



Quarterly Newsletter

May 2019

Creating a Community of Leaders

Through your support and donations, we are helping youth, who are at risk of poverty and unemployment, instead obtain a college education so that they can become contributing members of our community!

Our Youth College Readiness Program (YCRP) has been working in Bound Brook High School for the past four years, but we expanded this school year to include Bernardsville. Our staff has been helping the seniors at Bernards High School to prepare for a bright future!

Last year, you ensured that 100% of YCRP students:

- increased their knowledge and awareness of post secondary options and ways to finance college;
- received tutoring and academic assistance;
- received preparation for the SATs; and
- could attend college tours, a career breakfast, and community service to improve their resume.

Among seniors, 100% graduated on time and 96% enrolled in a college for the upcoming Fall semester.

Here are just a few of the stories of students you helped:



Current YCRP participants tour Montclair University.

"What I liked about the program is that the mentors are always there and will help us no matter what." - 2017-18 participant

Raised by a single mother through tough times, **Juliana** believes her mom was her greatest motivation to become a successful and good person. Balancing a part-time job with school clubs and sports, she made YCRP and good grades a priority. Juliana plans to attend Raritan Valley Community College (RVCC) to obtain a degree in Business, where she is sure to impress with her determination and leadership skills.

When **Hadir** first began YCRP, she identified two obstacles to her future success: not having someone at home to help her with school work and not knowing how she would be able to pay for college. With the support from YCRP, Hadir now has a 4.0 GPA, and can see attending and affording college as a reality. She is incredibly ambitious, balancing our program with a part-time job and multiple school clubs. Hadir has always wanted a career where she can help people. This Fall, she plans to pursue a career in nursing at RVCC with a scholarship she earned from the NJ STARS program.



Hadir, Juliana, and several other YCRP students worked together to run a successful food drive for the community.

Edgar, a senior at Bernards High School, is a first-generation immigrant to the United States. He has lived in the United States for three years and has already worked toward establishing his citizenship and obtaining a job. However, since English is his second language, Edgar has struggled with school and keeping up his grades. He has always wanted to go to college but did not believe he had the means. With the help of our staff, Edgar was able to better manage his schedule, achieve higher grades, learn about financial options for college, and fill out his first college application. Last month, he was accepted to RVCC, where he will study Auto Mechanics and become the first person in his family to attend college.

Thanks to YOU, in just 4 years, almost 60 students, who never thought they could go to college, are attending and realizing their potential! You are making a real difference in our community!

This program is made possible, in part, by a grant from the Office of Faith Based Initiatives and generous donations from Ethicon, Inc, Hanafin Foundation, and AT&T.



Strategic Planning

In April, our staff and board gathered to discuss strategic planning for Middle Earth. This amazing team works so hard to reach every youth, identify new solutions for emerging challenges for teens, and ensure we are doing everything possible to improve our community!



Celebrating 10 Years!



For the past 10 years, we have hosted a **10K Race** in Duke Island Park every Spring. This year, to celebrate our 10th Anniversary, special long-sleeve t-shirts were given to runners. Thank you to the runners and sponsors for supporting our youth programs and inspiring our youth to better fitness!

THANK YOU

to these organizations for their support and generosity!

- ◆ AvidXchange
- ◆ Blades, Crout & Proulx, LLC
- ◆ Bound Brook Elks #1388
- ◆ Colgate-Palmolive Company
- ◆ Family Foot & Ankle Specialists
- ◆ G&L Painting
- ◆ Hanafin Foundation
- ◆ Hillsborough Massage Therapy
- ◆ Johnson & Johnson Employee Engagement Program
- ◆ New Jersey City University
- ◆ Northeast Lock Corporation
- ◆ Panera Bread
- ◆ St. Patrick's Day Parade
- ◆ Somerset County Bar Foundation
- ◆ Wegmans

Student Ambassadors are Raking in the Awards for their Street Safety Project

Last year our Student Ambassadors for Community Health, in partnership with the 4-H, developed a street safety project, which included a parklet, street murals, and crosswalks. We are pleased to announce that their project has won several awards!



- The 4-H State-level Excellence in Teen Programming
- The Denise Miller Innovator Award
- The Excellence in Planning Award from Somerset County
- Somerset County Excellence in the Arts Award

Casino Night

Buffet Dinner and Bar
Basket Raffle
Texas Hold 'Em
Roulette
Craps
Money Wheel
Blackjack

Friday, June 7, 2019
from 6 to 10 p.m.
Winemakers of Somerset
in Bound Brook

Get more info or purchase tickets at
www.MiddleEarthNJ.org/casino-night

Somerset County 4-H Fair on August 7-9. Please visit our food stand in the big tent at North Branch Park! By ordering a burger, grilled cheese or French fries, you will be supporting our youth programs!