

ED FUNDAMENTALS

A SPECIAL NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS
OF THE PHILADELPHIA EDUCATION FUND

Ed Fund Expands its Reach with PhillyGoes2College

Each year, more than 1,500 students turn to the Philadelphia Education Fund for college access, college scholarships and college persistence support. While that may sound like a lot, we at the Ed Fund feel that it is not enough. Workforce development is inextricably tied to greater postsecondary access and there are thousands of individuals in Philadelphia who could benefit from a college degree. That's why the Philadelphia Education Fund has added PhillyGoes2College (PG2C), one of the city's premier college resource and referral initiatives, to its portfolio of programs.

PG2C was launched in 2010 by the City of Philadelphia to help reach then-Mayor Nutter's goal of doubling the percentage of Philadelphia residents with a four-year degree to 36% by 2018. After the mayoral transition, the City sought a nonprofit organization to take over the program and, in 2017, selected the Ed Fund through an RFP process.

PG2C is the only program in Philadelphia that provides citywide free, comprehensive college and career access referral services to individuals of any age from anywhere on the learning continuum. Those served include middle and high school students who need college access support, adult high school graduates who did not continue on to postsecondary education and are now interested in exploring their options, and adults who left postsecondary education and want to return to complete their degree.

According to Ed Fund President and CEO Farah Jimenez, PG2C will enable the Ed Fund to help an even more diverse range of students access postsec-

ondary education and achieve career success. "Philadelphia is the poorest large city in the nation and is ranked 92 out of 100 cities in college attainment. As a city, we need to do better. PG2C is an opportunity for the Ed Fund to leverage its more than 25 years of leadership in college success programming to support the college going and college completion dreams of a much

larger audience of students."

PG2C provides referrals for individuals who need support with scholarships and financial aid, SAT

preparation, FAFSA completion, and finding and applying to the right school or college. It offers college-going workshops to the community; one-on-one appointments for help with postsecondary education or resume-related needs; and resource tables at events around the city.

To ensure it is accessible to all potential college students, PG2C has cultivated a strong digital presence. Its website (phillygoes2college.org) is a popular

local resource and offers referrals, literature and guidelines about the educational process, and a calendar of citywide college-going events.



PG2C provides help with FAFSA completion

"Too many Philadelphians give up on their dreams of higher education," says Jimenez. "We're excited to have a platform to not only show them that college is possible but to help them get there."

**To support PhillyGoes2College,
call Kimberly Stephens at
215-665-1400 ext. 3316 or
email kstephens@philaedfund.org.**

Month-long campaign boosts college awareness

In October, many students begin the process of applying to colleges and for financial aid. To connect more people to available resources that help students enter and complete college, the Ed Fund's PhillyGoes2College program took the lead in coordinating a month-long awareness campaign featuring events hosted by organizations throughout the city.

To kick off the campaign, the Ed Fund hosted a Financial Aid Assistance event, featuring a keynote address by **Otis Hackney**, Chief Education Officer, City of Philadelphia and remarks by **Dr. William Hite**, Superintendent of The School District of Philadelphia. The event, which coincided with the release of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), provided an opportunity for students to utilize a large computer lab to complete FAFSA forms with assistance from university financial aid experts, and get answers about paying for college.



FARAH JIMENEZ

President's Message

When people ask me about the Philadelphia Education Fund, I often describe it as one of Philadelphia's best-kept secrets. While many people know parts of what we do, very few have a full picture of the many ways we increase college access throughout the City.

The fact is, the Ed Fund offers the most comprehensive college access and college persistence programming in Philadelphia. That's because we address the journey to college and career success holistically. By beginning our work with students in their middle school years, the Ed Fund helps ensure that those most at risk of dropping out receive the intervention and support necessary to stay on track and graduate high school.

In our city's struggling high schools, we help create a college-going culture that allows traditionally overlooked students to see themselves as "college material." From the very first day of 9th grade, we engage students in an ongoing conversation about their future and support them with resources, guidance, and skill building throughout their high school career. Read more about how the Ed Fund's college readiness plan helped transform a high school on the brink of closure on page 2.

But we don't just help students get into college; we help them get through it successfully. Did you know that the Ed Fund is the largest non-university scholarship entity in the city? **Through the generosity of donors who helped endow our Scholars Program, we annually award between \$500,000 to \$1 million in Last Dollar Scholarships that fill the gap between the financial aid and the cost of college attendance.** We also match first generation students with adult mentors who help students navigate challenges they encounter along the way.

