Dear Friends,

Chester County Futures is on the move. We are forging new relationships with community and corporate partners in the county and across the Greater Philadelphia area, as evidenced by our Sixers Youth Foundation Partnership and growing EITC Contributors list. Students from all four districts have had the opportunity to visit college campuses and participate in exciting corporate site visits like the one held at DePuy-Synthes in the fall.

Additionally, Chester County Futures is literally moving. We are, in a sense, heading home to Coatesville. We started in Coatesville in 1996 and as of March 15, 2020 will be operating out of the Lukens Executive Office Building at 50 South First Avenue, Suite 105, Coatesville, PA 19320. In addition to being centrally located to all four of our districts, we are now a vital member of the communities we serve rather than an outside service that comes into our communities. We will do this in all districts with a greater in-school office presence during the week.

The relocation is quite empowering to us. We look forward to hosting many meetings, welcoming our students and families and contributing to the growth that western and southern Chester County is experiencing. We would like to extend a special thanks to TEVA Pharmaceuticals for the generous in-kind gift of office furnishings.

Meanwhile, our students remain focused on the tasks at hand, seniors anxiously awaiting admissions decisions and financial aid packages, juniors preparing for spring SATs, sophomores learning financial literacy and job interviewing skills and our high school freshman are forming important friendships with members of their CCF cohort that will help them successfully navigate the pitfalls of high school. Your support helps keep them on track.

We hope you enjoy seeing all that our middle school through college students are up to in this edition. And remember, to stop by and see us in Coatesville!

Warm regards,

Maria McDonald | Executive Director

Koi-Fly Collaboration with CCF

Pictured here are members of our all-female group of tenth grade students from Coatesville that participated in the Fresh-Filmmakers initiative with Koi-Fly Creative of West Chester, PA. Co-founder and CEO, Stacey Grant and Lead Marketing Strategist, Shelly Hughes led the project. This photo was taken just after their interview with former manager of the World Series Champions Philadelphia Phillies, Charlie Manuel.
CCF Students Engage in the Field of Forensics with the Chester County Coroner’s Office

By Joe Daye

The students of Chester County Futures had a very informative lesson last week as they got to learn more about the career of a coroner. As we enter into the second marking period, students in 9th, 10th, and 11th throughout Coatesville and Kennett High Schools got the opportunity to have a presentation in their classroom, followed by participating in a scenario that propped a blue body bag! Chester County Coroner’s First Deputy Sophia Jackson was kind enough to bring an educational presentation with her fellow Deputy Coroner’s Barbara and Jesse and Coroner Transporters T.J. and Gregg.

Students throughout both schools got the chance to learn about the four determining factors that the Coroner’s Officers look at in determining death, meaning was it a “suicide, homicide, accident, or undetermined.” Students also got the chance to witness scenarios as well as closed investigations throughout the county. One of the more significant scenarios that got the students going was when they showed a case where a person fell down the stairs. The person was elderly, but throughout the autopsy, it was determine the person had a heart attack before falling. Students got the chance to see that even during the presentation that the Coroner’s Office was in fact on-call. For any students thinking that they wanted to have a similar career like television shows such as CSI or NCIS portray, they learned that there are many aspects that go into the time of a situation.

Students had time to ask questions about what it takes to get into such a field, what their day to day is like and how it effect the workers lifestyles seeing incidents. The presenters were kind enough to answer and showed their background. They shared experience with their work and what lead them to go into this field as well as educational pursuits. In the end, the students got the chance to participate in a scenario where three students performed. One student as the officer investigating and determining, one as the coroner taking the photos of the one played the role of the deceased.

DePuy Synthes Site Visit

By Kim Dickinson

In November, the junior and senior students at the Coatesville Area School District went on a corporate visit to DePuy Synthes. On this visit, the students had the pleasure of going on a Prototype Shop tour, working together in two groups on building a Lego activity on how the process works with building and shipping out materials. They had the opportunity to see a mock surgeon/design and work with different employees to redesign a shape. Lastly, they had hands on experience of working in a group and sawing through a bone, just like doing a hip replacement.

