

ED FUNDAMENTALS

A SPECIAL NEWSLETTER FOR FRIENDS OF THE PHILADELPHIA EDUCATION FUND

U.S. Department of Energy Grant Benefits Philadelphia High Schools Through PEF

The Philadelphia Education Fund is well known for its expertise in college and career success programming. It is less known for its expertise in career-based curriculum design. Until now.

This year, PEF was selected to partner with the Philadelphia Energy Authority (PEA) and the Energy Coordinating Agency (ECA) on a three-year U.S. Department of Energy-funded program that provides job training in the fast-growing solar energy industry. Called Bright Solar Futures, the program is the first in the nation to provide comprehensive solar training to Career and Technical Education (CTE) students, and now among them, Philadelphia high school students.

PEF's point person for this collaboration is Nancy Peter, Director of PEF's McKinney Center for STEM Education. "The PEA and ECA have developed solid training programs for adults looking to enter the solar energy field.

What we bring to the table is experience and expertise in making STEM programming relevant and accessible to students. We have a strong record of helping scientists interface effectively with young people and supporting educators in the development and delivery of STEM career content."

PEF's role in the partnership has two parts: helping industry professionals learn how to teach high school students and creating what eventually will be a year-long program for adoption by the state and national replication. Both pieces rely on PEF's expertise in different ways. To develop the curriculum, the PEF team must synthesize Pennsylvania Common Core standards, national Next Generation Science standards, and School District of Philadelphia standards in math, science, sustainability, and CTE. PEF must also map its findings to all the skills a



Bright Solar Futures summer pilot program high school graduates

student must master to be job-ready. PEF's experience in schools will help in training PEA and ECA staff and other instructors how to adapt their existing training programs to meet the needs of adolescents.

"We selected the Philadelphia Education Fund as a sub-recipient of the Bright Solar Futures grant based on the invaluable assistance they provided on a previous initiative called Find Your Power," says Laura Rigell PEA's Solar Manager. "For that initiative, PEF staff not only coached our energy instruction team to better engage youth, but also helped improve our curriculum immensely."

Bright Solar Futures first class graduated last August. Another cohort is enrolled now. Dr. Michael Calderone, principal of Frankford High School, commended the program for giving his students the option to continue their studies in solar and other renewable energies at the college level or jump right into a career with continued opportunities for advancement.

Program graduate Kayla Brown agreed, "The Bright Solar Futures class made me confident in my choice to study architecture when I start at Drexel this fall. I hope to use what I've learned about solar as a way to give back to my community as I start my career."

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— Bright Solar Futures graduate, Kayla Brown

Educate Philly Gala **Tops \$161,000**



All photos this page: Tommy Leonardi

THE SPOTLIGHT WAS ON the region’s athletic coaches, high school and college achievers, and elected officials for the Philadelphia Education Fund’s 2nd Annual Educate Philly Gala Luncheon on June 12, 2019 at the Union League. The sold-out event raised \$161,475 to support PEF’s wide range of programs that help students succeed in college and career.

Themed “Developing the Scholar Athlete,” the event featured a lively panel discussion with former Phillies All-Star and First Base Coach Mickey Morandini, former Philadelphia 76er and Temple Men’s Basketball Head Coach Aaron McKie, and Ken Carter, the former high school basketball coach and education activist who inspired the 2005 film *Coach Carter*. The coaches emphasized the transferability of self-discipline, leadership, and team skills to success in higher education and career.

Recognition of hard-working students with inspiring stories opened the event. Edward Rendell, former Governor of Pennsylvania and former Mayor of Philadelphia, recognized Last Dollar Scholarship recipients, Nayeli Perez-Peralta and Cheryl Wiltshire, with Rising Star Awards. Nayeli, now a 1st year at Temple University, was born with a rare condition that affects her ears, eyes, spine, and heart. She has endured countless surgeries and is passionate about using film and photography to encourage and support others. Cheryl, a 1st year at West Chester University, is passionate about social and criminal justice issues. “I believe that knowledge and experience will allow me to have the tough conversations about the justice system that can begin to create change,” she said. Both Nayeli and Cheryl expressed their gratitude to PEF’s Olney Charter High School College Advising staff for believing in them and helping them get to this exciting place in their lives.

Last Dollar Scholarship co-founder A. Morris Williams presented the Shining Star Award to Philadelphia Scholar Maria Khan. Maria



Photos from top left to bottom:

Mickey Morandini, Aaron McKie, Ken Carter, and Farah Jimenez

Mayor Kenney

Farah Jimenez, Rising Star Nayeli Perez-Peralta, and Governor Rendell

KC Baldadian, Art Baldadian, and Shining Stars Maria Khan, Najeda Regis, and Anthony Santana

Farah Jimenez, Rising Star Cheryl Wiltshire, and Governor Rendell



“Philly Gala” – Continued on page 4



FARAH JIMENEZ

President's Message

As we welcome 2020, I enter the new year with gratitude.

