



FAMILIES TO COLLEGE



FTC Monthly Digest

Volume 1 Issue 1

February 9th, 2021

A Word From Our Director

Greetings everyone! I am so excited to present our first monthly newsletter to you. We aim to give you up-to-date information about our program and share resources of value to you. We are aware that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has caused some very serious challenges for families. But, please know that our team stands ready to assist however we can.

Please remember that a core objective of Families to College is to support every member of family, not just students. In service of this goal, we are planning to roll out some great new initiatives specifically for parents. Keep your eye on the “Parent Voice” section for more information. Of course, we continue to provide academic support, college readiness, and career exploration through our Campus Center program. Please encourage your students to join our Discord server, so that they can receive information about all of the great opportunities we have targeted to our students.

Let our team of staff, AmeriCorps coaches, and volunteer mentors support you as you continue to work towards your goals for your family! If you need anything from me, please feel free to contact me directly at 856-358-3013 or email me at cwilliams@appelfarm.org

Parent Voice

Families to College is proud to introduce our new Parent Advisory Council! The first meeting of this council was held on Monday, January 25. As a program, we value the importance of incorporating parent voice as we design, implement, evaluate and adapt our programs and services for families. The Parent Advisory Council provides a valuable way to share ideas, concerns, and suggestions for improvement with program leadership. In our Parent Advisory Council meetings, program staff will share program developments and ask for feedback regarding potential new initiatives before implementation. Parents, we value your input!

All FTC Parents & Caregivers are encouraged to be a part of our Parent Advisory Council meetings, and will receive a \$50 Amazon e-gift card for each meeting attended.

Spring 2021 Parent Advisory Council Meetings: (all meetings will be held virtually on Zoom until further notice)

- March 22, 2021
- May 24, 2021

For more information about our Parent Advisory Council, please contact our Program Director, Curtis Williams at cwilliams@appelfarm.org.

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Campus Center

The FTC Virtual Campus Center has lots of fun and educational activities going on this spring on our Discord server!

Virtual Homework Help and Tutoring

Our Campus Center team is available to offer Homework Help 4 days a week, Monday through Thursday from 2 - 7 PM. During this time, we have several individuals available to help students with any assignments - from completing a math worksheet to writing a full essay. Assistance is available in all subjects, in all grades from Elementary through College! As an additional benefit, any FTC student who needs homework assistance or more in-depth tutoring outside of our Homework Help time is also eligible to utilize Brainfuse 24 hours a day for online, on-demand tutoring.

Fun with the Campus Center

FTC has a student lounge that is open Monday through Thursday, 2pm - 7pm. This is meant to be a fun, relaxed space for students and coaches to share and talk.

In addition to these ongoing activities and workshops, we also offer a biweekly game night on Tuesdays from 5pm - 6pm. During

game night, coaches, students, and their families hop on a Zoom call and play online games together. Our most popular games are Among Us & Scribb.io, but we're always open to trying new games!

Spring Student Workshop Series

- Session 1 Dates: February 1 – March 12
- Mondays and Thursdays 5 – 6 PM

Finance 101

Taught by guest instructor, Ryan Hummel, this course will provide an introduction to smart ways of managing your money. We'll start by building a solid foundation for discussing finances, then talk about credit, budgeting, the stock market, investing and how to make your money work for you.

Self-Exploration

Our Thursday workshop is Self Exploration, led by our team of coaches. The Self Exploration courses will consist of different activities and events that encourage students to share more about themselves. Throughout the course, students will have the opportunity to share their hobbies, interests, and personal and educational lives with each other and the coaches to better understand one another and themselves.

Please contact Kylee Bagley (kylee@unitedadvocacygroup.org), for more information.

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Mentors and Volunteers

Our volunteer Community Mentors are the backbone of the Families to College program and work with staff to engage and build relationships with FTC families. Their role is to support families as they work towards their goals, using their action plans developed at intake as a guide. Families, please keep in contact with your mentors as they are an important link that will help our program better support you.

