

Transitioning Together

A Mentor Program for First Generation Students Applying to College

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- T² Spreads** 1
- Welcome Class of 2018** 1
- LGR & Retreat** 2
- Northeastern** 3
- Alumni Spotlight** 3
- Class of 2017** 4

The T² Model Spreads to Wellesley High School

In January 2016, Melissa Hanenberger, T²'s director, received an email from Margot Lansing, a board member of *Wellesley Friendly Aid*, a non-profit organization that works to improve the well-being and quality of life of economically disadvantaged residents of Wellesley, MA. Margot and her fellow board member, Sharon Kiernan, were starting to investigate the possibility of providing assistance to students at Wellesley High School who were exploring college. They had heard about Transitioning Together and wanted to learn all about the program. That initial email set in place a series of phone calls and meetings, which started a wonderful relationship and partnership. A year after that initial email, *Wellesley Connects* launched, with its first cohort of 12 mentor and mentee matches. Melissa has consulted with *Wellesley Connects* from the start and continues to offer support and advice. This past January, Melissa spoke with the *Wellesley Connects* mentors right before they met with their mentees for the first time. For her consultation services, Margot and Sharon presented Melissa with a \$100 honorarium check for T². This contribution will help with the programming supplies for the T² students at Newton North. T² is excited to continue this relationship with *Wellesley Connects*, thanks them for their support of T², and



Sharon Kiernan, Melissa, and Margot Lansing

wishes them success with their first cohort.

T² Team Members

- Melissa Hanenberger
*Director &
Mentor Coordinator*
- Jillian Hall
*Programming
Director*
- Rich Labeledz
Alumni Coordinator
- Nani Bauza
Mentee Coordinator

Welcome T² Class of 2018

On January 19, we welcomed the Transitioning Together Class of 2018. Twenty-nine mentees and their families met their new mentors who will 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:

- 100%** (29 mentees) First Generation in their family to attend a traditional 4 year college in the United States
- 45%** (13 mentees) English Language Learners (ELL) or former ELL (FLEP)
- 41%** (12 mentees) receive Free or Reduced Lunch
- 41%** (12 mentees) live with a single parent or guardian
- 7%** (2 mentees) live with someone other than either of their biological parent
- 10%** (3 mentees) in METCO
- 10%** (3 mentees) in NNHS Dover Legacy Scholars (DLS)



See the T² website:
www.nnst2.org
for our complete
calendar of events,
important updates,
T² in the news,
resources, and forms.
Check it out!

T² Partnership with Let's Get Ready

This year, T² and Let's Get Ready (LGR) continue their cooperative partnership. LGR is a national nonprofit that provides free SAT preparation, admission counseling, and post-enrollment mentoring for students from low-income circumstances to help them get into and graduate from college. LGR peer-driven program is administered by volunteer college students. LGR invited our T² Class of 2017 to attend for FREE two excellent workshops in their Boston office. The first event was "College Signing Day" on April 15th. During this session students received help reading financial aid award letters, making college decisions and preparing for college life and success! The second event is the super fun and FREE "Dorm Day" workshop on Saturday, August 5th. The workshops for that day cover topics like: budgeting in college, adjusting to college life and academics, and time management. At the workshop, T² students also have the opportunity to meet other first generation students from the Boston area. "Dorm Day" culminates with students selecting for FREE \$300 worth of gently used dorm supplies sponsored by Grad Bag. Some of the most popular items are bed linens, comforter sets, mattress covers, lamps and desk supplies. T² is extremely proud and thankful for our relationship with LGR & Grad Bag.

Class of 2018 Retreat at Mount Ida College

On Tuesday, February 28th, the T² Class of 2018, participated in the third annual retreat at Mount Ida College. The mentor and mentee workshop at Mount Ida College's picturesque 72-acre residential campus in Newton is an exciting launch of the T² experience. Throughout the workshop mentors and mentees were addressed by important leaders of our community - on behalf of the City of Newton Mayor's office, Quinn Etchie, Director of Youth Service; Laura De Veau, Vice President for Student Affairs, Mount Ida College; Dr. David Fleishman, Superintendent of Newton Public Schools; Melissa Hanenberger, T² Director; and Dr. Henry Turner, NNHS Principal. All of these community leaders expressed their support and commitment to the T² program and mission.



