

TRANSITIONING TOGETHER

A Mentor Program for First Generation Students Applying to College



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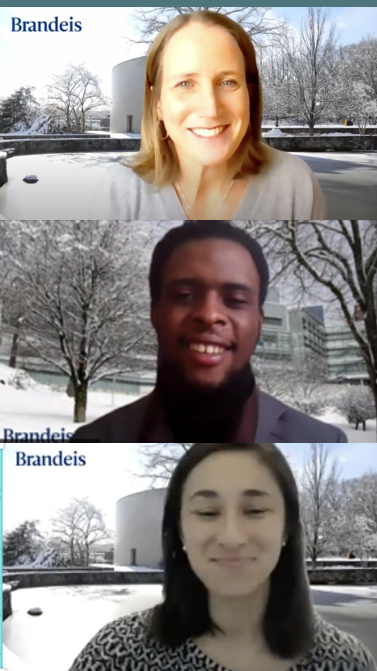
T2 TEAM MEMBERS:

Melissa Hanenberger
 Director &
 Mentor Coordinator
 Jennifer Geraghty
 Mentee & Alumni Coordinator
 Jillian Hall
 Programming Director

Every year we look forward to our annual T2 Retreat - a day away from school where mentees and mentors gather on a local college campus for a full day of activities, learning, and bonding. For many students, this day marks their first time on a college campus and their first real exposure to many parts of the college admissions process. When we began planning the Class of 2022 retreat, we were concerned - how would we replicate this experience? Can we pull this off over Zoom?

Thanks to the amazing team at Brandeis University, we were able to host our first ever virtual retreat and while we certainly would have loved to have been on campus, it went as smoothly as it could have. Mentors and mentees logged into Zoom at 9am and we began our day with a series of welcomes from Superintendent David Fleischman, Principal Henry Turner, Mayor Ruthanne Fuller, and Brandeis University Dean of Admission Jennifer Walker. They set the tone for the day - encouraging the mentees to be excited about their future, letting them know how important and valued they are as first generation college students, and reminding them to stay positive and hopeful.

Shaquan Williams, Brandeis Admissions Counselor, then led the group through a storytelling activity in which he had mentees and mentors go into breakout rooms and learn more about each other. Everybody found the activity fun and engaging - it's amazing how technology still allowed us to connect one on one with each other, even in a group setting! After Shaquan's activity, we heard from a College Admissions Panel which included Jessica Schulman from Brandeis University, Mario Silva-Rosa from Bentley University and Peter Schilling (con't p. 2)



PICTURED ABOVE: JENNIFER WALKER, JESSICA SCHULMAN & SHAQUAN WILLIAMS FROM THE BRANDEIS ADMISSIONS TEAM



VIRTUAL RETREAT CON'T....

(con't from pg. 1).....from Massachusetts Bay Community College. This was a great way for the students to get some initial exposure to three different types of colleges.

After the panel, the group got to experience a virtual tour with current Brandeis University student, Natalie Sadek. The students loved hearing Natalie’s personal story about why she chose Brandeis, all the ways she’s involved on campus and all her insights into life at Brandeis. No better way to learn the ins and outs of a college than from an actual student! After the tour, we took a long break for lunch. In normal times we would have eaten in the dining hall, but instead we did the next best thing and everyone got to order lunch from UberEats!

After lunch, we jumped right into a financial aid session with Amy Herrboldt, Brandeis University Associate Director of Financial Aid. Amy did a great job keeping everyone engaged and providing a great initial overview of what the financial aid process looks like and what students should keep in mind as they are researching colleges. We then had our final session of the day which was a student panel, featuring MJ Ibrahim ‘23 and John Rodrigues ‘21, both first generation college students at Brandeis University. MJ and John were incredibly inspirational as they both told their stories about being the first in their families to go to college, what that meant for them, and what challenges they had and how they overcame them. MJ and John both spoke about the power of mentors, not being afraid to ask for help, and the importance of finding people on campus that they feel connected to. It’s amazing to think that this group of T2 students will be just like MJ and John in a few years!