Welcome to the team!

FTC is happy to welcome our new Community Mentor Rubi Lukasiewicz! Rubi Lukasiewicz has worked at Acenda Integrated Health (formerly Robins Nest) for 16 years as Program Director of the Healthy Families Program. Rubi has always been motivated by the desire to strengthen and empower families giving parents the opportunity to positively influence their child's life.

FTC is also happy to welcome our three new volunteer tutors: Danica Pratta, Zalak Mido, and Brianna Jones.

Danica Pratta is originally from Salem County however, she is currently located in Washington D.C working as a biomedical researcher for the National Institutes of Health. She has been a teacher's assistant for 5 semesters and is passionate about encouraging women in STEM. Danica's hours are Tuesdays 5pm-7pm

Zalak Modi is currently a sophomore Biochemistry major at Rowan, but beyond science, she can also support students in math, History, and some English. Her hours are Mondays and Wednesdays 5-7 PM and Fridays 12 PM to 2 PM. "

Brianna Jones graduated from Kean University in August 2020 in Communications-Media/Film. She covers math, English and Science. Her hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays 11am - 1:30PM and Saturdays and Sundays 3PM - 5PM.

Please contact Jenn Balbuena (ibalbuena@unitedadvocacygroup.org), for more information.

Current Volunteer Opportunities

Community Mentors - We are always looking for more individuals to serve as Community Mentors. Mentors support the family they are paired with in reaching their goals identified at intake. Unlike traditional youth mentoring programs, our mentors build relationships with and support every member of the family. Contact us to find out more about this great opportunity!

Spanish Speaking Financial Literacy Volunteer- We're looking for someone with expertise in financial literacy that is interested in providing one-on-one support and coaching to families.

Learning Pod Tutors - Families to College partners with AmeriCorps to offer in-person Learning pods where parents can bring their children to complete remote instruction during the school day. We also provide academic support to students and are in need of volunteers to help staff the learning pods.

Virtual Workshop Leader- Any special talents or skills you would like to share with our families? You could lead a virtual workshop! The workshops could be anything from couponing, entrepreneurship, and finances to nutrition or leading a yoga class. This volunteering opportunity is open to volunteers interested in one time volunteering or on an ongoing basis. If you have an idea for a workshop or any other volunteering opportunity please do not hesitate to reach out.

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FTC Events

FTC hosts regular virtual events hosted on Zoom to support and maintain our community. Some of the events we offer include:

Virtual Family Nights -

Each month, FTC hosts a family night via Zoom, complete with supply packets and dinner delivered to participants! (RSVP required)

Virtual College Tours -

Join us for an exploration of different colleges and universities each month, complete with presentations from school alumni and admissions representatives.

Parent Workshops -

Join us for these great times to gather and support each other as parents and caregivers!

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Recent Events

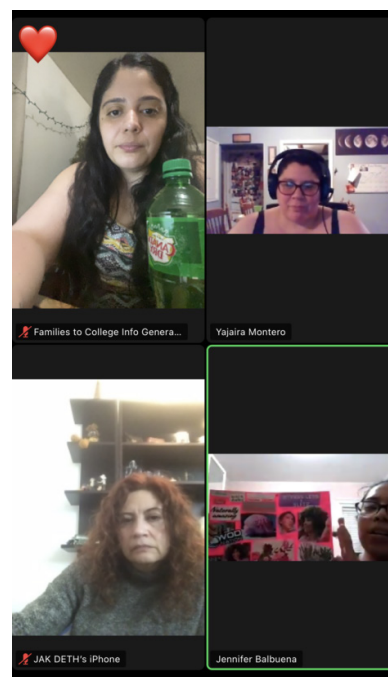
December 16 - Family Night

Our December Family Night was a huge blast! Several families came together over some hot chocolate while they built gingerbread houses together, and shared what they were grateful for in 2020! Participants shared stories and laughs all from the comfort of their own homes. What a fun, exciting night!



