

Bridging the Gaps



To and Through: College and Career Readiness for Philadelphia High School Students

Student Interns:

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Community Preceptor: Laura Naylor, Academic Services Manager, Philadelphia Futures

COMMUNITY PARTNER



Philadelphia Futures

Philadelphia Futures is a non-profit organization that connects low-income, first-generation-to-college students to the tools, resources, and opportunities needed for admission to and success in college.

<https://philadelphiafutures.org/>

PROJECT

The interns served as teaching assistants for two classes in Philadelphia Future's summer curriculum: (1) Career Research & Exploration and (2) History and Human Behavior. In Career Research and Exploration, interns helped high school students develop skills for college and career readiness, such as how to write a resume and cover letter. Students were introduced to different industries throughout the summer via guest speakers, and they presented a final project on an industry of their choosing. In History and Human Behavior, the students learned about various ethnic histories (African-American, Haitian, Native American, and Middle Eastern) movements, and how they have shaped our present-day society. Guest speakers and documentaries were employed to provide more information and context to the various topics. The final research paper will highlight a social justice movement or an issue of their choice.

CHALLENGES

- Engaging with students in a virtual setting
- Understanding the effects of the pandemic, remote learning, isolation, and social injustice on student mental health and academic involvement
- Learning how to collaborate and communicate with new team members with different approaches and perspectives
- Developing lessons that prompt participation when cameras and mics are off
- Encouraging equal participation and effort in group projects in Zoom breakout rooms
- Summer jobs overlapping with class times

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Assisted in virtual classrooms to support students in writing resumes, cover letters, and reflections
- Helped students identify their passions, values, and goals
- Introduced students to different career paths and industries
- Held a Health Careers Panel to discuss the medical school application process and our personal journeys to medical school
- Educated students on smoking cessation in an age-appropriate manner by including conversation on e-cigarettes and vaping
- Provided information on COVID-19 vaccines and answered student questions regarding safety and efficacy

"The students I worked with made the subject a very interesting and intriguing one by providing amazing insights on a lot of social justice issues around us. I can say that through this experience, I have learned to be opened to learn new things regardless of who or where it may come from."

"I am very passionate about teaching history specifically African and African-American history. Having the ability to teach these topics to predominantly students of color has been a blessing. The students have been extremely engaged throughout the entire summer and have thought critically about many of the social justice movements they have learned."

"As a medical student, I've always had a passion for setting the next generation up for success, so it's been rewarding to play a direct role in their college & career readiness. From this experience, I've developed a greater capacity for mentoring and teaching students."

"Our students shared the difficulties of internet access, conflicting work schedules, and pandemic strain. Despite these stresses, I was inspired by the work they put into their final projects, and I was thoroughly impressed that many of them weaved in social justice issues when discussing education and career opportunities. I am hopeful that our students will achieve their education goals and continue to mobilize themselves and their communities to push for equity, growth, and change."

REFLECTIONS

	Philadelphia Futures	City of Philadelphia
High School Graduation Rate	100%	69%
College Matriculation Rate	98%	55%
College Graduation Rate*	70%	23%

*Classes since 2012



Google Classroom

