New Brunswick, NJ
Grant Period: 2008-2012

Students excelling academically, ready for college

The Bridge to Employment - New Brunswick, New Jersey program seeks to increase the number of students attending institutions of higher education and pursuing high-level science careers.

Students attending New Brunswick Public Schools exhibit many risk factors that make this goal difficult to achieve. The high school has a 68% graduation rate, while 95% is New Jersey’s average. The national average for SAT scores in 2007 was 1511, and for the state of New Jersey was 1518. However New Brunswick SAT scores were considerably lower at 1264. Many of these challenges are addressed or eliminated through BTE activities that enhance the academic performance of students.

In the first year of the program, students strengthened basic academic concepts and mastered core math and science fundamentals through weekly academic support and tutoring from Rutgers University; a marine biology research project allowed students to apply their learning.

In the Year 2, students attended a Saturday Academy, which included academic support sessions, as well as Chemistry, Geometry, and Algebra II tutorials to strengthen test taking and study skills. BTE students also meet with Johnson & Johnson Mentors and job shadow. All students participated in an intense SAT Prep Course.

The program culminated with all BTE students taking two college level English courses, equivalent to Basic Composition 100 and Expository Writing 101 at Rutgers University.
Victor was a little skeptical about BTE at first, but he quickly realized joining the BTE program was “the best decision I’ve made.” Through BTE, Victor has overcome his shyness and mastered public speaking and communication techniques. Victor also learned how to apply new skills to jobs and internships. During his time in the BTE program, Victor was required to complete 33 hours of service learning. He enjoyed the experience so much, it transitioned into a series of projects. Victor hopes he can continue working at his service learning site throughout his college career. Victor sums up his experience in BTE best stating, “BTE gives us the necessary tools to bridge that gap through all the mentor workshops, mock college interviews, reviewing our resume, college visits, and most importantly S.A.T. preparation.”

**BTE – New Brunswick Impact:**

- Higher Math and Science grades than comparison group students (85.8% in math, compared with 78.8%, and 82.1% in science, compared with 75.9%).

- Improved SAT scores (college entrance exams) by an average of 244 points (average combined SAT score: 1493). 93% of BTE students scored above the New Brunswick High School average in Math (56% above the NJ and US average in math)