

THE PROPEL PERSPECTIVE

MARCH 2024

EMPOWERING FUTURES



Dear February... We had a blast!

February was an incredibly engaging and enriching month for PROPEL! From homemade pizza nights to scholarship presentations and Valentine's Day festivities, there was a lot of love, learning, and connection happening.

We welcomed Debbie Schmidt as PROPEL's newest board member and her visit alongside long-time board member Ingrid Fulmer underscores the importance of community engagement and support. Their interest and involvement in visiting the Boca location and meeting staff and children demonstrate a commitment to the organization's mission.

Coach Garvey's initiative to teach kids how to make homemade pizzas not only provided a fun activity but also imparted valuable cooking skills. It's wonderful to see mentors finding creative ways to connect with and empower their students.

Valentine's Day... Love was in the air! Our coaches used this day to show love by organizing a fun activity and providing treats for the kids. It's heartwarming to see gestures like this that reinforce the sense of community and belonging.

LOOKING AHEAD...

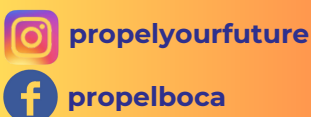
**Betting on a Better
Future Casino Event**

**BWCF Golf
Tournament**

Beach BBQ

Community Partners

**PROPELIAN
SPOTLIGHT**



The vision board event hosted by our coaches was a fantastic way to encourage goal-setting and self-reflection among the kids. By visually representing their aspirations, they're provided with a daily reminder of their dreams and motivations.

The Viner Scholarship Presentation was an an inspiring opportunity for our high schoolers to learn more about potential scholarship opportunities. Having advocates who are actively involved in the application process can make a significant difference in students' lives. Thank you to Viner for visiting our site and believing in our kids!

Overall, we are dedicated to nurturing and empowering our PROPELIANS, providing them with opportunities for growth, connection, and self-expression.

Here's to more enriching experiences in the months ahead!



www.propelyourfuture.org

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PROPELIAN SPOTLIGHT...



We highlight the journey of Jonathan Jean Baptist, an inspiration within our PROPEL family. At the age of 18, Jonathan's tenure with our program spans three years, during which he has left an indelible mark on all those fortunate enough to know him.

Jonathan luminates every space he enters with his infectious enthusiasm and heartwarming smile. His unwavering optimism serves as a guiding light, uplifting his peers and fostering a sense of camaraderie wherever he goes. As a friend, Jonathan's compassion knows no bounds, and his genuine care for others has endeared him to many.

Beyond his magnetic personality, Jonathan's dedication to excellence shines through both in the classroom and on the basketball court. A true overachiever, he consistently exceeds expectations in his academic pursuits, setting a standard of academic excellence for his peers to aspire to. Moreover, his skills on the basketball court are nothing short of remarkable, showcasing his tenacity and passion for the sport.

Today, we proudly applaud Jonathan's accomplishments as he embarks on the next chapter of his journey. Having been accepted into institutions such as (FAMU) Florida Agricultural Memorial University, University of South Florida, and Florida Gulf Coast University, Jonathan's academic aptitude is matched only by his ambition. His decision to pursue sports medicine reflects his unwavering dedication to combining his passion for athletics with his desire to make a difference in the lives of others.

Jonathan, your achievements serve as a testament to your perseverance, integrity, and unwavering commitment to excellence. As you continue to pursue your dreams, know that you carry with you the unwavering support and admiration of the entire PROPEL community. May your future endeavors be met with continued success and fulfillment, and may you forever shine as brightly as you do today.

Congratulations, Jonathan, on this well-deserved honor. The best is yet to come!

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COMMUNITY PARTNERS...



Viner presentation with our juniors and seniors and Viner alumni recipients Tanisha Paul and Jean Max Meradieu.



For the past three years, PROPEL has been partnered with the FAU Medical program. Each semester, twenty or so medical students volunteer their time and impart their wisdom and experiences upon our PROPELIANS.

Each medical student is teamed up with a PROPELIAN or a group based on their academic goals, personality and overall chemistry. The medical students have become an extension of PROPEL; more than just tutors, they have become great mentors and friends.

This is a reflection essay from this past semester's group of medical students...

Leveling the playing field only goes so far when only one team knows there's a game. This is a challenge many individuals in underserved communities face, and a challenge that is solved by interpersonal connection and mentorship. It is also a challenge that, if left unsolved, continues to place artificial constraints on the opportunities available to those on which it imposes. PROPEL is well aware of this danger. As an afterschool program, PROPEL provides a safe and supportive environment for middle and high school students to practice good study, leadership, and networking skills. Many of its students come from families who have only recently immigrated to the United States and thus are trying to navigate not only the trials of the school day, but also the stressors of a new environment. By providing a sense of stability and structure to the lives of the students at PROPEL, they hope to aid in achieving academic success and catapult them to achieve their highest potential.

Last year, PROPEL identified a need within the organization for a dedicated college readiness program consisting of an overview of the college application process, essay

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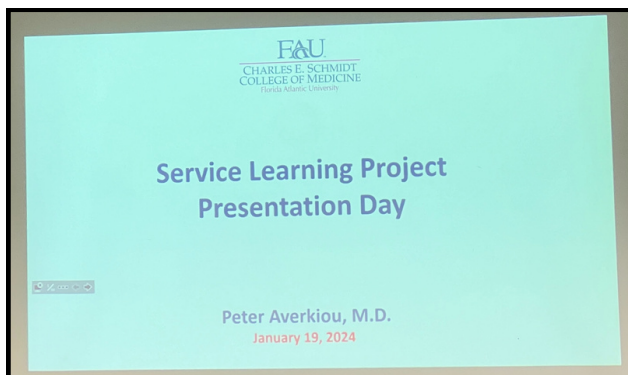
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guidance and standardized test preparation. As the seniors prepared for college and other endeavors, the juniors, and even some sophomores, were seeking their own path forward, in many cases as soon-to-be first-generation college students. However, with limited options for getting first-person opinions regarding the application process, many became discouraged. Recognizing this, PROPEL invited the FAU College of Medicine to guide students in essay writing and exam preparation in twice-weekly sessions of a hopeful inaugural program. As the first college acceptance letters reach their respective students at PROPEL, it is clear that these students are internally driven, hopeful for what they can achieve if only made aware of the details. Initially, most students told us that they were unsure where to apply and were only planning on applying to 2-3 schools. However, after a refreshingly interactive discussion of application fee waivers and deadlines, majors and minors, pre-professional tracks and scholarships, the students were able to tell us with excitement about their future plans and dream schools. Some are even ready to introduce yet another change into their lives with out-of-state schools if their chosen major dictates. What at first appeared as trepidation at the start of our program has now become excited anticipation.

As soon as the students were made aware of the “game,” they excelled with an ambitious proactivity. While we reviewed essays with the students, we talked about their achievements, their goals, and the experiences that drive them today. In experiencing this, we were reminded of the lives our patients will lead outside of the clinic. They will be motivated by their values, like those our students attempt to describe in 500 words or less. They will seek answers in a foreign context, just as our students inquire about early action versus early decision. And they will become frustrated. If we’re not willing to sit with our neighbors – be it students or patients – and try to understand their lives to help them find a solution that works for them, we will just be adding to the noise that tends to arrest us in life’s pivotal moments. Our job is not to complete as many essays as possible, or to send off applications to every school, but rather to spend time finding the roadmaps for our students, our patients, our neighbors, so they can choose the paths that best represent their goals and needs. It is our hope that this program might continue so that other students might not only come to this conclusion themselves, but so that we as current students and future doctors might be more aware of the everyday needs of our communities.



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