

Transitioning Together

A Mentor Program for First Generation Students Applying to College

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T² Team Members

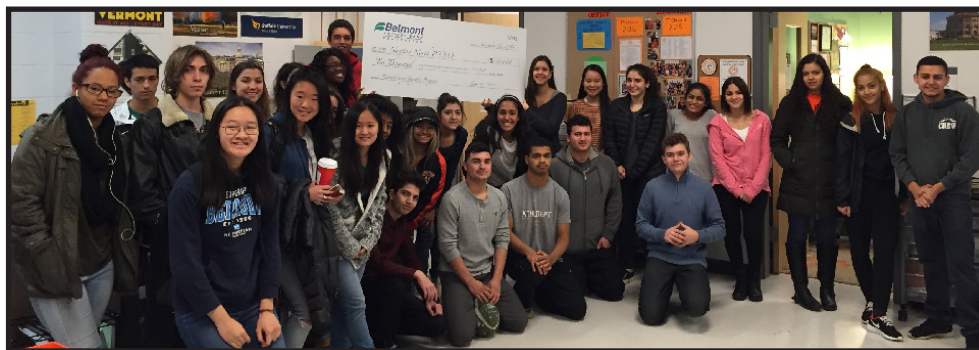
Melissa Hanenberger
*Director &
Mentor Coordinator*

Sarah Hoffman
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Director*

Rich Labeledz
Alumni Coordinator

Nani Bauza
Mentee Coordinator

T² Wins Belmont Savings Bank Foundation Grant



Newton North's Transitioning Together (T²) program received a generous \$10,000 grant donation from the Belmont Savings Bank Foundation. As the director of the T² program and a Newton resident, I am excited about what this contribution means for the first generation students and families we support, as well as the impressive commitment to our city demonstrated by the Foundation.

Earlier this fall, T², along with many other Newton organizations, submitted an application describing our mission and how a foundation grant would improve our services. We then reached out to our supporters in Newton, encouraging them to vote for us via the Belmont Savings Bank Foundation website. Over 2,800 votes were ultimately counted, resulting in our first place finish at the Foundation's November reception at the Newton Marriot. With the generosity of the Foundation, each of the sixteen wonderful Newton organizations, including Newton Public Schools' Calculus Project, received a base grant donation in the amount of \$500.

As a result of this initiative, we will be able to expand our program to provide our students with standardized test prep books and classes, as well as monthly T passes to visit local colleges during their summer vacation. Transportation costs will be covered for our group college visits to Northeastern and our retreat at our partnering institution, Mount Ida College. In addition, each T² student will now receive their own copy of *I'm First*, a first generation resource book. Once accepted, students will receive a t-shirt from the college that they will be attending to celebrate their success. Our first generation students will feel pride for their hard work, a beacon of what can be accomplished with the support of one's community.

This grant from the Belmont Savings Bank Foundation will have a profound impact on our operations and countless lives across Newton. As a member of the community myself, I believe everyone in Newton needs to work together to help each other, and every family should have equal opportunity. We are extremely grateful for the support of the Belmont Savings Bank Foundation, which has donated over \$600,000 in grants to Greater Boston groups since 2012. Support from groups like the Foundation reinforces our commitment to the Newton community, with everyone in the city benefitting as a result.

From 12/19/15 The Newton Tab article written by Melissa Hanenberger



See the T² website:

www.nnhst2.org

for our complete calendar of events, important updates, T² in the news, resources, and forms.

Check it out!

Welcome T² Class of 2017

On January 21, we welcomed the Transitioning Together Class of 2017. 34 mentees and their families met their new mentors who would be working with them for the next 18 months. The T² Team spoke about the history of the program, its success over the past three years, and the timeline and expectations for this fantastic opportunity these students have before them. Below are the demographics for our newest class:

97% (33 mentees) First Generation in their family to attend college in the United States

56% (19 mentees) receiving Free or Reduced Lunch

50% (17 mentees) living with a single parent or guardian

35% (12 mentees) English Language Learners (ELL) or former ELL (FLEP)

12% (4 mentees) in METCO

9% (3 mentees) in NNHS Dover Legacy Scholars (DLS)

Class of 2017 Retreat to Mount Ida College

On Tuesday, February 23 the Transitioning Together Class of 2017, mentors and mentees, participated in our annual retreat at Mount Ida College in Newton. Mentors and mentees were



welcomed with some powerful words of encouragement from leaders of our Newton community: Mayor Setti Warren, Dr. David Fleishman, Superintendent of Newton Public Schools, Mark Aronson, North's Interim Principal, Barry Brown, President of Mount Ida College, and Jeff Cutting, Vice President of Enrollment, Mount Ida College. We participated in innovative team building exercises, a student-led campus tour, a financial aid literacy presentation, Q & A with a Mount Ida first generation student panel, and motivational closing remarks from Laura DeVeau, Vice President for Student Affairs at Mount Ida College. Ms. DeVeau provided us with some very wise and inspirational words of advice to the Transitioning Together Class of 2017.

- *Get better at time management!*
- *Meet and get organized with your mentor, your mentor is a great resource of information. Make a PLAN!*
- *Find an advocate - a person that will support you and guide you.*
- *Improve your writing in its true form and practice good note taking.*
- *Make your own your decisions.*
- *Research colleges, community colleges and universities that have on campus First Gen Programs.*
- *Support each other in the Transitioning Together program. It is your TEAM.*
- *Find teachers and/or advisors from NNHS to help you. Say THANK YOU to them.*
- *Do summer internships before and during college years.*

And for our T² Seniors - avoid the typical college freshmen mistakes!

