



MAKING THE GRADE

IT'S ALL ABOUT OUR STUDENTS!



Dear Friends,

Spring brings the promise of new beginnings, no student looks for those beginnings with as much anticipation as a senior in high school. The Chester County Futures Class of 2016 has done the work with early admission applications, FAFSA submissions, scholarship research and applications completed; leading them to their new beginnings in post-secondary schools in the fall. We are enormously proud to report that our 36 seniors have been accepted at a wide variety of schools from Stanford University to Delaware County Community College, with several of them still making their selections.

As an organization, we find ourselves experiencing newness within our programs as well. In this issue of *Making the Grade*, you'll read about the expansion of our Futures AHEAD middle school program to include Coatesville as they attended their first enrichment camp at Longwood Gardens. You'll notice the important programmatic outcome that

resulted from our partnership with SAP America's Social Sabbatical consultants. And of course, you'll enjoy seeing the joy of learning in the photographs of our wonderful students working with dedicated volunteers, mentors and staff throughout all of our programs.

While we anticipate 100% high school graduation again this year, we will be measuring the success of the 2015-16 school year in new ways thanks to the increased participation of our donors, volunteers and partners. We look forward to sharing the outcomes with you in our July issue.

When we bring our community together with our students, great things happen for us all.

Thank you for your support and encouragement,

Maria McDonald
Executive Director
mmcdonald@ccfutures.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

Save the Date

Women's Empowerment Luncheon

People's Light & Theater Company
Thursday, April 21, 2016
View photos: <http://bit.ly/1VHi8NL>

Graduation Celebration for 36 Seniors!

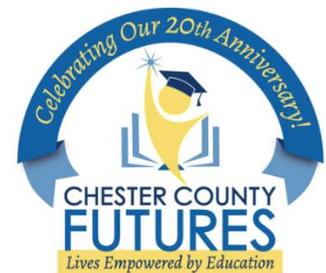
Tuesday, May 17, 2016

Futures' 16th Annual Golf Classic

Applebrook Golf Club
Tuesday, June 14, 2016
<http://ccf.kintera.org/golf2016>

20th Anniversary Celebration

The Run for Empowerment
Saturday, October 1, 2016



Our 20th Anniversary

Celebrating two decades of outstanding service to over 1,000 students in our shared communities.

Board Members, families, staff, volunteers, donors, and community partners will all come together to enjoy a week's worth of fun, food, appreciation, and support for our organization and the wonderful students we serve.

SAP Social Sabbatical Project



Members of the SAP America's Social Sabbatical Initiative representing Chester County Futures: Marjorie Dawkins, Steve Brown, Kim Dickinson, and Maria McDonald. SAP consultants Melissa Rittenhouse, Nina Kelley and Michael Cieri.

Pyxera Global approached Chester County Futures in December to interview us as a potential partner for SAP America's Social Sabbatical Initiative. At the core of this program, SAP America deploys SAP professionals to non-profit organizations for six-week assignments to help deliver specific strategic initiatives for their non-profit partners.

Chester County Futures competed against 12 organizations in the Greater Philadelphia region. In the end, five were chosen and Chester County Futures was the **only** non-profit organization in Chester County to be selected.

Our project: To fully develop a college bridge program to better prepare students for college, support them throughout their college education, and guide them to successful careers beyond.

SAP consultants Melissa Rittenhouse, Nina Kelley and Michael Cieri worked alongside our staff to create our new program, *Steps 4 Success*:

Highlights of the work include:

- A phased development plan for *Steps 4 Success*, beginning with the Class of 2016
- Outreach and engagement opportunities for our current Alumni
- A project management plan for our inaugural College Bootcamp, hosted by SAP America on August 8, 2016 including four main areas of focus:
 - Budgeting on campus,
 - Time management with new independence,
 - Adapting to new social situations,
 - Peer to peer mentoring through a closed social media group

Executive Director Maria McDonald stated at the concluding ceremony at SAP, "The SAP Social Sabbatical took a goal and made it a reality by lending us the expertise we needed to reach completion. This work would have taken many months, if not years to complete, we can't possibly thank SAP enough."