January 13 - Parent Wellness Workshop

Knowing that the pandemic has been an extremely difficult time, we wanted to make sure that we didn't forget about the wellbeing of our FTC parents and caregivers. We offered this virtual workshop to help focus on self-care. Attendees shared about their own experiences and provided support to each other. Workshop activities included meditation practices and starting a vision board. This was a beautiful event and helped to further strengthen our FTC Community!





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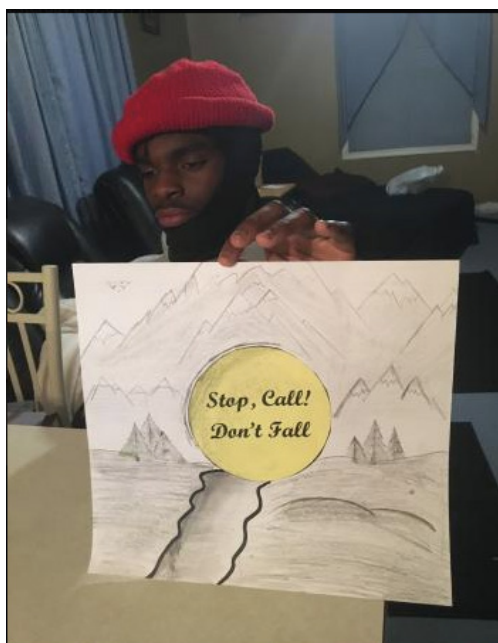
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January 18 - MLK Day of Service

FTC embraces the spirit of service that characterizes the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service, as a “day on, not a day off.” This year FTC partnered with Eagleview Health and Rehabilitation Center to provide a critical message to its residents. One of the issues the Eagleview faces in an increase in injuries due to falling. Appel Farm Teaching Artist, Zoungy Kligge, facilitated a fun artistic activity that families completed to remind residents to call for help. This is shown in the message “Stop. Call, Don’t Fall”





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Upcoming Events

Virtual College Tour

Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California
February 10 @ 6:00pm

Virtual College Tour

California State University - Long Beach virtual college tour
February 17 @ 6:00pm

Monthly Family Night

FTC Jeopardy
February 24 @ 6:00 PM

For more information and to RSVP for any of our upcoming events, please contact FTC's Family Engagement Coordinator, Stephanie Gonzalez (stephanie@unitedadvocacygroup.org).

All events listed above will use the following Zoom information:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83638030275?pwd=Slo2enRZemVGTkNGQWZmcnJUR1puUT09>

Meeting ID: 836 3803 0275
Passcode: 423062

FTC Trivia

Have a little fun with FTC and try your hand at some trivia!

1. Which is the tallest mountain in the world?

2. Which planet is known as the Red Planet?

3. How long does it take for the earth to revolve around the sun?

4. What is the Largest freshwater lake in the world?

Turn to the last page for the answers!





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Fun Facts About February

It is the shortest month of the year.

The Welsh call February “y mis bach” which means “little month”.

The month is named for the Latin word februum which means purification. Together with January, it was the last of the months added to the Roman calendar.

Black history month is celebrated all February

Groundhog Day on February 2 is when we ask, “Are we in for six more weeks of Winter?” Only a groundhog named Punxsutawney Phil knows for sure. Each year on Groundhog Day, people flock to Gobbler’s Knob in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, to await the forecast of the local rodent celebrity. Originating with German settlers, who came to Pennsylvania in the 1700s and brought their seasonal superstitions with them, legend has it that if Phil sees his shadow on February 2, the winter chill will continue. Oddly, if the weather is cloudy and he doesn’t see his shadow, we can expect warmer temperatures and early spring. Groundhog Day is a tradition to be cherished.

DID THE GROUNDHOG SEE HIS SHADOW IN 2021? The results are in and Punxsutawney Phil saw his shadow in 2021, which means we are in for six more weeks of winter. Don’t be putting your coat away just yet, Phil has spoken.

FTC Trivia Answers:

1. Mount Everest

2. Mars

3. 365 1/4 Days

4. Lake Superior



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