



GUIDANCE NEWSLETTER September 21, 2009

WELCOME BACK

The Guidance Department would like to welcome everyone back to school. We made a smooth transition into the 2009-10 school year. Minimal course changes were made and as a result students were in classes focused on the important task of learning at the very beginning of school. Thank you to everyone who honored our new protocols.

NATIONAL MERIT CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Justin Cohn who has been named a National Merit Semifinalist in the National Merit Scholarship Competition. Commended scholars will be officially named later this month and announced in the next newsletter. The New York State qualifying scores based on junior year PSAT scores for semifinalists ranged from 218 through 240. The qualifying scores for commended students ranged from 201 through 217.

AP SCHOLAR CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Blind Brook's 58 AP Scholars earning various levels of recognition. The College Board's Advanced Placement Program (AP) provides motivated and academically prepared students with the opportunity to take rigorous college-level courses while still in high school, and to earn college credit, advanced placement, or both for successful performance on the AP exams. About 18 percent of the nearly 1.7 million students worldwide who took AP exams performed at a sufficiently high level to also earn an AP Scholar Award. The College Board recognizes several levels of achievement based on students' performance on AP Exams.

To qualify for the AP Scholar Award a student must complete three or more AP Exams with grades of 3 or higher. 27 students qualified for the award. AP Scholars with Honor must earn an average grade of a least 3.25 on all AP Exams taken, and grades of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams. These students have been noted with an *. Nine Blind Brook students have qualified. The AP Scholar with Distinction Award has been earned by 22 Blind Brook students noted with an **. These students have earned an average grade of at least 3.5 on all AP exams taken, and grades of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams. Finally, we have one National AP Scholar, BENJAMIN LUBKIN, who met the criteria by earning an average grade of 4 or higher on a five-point scale on all AP exams taken, and grades of 4 or higher on eight or more of these exams ***.

Blind Brook is proud of the AP Scholar accomplishments of:

Nicole Accurso
Andrew Babat

Tal Ackerman **
Mariana Barreto **

Matthew Adler **
Kevin Becker **

Jacob Azia *
Sarah Berk **

Daniel Berkowitz	Marnie Blum	Zachary Bodinger **	Alyssa Chasanoff
Justin Cohn	Alyssa Davis	Jordan Drutman **	Russell Dulman **
Mori Einsidler **	Joseph Esposito *	Steven Fisher **	Marissa Fortino
Sharon Friedlander	Lisa Ganz**	Daniel Gelbard	MatthewGoldwater**
Jenna Haber **	Amy Holm	Ryan Horowitz	Michael Horwitz*
Gaurav Jain	William Ketchabaw	Joseph Kok **	Lauren Konigsberg
Dana Leshem *	Edward Licitra *	Max Linder **	Benjamin Lubkin **
Stacey Lurie **	Joseph Magliano	Robert Magliano	Douglas Melvin
Diksha Nagia	Daniel Newmark	Alana Pace	Samantha Park
Aaron Prusak *	Melissa Prusky **	Jeffrey Rakoff	Jennifer Rakoff
Ankita Satija	Corinne Segal **	Daniel Shassian *	Stephanie Sherry **
Adam Spiegal *	Justin Starr	Sarah Taitz	Christina Tempesta *
Sonia Taneja *	Julia Whalen *		

Of this year's award recipients at Blind Brook High School, eight are juniors. These students have at least one more year in which to complete college level work and possibly earn a higher-level AP Scholar Award. These students are:

Daniel Berkowitz	Justin Cohn	Alyssa Davis	Daniel Newmark
William Ketchabaw	Diksha Nagia	Sharon Friedlander	Justin Starr

ANNOUNCING PROJECT SUCCESS AND OUR NEW PROJECT SUCCESS COUNSELOR

-A letter from Angela Marciano, Project Success Counselor

Dear Blind Brook Community,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself and the Project SUCCESS program. My name is Angela Marciano MS, LCSW, CASAC, CPP and I will be at Blind Brook High School on Tuesdays and Fridays.

What is Project SUCCESS?

Project Success (Schools Using Coordinated Efforts to Strengthen Students) is a national school-based program that reduces risk factors for teen substance use and increases protective factors in the individual and in the environment. This is done in several ways. The first is to provide education to students, giving them information about the consequences and harmful effects of alcohol and other drugs. The next is changing social norms which simply means helping students see that most teens do not use alcohol and other drugs. In addition to education about effects and consequences there is also the teaching of practical skills such as refusal skills for resisting peer pressure, conflict and anger management skills and coping skills to reduce stress. Finally, I will be working in the school and community on activities to promote a drug free healthy lifestyle for teens.

