

BeWell *Connected*

COLLEGE EDITION:

How BridgeUP scholars can start preparing for college

It's never too early to get ready for college!

BridgeUP is Here to Help!

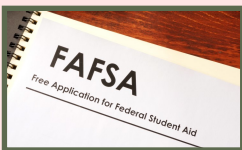
By Rudy Garcia, BridgeUP Associate Manager

This summer, BridgeUP held its first-ever College Prep Boot Camp for rising seniors. Over the span of 4 weeks, scholars were guided through the complexities of the college application process. Special attention was given to writing a strong college essay and building a college list that is a good fit with their needs.

Additionally, the scholars learned about the financial aid process and the requirements for completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). During the boot camp, scholars were exposed to several guest speakers, in-person and virtually, who provided information on college-related topics.

The boot camp built on the program's previous college readiness efforts: namely, several college trips to CUNY, SUNY, and private non-profit campuses; guest speakers from a variety of industries; and SAT test prep. In an effort to continue supporting our scholars, during the fall, rising seniors will continue to meet with the college prep boot camp team to finalize their admissions essay, solidify their college list, and complete admissions applications.

Moreover, BridgeUP will host a FAFSA completion night for scholars and parents in which counselors will guide them through the application process. Lastly, we also intend to invite additional guest speakers (primarily current and former college students) and facilitate further college tours to local and state colleges.



SPEAK UP!

As parents, you can make a big difference in your scholar's education, and their chances of getting into college! Don't hesitate to speak up and advocate for them with teachers, school staff, and BridgeUP!

Talk to teachers:

- Attend parent-teacher conferences to talk about how your scholar is doing in school
 - What tutoring or extra support might be available
 - What clubs or other activities they can join.
- Don't hesitate to email or call your scholar's teachers directly to find out how they are doing.

Talk to BridgeUP:

- Attend BridgeUP parent meetings to get to know the Fellows and Tutors, and learn how they can support your scholar.
- Reach out to your Fellow every month to see how your scholar is doing.
- Join the BeWell Parent Advisory Board to get even more resources for supporting your scholar and the rest of your family.
 - Email bewellbu@gmail.com or call/text 929-249-0925 for more information.

Talk to your scholar:

- Talk to your scholar to see how they are doing in school.
- Encourage your scholar to plan for the future.
- One way to do this is by helping them think about what classes they enjoy most, and how they could pursue a career in that area in the future.



GETTING AHEAD: HOW TO BE COLLEGE-READY IN EVERY GRADE

Many scholars and parents think that the college application process starts during students' senior year of high school. However, there are many benefits to beginning to think about college early--as soon as your scholar starts high school! Here is a grade-by-grade guide for parents thinking about college:

9th and 10th Grades:

- Make sure your scholar attends BridgeUP on-time, and on a regular basis.
- Make sure your scholar maps out their high school classes to see how they will lead to college.
 - Scholars should choose the most challenging classes they can handle.
- In addition to BridgeUP, encourage your scholar to find after-school and summer activities that they like, and join!
 - These can include sports, school clubs, and community organizations like the YMCA or Boys and Girls Club.
 - This helps colleges learn about your scholar's interests, and shows that they can make a commitment and stick with it.
- Help your scholar find out about opportunities for community service at school, places of worship, and community programs.
 - Colleges like to see students doing community service, even if it's just once a month.
- 10th graders should take the PSAT to practice for the SAT they will take later on.
 - BridgeUP will help scholars prepare for these exams, so it's important to stay connected.
- Support your scholar in finding someone they can look up to and ask for support and advice, like their BridgeUP fellow, teachers, or a school counselor.
 - Mentors can help them do well in school, offer guidance through the college application process, and help scholars explore their interests.
- Help your scholar think about what they might want to study in college by exploring what classes they like.
- Get to know your scholar's guidance counselors and teachers.



11th Grade:

- Attend college and financial aid activities at your scholar's high school.
- Make sure that your scholar takes the PSAT in the fall to prepare for the SAT.
- Make sure your scholar takes the ACT or SAT in the Spring.
 - Encourage your scholar to look into low-cost SAT prep courses, and download free or low-cost SAT prep apps for phones or computers.
 - Encourage them to set aside time every day to study for the SAT.
- Work with your scholar to begin researching colleges they might be interested in, and request information from the schools.
 - If possible, take your scholar to visit colleges they are interested in. BridgeUP will also do this with your scholar.
- Encourage your scholar to continue participating in extracurricular activities during the school year and summer, like sports and community service at BridgeUP.
- Continue to maintain a relationship with your scholar's guidance counselors, teachers, and BridgeUP fellow. Call and email them for regular updates on how he or she is doing.



Summer Between 11th & 12th Grade:

- Encourage your scholar to participate in BridgeUP's College Prep Boot Camp to get a head start on their college search and essay.