And this year, I'm thrilled we are expanding our reach to help an even more diverse group of individuals pursue their dream of college through PhillyGoes2College (PG2C). As you will read on our cover page, PG2C will enable the Ed Fund to assist individuals anywhere on the learning continuum, including adults who never attended college and those who left before earning a degree.

None of these services would be possible without the support of our donors. **If you are interested in helping turn a student's dream of college into a reality, call me at 215-665-1400 ext. 3313 or email FJimenez@philaedfund.org.**

-Farah Jimenez



Philadelphia Scholars

Ed Fund Scholar Achieving her Dreams

Dominique Guess is the personification of determination, and that determination has enabled her to overcome some overwhelming obstacles.

At five, her father, a pastor, was murdered and her mother was left to support Dominique and her eight siblings as a single parent. Along the way, they faced some very lean times. "My mom had been a stay-at-home parent. She didn't know how to raise nine children on her own, but she is a very strong woman."

During this difficult time, her mother drew her family close. "I was home schooled for about eight or nine years. It gave me a lot of flexibility and exposed me to many different experiences," says Dominique.

While she enjoyed her years of home schooling, by the time she reached 11th grade, Dominique was ready to return to a traditional school environment. She enrolled in Strawberry Mansion High School, but found herself struggling to catch up in English and Math. Despite these challenges, she was determined to graduate high school and attend Temple University. And, like her mother, Dominique is a strong woman.

Today, Dominique is a sophomore at the school of her dreams majoring in Asian Studies, a subject that has long fascinated her. She is taking classes in Japanese and teaching herself Korean. Her ultimate goal after graduation is to travel to South Korea

and immerse herself in the culture, language, and music, so she can educate other Americans about a part of the world she feels is little understood.



Dominique Guess

To make her dream of attending Temple a reality, Dominique not only drew upon her own personal strength but also took every opportunity to utilize the resources and support available to her. Not the least of these resources was a Last Dollar Scholarship from the Philadelphia Education Fund.

"The scholarship I received from the Ed Fund helps cover many of my college expenses. Without it I wouldn't be able to attend Temple," she says.

As a college student, Dominique continues to value the resources offered by the Ed Fund. This year, Ed Fund staffer Ericka Morris will serve as her mentor, offering guidance and advice to help her remain on track to achieve her goals.

Morris, who as an undergraduate majored in American and African American studies, appreciates the fact that rather than choose a traditional path to employment, Dominique is pursuing her passion. "Dominique is inquisitive and she sees her education as an opportunity to enrich her life and be interested in her life," says Morris. "I think that the most successful people find a way to do what they love and I hope to be a sounding board for Dominique as she explores her options and opportunities."

Summer Round-up

While school may not have been in session, this summer was a productive time for the Ed Fund. Here's a recap of what we were up to:

IMPROVING STEM EDUCATION

The Ed Fund introduced the inaugural class of McKinney Senior Fellows at a *launch event for The Donald McKinney Center for STEM Education*. The Senior Fellows



A beaker toast to the McKinney Center

comprise an elite roster of individuals who are advancing the national conversation on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM)

education through their academic research and global corporate philanthropic leadership. Members of this distinguished interdisciplinary group will lend their talents to efforts that inform the programs, research, evaluation, and public policy work of the McKinney Center.

Several of the Senior Fellows also presented at the Ed Fund's first *Donald McKinney Center/Philadelphia STEM Ecosystem Community-Based Learning Conference*, which brought together STEM educators, academics, and members of City agencies. As part of the Ed Fund's STEM Ecosystem initiative, this diverse group of stakeholders is working to identify and address challenges in STEM education and help ensure that all students have access to meaningful STEM learning opportunities.

PREPARING STUDENTS FOR COLLEGE AND CAREER SUCCESS



Ed Fund staff welcome students to First Year Experience

A recent study found that as many as 1 in 5 low-income students who have been accepted to college don't arrive on campus in the fall, due to challenges they did not expect. This summer, a variety of

Ed Fund initiatives helped smooth the transition to college for graduates of our College Access Program (CAP) and partner high schools.

- More than 100 students took part in *First Year Experience*, a daylong event that included college prep team building activities, workshops on postsecondary success and persistence, a Scholars alumni panel, as well as giveaways and Last Dollar Scholarship awards.