The day ended with inspirational closings from Monique Gnanaratnam, Brandeis University Associate Dean of Students, and Melissa Hanenberger, T2 Director. Despite the fact that the group spent 5+ hours on Zoom, everyone left feeling energized and inspired to begin their work together and officially start the college search and application process. A huge thank you to Brandeis University for hosting us, for the 3rd year in a row, and hopefully we will be back on campus soon!

T² Alumni Breakfast

On January 12th, Transitioning Together hosted its annual Alumni Breakfast – this time on Zoom! Many students were able to attend because of the break between the fall and spring semesters on college campuses. Alumni stopped by the Zoom with their coffees to talk about their college experiences, particularly during the pandemic. Lots of great conversations were had with a range of alumni spanning from the T2 class of 2020 all the way to the first T2 graduating class of 2013! To stay up-to-date with the current happenings of T2 and all things alumni, please follow our new LinkedIn page: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/12391553/>.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Vy Trieu

Transitioning Together Class of 2020
Boston University Class of 2024

Can you introduce yourself and update everyone on how you are doing at Boston University?

Hi everyone! My name is Vy and I am a freshman majoring in Psychology with a minor in Biology at Boston University (BU). On campus, I am involved in the Vietnamese Student Association as an Underclassman Representative, Alpha Chi Sigma - a professional chemistry fraternity, and Timmy Global Health. If COVID permits, I will be going to Madrid, Spain to study abroad next semester. I applied ED2 to BU and got accepted a month after that. I also applied to 14 other colleges through both EA and RD.

Tell us a bit about your experience so far at Boston University How have things been related to COVID-19?

I did not expect much coming to BU during the pandemic but my experience at Boston University has been awesome so far! BU has been doing a great job in terms of COVID testing and precautions so I feel really safe living in the dorm. We are required to get tested every three days and fill out the symptom screening survey every day. If you don't follow the testing guidelines, BU will lock your ID (no dorm and dining access) and student accounts (cannot submit assignments :) Since BU is doing Learn from Anywhere, most of my classes are online except for Intro to Experimental Designs (Stats for Psychology majors) and Biology labs. I usually go to the library or Law Building to do my classes for a change of scenery!

What kinds of supports are available to you and other first generation college students at Boston University?

We have a First Gen student center called the Newbury Center where they hold multiple workshops and events throughout the year to help students assimilate to college life. For example the most recent ones are "First-gen students CAN study abroad" and "First-gen financial wellness series." We also have multiple clubs that could help everyone (especially first-gens) in terms of academics, such as the Educational Resources Center (free tutoring!! I have used this service countless times this year) and Peer Mentors.

What are some pieces of advice that you recall from your T2 experience that had an impact on your college experience? Any advice for the new T2 cohort?

