Dear Friends,

A new school year begins at Chester County Futures, bringing with it a sense of what is to come. Often we can identify the challenges and opportunities well in advance of holding our first after-school session. Challenges are certain to occur each year, and our team addresses them with great agility and dedication to our mission.

This school year, opportunities that have come to Chester County Futures will help us deliver our programming in new ways. Over the summer, we were able to recruit and hire additional talent for our staff. The blending of experienced staff with new team members brings fresh perspective and ideas to our work. Our board added two new members with significant contacts throughout Chester County, while filling skill gaps at the board level.

Equally exciting is news of two new partnerships for our organization that are providing unique experiences for our students. We are enormously proud to announce the partnership with the Sixers Youth Foundation for the 2019-2020 school year. Chester County Futures received a $25,000 grant in support of our middle school program, Futures AHEAD. We are the only non-profit organization in Chester County to receive this support. In addition to the valuable funding, our staff will be using Math Hoops, a socio-emotional developmental tool incorporating math skills development and the game of basketball. More to come about this important partnership throughout the school year.

Koi-Fly Creative Productions approached us to produce a video for our mentoring program that you may have seen in our emails. As a result, Koi-Fly Creative named Chester County Futures as their partner in their new program, Fresh Filmmakers. The professional team at Koi-Fly is working alongside our 10th grade students in Coatesville to produce a short video for the annual Sleep Out for Covenant House in Philadelphia on Thursday, November 21. Our students will help develop the script, film and edit the project.

Your ongoing support has helped make this possible. The organization you so generously support has a momentum that is reaching beyond our county to bring the very best opportunities to our hard working students. You’ve been a catalyst, trusting us to be stewards of your support to level the educational opportunities in Chester County. Thank you!

With deepest appreciation,

Maria McDonald
Executive Director

Frank J. Cirone
Board Chair
Tax Credits Benefit CCF Students

Through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program, businesses can support Chester County Futures’ Passport to College Program. The EITC program provides businesses with a 75% tax credit (not just a deduction) for donations to approved Educational Improvement Organizations such as CCF. The tax credit increases to 90% if a company commits to making the same donation for two consecutive years.

CCF Visits Chestnut Hill College

By Kim Dickinson

On Thursday, October 3rd, fifteen Phoenixville Chester County Futures students in 10th through 12th grades visited the beautiful campus of Chestnut Hill College in the city of Philadelphia. The students learned the history of the college, originally named Mount Saint Joseph College by the Sisters of Saint Joseph. Initially a college for women only, the college became co-ed in November 2001. Students explored the architectural integrity of the building, which looks like a scene out of a Harry Potter movie. Because of the scenery, they host a Harry Potter Academic Conference every year for the last 10 years. The tour included viewing dorm rooms and classrooms and lunch in the school cafeteria. The day ended with students receiving Chestnut Hill swag to remind them of the visit. The students enjoyed the day and seeing what a small campus has to offer.

CCF and Lincoln University Together Again

By Joe Daye

Chester County Futures students are getting right into the motion of academics, extracurricular activities and athletics! We were thrilled to kick off our Passport to College 2019-2020 afterschool program which began the week of September 16th. What is more exciting is that we have an array of undergraduate students from Lincoln University coming into Oxford High School to participate as classroom presenters! During the summer months, Student Service Coordinators (SSC) were asked to submit a list of required presenters before the start of the year. Topics include Guidance, Study Skills, Writing, Financial Literacy, Engineering, Personal Branding, PSAT and SAT prep as well as College Essay and Admissions.

In the beginning of August Joe Daye, our 9th grade coordinator, reached out to Nancy Stabler, the Department Assistant of History, Political Science, Philosophy and Religion at Lincoln University to see if she might have presenters that could engage the students in a lesson focused on Study Skills, Learning Styles or Diversity and Change. Nancy was kind enough to direct him to Natasha Faison, the Director of Community Service & Engagement at Lincoln University where she stated that students are required to volunteer within the Oxford community.

After a positive conversation on the 3rd of September, CCF held a meeting with 11-15 students at the Lincoln University Campus to share expectations for the presentations. Lincoln University students were encouraged to share their platform, major and plans, as well as assist in delivery of the curriculum with the SSC within Oxford High Schools.

This is a very exciting time for our incoming freshmen as they will be entering new doors and exposed to numerous opportunities as well as understanding new perspectives.
CCF Host 13th Annual College & Career Expo

By Kim Dickinson

Chester County Futures 13th Annual College and Career Expo was hosted at the beautiful campus of Cabrini University on Tuesday, August 6th. Benchmark Federal Credit Union was our proud sponsor and supplied the “Dream Big” t-shirts wore by our students and staff. Over 150 Chester County Futures students in grades 9 through 12 from our four school districts participated in the “Dream Big” themed Expo.