- Our *College Access Summer WorkReady Program* also helped students maintain focus on their college and career goals during the summer months. This six-week summer service learning experience employed teaching and learning strategies to prepare students for college and career success. This year, 30 CAP students from Horace Furness, John Bartram, Kensington Creative and Performing Arts, Olney Charter, and Roxborough High Schools participated in the program.
- Of course, the ultimate goal for all students is a successful career. To give our students an edge as they enter the job market, the Ed Fund hosted a *Career Expo*. At this interactive event, students participated in mock interviews, met with area employers and attended presentations offering valuable information and advice for a successful job search.



Students received employment advice at our Career Expo

DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE TEACHERS

In May, the Ed Fund's Philadelphia Postsecondary Program's (PPSP) hosted the *Spring Institute*, which aimed to help secondary and postsecondary educators smooth the transition from high school to college. The event featured teacher-facilitated workshops and discussions on tangible and practical topics aimed at ensuring middle school and high school teachers gain the tools to prepare students for the rigor of college, and that college professors are equipped to help transitioning students succeed. Educators learned specific strategies from their peers, and created actionable agendas they can use in the classroom and share with peers and administrators.

Finally, because students benefit when teachers have opportunities to broaden their worldview, the Ed Fund partnered with Global Exploration for Educators Organization (GEEO) to sponsor a *travel program for educators* in August. Through this collaboration, 15 educators were able to travel to World Heritage sites and cities in India and Nepal where they were exposed to new experiences and received assistance with creating innovative curricula for the classroom.



Teachers visited World Heritage sites through our partnership with GEEO

Ed Fund Welcomes New Board Members

The Philadelphia Education Fund is pleased to announce the addition of **La-Toya Hackney**, **Donald DiLoreto**, and **Dr. Nancy Butler Songer** to its Board of Directors.



La-Toya Hackney

Hackney is Assistant General Counsel for TE Connectivity (formerly known as Tyco Electronics), a global manufacturer of electronic components. She serves as lead counsel for its automotive business in North America. A former Rhodes Scholar nominee, she is a graduate of Stanford University, and Harvard Law School.

Hackney is a product of the Philadelphia public school system and her husband Otis D. Hackney II, Chief Education Officer of the City of Philadelphia, is an alum of the Ed Fund's Scholars Program. Both are strong advocates of public education and served as a host family for "Considering Henry," a parent group dedicated to informing prospective C.W. Henry Elementary School parents about the school. With a strong commitment to community service and education, Hackney also serves on the board of WHY? and on the Ed Fund's Scholars Advisory Committee.

"Educational opportunities can change the trajectory of a student's life and break the cycle of generational poverty," she says. "The Ed Fund is the perfect organization for me to support these goals because it is helping students get the financial assistance and overall support that they need to be successful as first generation college students."



Donald DiLoreto

DiLoreto is Senior Vice President of the Education and Non-Profit Banking Group at Wells Fargo Bank. He has over 20 years of public sector experience and is responsible for managing higher education relationships in Pennsylvania, Delaware, Ohio and Kentucky. He received his MBA in Finance from The George Washington University and his undergraduate degree in Economics and Political Science from Virginia Commonwealth University.

DiLoreto's community involvement includes current and past board memberships with civic and youth organizations including the Economy League and The First Tee. He has also been active in many civic, economic development, and educational initiatives.

"As a financial service professional serving higher education at one of the largest employers in the region, I know that education is at the heart of economic development," says DiLoreto. "I was attracted to the Ed Fund because of the organization's impact on teacher quality and student outcomes."



Dr. Nancy Butler

Songer is Dean of Drexel University's School of Education, where she also served as Distinguished University Professor. She holds a doctorate in science education from the University of California, Berkeley and a master's degree in molecular and developmental biology from Tufts University. She also studied biology as an undergraduate at the University of California, Davis.

Drexel's School of Education plays a key role in the University's neighborhood partnerships involving public education in Philadelphia. Its DragonsTeach program is part of a national initiative to meet the need for STEM teachers and offers students in Drexel's STEM majors the opportunity to integrate teacher preparation into their curricula.

Passionate about improving STEM education in Philadelphia, Songer volunteers with the Ed Fund's STEM Ecosystem. "As a science educator and researcher for over 25 years, I love the chance to think about creative means to increase the quality of STEM programs and resources within Philly, particularly since Philadelphia has such a thriving STEM culture," she says.

The Ed Fund wishes to thank departing board members Ray Creely, Lucy Kerman, Greg Anderson for their work and commitment on behalf of Philadelphia's students, teachers and schools.