Following the welcoming speeches, the workshop began with a "Journaling Exercise" in which mentors and mentees discussed teambuilding questions reflective of the college admissions process. The journal questions were a great starting point for the mentors and mentees to get to know each other, understand expectations and concerns about the college application process. The journal had a total of 16 questions with topics such as aspirations and anxieties, admissions and transfer questions, financing, first generation, and getting to know each other. Mentors and mentees also participated in several Mount Ida student-led campus tours of CONNECT, Campus Center, Commuter Lounge and student centers. One of the highlights of the retreat was the comprehensive financial aid literacy presentation by Dyan Teehan, Director of Student Financial Services.

After a delicious lunch, Laura De Veau, Vice President for Student Affairs, gave closing remarks that encouraged mentees to reflect about setting goals for the college admissions process, find their motivation, and jump start the process. T² mentors and mentees left the Mount Ida College with a stronger relationship and ready for an exciting higher education journey. T² is incredibly grateful for the Mount Ida partnership. Mount Ida staff created an experience where T² mentors and mentees learned about themselves, connected as a cohort, and gained knowledge of some of the most important aspects of the admissions and financial aid processes. Thank you Mount Ida!

Class of 2018 Visits Northeastern

On Tuesday, March 21st, the T² Class of 2018 and their mentors jumped on a bus to head in to Northeastern University for a campus tour and a presentation from current students. During the tour, students got to see a classroom, a freshman dorm room, the gym, the student center, in order to get a complete feeling of the campus. Our group was most impressed by Northeastern's Co-op Program, which provides students the chance to work (often times paid!) during their college experience. This gives students the unique opportunity to get real world experience and build a resume while they are in college. Our tour guide, Lauren, had the opportunity to complete two co-ops during her time as a Northeastern student and she felt that these opportunities have given her confidence and invaluable preparation for life after college. After the tour, the group met with four current Northeastern students who are all receiving full-scholarships. One of the scholarships, the Torch Scholarship, is awarded to first generation college students who have "overcome exceptional odds." The T² students found it refreshing to hear that first generation scholarships exist! The Northeastern students were very impressive as they talked about their majors and their co-op experiences. One of the students, originally from Boston, even talked about changing her major multiple times and ultimately ending up in nursing. She emphasized that it is okay not to know what you want to do or to change your mind, and that talking with mentors, professors and industry professionals can help you navigate through choosing a major or career path. The students gave great advice about how to adjust to college life, how to succeed in higher level academics, and how to get involved on campus. A huge thank you to Northeastern University and their incredible students for having us on campus!



Alumni Spotlight
Kayla DeMelo
T² Class of 2016,
Becker College

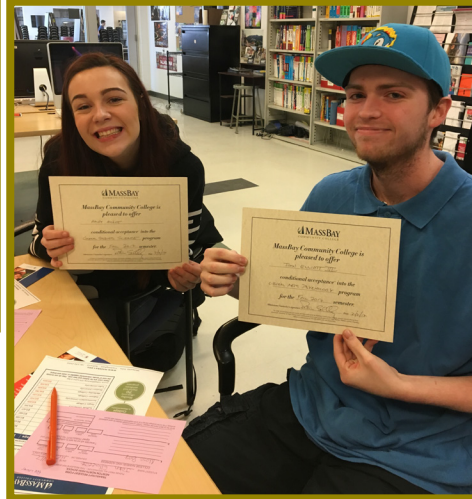
I am currently studying to become a veterinary technician; this is kind of like a nurse (rather than doctor) for animals. My time at Becker so far has been amazing; Becker is a small school and very concentrated on my field of study, veterinary medicine, which I love. We do a lot of hands-on work in the clinic and I take classes that really feel practical and useful in my field of work. In terms of social life, I have established a really great group of friends-there are about 5 of us-and we all have similar majors. My roommate is awesome and we get along perfectly (not a story you always hear people tell in college, so I guess I got lucky). I just applied for a Resident Assistant position for next year and am hoping to get the job. Right now I work in the vet clinic on campus for my work-study position. Overall, I have loved my time here so far and feel like Becker is a perfect fit for me.

