



Warwick Secondary School * 1967 – 1997 * Vision – Vigor - Victory

1. Alison Charles

Vision - *I always wanted to be an Artist since probably 5 years old. At Warwick Secondary I wanted to be an Architect or Architectural Renderer.*

Vigor - *I did Art classes and was the first girl to ask to be switched from cookery/needle work to technical drawing. I got an A in technical drawing.*

Victory - *I am currently a Vision Paraeducator. I have been in my job for 17 years.*

2. Andre' Dill

Vision - *I wanted to become a chef or a pilot.*

Vigor - *For professional development, the students at Warwick Secondary who were interested in cooking went to hotel college on Thursdays at Stonington Beach Hotel. After graduation from Warwick Secondary, I got a job as a Commis Chef at Harmony Hall and Belmont Hotel. I worked for three years then graduated to junior chef de-party.*

Victory - *I am currently the OSP construction manager for One Communications. I got interested in cable tv and started working at Cablevision as an auditor with Mike Jones (who put in a good word for me, in 1989). I am still with them today. It has been 36 years.*

3. Carlos Butterfield

Vision - *I wanted to be an Electrician*

Vigor - *I participate in seminars and other on the job training for my career as an industrial electrician.*

Victory - *I have been working at BELCO for 18 years as an Electrician.*



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4. Dawnette Belton

Vision - *I wanted to be an Art Teacher, wife and mother.*

Vigor - *In 1993 I obtained a Diploma in Fine Art from Bermuda College and started working as a sales associate in several retail stores. In 1997 I got married and a year later got my dream job working as a Visual Merchandising Assistant at Gibbons Company. In 2000 I went back to Bermuda College and got an Associate's Degree in Art & Design. In 2004 I became a mother.*

Victory - *Being married for 28 years is a great victory, it hasn't been easy, but we both made a commitment to it and we have learned to communicate in a healthy constructive manner. I can't imagine my life with anyone else. Being a mother to a 21-year-old daughter has been challenging and rewarding. My proudest moments have been watching my daughter grow in her confidence, watching her graduate as an honor student from High-School, and pursuing her Associates Degree in Art.*

5. Gail Woolaston

Vision - *I wanted to become a Hairdresser.*

Vigor - *I attended cosmetology school in Canada (I got pregnant) so the dream of becoming a Hairdresser ended.*

Victory - *I currently work in Hospitality at the Reefs. Before the Reefs, I worked at Sonesta for 15 years before they closed. I have been working in the Hospitality Industry for 35 years.*

6. Gayvonne Smith

Victory - *I initially wanted to be a Lawyer.*

Vigor - *I chose to do Hospitality and went to Bermuda College for Hospitality.*

Victory - *I currently work as a Reservation Manager at a major hotel on the island. I have been working in the Hospitality Industry for 36 years.*



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7. Lyha Winter

Vision - *I wanted to be a Horticulturalist.*

Vigor - *I did a two-year apprenticeship program with the Department of Parks. I am currently undertaking online courses with Kew Gardens, alongside completing numerous other programs and courses related to agriculture and horticulture.*

Victory - *I am currently the Caretaker at Scaur Hill Fort. I have been working with the Department of Parks for over 35 years.*

8. Jennifer Pitt

Vision - *I honestly aspired to find a career that did not involve fitting into a box that girls/women were put into or anything outside of administration/business.*

Vigor - *I went to college for engineering. I was the first female Bermudian to work at Tynes Bay.*

Victory - *I currently work as a Finance/Accounting Manager and have been in this career for 2 years.*

9. Keysha Tacklyn

Vision - *I wanted to be a hairdresser but ended up becoming a teacher instead.*

Vigor - *I went to Mitchell College and earned my Associates Degree in Early Childhood Education. I then went onto American International College and earned my Bachelors.*

Victory - *I have been working as a teacher for 32 years.*



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10. Nolana Lathan

Vision - *I initially wanted to become a kindergarten teacher.*

Vigor - *During my teenage years, I dedicated significant time to babysitting children, which strengthened my passion for caring for young ones. However, in my early twenties through late thirties, I spent much of my time working in the retail industry, acquiring skills in patience, communication, and adaptability.*

Victory - *Ultimately, I achieved a personal victory by returning to my original dream and working as a nanny for several years. More recently, I have embraced a new chapter as a part-time caregiver for my aging mother, sharing responsibilities with my sisters. This ongoing journey underscores my commitment to caring for others at every stage of life.*

