



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Motorsports Boarding School in North America Formed**

*~ Strategic partnership with Virginia International Raceway and Carlisle School to improve education for drivers and engineers of tomorrow ~*

**Axton, VA (Feb. 8, 2008)** – VIRginia International Raceway (VIR) and Carlisle School formally announce the formation of The Academy of Motorsports. An unofficial announcement occurred at the World Karting Association’s KartFest 2008 at the end of January. The Academy is to become the first motorsports boarding school in North America. The partnership combines the motorsports assets of Southern Virginia with the private education of Carlisle School, an International Baccalaureate World School.

“The overarching goal of The Academy is to provide racing and academic excellence to young racers who often struggle to balance the two,” states Ted Settle, The Academy spokesperson and Director of Virginia Tech’s Office of Economic Development. “This program offers future drivers real-world, hands-on experience in a variety of track settings and an unparalleled secondary school education.”

In a curriculum developed specifically with students in grades 7 and above in mind, this program initially focuses on driver development and education, but will quickly expand to include engineering and other facets of the motorsports business. Capitalizing on existing resources and partnerships with Virginia Tech, Old Dominion University and local community colleges, The Academy students will have access to cutting edge research and engineering programs. Students obtain hands-on, behind-the-wheel time on the tracks of VIR, South Boston Speedway and Martinsville Speedway. Education also

takes place on Old Dominion University's chassis and engine dynamometers and at the Virginia Institute for Performance Engineering and Research (VIPER).

"The motorsports component of The Academy will be developed based on the individual students' need," explains Connie Nyholm, VIR Managing Partner. "We can provide various vehicle training depending on the capability of the driver. This program has access to kart tracks, oval tracks, and road courses, so we are prepared to handle any type of driving situation."

In this partnership, Carlisle School provides the college preparatory curriculum, including AP or IB courses, to ensure students are ready for further academic study in a college or university. Carlisle School boasts a 100% four-year college acceptance rate. The Academy students will have the same academic standards as the traditional Carlisle students. Students of The Academy will live in boarding facilities near Carlisle School's main campus in Axton, Virginia.

"I speak from experience when I say that it's extremely difficult to successfully balance academics and competitive motorsports," states Paulie Harraka, World Karting Association Triple Crown Champion, six-time WKA World Champion and rising NASCAR star. Harraka, who was recently selected to participate in NASCAR's Drive for Diversity program, is an official spokesperson for The Academy. "The Academy understands the difficulties that students are faced with and has put together an exciting curriculum that sets a student up for success on both fronts. This is an innovative solution to a problem race families have struggled with for years."

The Academy is accepting students for Fall 2008. For more information about The Academy, visit [www.TheAcademyofMotorsports.org](http://www.TheAcademyofMotorsports.org) or call 276.632.7288 x225. Photos and interviews are available upon request.

*Recognizing the individuality of each student, The Academy is dedicated to developing the skill sets of gifted drivers and students pursuing a career in motorsports while providing the highest quality college preparatory education.*