It is a gift to lead an organization with a dedicated board, a committed staff, and all of you – our generous donors and supporters. Your willingness to give of your treasure and time strengthens our work serving more than 5,000 Philadelphia high school students and 130 Philadelphia Scholars scholarship recipients every year.

In this issue of EdFundamentals, we highlight the many ways in which individuals and organizations are volunteering their time and energy to the Philadelphia Education Fund. Whether mentoring a student, endowing a scholarship, employing one's professional talents, speaking to students, or hosting a college and career experience, volunteering with the Philadelphia Education Fund can -- and does -- take many forms.

Make 2020 the year to take your involvement with us to the next level. Do you have friends, family, or and colleagues you could ask to join you in the effort? Do you know you'd like to volunteer, but need more information? We can help! Just email volunteer@philaedfund.org, follow PEF on Facebook or Twitter (@PhilaEdFund), or call 215 665 1400 to be invited to the next PEF Volunteer Information Session.

Share Your Talent As An Executive Volunteer

Are you a talented professional looking for a way to support the college and career ambitions of Philadelphia students?

Consider signing up to join the Philadelphia Education Fund's Executive Volunteer Program.

Over the past year, the PEF has been fortunate to attract executive volunteers representing a variety of sectors, such as marketing, financial advising, human resources, and the law. "Every volunteer has significantly enhanced the organization's ability to achieve its mission," says President and CEO Farah Jimenez. "PEF is a small and mighty team, and we want to grow and deepen our impact. Executive volunteers help us fulfill that ambition by bringing their expertise to guide us through areas in which we need to grow our capabilities."



Mark McCreary

For the past three years, Fox Rothschild Partner and Chief Privacy Officer Mark McCreary has volunteered with PEF by providing pro-bono legal counsel. Most recently, he drafted contracts and template agreements for PEF to use in its professional development and STEM curriculum consulting

practice. Also, he facilitated ownership transfer of a digital tool acquired by PEF to assist schools and teachers in creating online communities of practice in STEM and College Access.

McCreary was attracted to PEF's good work and involvement in the community. "I was delighted to see how

engaged leadership was in the process. They reviewed all the contracts thoroughly to ensure alignment with their goal of assisting students and educators," he said. "Everyone at the organization was so appreciative of my time and effort, which made the work especially gratifying."

PEF has benefited also from the knowledgebase of former Lockheed Martin HR Vice President Bill Hyman. To help PEF improve its talent recruitment and onboarding, Hyman drafted an interview guide and helped staff craft effective interview questions. He also trained staff in behavioral interviewing techniques through role play and feedback. "I was so impressed with the diversity, caliber, and energy of the team," he said. "They were truly committed not only to recruiting and hiring the best candidates but also to their own professional development and growth."



Bill Hyman

This engagement was Hyman's second at volunteering with PEF. He was first drawn to PEF's mission of helping students access and succeed in college several years ago when he volunteered as a mentor to a Philadelphia Scholars scholarship recipient.

Are you a professional with a set of skills that you would be willing to donate? Become a PEF Executive Volunteer by contacting Peg McCool at pmccool@philaedfund.org or 215-665-1400 x3322.

Khan shared her journey to the US from Pakistan where, as a young girl, she had understood that girls were to be discouraged from getting an education. She credited PEF with encouraging her to take advantage of every opportunity that the College Access Program offered and showing her that she was capable of achieving her dreams. Today, she is a junior at Cabrini University studying pre-med with a 3.95 GPA.

And, Scholars Advisory Committee member Art Baldadian presented his eponymous scholarship to Kensington CAPA grad Anthony Santana and Olney Charter alumna, Najeda Regis. Najeda is using her Art Baldadian Scholarship at Franklin & Marshall College. She came to the US from Haiti at age 13 and was raised by a single mother who struggled to support the family. Najeda credited PEF with encouraging her to attend a small liberal arts college and helping her navigate the process every step of the way, from preparing for the SAT, applying for financial aid, visiting college campuses, and securing scholarship funds. Anthony, a senior studying athletic training at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, plans to pursue an advanced degree in physical therapy. “Knowing that there are people out there who want to invest in my academic success drives me to continually improve,” he says.

SAVE THE DATE! Join us on **THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2020 FOR EDUCATE PHILLY**, a benefit luncheon for the Philadelphia Education Fund. This year’s theme is **Poli Sci 101: The Press Effect on Education**.

Benoiel Family Endows Scholarship

The Benoiel Family (Leslie, her siblings Jeffrey, Shawn, Peter, and Todd and their father, Peter Benoiel with wife Willo Carey) are long-standing supporters of the Philadelphia Education Fund. At the 2019 Educate Philly Gala, they formalized their multi-year gift to the Philadelphia Scholars Program to create the Benoiel Family Endowed Scholarship.