The day opened with a dynamic message from Rev. Linwood Smith, Jr., former Teacher and Principal of Downingtown East High School. He encouraged all in attendance not to be afraid to dream because no dream is too small or has an expiration date.

The activities of the Expo began with the students exploring the many college and career exhibitors. There were private schools, PA state schools, automotive and trade technical schools, and community colleges on hand to field students questions on what their schools could offer. The many diverse career presenters ranged from Radnor Township Police, Benchmark FCU, Civil and Space engineers, US Bureau of Statistics, and Microsoft.

One of the best parts of the day for the students is the campus tour. Students toured parts of the 112-acres of urban forest campuses natural oasis. Making sure that they viewed the areas of most interest to them from the gym, exercise facility, dorm rooms, and finally the cafeteria were they enjoyed an all you can eat lunch. The day continued with grade specific workshops presented by Microsoft. Grades 9 & 10 discovered how to Make Hustle Happen. They explored the steps to take their big ideas/big dreams and turn them into a plan for business success or a campaign for a cause. Grades 11 & 12 discovered how to build their brand using LinkedIn. They developed profiles showing what they stood for, what they could do, and connected and shared with others. The day ended with the students having some free time to reflect, unwind, and share with each other everything they learned. It was another successful Expo for all of those involved!

CCF staffs up for the new school year with talented new team members!

★ Clarence Johnson, Community Partnerships Manager. Clarence comes to us from Marist University where he served as an academic recruiter. His career advanced his competencies in relationship building, sales and pipeline development through a variety of roles in both corporate and collegiate positions. He received his B.A. in Political Science and Public Administration at West Chester University, and is a current MBA candidate at Eastern University. Cjohnson@ccfutures.org

★ Tori Springfield, Students Services Coordinator. Tori completed her undergraduate degree at East Stroudsburg University. She is a former AmeriCorp VISTA, serving two years as a College Completion Coach at Lorain County Community College. Tspringfield@ccfutures.org

★ Mary Williams, Student Program Advocate. Mary’s experience includes both curriculum development and volunteer development and placement for the non-profit sector. She received her B.A. in Environmental Education from Hollins University and has certification from the Master Gardeners Program at Penn State. Mwilliams@ccfutures.org
Sixers Youth Foundation Supports CCF

Chester County Futures middle school program, Futures AHEAD is the first academic enrichment program in the county to receive a grant from the Sixers Youth Foundation. The $25,000 grant award will support academic enrichment activities for students aged 12 – 14 across four districts: Coatesville, Kennett, Oxford and Phoenixville. Futures AHEAD provides early intervention, STEM exposure, academic advising and career exploration for economically disadvantaged youth.

Chester County Futures staff traveled to the Sixers Training Center in Camden, NJ to participate in training for the Foundation’s Math Hoops program for the 2019-2020 academic year. The program engages 4th-8th grade students in fundamental math and social-emotional learning through the game of basketball. Working with real NBA and WNBA player stats, students and educators complete a 12-lesson curriculum, while competing in NBA Math Hoops games.

“In addition to the critical funding provided by the Sixers Youth Foundation, our students will have the opportunity to enhance their math skills, in a fun and innovative way. The strength of this partnership greatly impacts our work to remove the economic differentiators for our young people,” explains Executive Director, Maria McDonald.

Student Programs Manager, Kim Dickinson adds, “The Sixers branding certainly helps build excitement among our students who are already anxiously awaiting the opportunity to compete among other teams in the region in the spring.”

CCF Proudly Announces New Members to our Board of Directors:

Jim Danna SVP and Team Leader, Commercial Lending, WSFS Bank
Jim has been directly involved with CCF over the past six years as a founding member of our Community Partnerships Team. WSFS Bank continues to be a significant partner with CCF, supporting our financial literacy programs, Graduation Celebration and volunteerism needs within the program. Jim serves as a Board member for the Community Lenders CDC and resides with his family in Phoenixville, PA.

Rev. Linwood M. Smith, Jr., Pastor, Mount Zion AMEC Atglen
Reverend Smith received his Master of Divinity degree from The Lutheran Theological Seminary of Philadelphia upon retiring after 32 years in education, predominantly Downingtown School District, High School Principal. Other board service includes Brandywine Health Foundation, Coatesville Youth Initiative, Coatesville Community Education Foundation, and Coatesville Chapter NAACP. He resides with his wife of 30+ years in Coatesville, PA.

ABOUT US

Chester County Futures works with economically at-risk youth to give them the academic support and life skills needed to succeed in school and in life. We support our students with academic enrichment, adult mentoring and scholarship support. We serve students in the Coatesville, Kennett, Oxford, and Phoenixville Area School Districts.

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