As for what I would do differently, I think my biggest thing I would change is that I would take less stuff with me! I know it sounds petty, but I found that I brought a lot of unnecessary items with me. I over packed clothes; I bought things like a can opener, a cutting board, and other kitchen things. I ended up taking a lot of stuff home the first time I was on break, just to de-clutter my dorm a little.

I felt like T² really covered what was necessary in preparing me for college, so I don't know that I can specifically name something I wish we had talked about. My mentor, Katya Salkever, was amazing. She still continues to help me as I move through my college journey. If I have any questions about financial aid or even just want to share my first semester grades, I can shoot her a quick text and I know she will get back to me that same day, if not in the next few minutes. I love that I can have this relationship with someone who I know genuinely wants to help me be successful.

For students thinking about participating in the T² program, all I can say is: DO IT. You have absolutely nothing to lose, only knowledge to gain from this amazing program. If you truly want to succeed, T² will get you there. It is annoying sometimes to have your mentor nagging you about deadlines and due dates, but in the end it's worth it. College isn't something you can procrastinate on thinking about, and you will be miserable if you do. T² made sure I stayed on track and explored all my options. It prepared me for testing, helped me fill out applications, and provided me with a support in my college journey that I wouldn't have had if I had just left it up to my parents, who never attended college. It is really an amazing program.

Transitioning Together Class of 2017



Colleges where the T² Class of 2017 students have been accepted:

- American University
- Anna Maria College
- Assumption College
- Babson College
- Becker College
- Ben Franklin Institute of Technology
- Bentley College
- Boston College
- Boston University
- Bridgewater State University
- Case Western Reserve University
- Clark University
- Clarkson University
- Curry College
- Eastern Nazarene College
- Emmanuel College
- Fitchburg State University
- Framingham State University
- Ithaca College
- James Madison University
- Lasell College
- Lesley University
- Mass Bay Community College
- MCPHS
- Merrimack College
- Mount Ida College
- Newbury College
- New York University
- Northeastern University
- Old Dominion University
- Pine Manor College
- Plymouth State University
- Regis College
- Salem State University
- Simmons College
- Southern Connecticut State University
- Southern New Hampshire University
- Suffolk University
- Temple University
- Trinity College
- Quinnipiac College
- University of Alabama
- UCONN
- University of Colorado, Boulder
- University of Denver
- 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
- University of Southern Maine
- University of Vermont
- University of Virginia
- Wentworth Institute of Technology
- Western Connecticut State University
- Western New England University
- Wheaton College
- Worcester State University

By The Numbers

of Mentees = 35

Accepted to 4 year College = 32

Accepted to 2 year College = 3

% Applied to College = 100%

Awarded Merit Aid = 69%

Total Merit Aid Awarded to T²

Mentees = \$ 1,417,463

Average Merit Aid = \$59,060

Total # of Applications = 301

Average # of Applications = 9

of College Acceptances = 148

Average # of Acceptances = 4.9

The above figures are as of April 24, 2017.

“...your resume is outstanding. The Admissions Committee is particularly impressed with your involvement in Transitioning Together. This is one of the many reasons we want you at American University.”

-From an Acceptance Letter to T² Class of 2017 Mentee from Jeremy Lowe, Acting Director for Undergraduate Admissions at American University

Transitioning Together

www.nnhst2.org

Newton North High School

457 Walnut Street

Newtonville, MA 02460

617-559-6347