Former Scholars Advisory Committee Chair Art Baldadian with Leslie Benoiel



Photo: Tommy Leonard

College Costs! Preparing Students to Finance a College Education

One of the ways the Philadelphia Education Fund encourages a college-going culture in Philadelphia high schools is by helping students see past the sticker price of college to the many ways it can be financed. With family financial guidance, PEF knows that a college education is within reach of any student.

To help, PEF developed College Costs!, a series of more than 50 comprehensive financial literacy sessions led by experienced finance professionals and financial aid coaches. College Costs! is offered to high school students in PEF’s College Access Program.

Topics include:

- benefits and risks of financing an education
- strategies for securing scholarships
- estimating the full cost of a college education beyond tuition
- understanding your financial aid award letter, establishing
- positive financial and debt management habits
- earning and managing money while a student.

The workshops also offer students and their parents hands-on support in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) – as first step in securing financial aid.

The College Costs! series launched in early 2019 with funding from KeyBank, Leo Niessen Jr. Charitable Trust, PNC, and Santander Bank. Further, a partnership with the Philadelphia Federal Credit Union, the Financial Advancement Network, and the Urban Affairs Coalition provided a six-week intensive financial education program last year for rising juniors in PEF’s College Access Program.

“For the vast majority of our students, cost is a key determinant in their decision as to whether or not to attend college,” said Amir Fralin, College Access Program coordinator at Roxborough High School. “Being able to offer College Costs! workshops is one way we can help students and their families manage those concerns and work toward an affordable college education.”

Philadelphia Scholars Alumni Profile:

Karina Melendez

She was a CAP student in high school and a Philadelphia Scholar in college. Now she's paying it forward. Karina began her journey with PEF while a freshman at Thomas A. Edison High School. "My counselor told me that that the College Access Program (CAP) offered scholarships and mentoring, which motivated me to get involved," she recalls.

Karina, who is the first in her family to earn a college degree, grew up in North Philadelphia. As part of CAP, she attended college readiness workshops, volunteered at PEF events, sat in on the First Year Experience as a junior, and participated in the city's Work Ready summer program annually. One of her Work Ready internships was with Bayada Home Health Care where she continued to work while earning her bachelor's at Chestnut Hill College. Karina works at Bayada today as an Associate.

As a graduating high school senior, Karina received a Last Dollar Scholarship through PEF's Philadelphia Scholars Program. As a Scholar, she volunteered to talk to high school students about her experiences as a first generation college student and served on panels at CAP events.

The Scholars program also matched her with a mentor, Joan, with whom she met monthly and formed a close relationship. "When I first got to college I was very intimidated," she says. "It seemed like no one else came from the inner city, and I didn't know if I was good enough. At the same time, I didn't want to disappoint my family because they had sacrificed so much for me. Joan helped to ease my anxiety. Whenever I texted her with a question or concern, she always responded quickly."

Karina's dedication paid off. After graduating in 2017

with a degree in Psychology, her Work Ready employer, Bayada, offered her a full-time position assisting in all aspects of the organization's day-to-day operations. Now a college graduate, a newlywed, and a new homeowner, Karina is paying it forward.

As a Scholars alumna, she's mentoring a Scholar, has served on PEF's Robert C. Digges Scholarship Committee, and recently joined the Scholars Advisory Committee.

"Joining SAC makes me feel as if my scholarship journey has come 'full circle.' Going through CAP introduced me to programs that helped me even outside of college. And now

I'm honored to be able to share my experience and give a voice to students as one who makes the scholarship decisions. "

"Joining SAC makes me feel as if my scholarship journey has come 'full circle.'"



Karina Melendez and Farah Jimenez

Photo: Tommy Leonard

Are you a college graduate interested in mentoring a student?
Contact Allison Kelsey to learn more. akelsey@philaedfund.org
215 665 1400 x3338.

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PEF's Education First Compact Monthly Series

TO RECEIVE MONTHLY EMAILS WITH SPEAKER AND CONTENT DETAILS, JOIN OUR MAILING LIST BY VISITING
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Mark your calendar!

UPCOMING EDUCATION FIRST COMPACT SESSIONS

FEBRUARY 6, 2020 Growing Green Futures: Educating for Sustainability

MARCH 5, 2020 Middle Grades Matter: Advancing Literacy for Postsecondary Success

APRIL 2, 2020 Paying for College: Avoiding the Affordability Trap

MAY 7, 2020 Developing School-Based Talent: From Real-Time Coaching to Residency Programs

JUNE 4, 2020 Is the School District on a Sustainable Track? A FY21 Budget Primer

Unless otherwise noted, Education First Compact meetings take place:

*7:45-10:00am at the Philadelphia Education Fund
718 Arch Street, Suite 700N, Philadelphia, PA.*

Eager to learn more about matters impacting education in our region? Participate in PEF's Education First Compact.

From September through June, hear from the region's leading experts about timely and trending education issues at this free, monthly forum.

Interested in supporting the Education First Compact? To learn more about how you can subscribe, sponsor, or underwrite a session or the year-long series, email Peg McCool at pmccool@philaedfund.org or call 215-665-1400 ext. 3322.