

HELP POTENTIAL FIND ITS PATH

Crossroads is now serving 150 scholars – more than ever before! Despite a challenging year, these scholars have continued to achieve their goals and build a successful pathway for their futures. Your support is even more important now during these economically challenging times. Help us provide the education and programming necessary to pave a pathway for college and career success.

Invest in Pittsburgh's future. Donate today!



CHECK US OUT ONLINE!

To make a donation please visit



www.crossroadsfoundation.org

board of directors

Dean A. Calland, Esq., President
Founding Shareholder, Babst Calland

**Richard F. Gobbie, DMD, MDS
Vice President**
President, Pittsburgh Orthodontic Group

Cathy Frischkorn, Secretary
Volunteer

Kurt Herdman, CPA, Treasurer
Accounting Professional

Ryan P. McCarthy
Senior Legal Counsel
Westinghouse Electric Company

Camille A. Sciuлло
President, Camille Sciuлло & Associates

Neal Shipley
CEO, Capital Foundry

Donnesha Slider, MD
Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist

Juel L. Smith
Interim Associate Dean of Academic Affairs,
CCAC Boyce Campus

Matthew Stalder
Founder & President, MGS Group LLC

LaMarcus Thurman
Assistant Vice President and Community
Relationship Manager, Northwest Bank

Joann Urbaniak
Retired Educator, North Allegheny Schools

MENTORING MATTERS

Mentorship is a key component to a scholar's journey at Crossroads. Our junior and senior scholars act as peer mentors to their freshman classmates, providing them guidance as they transition into high school. As those freshmen become juniors and become mentors themselves, they start to experience some of the most difficult aspects of their high school career – heavier class schedules, SAT preparation, college applications and career decisions. That's when Professional Mentors begin to provide essential support helping the scholars develop key interpersonal and decision-making skills.

Damion Wilson, Crossroads Director of Programs, said this initiative has helped prepare our scholars for real world success by creating a safe outlet in which they can practice the skills developed at Crossroads. "This [program] affords our scholars the opportunity to learn the skills and dispositions necessary to be successful in charting their postsecondary path," he said. "It allows us to provide a more comprehensive program experience, resulting in more well-rounded scholars that are better equipped for the global workforce."

The first step in providing this experience is finding professionals to participate. Matt Cottrill, the president and founder of Growth Track Advisors, LLC, was looking for a way to give back to his community and Crossroads was the perfect match. He said that most young people he talks with want to know more about what is out there and how things work. "I wish I had the opportunity and access to a mentor when I was young," he said. "I believe I have the skills and experience now to help others identify and achieve their future goals."

Lauren Rudy, a fellow mentor, had a similar goal. As a science teacher at Central Catholic High School, she is familiar with Crossroads. She said the idea of the Professional Mentoring Program is to get to know these scholars as much as possible, helping them in their growth as young people. During the pandemic, zoom calls at mentorship meetings have allowed the mentoring relationship to continue. She and her mentee Jasmine have been able to build an incredible friendship, laying the groundwork necessary to adjust as Jasmine moves forward. Lauren plans to be a resource for Jasmine as she transitions through high school and into college. Jasmine values that support. "I know I can ask her for anything," she said.

Mentorship doesn't stop when the academic year ends. As Matt said, mentoring is a great opportunity, but it comes with great responsibility because you have the opportunity to change these young people's lives. "These are bright, energetic and impressive young people," he said. "I hope to bring insight and perspective to the table so they can develop a vision and create a plan for their future."

To learn more about our Professional Mentoring Program, contact Damion Wilson, Director of Programs, at dwilson@crfdn.org or (412)661-9422.



**BACK TO SCHOOL
BY THE
NUMBERS** **62**
NEIGHBORHOODS
6 **HIGH
SCHOOLS**
150
STUDENTS
3.29
AVERAGE GPA

A great start to the school year!

CROSSROADS CUP 2020

On October 5, 2020, Crossroads hosted almost 50 golfers at Cranberry Highlands Golf Course to raise money for our scholars and their families, especially those who have been significantly affected by COVID-19. Thanks to the community, volunteers and generous donors, Crossroads raised \$4,000 – continuing to pave a pathway for success! We are so thankful and already looking forward to next year!



Crazy Hat Day to start off a great week at CampBioE!