What will Project SUCCESS look like in our school?

I will be conducting classroom presentations and parent presentations, coordinating speakers for parents and assemblies and doing school wide prevention activities in addition to doing individual and group counseling.

Project Success is a voluntary program. Students can be referred by parents, teachers, peers and community. I also hope to be a confidential resource to you so feel free and

contact me at 937-3600, extension 3144. I look forward to working with you in the near future.

ANNOUNCING ACADEMIC SUPPORT

In an effort to improve extra help opportunities, students have new options. Any student may seek extra help from his/her own instructor during activity period every day. In addition, we have developed a schedule for academic assistance in math, social studies, science, English, world language and an opportunity for general support. Assistance in the core areas is available lunch periods, in addition to a number of periods throughout the day. Acknowledging that there are different learning styles and different teaching styles, accessing help in a time other than activity period provides students the opportunity to seek help from a teacher other than their own in the same discipline. Scheduling academic support throughout the day should also provide the opportunity for more one-on-one time with an instructor.

At any time throughout the year, a teacher may request that a student be assigned to academic support for additional assistance. Students can self refer and parents can make a request for an academic support assignment. Students can drop in for assistance any time they are free. An academic support schedule of available periods and instructors can be obtained from your child's guidance counselor.

GRADE 9 NEWS

The Effective Communication Curriculum has been improved for ninth grade students. This year, for the first time, all ninth grade students have the same teacher for Effective Communication and English 9. This allows for consistency in instruction and the inclusion of ELA and character education goals in both courses. The theme of identity connects with "A Life of Consequence" presented in Effective Communication. A research component and service-learning project has been added to the curriculum in addition to an increased use of technology.

GRADES 10 AND 11 NEWS

All sophomores and juniors are strongly encouraged to register for the PSAT/NMSQT exam that will be given in school on Wednesday, October 14, 2009. The PSAT is a practice exam that measures critical reading skills, math problem-solving skills and writing skills. The most common reasons for taking the PSAT are to:

- Receive feedback on strengths and weaknesses specific to the skills necessary for college study in order to understand areas of focus for improvement on the SAT
- Understand how individual performance on an admissions exam compares with others applying to college
- Enter the National Merit Scholarship Competition in grade 11
- Become familiar with the kinds of questions and directions on the SAT

The PSAT is a practice test. The scores are not sent to colleges. Sophomores who take the PSAT again, as juniors, on average score 3.3 points higher in critical reading, 4.4 points higher in math and 4.1 points higher in writing. This compares to over 30, 40 and 40 points comparatively on a SAT exam.

Students should register for the PSAT in the Guidance Office. The fee for the PSAT is \$13.00. A check in this amount should be made out to Blind Brook-Rye UFSD. The registration deadline is **Monday October 2009**.

ANNOUNCING A PSAT REVIEW COURSE

The highest scoring juniors in each state qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program based upon their PSAT exam taken in junior year. Blind Brook High School is offering a three session PSAT Review course taught by staff from The Princeton Review on Friday, October 2 from 6:30 – 9:00 pm, Saturday October 3 at 8:30 – 11:30 am and Friday, October 9 at 6:30 – 9:30 pm. These dates and times have been chosen in order to allow participation of the greatest number of students. We did not want the course to interfere with homework time during the school week or participation in sports or other extracurricular activities. Each student will have the opportunity to take a PSAT exam and receive feedback on it, to review targeted test questions based upon group results, to become familiar with the construct of the exam and to learn strategies for optimally performing on the exam. A minimum of ten students will be needed to run the course. Students may register for the course in the Guidance Office by Tuesday, September 29th. A decision regarding whether there is sufficient enrollment to run the course will be made at that time.

The cost of the PSAT Review Course is \$199 per student. Checks should be made out to Princeton Review. According to the Princeton Review preparation team, students who participate in the review increase their score by 20 PSAT points, the equivalent of 200 SAT points.

GRADE 12 NEWS

The final version of the School Profile has been sent to the printer and we are anticipating we will receive it by Tuesday, September 29, 2009. The final version of the transcript will also be ready at that time.