PYXERA Global envisions a world in which individuals, organizations, and institutions from different points on the globe converge to address complex challenges through sustainable and mutually beneficial efforts.

www.pyxeraglobal.org

Futures AHEAD Enrichment Camp

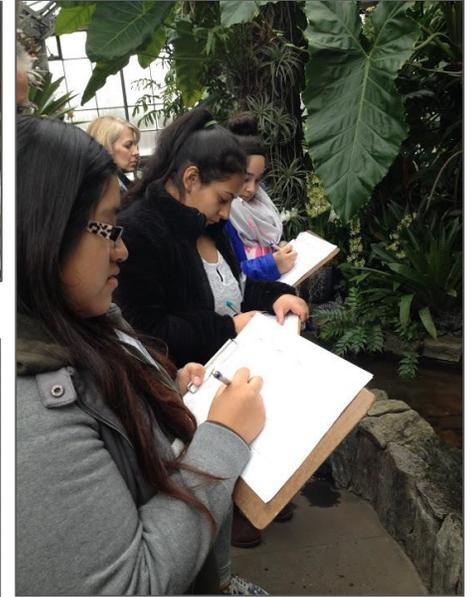
In late March, Longwood Gardens was bustling with life as over 80 middle school students from our Futures AHEAD program visited the world-renowned site in Kennett Square for a two-day enrichment camp. The event provided our 7th and 8th grade students from Coatesville, Kennett, and Phoenixville school districts with hands-on learning opportunities under the guidance of a team of Longwood educators.

Following an introductory tour of the gardens, Longwood staff led our students through a presentation of "biomimicry," the practice of drawing inspiration from nature to create man-made products. Students studied the natural designs of various plants that led to the creation of Velcro, packaging materials, clothing, and many other every-day items. The students were then presented with a "dilemma" that they needed to solve by utilizing the creativity and skills of biomimicry. This dilemma challenged students to redesign a community playground to make it safer, more accessible, and more environmentally-friendly by drawing inspiration from numerous plants on display in the Longwood Conservatory. Through careful observations and photography, groups created a PowerPoint presentation and unveiled their new-and-improved playgrounds to Longwood staff members and their peers. Longwood's Coordinator of School and Youth Programs Lori Trexler said, "Longwood Gardens is pleased to partner with Chester County Futures in this important educational initiative. Our educators were so impressed by the students' ability to apply what they learned

about plants in such creative ways. It was a pleasure to work with such a motivated group of students!"



**LONGWOOD
GARDENS**



In late March, Longwood Gardens hosted the Futures AHEAD camp for our Coatesville, Phoenixville and Kennett Square middle school students.

Our Students



Maria Co (Jr. CV)
 Selected from a national pool of talented high school juniors to spend three weeks attending the College Prep program at Franklin & Marshall College this summer.

F&M College Prep is designed to transform young people into college-ready men and women, eager to discover their intellectual passions and develop their leadership skills.

Rising seniors attend F&M faculty-taught classes two hours per day, four days a week. They also take skills and writing workshops, and go on field trips, designed to expose them to a well-rounded liberal arts education experience.



Nelson Negron (Sr. CV)
 Nearly a full Academic Scholarship Award



Jonathan Woodard (Sr. CV)
 A Full Academic Scholarship Award

Stanford University

Ariosto Gomez-Franko (Sr. OX)
 A Full Academic Scholarship Award



Ahazia Irons (Sr. CV)
 Received the Chester County Women's Commission Empowered Young Women's Award

Futures AHEAD

In early April, twenty Chatham Financial volunteers spent the day tutoring our 7th and 8th grade students from Kennett Middle School. What a great way to kick-off National Volunteer Week!



Staff Highlight: Keara Farrelly, Development Coordinator



Keara joined Chester County Futures in December 2015 as our Development Coordinator. She has a Bachelor's

Degree in International Development and Spanish from the 2013 class of the University of Delaware. Go Blue Hens!

In her role as the Development Coordinator, her responsibilities include managing the execution of our fundraising events such as; Strikes for Futures, the Women's Empowerment Luncheon, the Golf Classic, and

supporting this year's 5K Run for Empowerment. Keara also writes grant proposals for corporations and foundations. "I enjoy working with the entire CCF team and I love learning the ins-and-outs of how a non-profit organization is run."

"My favorite part of my job is when I get to interact with the students that we serve and their families. I especially enjoy translating for the Spanish-speaking families in our program. It allows me to experience a part of their involvement with CCF and allows me to communicate in Spanish, which I love!"



ABOUT US

Chester County Futures works with economically at-risk youth to give them the academic 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 Coatesville Area, Kennett Consolidated, Oxford Area, Phoenixville Area and West Chester Area School Districts.

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