- *Do NOT focus on the past (high school).*
- *Do NOT be afraid to take risks while at college.*
- *Do NOT spend hours texting old friends.*
- *Do NOT miss out on meeting new people and making new connections at college.*
- *Do NOT be afraid to talk to your professors. They want to help.*
- *Do NOT leave writing essays for the last minute. Use free writing workshops for support & free on-campus tutoring services available for help.*
- *Balance your time well during the school year - focus on academics but have fun.*
- *Get involved.*



Laura DeVeau (above)
and First Generation
Panel (below)



Class of 2017 Visits Northeastern

In late March, a large group of T² students, parents and mentors boarded a bus to Northeastern University for a presentation from a few of their first generation Torch Scholars. We heard from some wonderful Northeastern students



about college life – both getting into college and succeeding once enrolled. All three were the first in their family to attend college. Two scholars came a long way to Northeastern, from Oregon and North Carolina, while one of them chose to stay in Boston for her education after high school. They talked about how much they loved their majors in sociology, health science, and architecture. Each student shared stories about hard work, late hours in the library and a lack of sleep, which was a little scary for our high school juniors! But all of the Northeastern students have had a few years to work up to a more rigorous schedule, and have received a lot of support from staff, professors, and each other. They urged our students to reach out to professors as soon as they arrive to insure a smooth transition, as well as to take classes in the summer to get ready for college. They also stressed the value of getting involved in other activities on campus. The T² group had lots of great questions, and were grateful for the chance to connect with first generation students at the college level.



Alumni Spotlight
Ezeka Allen
T² Class of 2015,
Ithaca College
Class of 2019

Now that you are in college, what do you wish you had known before you got there?

Since getting to college I wish I had told myself that "I am prepared." Before coming to college I was terrified that I wasn't going to be able to handle college work. I felt that North prepared me very well and with the way I learn my school is able to help me with this new challenge.

Is there anything you would do differently?

I think one thing that's really important to do when applying to schools is to look at their newspapers. When you look at paper you can really see what's happening on that campus and how the students feel.

What specific experience in T² has had a big impact on your transition to college?

I personally thought the college visits were the most helpful. It was nice to go with someone who knows all the important questions to ask that I wouldn't have thought of. Since I was unable to go on these tours with my dad, my mentor came in very helpful to assist me in the process.

Anything else you wish your mentor had said/done?

I think the assistance after college would be nice which is the program I am bringing to my school. I strongly believe in the work that this program is doing and I want to bring it to my college. Because applying to college isn't just a one stop shop. There are several molehills that will feel like mountains when you don't have the support.

What would you tell students thinking about being in T²?

I think this program is great because applying to college is hard and stressful. It's nice to have someone besides your parent giving advice. I think T² put us on the same playing field as everyone which made it fair.

What suggestions do you have for students about to start the application process?

To figure out the way you learn. I personally like that I go to a smaller school and I can have personal connection to my professors. If you are more of an independent learner then maybe a bigger school is for you. Allow yourself to go to school because you like the program or what the school has to offer. I think it's great that we are being put on to the same playing field as other students whose parents have attended college. I am going to try to bring a program like this to Ithaca because the easy part is getting in, the hard part is staying and succeeding.

Transitioning Together Class of 2016



Colleges where T² Class of 2016 Students have been accepted:

- Amherst College
- Anna Maria College
- Assumption College
- Barry University
- Becker College
- Boston College
- Boston University
- Bridgewater State University
- Bunker Hill Community College
- Case Western Reserve University
- Champlain College
- Clark University
- College of the Holy Cross
- Emmanuel College
- Emory University
- Fitchburg State University
- Framingham State University
- Hofstra University
- Howard University
- Iona College
- Lasell College
- Long Island University-Brooklyn
- Mass Bay Community College
- MCPHS
- Merrimack College
- Middlebury College
- Mitchell College
- Mount Ida College
- Newbury College
- New England Inst. of Tech
- New York University
- Northeastern University
- Old Dominion University
- Pine Manor College
- Plymouth State University
- Regis College
- Salem State University
- Simmons College
- St. John's University
- Southern Connecticut State University
- Southern New Hampshire University
- Suffolk University
- Swarthmore College
- Temple University
- Tufts University
- University of Alabama
- UMASS Amherst
- UMASS Boston
- UMASS Dartmouth
- UMASS Lowell
- University of Hartford
- University of Maine - Orono
- University of New Hampshire
- University of New Haven
- University of Rhode Island
- Wellesley College
- Wentworth Institute of Technology
- Wesleyan College
- Western Connecticut State University
- Western New England University
- Worcester State University

By The Numbers

of Mentees = 36

Accepted to 4 year College = 32

Accepted to 2 year College = 4

% Applied to College = 100%

Awarded Merit Aid = 58%

Total Merit Aid Awarded to T²

Mentees = \$ 3,437,180

Average Merit Aid = \$163,675

of Applications = 332

Average # of Applications = 9.2

of College Acceptances = 157

Average # of Acceptances = 4.4

The above figures are as of May 10, 2016.



Transitioning Together

www.nnhst2.org

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