SUMMER PROGRAMS FORGED AHEAD DURING PANDEMIC

In-person gatherings may have paused this summer, but Crossroads scholars kept learning. Thanks to our amazing Crossroads community, we were able to continue our partnerships with businesses and individuals to teach our scholars online. Scholars took advantage of every opportunity to learn during the pandemic, attending multiple sessions for Career Academies, Rising Junior Career Days, and Connecting with Crossroads Week.

CampBioE We maintained our annual partnership with University of Pittsburgh's Swanson School of Engineering Science Camp, CampBioE. Facilitators creatively taught scholars about bio-engineering and regenerative medicine. The three-day camp was designed not only to expose students to science, but also show that STEM can be a fun and exciting career path.

Health Career Academy Crossroads scholars participated in a three-day virtual event hosted by the Pennsylvania Area Health Education Center. They learned about healthcare careers from nurses, EMS staff, pharmacists, doctors, and careers in occupational therapy, physical therapy, physician assistant, and dentistry.

Regional Job Outlook Regional Job Outlook allowed for our scholars to communicate with community professionals in different careers. This four-day event provided each scholar the opportunity to learn about possible regional jobs and career paths while considering their own interests and future college majors. Over the course of the week, scholars connected with The Saturday Light Brigade, Lisa Sylvester at WPXI, Dean Calland and Chaz Peacock from Babst Calland Attorneys at Law, DJ Bamboo from Women In Tech, and Jennifer Hawkins from Sports Pittsburgh.

Rising Junior Career Days Crossroads provided a week-long opportunity for rising junior scholars to learn more about various professional careers. Over the course of the program, they connected with Tiffany Burnett of the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Diamonte Walker of the Urban Redevelopment Authority, Matt Cottrill, an Entrepreneur and member of the Notre Dame Club of Pittsburgh. They finished the week hearing from faculty, alumni and current students of CMU Engineering - a panel consisting of chemical, biomedical, mechanical, and civil and environmental engineers.



Esther Stief

WAYPOINTS

The Road Ahead from the Executive Director's Desk

In the fall, aspen trees are strikingly beautiful with their white bark and bright yellow leaves. Beyond their splendor, aspens can teach us a lot about what it means to be interconnected, to be dependent on one another, for you never simply find one aspen tree. Aspens grow in groves, or stands, because the trees share a root system. In fact, aspens within a stand are considered a single organism with the main life force located underground in its single root system. While an individual tree is marvelous and bears unique scars and branches, it only exists because of its connection to the surrounding trees.

These months of social distancing, interrupted schedules, and remote interactions have left many of us feeling adrift. Humans, like aspens, are meant to be interconnected, to be grounded in a community with expansive roots in nourishing soil. Here at Crossroads, we have dug deep during this time to strengthen our root system for our scholars and to highlight the connectedness we have with our community, our Aspen Stand.

Our professional mentoring and college coaching programs leverage the power of connection to help young people envision and plan for their futures. Crossroads' volunteer, professional mentors meet monthly with junior scholars in our LEAD leadership program to build networking skills, support the development of career goals, and encourage personal development. Our LEAD scholars, in turn, mentor freshman scholars as they transition into high school and their roles as scholars creating an interdependent network of support.

Crossroads has expanded its college support through implementing a college coaching program where coaches are paired with seniors who are applying to college. Longtime college mentors and Crossroads board members Cathy Frischkorn and Joann Urbaniak work with Crossroads College Access Coordinator, Fabian Cotton, to equip the coaches with resources to help their scholars navigate the college decision making process. These coaches offer an invaluable support to our seniors during this fall when virtual college visits, cancelled SATs and interrupted academics present new challenges to an already stressful process.

As Crossroads continues to support scholars during a year of divisive politics, a pandemic and racial reckoning, we are keenly aware of our need for connection. Our host high schools, volunteers, families, staff and board, donors and business partners create a root system for our scholars that allows them to grow, to flourish even, in difficult circumstances. We are reminded, more than ever before, that like aspen trees, we only exist in and through community. Thanks for being part of our Aspen Stand!



MEET OUR NEW COUNSELOR

Ms. Christina Kenney, a Pittsburgh native, started as the Extra Mile Transition Counselor in March 2020. Her role collaborates between Crossroads and Extra Mile Education Foundation to support students throughout Allegheny County prior to starting high school. Ms. Kenney attended the California University of Pennsylvania, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology and a Master's of Science in Clinical Mental Health Counseling. With over 11 years of experience working with Pittsburgh Public Schools and various organizations and agencies, Christina is excited about her position and says, "I am passionate about assisting scholars through their academic and professional development while promoting community outreach, social justice, and strong mental health."



Christina Kenney, LPC