11. Maria Ray

Vision - *Growing up, I always had a passion for numbers, and my interest in accounting was sparked during my first bookkeeping class with Mr. Bennett at Warwick Secondary. From that moment on, I knew I wanted to become an accountant, and never lost my enthusiasm for the field!*

Vigor - *To pursue my dream, I took numerous accounting and business courses at college, which laid the foundation for my career. I furthered my education by completing the CMA (Certified Management Account) courses, ultimately becoming a Certified Professional Accountant (CPA).*

Victory - *I'm currently serving as an Accounting Manager, overseeing the accounting functions for seven companies and managing their financial books. With over 20 years of experience in the field, I've had the privilege of growing and evolving as a professional accountant, and I'm proud of the expertise I've developed over the years.*

12. Dorea Richards

Vision - *I always wanted to be a Nurse.*

Vigor - *I enrolled in the Geriatric Aide course at Bermuda College and passed with Honors. I worked nights and weekends at different rest homes and for private people for about a year. After working with older people in rest homes and private care for over a year, I realized that I no longer wanted to pursue a career in nursing. I decided to explore opportunities in banking instead.*

Victory - *Presently I work at HSBC as Assistant Manager of Client Implementation team. I have been working at HSBC for 27 years.*



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13. Lisa Hall

Vision – *From an early age, I was captivated by the intricacies of the human body and the medical field. My dream was to become a forensic pathologist – someone who performs autopsies to uncover the causes and circumstances of death. This passion drove me to explore the sciences and medicine, fueling my curiosity about human anatomy and the mysteries of life and death.*

Vigor – *Contrasting my childhood aspirations, my career path took a different turn. My parents believed that pursuing a career in business would be more practical and cost-effective, so I enrolled in an accounting program. I studied accounting through the CMA program in Canada, which was also offered at Bermuda College, and I completed this training at the age of 45 – making me a late bloomer in the field. My professional journey began in the accounting sector, but my interests soon expanded into financial services, including mutual funds, anti-money laundering, and compliance. I worked at an accounting firm and later at a bank, where I gained experience managing shareholders' subscriptions, redemptions, and mutual fund transactions. My role in compliance spanned several years, providing me with valuable insights into financial patterns and market behaviors. In 2008, I recognized the signs of an impending recession through these patterns, which inspired me to pursue further certification. I dedicated three years to obtaining my accounting designation, solidifying my expertise in the field.*

Victory – *Today, I have proudly worked as an accountant for over 13 years. My journey reflects resilience and adaptability, transforming initial dreams into a successful and fulfilling career in finance and accounting.*



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14. Valeria King

Vision – *Growing up, I didn't have a clear career path in mind until I discovered my passion for numbers during my book-keeping class with Mr. Bennett at Warwick Secondary School. That course was a turning point. It sparked my interest in accounting and gave me direction for the first time. After high school, I briefly attended Bermuda College, which confirmed that accounting was the right field for me.*

Vigor – *As a mature student, I made the bold decision to pursue my accounting degree abroad in August 1995. I began at Hillsborough Community College in Florida, where I not only excelled academically but also earned a walk-on athletic scholarship for fast-pitch softball – something I'm particularly proud of. I then transferred to Alabama A & M University, where I completed my bachelor's degree in accounting in May 2000. Upon returning home to Bermuda, I joined Ernst & Young, which proved instrumental in my professional development. The firm invested heavily in their employees' growth, sponsoring me through the Becker CPA review course.*

Victory – *Through dedicated study and the firm's support, I successfully passed all CPA exams by November 2001 and became fully licensed as a Certified Public Accountant in December 2002. My commitment to continuous learning led me to pursue further education while working full-time. I completed my master's degree in accounting at the University of Alabama in Huntsville in December 2023, demonstrating my dedication to staying current with evolving accounting practices and advancing my expertise in the field. I currently serve as Director of Contract & Grants Accounting at the University of Alabama in Huntsville, a position I've held for 18 years. In this role, I oversee the financial management of research contracts and grants, ensuring compliance with federal regulations and institutional policies while supporting the university's research mission.*



