degree in human services
- Harbour did a lot to prepare for the real world.
- No, we love Harbour, we love Dr. Jacobs.
- Thank you for all your support during my time at Harbour. I do not know where I would be without it
- Pace is too slow and losing interest is a problem
- Provide more specific job training, and perhaps coaching in getting a job.
- If it wasn’t for The Harbour School, I would not be living a complete life like I am now.
- It has helped me more than I can say and I am so grateful for it.
- I have been at Royal Farms for 7 years, have made many friendships there and I love it.
- I take Uber to and from work which is a service I receive from DDA. I am engaged to a graduate from the Baltimore campus, my life is very full.
- I am a ServSafe certified food manager and a certified food handler also I completed a program in entrepreneurship and have applied for another job

Number of Harbour School grads in post-secondary education, working, or a combination

**92.8%**

## IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE US TO KNOW, OR YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH HARBOUR?

- This past March I got a job as a substitute daycare/classroom aide in “Lower Township Elementary School District” (NJ). I would not recommend “The Workforce and Technology Center to ANYONE!!! I had a terrible experience and I think this place has gotten other bad reviews.
- I have delivered 2 speeches, met with the Board of Directors at Melwood, and landed an internship in the finance department at Melwood
- It if wasn’t for The Harbour School I don’t know what I would be doing. Harbour School was amazing and helped me so much. Mrs. Pickhardt was such an inspiration in my life. She is the one who influenced me to want to work with special needs children. Thank you, Harbour School. Very sadly Ms Pickhardt passed away August 2021.
- I got divorced last year. (looks like Harbour grads are not immune from marital problems)



## WHAT ARE THE DIRECTIONS FROM HERE? HOW DO WE BUILD AN EVEN BETTER SCHOOL?

- There is an alumni link to the school's Facebook page and alumni have their own page.
- Harbour is back in school in person full time.
- Do a better job of helping students apply and be accepted into post-secondary schools.
- Harbour updated our transition program to include more parent participation and more cross-subject area involvement



## CONCLUSION

At The Harbour School we believe in the law of physics that nothing stays the same. We either get better or not. We are definitely committed to getting better. The Harbour School has just started its 42nd year as a school. We have achieved a great deal. And there is much left to do.

- We were hugely challenged in 2020 by the pandemic. We do not believe that online instruction meets our students' educational needs. The two challenges of safety for students and staff and giving our students an appropriately challenging educational program are often at cross purposes. Thankfully, the school remains fully in person for the 23-24 academic year.

We need to continue to work with families on the benefits of soft-skill training. It is these skills that keep our students both in college or on the job.

We believe that our fledgling birds will fly further and faster if they are not only well fed; but also have a clear focus on where they are going and the real challenges that lie ahead. The workplace has changed dramatically coming out of the pandemic and we are not there yet. The school is going to assess how that workplace has changed. Working from home presents challenges for many of our alumni since they often require in-person supervision. On the positive side, our alumni often get service sector jobs and there are many openings in those areas with increased hourly wages and benefits. Our alumni are not immune from these changes and the school will need to adjust our programming to meet those challenges.

**We are a fine, fine school with fine, fine students and fine, fine teachers- it is no wonder we all just love this school.**



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## POST-SECONDARY SCHOOLS & INTERESTING JOBS

### 4 YEAR COLLEGES

American University	Louisburg College
Assumption College	McDaniel College
Arizona State University	Notre Dame of MD University
Bowie State	North Idaho College
Cabrillo	St. Mary's College
Culinary Institute of Jerusalem	Salisbury State University
Delaware State University	Stevenson University
Delaware Technical Institute	Towson University
Frostburg State University	University of Baltimore
Eastern Washington University	University of Hawaii
Elizabeth State University	University of Maryland-Baltimore Co
Frostburg State University	University of Maryland-College Park
Full Sail University	University of Maryland-Global Campus
Leslie College	Washington Adventist University
Liberty University	Washington College
Lincoln Tech	

### 2 YEAR COLLEGES

Anne Arundel Community College	Harrisburg Area Community College
Baltimore City Community College	Howard Community College
Brevard College	Jefferson Community College
Carroll Community College	Montgomery College
Chesapeake College	North Idaho Community College
College of Southern Maryland	Paradise Valley Community College
Community College of Baltimore City	Patrickerson Community College
	Prince Georges' Community College

### COLLEGE MAJORS REPORTED

Automotive Technology Certificate	FDA
Biology	General Studies
Biology & Neurosciences	History
Business	Mechanical Engineering
English	Music
Computer Science	Organizational Leadership
Cyber Security Certification	Special Education/Integrated Education
Digital Forensics	Theater
Engineering	Web Design
Early Childhood Development	

\*\*\*Graduates have earned certificates, associates, bachelors and master's degrees

### COOL EMPLOYERS & OCCUPATIONS

Apple Call Center-Tech Support	Howard County P.S.
National Institute of Health	Montgomery County P.S.
Dept. of Corrections-Parole & Probation Agent	Infologics Corp-Research Assistant
Baltimore City Police Officer	Department of Veterans Affairs-law Library Clerk
National Institute for Science & Technology	ATK Space Systems-Admin Assistant
Vermont State Park	RGIF-Inventory Control Supervisor
Dept. of Health & Human Services	National Guard-Military Police
NASA Goddard Space Center	Anne Arundel Community College-Teaching Assistant
United States Army Mechanic-E4	CCCBC-Dundalk
Maryland State Dept. of Education	Goddard Schools
Federal Aviation Admin.-Air Traffic Controller	Vermont Park Ranger
Lifefridge & Courtland Gardens (Kosher Supervisor)	Maryland Aerospace
Department of Transportation Research Assistant	Owner of a Landscape Company
Library of Congress Retrieval Technician	U.S. Food and Drug Administration Goodwill Lead Supervisor
Department of the Interior	Correctional Officer, PG Corrections
Department of Juvenile Services, Case Management Specials	Quevera-Computer Programmer
World Bank-Clerk	Wegman's Senior Team Leader
Norris Ford-Mechanic	Serenity Acres Treatment Center, Residential Coordinator
Darcars-Mechanic	Walker Mills Auto Collision-Auto Body Tech
Veterans Administration Legal Clerk	Sp.Ed. Teacher, St. Mary's County Public Schools
Anne Arundel County P.S.	Medical Assistant-Sunrise Senior Living