12th Grade:

- Attend college and financial aid activities at your scholar's high school.
- Work with your scholar to decide which colleges they will apply to.
 - If possible, bring your scholar to visit the schools he or she is applying to.
- Make sure your scholar takes or re-takes the SAT and/or ACT in the fall.
- Help your scholar finalize and submit college applications, including essays, resumes, and letters of recommendation. Scholars who attend Boot Camp will receive lots of support on this.



- Complete the FAFSA, with the help of BridgeUP.
- Encourage your scholar to look for and apply to scholarships.
 - Keep an eye out for scholarship opportunities through your union or job.
- Encourage your scholar to continue working hard in school, and participating in extracurricular activities throughout the school year and summer.
 - Grades matter all the way through the end of the school year!
- Continue to maintain a relationship with your scholars' guidance counselors, teachers, and BridgeUP fellow.

ASK DR. C.

Dear Dr. C,

My daughter, Mariella, is entering her senior year of high school, and there is a lot to think about! The college application process is confusing, and once we get through that, we'll also have a lot to do to get her ready to leave for school! How can I manage?

Sincerely, So Close Yet So Far

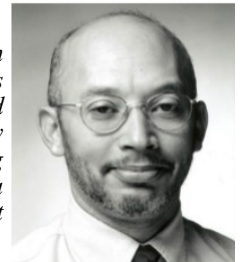
Dear So Close Yet So Far,

Senior year of high school can be an exciting time for scholars and their families, but it can also be very hectic! It is normal for teens and their parents to feel overwhelmed, or to have mixed feelings about graduation and what lies ahead. The list we include in this newsletter is a helpful place to start when it comes to managing the tasks related to the college planning. It is especially important to stay in touch with Mariella's BridgeUP fellow and tutors, teachers, and guidance counselor to make sure that she is on track to graduate and apply to the schools on her list.

It is also important to plan for what will happen after she decides where to attend college. You should schedule a physical for her this year to make sure all of her immunizations are up to date. You should also connect Mariella with an adolescent health doctor to make sure that any physical or mental health issues are taken care of before she starts college. They can also provide her with counseling on diet, exercise, substance use, responsible sexual decision making, and other topics that she might have to deal with once college starts.

If you don't already have a healthcare provider who can help Mariella with these services, Project STAY is available to see her and all young people between ages 13 and 24, even if they don't have insurance. It is open on Thursdays from 3pm-6pm, at 610 W. 158th Street in Manhattan. Contact 646-245-4000 for more information. BeWell can also connect you with other healthcare providers, including myself, if you'd like!

Dr. Cohall is board-certified in both Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine. He is a Professor of Public Health and Pediatrics at the Columbia University Medical Center. In addition to supervising health services at several clinics, he has a private practice in Adolescent/Young Adult medicine at NY Presbyterian Hospital.



Helpful resources for parents and scholars:

www.CollegeBoard.org

Find information and study materials for the SAT, PSAT, SAT Subject Tests, and AP Exams, and research college options. Visit <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/get-started/for-parents> to find a Parent Action Plan for each year of school, and find information about how to pay for college.

Planning for Success: Helpful Hints for New York City Parents / Guardians

Visit this link to download a helpful guide for parents and guardians navigating the college application process in New York City:
<http://on.nyc.gov/2xQ2hUP>

www.fafsa.ed.gov

Learn about Free Application for Federal Financial Aid (FAFSA), and submit an application.

BeWell and BridgeUP

If you feel like you or your scholar needs additional help with the transition to college, reach out to your BridgeUP fellow or BeWell Co-Director Renee Cohall, LCSW at (646) 245-4000.

**Follow us on
social media!**

**Instagram:
@Bewellbridgeup
@nyplbridgeup**

**Facebook:
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facebook.com/nyplbridgeup**

CALLING ALL PARENTS

Join the BeWell / BridgeUp Parent Advisory Board!

What is BeWell?

BeWell is a program developed by Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health to work with NYPL BridgeUP providing health and wellness services to scholars and their families.

BeWell serves BridgeUP scholars by providing monthly workshops on important health topics like stress, sleep, and physical health. It also provides support services to BridgeUP scholars and their families, by connecting them to services such as health care, counseling, health insurance, and housing.



Members of the BeWell Parent Advisory Board, with Health Coaches Rebecca Grant, Katy Falletta, and BeWell Co-Director Renee Cohall, LCSW.

Why do we need your help?

We need your suggestions, advice, and opinions on how BeWell can provide information and assistance for the health and wellness of the NYPL BridgeUP community!

How can we help you?

As a member of the Parent Advisory Board, you'll help us improve our programs. We'll help you by offering you:

- Opportunities to learn more about the resources available in your community
- Direct access to social workers and adolescent health providers
- Metro Cards to attend our monthly meetings
- Chances to connect with other BridgeUP parents



BeWell is funded by the Trust of David & Helen Gurley Brown

Interested?

It's easy to get involved!

The commitment is **flexible** — we know you have a lot on your plates!

We have monthly meetings, but can also talk to you on the phone, meet you at the library or at our office, or get your ideas via email!

Join the Board!

Call or text 929-249-0925 or email bewellbu@gmail.com