The students as well as the coordinator and manager had a very informational and enjoyable visit. The students love that they had the opportunity of working with the employees, getting the hands on experience and holding conversations with the employees on the road map of success to their careers.

Letters to Senator Casey

Emma Fisher, a presenter from Penn Environment, helped Futures AHEAD students write letters to US Senator Bob Casey in support of the Clean Economy Act, which transitions the US to 100% renewable energy by 2050. Senator Casey has since signed onto this bill!
Sixers Youth Foundation Visits CCF

By Clarence Johnson

The Philadelphia 76ers Youth Foundation visited CCF students and staff at our North Brandywine Middle School site. Sixers representatives had an opportunity to observe and participate with the students in CCF programming. The Sixers also brought along Ivana Seric, 76ers Data Scientist: Research Development, to serve as guest speaker for the students. Members of the Sixers Jump Team performed and entertained the students at the conclusion of the program.

CCF’s Executive Director, Maria McDonald said this about the partnership and visit: “We cannot overstate the power of our partnership with the Sixers Youth Foundation, the partnership provides critical financial support and engagement activities for our middle school program, Futures AHEAD. Garnering a speaker with the personal background and professional resume of Ivana Seric provided an extraordinary learning experience for our students. Squad 76 certainly brought the energy level up as well!”

Thank You to our EITC Contributors

The Educational Improvement Tax Credit Program (EITC) provides tax credits to eligible businesses contributing to Educational Improvement Organizations like Chester County Futures. We are honored to have received $67,500 in EITC funds from corporations in our area, so far. Futures receives significant financial support through EITC funding on an annual basis from local and regional corporate partners. Thank you to our EITC Contributors:
CCF Students from Phoenixville High School Visit SEI

By Krista Madey

It was an exciting morning for Chester County Futures students of Phoenixville High School when they visited SEI’s headquarters in Oaks, PA. SEI is a large financial services company that provides investment processing and management on a global scale.

The students, grades 9-12, knew they were in for something special the minute they walked in the door. It was clear that SEI does not look or feel like an investment institution. Art pieces from founder Al West’s art collection hang on walls and ceilings, and occupy spaces next to employee’s desks. The West Collection, as it is known, is possibly the world largest and most ambitious private collection of contemporary art by emerging artists. According to one employee, “An integral part of our unique workspace, these installations push the boundaries of what art is – just as we push the boundaries in our business. It’s a perfect fit.”

After the art tour, CCF students were given a sneak peek behind the scenes of the company’s media center, where all ad and video production take place. After dividing into small groups, the students made up skits that were then shot on “green screen” to simulate how videos are actually made, which gave them a better feel for what media production actually looks like.

The morning concluded with a pizza lunch, joined by SEI employees to answer any questions student had about the company, careers, college, or just life in general! Thank you, SEI!

Next Level Training Selects Chester County Futures

By Maria McDonald

Next Level Training selected Chester County Futures (CCF) for a very unique fundraising opportunity. Next Level’s 12th leadership cohort in the Philadelphia region, comprised of 30 dedicated individuals across the country and world, declared to raise $62,000 for CCF in just 22 days.

Next Level describes itself as “a transformational training organization that supports people in unlocking their power, passion and purpose.” The 30 members of the Next Level team, who dubbed themselves “The Compassionate Crusaders”, efforts proved to be a monumental success.

Next Level Training has raised $83,334.83 for Chester County Futures. Executive Director, Maria McDonald, addressed the Next Level team at the final check presentation explaining “To receive this level of support from people we don’t know inside of 30 days is unheard of for small non-profits. I tell our students there is an invisible thread that connects us through our shared humanity. It’s our choice to find it and hang on to it or not. Now all of you have found that invisible thread and connected to us in powerful way. Because of that, you will always be in our hearts.”