

2026 GRADUATE OUTCOME SURVEY

Celebrating 45 Years of Putting Kids First!



Featured Graduate

This year's featured alum is Sebastian Slade Lee. Sebastian graduated from Harbour's Baltimore campus in 2021. His Harbour story began in lower school under the guidance of much-loved Gayle Pickhardt who passed away. Ms Pickhardt taught Sebastian to read. It had a major impact on his life. As he moved through school, his interests continued to grow. In Middle School he participated in Teen Club and RPG Club, and by High School sports had become a big part of his life. He played flag football, soccer, and basketball.

One of Sebastian's favorite Harbour memories was his final overnight trip with his classmates to Great Wolf Lodge. But it was another part of his High School experience that would have an even bigger impact on his future. Sebastian credits the job-seeking and work experiences provided by Harbour's Transition Team with helping him discover a job he would eventually turn into a career.

While Sebastian originally thought he might pursue HVAC work after graduation, the job he shadowed during High School caught his interest—and he's still there today! Sebastian is part of the Grounds Maintenance Team at Caves Valley Golf Club in Owings Mills, where he works alongside a team of more than 30 groundskeepers. With nearly 1,000 acres of pastures, woods, wetlands, and golf course to maintain, there is always plenty to do. Sebastian works three to four days a week, driving golf carts, operating zero-turn lawnmowers, and helping with whatever is needed to keep the grounds looking their best. He enjoys being part of the team and the variety that comes with working outdoors. Sebastian is a good and kind human being. He is a vital assistant in giving care to a severely disabled aunt that lives in the home. His aunt requires a great deal of care. Sebastian is a full participant in her care. Most recently his mom was diagnosed with Stage IV Kidney cancer. It took two years of wonderful care and today she is cancer free. His mom credits Sebastian's care with helping her through this long battle. As a result of his work with his mom and aunt, Sebastian has decided he might like to pursue a Certified Nursing Assistant license. He loves the outdoor work of landscaping but there is also this draw to help others. When he's not working or helping at home, Sebastian enjoys playing video games, spending time with friends, and keeping up with old Harbour classmates. Most recently, he visited Hershey Park with an old Harbour friend.

From learning to read in Lower School to finding a job he truly enjoys, Sebastian's journey is a great example of how the skills and experiences students gain at Harbour can continue to shape their lives long after graduation.

A MESSAGE FROM DR. JACOBS

Harbour now serves approximately 350 students on two campuses. It graduates on average 50 students each year. These are students with a full range of abilities as is obvious as each graduate gives his or her traditional graduation remarks. Yet the self-confidence and poise to give that speech makes clear that these kids will be ok as they leave the protective bubble that is the school. It is the expectation that Harbour will continue to be the "wind beneath their wings" as they move through their adult lives.



Sebastian Slade Lee, Class of 2021

HOW MANY GRADS DID WE REACH?

This annual survey backs that view with hard data. Through June 2026, 842 students have graduated from The Harbour School. Twelve 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 564 of our graduates or 68%. This is down a bit from last year. This survey goes all the way back to 1991, our first graduating class.

Putting Kids First for 45 Years!

GRADS WORKING AND IN SCHOOL

A total of 83% of our grads reported working. This is up from 67% three years ago. This year shows a change from previous surveys. In this survey, the more recent grads were less likely to be working. The impact of the federal job terminations is clear. Many of our alumni seek government jobs for their safety and general non-discrimination in hiring. Not so this year. Alumni in the 1991-2021 classes report that 90.9% are working. In the 22-25 cohort, 60.3% are working. The study showed a rise in the number of students in post-secondary from the last survey. Only 31.9% of all grads were in school, but 52% 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. Some of our grads are going back to school, either higher ed or post-secondary job training as employment options dried up and the number of new jobs in our economy is going down.

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 33.9% living independently. The huge jump in rental costs has added to this issue. Additionally, the number of funded supported living arrangements is going down as both the State of Maryland and the federal government have dramatically cut support.

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 74.7% of Harbour grads. Only 40 people were self-employed, .4%. In the Maryland study the largest percentage was 55% who were engaged in facility based nonwork. 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:	842	210	12,000
Post-secondary	31.9%	57%	31.9%
Employed	83.0%	53%	48%
Criminal involvement	.2%	13%	Unknown

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

- I am currently working two jobs and I'm in school part-time. I'm also still friends with only Harbour School people who I went to school with or who went to school after I graduated. I have the same friend circle that I had at Harbour. We're friends for life.
- I was on the Dean's list fall and spring semester at A.T. McDaniel.
- I have two classes at Towson University Hussman Boxes Café and Fitness.
- I have held a 3.5-3.8 GPA at Morgan State
- I am still working at Giant in Severna Park but now I am running the salad bar independently
- 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.
- I have been working at GBMC for two years! I am driving as well. I drive myself to and from work every day
- Fun experience, amazing teachers, great friends, learned how to be a cook, life skills to support self and be on my own. Everyone else doubted me-NOT Harbour
- I am in a day program for developmentally disabled adults which includes supported employment on a non-profit community farm. I like doing this work. I also volunteer 1 day a week for a food pantry affiliated with the Maryland Food Bank. When there is a housing placement available in my service providers group homes or apartments, I will move out of my parents' house if there is a good roommate.
- More planning with the transition team. At graduation didn't feel that I had a clear understanding of navigating the adult path and services.
- Harbour did a lot to prepare for the real world.
- Thank you for all your support during my time at Harbour. I do not know where I would be without it.
- 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 10 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.

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
- The Harbour School taught me so much. I made friends and felt safe. I am doing well
- If it 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 Mrs. Pickhardt passed away August 2021.
- I got divorced last year. (looks like Harbour grads are not immune from marital problems)



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

91.3%

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.
- 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 45th year as a school. We have achieved a great deal. And there is much left to do.

Graduates now leave with a full employment online portfolio to assist in securing employment and/or post-secondary education. We need to continue to work with families on the benefits of soft-skill training. Our students sometimes struggle with aspirational job choices. They may love football but probably not the NFL. 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. Artificial intelligence will change the workplace. It is not clear yet in what specific ways and how those ways will impact our graduates. 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. There may be more of these service jobs available as our borders are increasingly closed to immigration. The huge cut in federal employment has deeply impacted our students. They are often low-lying fruit and easy pickings for managers who want to cut jobs. Our alumni are not immune from these challenges 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
Lifebridge & 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
Department of the Interior	Goodwill Lead Supervisor
Department of Juvenile Services, Case Management Specialist	Correctional Officer, PG Corrections
World Bank-Clerk	Quevera-Computer Programmer
Norris Ford-Mechanic	Wegman's Senior Team Leader
Darcars-Mechanic	Serenity Acres Treatment Center, Residential Coordinator
Veterans Administration Legal Clerk	Walker Mills Auto Collision-Auto Body Tech
Anne Arundel County P.S.	Sp.Ed. Teacher, St. Mary's County Public Schools
	Medical Assistant-Sunrise Senior Living