

College planning boot camps guide first generation students into top pre-college programs

First Generation Boca Ciega High School (FL) Student Receives Full Scholarship to Brown Pre-College Program

MARIETTA, GA, USA, May 22, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- College Planning Program Guides Boca Ciega High School Student into Full Scholarship to Brown Pre-College Program

Josiah, a high school junior at Boca Ciega High School (Gulfport, FL) attended a summer [college planning boot camp](#) during middle school

sponsored by the [Foundation for Ensuring Access and Equity](#), a community-based organization in Marietta, Georgia. Now a high school junior, Josiah joins other students, who were also middle school boot camp participants, on their way to prestigious summer programs along their college-bound journey. Josiah has been offered fully funded summer experiences at the Brown



Boot Camp Students

University Pre-College Program and Northeastern University Accelerate Program. Jocelyne, a junior in the IB Program at St. Petersburg High School (FL) and Jack Kent Cooke Scholar, is on her way to a fully funded program at the University of Connecticut. She has also attended programs at the University of Pennsylvania, Carlton College, and the University of California Santa Barbara. Arshia, a junior in the St. Petersburg College Early College Program, is on his way to a fully funded semester long experience in the MIT MITES Program.

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I first learned about the MIT MITES program in the middle school boot camp and waited 3 years until I could apply. My family is so happy that I was admitted and received a full scholarship to attend.”

Arshia, St. Petersburg College Early College Program

The summer college planning boot camps for middle school and high school students are part of the

organization’s comprehensive college planning model through which students from under

resourced backgrounds and those who will be the first in their family to attend college are guided in “building a body of work” throughout their 7-year middle school through high school journey across the organization’s 3 pillars of scholarship, leadership, and service. The pre-college program invitations are the result of a body of work that resulted in Josiah being selected as a QuestBridge College Prep Scholar, Jocelyne being selected as a Jack Kent Cooke Scholar and National Merit Semifinalist, and Arshia being selected as a National Merit Semifinalist.

Jocelyne notes, “Since attending my first college planning boot camp as a rising 6th grader at Thurgood Marshall Fundamental Middle School, I have learned to pursue leadership and meaningful community service in all of my activities. Through the organization I have also served as president of the youth leadership board since entering high school, co-founded a college cohort club at my high school, served as a contributor to several books on college planning, and am currently serving as the project leader for an ACT Prep and Learning Strategies book. I will also be returning to the boot camp this summer as a high school intern and discussion group leader for middle school and high school students.”

[Dr. Lewis Brinson](#), the Pinellas County Schools Minority Achievement Officer notes, “In 2018, when I first met Mychal and Nina Wynn, the college planning couple who operates the Foundation for Ensuring Access and Equity’s nationally recognized ‘College Planning Cohort™ Program,’ I knew that what they had created is what our students needed. This will be our sixth summer hosting college planning boot camps for middle school and high school students. However, in responding to parent requests, we are now offering 2 strands—a college planning strand and a study skills strand—so that we meet the needs of all students.”

Mychal Wynn, a first generation graduate of Northeastern University and CEO of the foundation, notes, “Many students from marginalized and under resourced communities are not exposed to prestigious pre-college programs because such programs are viewed as unaffordable. However, our mission is to guide students, regardless of their socioeconomic backgrounds or citizenship status, in identifying programs offering scholarships and advocating for themselves to receive the maximum funding. Even when programs are not available to students until the 10th or 11th grade, we guide middle school students in planning how to make themselves competitive candidates for these programs through their scholarship, leadership, and service during each year of school prior to submitting their applications. These programs not only provide valuable learning and growing experiences, but allow students to receive fully funded visits to great colleges and to network with students from around the world. Our students are still applying to fly-in programs at such schools as Amherst, Bowdoin, Caltech, Carleton, Middlebury, Swarthmore, Williams, and Yale.”

Omar Dixon, Jr., a 2nd-year student at Brown University from Dallas, Georgia, is giving back by serving as a college intern for the boot camps. Omar notes, “As a participant in the college planning cohort program throughout high school, I was surrounded by other first generation students committed to becoming great students so that they could earn full need-based scholarships into great colleges. Each year, I had role models of college students returning to

serve as interns in the boot camps. Now, it is my turn to serve as a role model so that other middle school and high school students understand why they should thrive to become the best version of themselves and how by doing so, they will create great college and scholarship opportunities for themselves. I don't know of any other program where people like Mr. and Mrs. Wynn continue to support students from middle school through graduate school. Kimberly Hadaway, a 2017 graduate from my high school was my role model. She has received her BA in Math and Chemistry from Williams College and is about to receive her PhD. in math from Iowa State University. Mr. and Mrs. Wynn have been working with Kimberly since she was in the third grade and Kimberly continues to serve as a mentor and adviser to other students in the program. I guess you could say that Mr. and Mrs. Wynn have developed an amazing family of First Generation students who are leading and serving throughout the country."

The all-virtual 4-day middle school and high school boot camps are free for any Pinellas County Schools student. Students may register by contacting Dr. Lewis Brinson, Minority Achievement Officer at Pinellas County Schools or signing up on the foundation's website.

Mychal Wynn

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