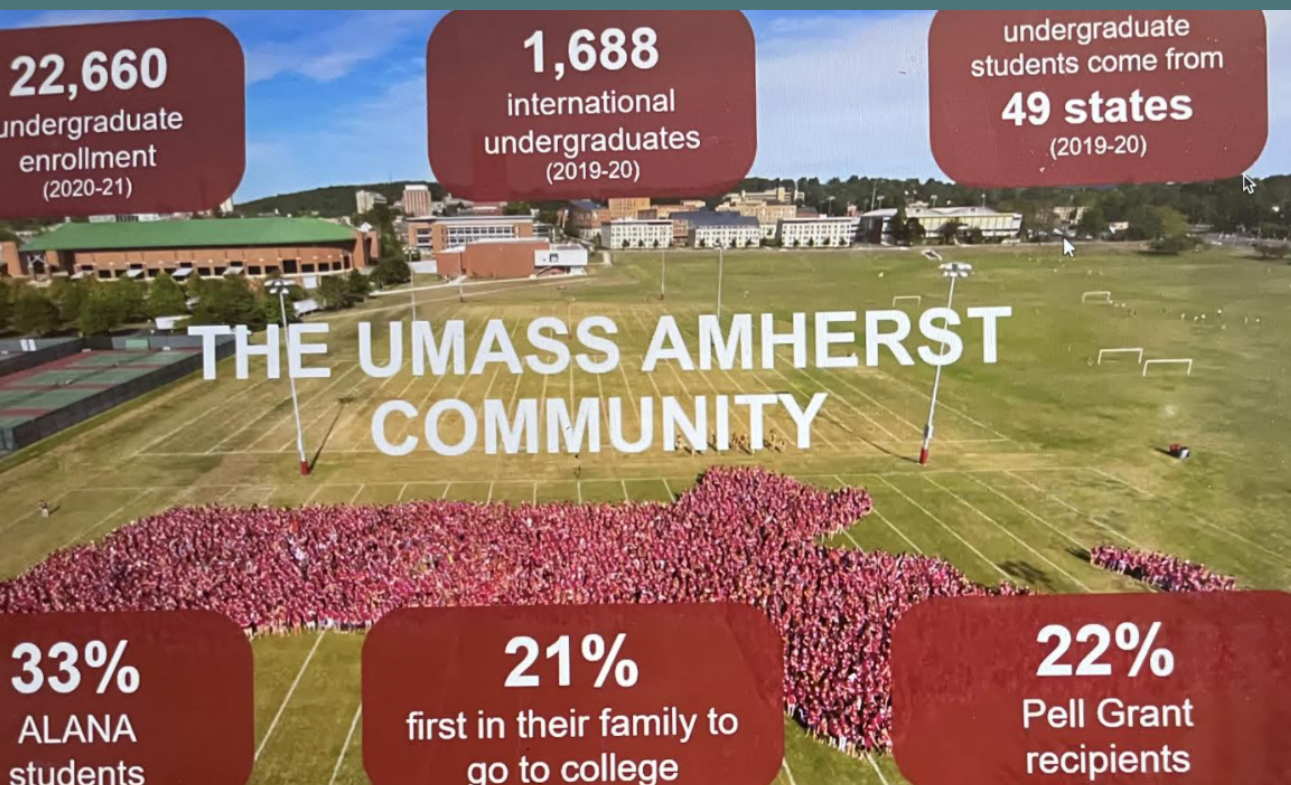
Start your essay AND fill out FAFSA (and CSS) early! Ask your mentor to check your personal essay and the supplemental essays. It's better to start early because, in my personal experience, I was super busy with schoolwork while having to take the SAT and TOEFL in the fall so I didn't have much time to tailor the supplemental essays better. Also, enjoy the process :) Don't stress out too much because, in the end, I know you'll do great no matter which school you get accepted into.

What would you tell future students considering applying to the Transitioning Together program?

Yes, 100% yes! T2 helped me tremendously throughout the college application process. I had an opportunity to visit some schools around the area with T2 and that was one of my best experiences at North. Through T2, I had a chance to meet my mentor (shout out to Eileen!) who is also a BU alum & we still keep in touch to this day!



Congratulations to Patricia Muumba, T² Class of 2014 on her nomination to Newvision's Top 40 under 40 in Uganda!



PICTURED ABOVE: XIOMARA DELOBATO AND MEGHAN SHEWCHUK FROM THE UMASS AMHERST ADMISSIONS TEAM

WELCOME CLASS OF 2022

On January 19th, we welcomed the Transitioning Together Class of 2022. Twenty-five mentees and their families met with their new mentors who will be working with them for the next 18 months. The T2 Team spoke about the history of the program, the timeline, and expectations for this fantastic opportunity these students have before them.

Below are the demographics for our newest class:

- **100% (25 mentees)** First Generation in their family to attend a traditional 4 year college in the United States
- **28% (7 mentees)** English Language Learners (ELL) or former ELL (FLEP)
- **44% (11 mentees)** receive Free or Reduced Lunch
- **32% (8 mentees)** live with a single parent or guardian
- **4% (1 mentees)** live with someone other than either of their biological parents
- **16% (4 mentees)** in METCO
- **36% (9 mentees)** in NNHS Dover Legacy Scholars (DLS)

Class of 2022 Virtual Visit to UMASS Amherst

On Wednesday, March 10th, the Class of 2022 took a virtual field trip to UMASS Amherst. Hosted by Xiomara Delobato, Associate Director of Diversity Recruitment and Enrollment and Meghan Shewchuk, Assistant Director of Admissions, we learned about UMASS Amherst through an interactive Kahoot game and a fantastic information session. Jeff Sung, T2 mentor won the Kahoot game impressing us all with his knowledge of the UMASS campus and all of its history and current offerings. A great informative time was had by all as we virtually visited our second college campus.

