Bridging the Achievement Gap

Bridge to Employment (BTE) in Ambler, PA serves as an educational vehicle that can expose this group of students to careers in the health and STEM fields.

In its first year, the program targeted incoming sophomore students at Wissahickon High School may have needed an extra push. The students selected scored lower on math and reading assessments, weren’t enrolled in Honors and Advanced Placement courses, or had lower scores in science classes than their peers.

This program has six main goals: soft skill development, which helps to increase students’ skills to succeed in both college and workplace environments; team building; career exploration; math/science skills; financial literacy; and transition to college

After its first year through a series of carefully planned activities, the program has already made an impact on the students. According to an evaluation of the program, students became more focused and some even saw grade improvement. BTE has helped them prepare for opportunities after high school, and helped them to develop into individuals that are better suited for professional environments.
Jasmine Futch entered the BTE program in Ambler when she was a sophomore, like all BTE students. Now a junior, she reflects fondly on her BTE experience.

Jasmine says, “I have always been a hardworking and determined student. I was always trying to accomplish big and small goals that I set for myself.” Jasmine adds, “Now in the middle of my second year with BTE, I have learned so much information that I can take with me wherever I end up.”

Jasmine says that she had enjoyed how BTE has allowed her to interact with her peers in a professional setting while also “teaching [her] the fundamentals of business and science job opportunities.” She also enjoys visiting the Johnson & Johnson medical sites and learning about just how many different opportunities are available in the health and medical fields. She says, “I realized that I can take my art abilities and apply them to designing and marketing for different medications, this way, I will not only be benefiting myself, but the patients that are receiving the medication.”

While in the BTE program, Jasmine has been able to maintain a 3.7 grade point average, as well as be an active member in four different clubs at her high school. This demonstrates Jasmine’s desire to be active and successful. She says, “I am so honored and grateful to be a part of the Bridge to Employment program because they continue to educate me about the journey of leadership and success.”