**Letter: Mobjack Rowing offers path to success**

Posted on May 04, 2016 - 01:32 PM

Editor, Gazette-Journal:

Are you sitting at home thinking how can I actually affect change? You may be surprised to learn that there is a program in our area that is already doing it. Between our two towns (Gloucester and Mathews) 34 percent of kids, on average, who graduate from high school go on to attend a four-year university. Mobjack Rowing Association, the rowing club that comprises our towns’ two high schools, boasts a 90 percent four-year college attendance rate. Of the remaining 10 percent, about half of those kids attended a two-year college and a quarter joined the military.

But wait! It gets better! The dollar figure for Mobjack scholarship money is a multi-million dollar figure. I want to make sure you read that correctly. Multi-million. The club boasts attendance at schools like Dartmouth, Rutgers, UVA, Florida Institute of Technology, Duke, The United States Naval Academy, University of Rhode Island, University of Pennsylvania, Bucknell, Tulsa, Northeastern, Miami, Clemson, Alabama, Columbia and Virginia Military Institute, to name a few. In most cases tuition was completely paid for.

What do I care if some other kid I don’t know goes to college? Good question. Kids who leave Mobjack walk away with valuable lessons. They learn the value of hard work and determination. They learn that everyone gets an equal opportunity as long as they put in 100 percent. They learn grit and mental toughness. They learn to love their town. These kids come back as adults and contribute directly to the economy, to the general state of affairs, and to the next generation. They start business, they run for office, and they supply open mindedness and logic to the world around them.

Mobjack is significantly smaller than most other high school programs and yet it has had more success than most. We have brought home numerous local, state, national, and international titles. We are currently working on a place to hang those titles. A new boathouse that will continue to accommodate the rich and honored tradition we have built.

During this time of tumultuous political discord if you want to continue sitting on your couch throwing things at the TV, then you can stop reading now. Or, you can join us and take pride in something we can all come together and support—a program that has had success, that has changed the lives of young men and women in our community, and that continues to do so. I invite you to come down to Williams Wharf and let people know where you stand. Be part of our legacy. Come watch regattas, cheer on the team, sign up for a rowing camp, and view the construction of the boathouse that will enhance and expand these opportunities.

For questions regarding the program please e-mail me or call me at [useyourwitt@gmail.com](mailto:useyourwitt@gmail.com) or [804-815-4387](tel:804-815-4387). I will be the first one to tell you that rowing changed my life. You can also access the Mathews Land Conservancy webpage at[http://www.mathewslandconservancy.com](http://www.gazettejournal.net/index.php?URL=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.mathewslandconservancy.com).

**Lt. Tucker Witt, USN**

**Charlottesville, Va.**

**Gloucester High School 2007**