Dynamic Leader and a Strong Partnership Help Transform a School

How does a school go from the brink of closure to one of the most improved high schools of the year?

In 2013, when Richard Gordon took over as principal, Paul Robeson High School for Human Services was plagued with poor academic performance and declining enrollment. Today, despite the fact that 88% of the school's students live in poverty and 17% qualify for special-education services, the school and its students are thriving. In fact, 98.5% of the senior class graduated last year, and more than half went to college.



Principal Richard Gordon

Much of the turnaround can be credited to the transformative leadership of Principal Gordon who established a culture of high expectations at the school. Described by his colleagues as a skilled agent of change, Gordon is an administrator who respects and values all people and is willing to take risks to broaden educational opportunities for students.

Gordon's first challenge was overcoming the fractured climate at Robeson where students, in particular, felt very disconnected to what was happening in the building. To create a more positive environment, he walked the halls constantly, regularly sat with students

in the cafeteria and even organized a school-wide field trip. Most importantly, he implemented an open door policy, and encouraged students to visit his office at any time. "When I first arrived,

going to the principal's office was seen as taboo," he recalls. "Today, kids are always in my office. I want them to know I am accessible and am eager for their input."

Gordon also made it his mission to prepare his students with the 21st century skills needed to succeed in

postsecondary studies. One way he

achieved that goal was to partner with the Philadelphia Education Fund to provide

students with targeted services, resources and support. "The Ed Fund developed a school-wide college readiness plan to help our students focus on their future," he says. "They engaged in an ongoing conversation with students about their journey that began on the first day of 9th grade and continued with them through graduation and beyond."

As part of that plan, the Ed Fund coordinated a range of school-wide and grade-specific college prep activities,

supports and services. For example, to expose students early on to high quality universities and motivate them to begin working toward the goal of college from day one, Ed Fund staff collaborated with Temple and Drexel Universities to create a college fair specifically for 9th graders. The Ed Fund also provided workshops on essay writing and interview skills for 10th graders, facilitated college visits to nearby campuses for juniors, and arranged for college admissions representatives to visit Robeson.

Gordon also credits the Ed Fund with helping to improve teacher quality at Robeson. "Several of my teachers attended the Ed Fund's Spring Institute," he says "In addition, Ed Fund staff

provided professional development within the school, where teachers participated in skill-building activities and learned

how to connect those activities to outcomes, and how those outcomes impact student choices."

"Our partnership with the Ed Fund has been invaluable," says Gordon. "In each of the four years Robeson worked with the Ed Fund, more than 95% of our students graduated. That creates opportunities and choice for students to move forward and create a better future for themselves."

In each of the four years Robeson worked with the Ed Fund, more than 95% of our students graduated

Join the Conversation

Concerned about the state of education in Philadelphia? Want to be part of the solution?

Join the Philadelphia Education Fund's Education First Compact, a monthly education speaker series that last year, alone, convened more than 900 civic, nonprofit, and corporate leaders.

From September to June, come to hear from and dialogue with the region's and the nation's leading figures in education. And, come to network with more than 100 individuals committed to education.

The Education First Compact is FREE to attend. This year, we invite you to signal your support for the Ed Compact by becoming a voluntary subscriber. To learn more about subscriber benefits, visit www.philaedfund.org/compact

- October 5:** English Language Learners
- November 2:** Scaling Innovation
- December 7:** Connecting Education Research to Practice
- January 4:** Educational Technology in Schools
- February 1:** Supporting Students in Higher Ed
- March 1:** College-Ready Writers
- April 5:** Teacher Prep Pathways
- May 3:** Budget Update
- June 7:** Mayor's Office of Ed Update

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Fund Ed!

PHILADELPHIA
EDUCATION FUND

A PROBLEM:

Philadelphia ranks 92nd out of the nation's 100 largest cities in percentage of adults with college degrees.

A PROVEN SOLUTION:

Last year, 95% of the seniors served by Philadelphia Education Fund's College Access Program were accepted to college.

THERE ARE THREE WAYS TO SUPPORT OUR WORK:

- Sign on to Fund Ed at the Ed Fund
- Sign up to be a mentor of a Philadelphia Scholar
- Sign on to host a friend-raiser and introduce your friends to the Ed Fund

Support the Ed Fund at www.philaedfund.org or call Rosina Rucci at 215-665-1400 ext. 4000