TRANSITIONING TOGETHER CLASS OF 2021

Colleges where T2 mentees have been accepted this year:

American University
Boston University
Bowie State University
Bridgewater State University
Bucknell University
Clark Atlanta University
Clark University
Curry College
Emmanuel College
Endicott College
Fitchburg State University
Fordham University
Framingham State University
Franklin Pierce University
Hampton University
Harvard University
Hawaii Pacific University
Howard University
Johnson & Wales University
Lasell University
Mass Bay Community College
MCPHS
McGill University
Merrimack College
New England College
Norfolk State University
Northeastern University
Nova Southeastern University
Pace University
Pratt Institute
Plymouth State University
Quinnipiac University
Regis College
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Rochester Institute of Technology
Roger Williams University
Rutgers University

Salem State University
Savannah College of Art & Design
Simmons College
Southern California Institute of Architecture
Southern Connecticut State University
Spelman University
Suffolk University
Tulane University
University of Connecticut
University of Delaware
University of Hartford
University of Maine, Orono
University of Maryland
UMASS Amherst
UMASS Boston
UMASS Dartmouth
UMASS Lowell
University of New Hampshire
University of New Haven
University of Pittsburgh
University of Rhode Island
University of Vermont
Virginia State University
Wentworth Institute of Technology
Worcester State University
Xavier University (LA)

Visit the T2 website:
www.nnhst2.org
for our complete
calendar of events,
important updates, T2 in the
news, resources, and forms.
Check it out!

BY THE NUMBERS:

of Mentees = **33**
Accepted to 4 year
College = **29**
Accepted to 2 year
College = **4**
Awarded Merit Aid = **19**
Total Merit Aid
Awarded = **\$1,017,045**
Average Merit Aid =
\$53,528
Total # of Applications =
248
Average # of
Applications = **8**
Total # of College
Acceptances = **134**
Average # of
Acceptances = **4**
Average Acceptance
Rate = **54%**

THE ABOVE FIGURES ARE AS OF MAY 1, 2021.



To celebrate First Generation Week 2020, we reached out to T2 alums at colleges across the nation to ask:

WHAT DOES BEING FIRST GEN MEAN TO YOU?

BEING A FIRST GEN STUDENT MEANS TO SET GOALS THAT I DIDN'T THINK WERE POSSIBLE. WITH THE RIGHT SUPPORT SYSTEM AND OVERCOMING OBSTACLES, I WANTED TO KEEP REACHING FARTHER UNTIL I GOT TO WHERE I WANT TO BE. EVEN WHEN TIMES GET TOUGH, KEEP REACHING!



CINA JOSEPH
MCPHS C/O 2020

Hello T² Family! Being a First-Generation college student is something to be proud of and to embrace. Remember, college is just one of many gateways to be exposed to a variety of subjects and a community of people. If you are fortunate to find a college that fits your criteria of affordability, academically, location, etc. then that's a great opportunity to sign up for as it pertains to your aspirations and future goals. Wishing the best for all of our successes!" -

Luther, T² Class of 2017
Framingham State '21



“Being a first generation student means a lot more responsibility on yourself, but you gain so much experience and have a better ethical understanding of yourself and the community.”

Tommy, T² Class of 2016,
University of Virginia
Class of 2021



“BEING A FIRST GENERATION GRADUATE MEANS THAT I CAN NOW HELP MY YOUNGER SIBLINGS GET THROUGH A CHALLENGING PROCESS. IT MEANS THAT I AM ABLE TO PASS MY KNOWLEDGE ONTO THEM AND MANY OTHERS WHO MAY NEED MY HELP. IT MEANS I KNOW THAT I CAN SUCCEED IF I PUT MY MIND TO IT AND NOT LET ANYTHING OR ANYONE STOP ME.” -TANAJA JORDAN

T2 CLASS OF 2015
FRAMINGHAM STATE UNIVERSITY CLASS OF 2019



Being a first generation student pushes me to work harder in school to achieve my goals and make my parents proud! Being the first to go to college is intimidating but all the same it gives me motivation to push myself harder

Luna

T² Class of 2017
Babson College '21

Thank you for all the alums who responded! Please see our First Gen Celebration video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88UfuLb6fUI>