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15. Shawnette DeRosa

Vision – *My dream was to become a Teacher, preferably an Art Teacher.*

Vigor – *During my academic journey, I earned a GCE in Art while attending Warwick Secondary School, which sparked my passion for creativity. In 1993, I further pursued my artistic interests at Bermuda College, where I earned a Diploma in Fine Art. My dedication to continuous learning led me to take additional classes at Bermuda College, earning a Certificate in Childcare Assistance in 1998 and an Associate's Degree in Arts/Human Services in 2002. Building on this foundation, I achieved a Bachelors in Child & Youth Studies from Mount Saint Vincent University in collaboration with Bermuda College in 2015. My commitment to education and supporting youth culminated in earning a Master's of Science in Education with a specialization in Special Education from Walden University in 2017.*

Victory – *My greatest victory has been my nearly 24-year career working in the public school system. I began as an Educational Therapist Assistant, working for two years with students facing behavioral challenges. I then transitioned into the classroom as a Paraprofessional, where I spent 14 years supporting students with learning differences. Currently, I serve as a Resource Teacher, collaborating with students on their Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to ensure they receive the accommodations they are entitled to, both in the classroom and during testing.*

16. Mike Jones

Vision – *As a young man, I initially dreamed of becoming a fisherman, as I was drawn to the sea. However, as I progressed through my teenage years, I discovered a passion for engineering. I decided to pursue that path, and my vision shifted towards building a career in the technical field.*

Vigor – *Throughout my career, I dedicated myself to continuous learning and growth. The company I worked for recognized my potential and sent me overseas to attend various technical schools and courses. This exposure broadened my expertise and sharpened my skills. Over the span of 33 years, I advanced through roles from supervisor to manager, ultimately serving as Vice President of Technical Operations at One Communication. My vigor and commitment fueled my professional journey and helped me achieve leadership in the telecommunications industry.*

Victory – *Now semi-retired, I enjoy a new chapter of my life. I run a charter business, allowing me to stay connected to the sea that once inspired my childhood dreams. Additionally, I operate a consulting firm, providing expertise to clients like BELCO. Throughout my adult life, I have remained a fisherman at heart, balancing my technical career with my love for the ocean. My journey is a testament to perseverance, adaptability, and staying true to my passions.*



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17. Mitchell DeShields

Vision - *To have a loving, supportive family that provides joy, purpose, and connection.*

Vigor - *Being married for 33 years, having a son who is 39, a daughter who is 33, and six wonderful grandchildren. The best part of my day is spending time with my children and grandchildren. Being a husband, a father, and a grandfather is a full-time job, and I take pride in every moment I get to share with them. Despite working within the system, my heart truly comes alive when I'm with my family, creating memories and nurturing those special bonds.*

Victory - *Maintaining a full-time career in government for many years, which allows me to support my family and keep my vision and vigor alive. It's a balance of dedication and purpose—working hard so I can enjoy the rewards of family life. In the end, my family and my work together remind me daily that I am living my purpose.*

18. Nichole McHardy

Vision - *Growing up, I dreamed of becoming an Entrepreneur. I envisioned building a business that would allow me to serve others through my creativity and leadership. I aspired to create a positive impact in my community and to turn my passions into a fulfilling career.*

Vigor- *To achieve my aspirations, I went to school and earned my Bachelor's Degree in Accounting.*

Victory- *I worked for 30 years as an Accountant, gaining valuable experience and stability. However, my passion for cooking ultimately led me to make a career change. I am now working as a Chef with T's Homestyle Cooking and Catering, pursuing my love for the culinary arts and serving others through delicious food.*



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19. Verna Wilkinson

Vision – *Initially, I didn't have a clear vision for my career. My aspirations developed gradually over time. Throughout my school years, I always loved playing school – imagining myself as a teacher. Because I learn differently, I wanted to find a way to teach that reflected my own learning style – methods that helped me retain information and understand concepts better. My goal was to teach in a way that would support others who learn differently, just as I had to learn in my own unique way. Ultimately, I always knew I wanted to be a teacher, and that desire has stayed with me throughout my life.*

Vigor- *My journey to becoming a teacher has been long and filled with dedication. I started my higher education at Bermuda College, then transferred to Mercy County Community College. From there, I continued my studies at Brooklyn College where I earned a Bachelor's Degree in Education. Eager to expand my expertise, I pursued a Master's Degree in Educational Technology at UCM in Penang, Malaysia. Each step of this journey required perseverance, passion, and a commitment to my goal of making a difference through education.*

Victory- *Today, I am proud to be a dedicated teacher with the Bermuda Ministry of Education, a career I've devoted 25 years to. This year marks a new chapter for me as I take on the role of ICT teacher at Elliot Primary School. My journey reflects my unwavering commitment to education, and I am grateful for the opportunities to grow, learn, and serve in this meaningful profession.*