The procedure for requesting a transcript to be processed follows:

1. A student should check the chart posted in the main guidance office indicating receipt of college materials. Each student must have in a self evaluation packet that includes a list of activities, honors and awards or a resume, two to three academic teacher report forms completed by core subject teachers, non-academic report forms completed by advisors in the student's most significant extracurricular activities or non-core subject areas, and a parent report form. When these materials are in, a student must have a conference with his/her counselor to review all materials and college goals. Transcript request forms may be submitted only after all materials are in and the conference has been completed.
2. The student will complete a transcript request form for each school to which he is applying. Due the volume of materials requested, we ask that students only submit materials for schools to which he will complete and send an application.
3. If a student is applying early decision, the Guidance office will only accept transcript requests for colleges with deadlines through and including January 1 so as not to miss a deadline. If a student does not gain admission to his early decision school, we will accept additional requests. This will reduce the number of requests processed unnecessarily.
4. Each student will complete section one of the Secondary School Report Form and Mid Year Report Form. These forms are available from the Guidance Department and are specific to each counselor.

5. School application materials will be processed within ten in-session SCHOOL days.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

As we approach the beginning of a new year, let us reflect upon and celebrate all the positive aspects in life and express our gratitude to those in our lives who have made a difference.

In the words of William Ward,

“You have been given 86,000 seconds today. Have you used one to say thank you?”

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

If you believe you qualify for any of the scholarships below, please see your guidance counselor as soon as possible.

Emory University

Emory Scholars Program

Emory Scholar Awards span four years of graduate study and range from two-thirds tuition to full tuition, room and board. Emory scholars may participate in an extensive program for educational enrichment including independent research; they may receive stipends to enjoy cultural and social events; they may use awards to study abroad during the school year; and in their summers, they may participate in diverse service –learning opportunities.

Blind Brook High School may nominate four students. Students must have outstanding records of academic achievement, possess extraordinary personal qualities, and have made significant contributions to their class, their school and their community. The nomination form must accompany the student’s application for admission and must arrive in the Emory Office of Admission by November 1, 2009. Please see your counselor if you are interested by **October 12th**.

Emory Goizueta Scholars Program for Business Majors

Eligibility – Students must have superior academic credentials and a demonstrated interest in business, as evidenced by engagement in entrepreneurial activities, participation in internships, membership in business clubs, and/or involvement in business related conferences, competitions and similar offerings. Leadership and community service are also important components in the selection process.

If you are interested, please see your counselor no later than **October 12th**. A completed student application to Emory must accompany the scholarship application.

New York Water Environment Association Scholarships

The New York Water Environment Association will be offering a total of six \$1200 scholarships, two to children of NYWEA members, two to students enrolled at a college or university where there is a

NYWEA student chapter, and two to high school students who will be enrolled in an environmentally related program in a four year college or university. Please see your counselor for details if you feel you qualify. The application deadline is **January 21, 2010**.

Prudential 2010 Spirit of Community Awards

Eligibility: High school students in grades 9-12 are eligible. The award is for students who have made a difference by volunteering over the past year. Applicants may win a \$1000 scholarship and a trip to Washington, D.C. next May. Prudential Financial and the National Association of Secondary School Principals sponsor the award.

If interested, visit <http://spirit.prudential.com>, click on the “how to apply” link, and follow the onscreen instructions. When asked for the access key, type the word **spirit**. The form must be completed, printed, signed and submitted to the guidance office by November 2, 2009. The most highly qualified applicant will receive the President’s Volunteer Service Award and will become eligible to win an unrestricted award of \$1000 or more, a medallion and a trip with a parent to Washington, D.C. in the spring.

Washington University in St. Louis Danforth Scholars Program

Eligibility: Students who have exhibited a capacity for service and leadership, as well as academic excellence, and who will embrace the challenges of a rigorous academic curriculum. Qualified students exhibit the qualities of the Dansforths – maturity, strong moral character, selflessness and commitment to the community. This merit-based scholarship may be in the form of full or partial tuition,

One Blind Brook student applying to Washington University may be nominated. The nomination deadline is October 15, 2009. Interested students should see their counselor by October 9, 2009.

CORNELL BUS TRIP

Students interested in attending Cornell are invited to attend a two-day trip to Cornell University in Ithaca, New York sponsored by the Cornell Alumni Admissions Network of the Cornell Alumni Association of Westchester/Putnam. The trip includes a campus tour, Cornell admission presentation, student panel, opportunity to attend college classes, and an individual college information round table discussion. Each student will be paired with an undergraduate student by the Cornell Admissions Office “Red Carpet Society” and the overnight stay will be in a campus dormitory with the host or hostess.

The bus will depart from the County Center in White Plains at 8:15 am on Sunday, November 1, 2009 and will return at 8:30 pm on Monday, November 2, 2009. The cost of \$175.00 covers transportation and four meals. Financial assistance is available for students in need. If interested, please see your guidance counselor. Checks should be made payable to: CAAAN and mailed to Penny Nemzer, 24 Latonia Road, Rye Brook, NY 10573.