



FLHS

FEBRUARY 2018

Counselor's  
Corner

The School Counseling Department at Fort Lee High School is a driving force in the development of college and career readiness and plays a crucial role in the social-emotional wellness of the students. The purpose of the Counselor's Corner Newsletter is to update all parents and students on the activities and events that have taken place since September, as well as to inform the school community as to what exciting events will transpire during the second half of the school year.



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# Counseling Department Activities

## September to February

**The Counseling Department has hosted multiple events during the first half of the school year to assist students with college and career preparation as well as to enhance the students' social and emotional well-being.**

- In September, the department coordinated the annual in-house College Fair in which over 75 colleges and universities sent representatives to meet our students and disseminate informational brochures about their institutions.
- In September, school counselors held a Senior Planning/Financial Aid Night for all seniors and their parents in which counselors and administrators were able to share information about what to expect during this important year and discussed how to navigate the college application process. A representative from the Montclair State University Financial Aid Office walked all parents and students through the FASFA process.
- On September 5<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> grade students attended Freshman Orientation. During the orientation, students had the opportunity to meet administrators, counselors, and teachers. Students were given an overview of the policies and procedures of the high school as well as had the opportunity to do a walk-through of their class schedule in order to familiarize themselves with the building.
- On Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>, the ninth grade parent breakfast was held in the Media Center. Mrs. Serulle-Green explained how courses, grades, and credits all become part of a student's transcript and are used in determining a student's final GPA in senior year. She also reviewed Fort Lee High School's 120 credit graduation requirements. In addition, parents navigated the Fort Lee website, [www.flboe.com](http://www.flboe.com) and were shown how to locate announcements, calendars, and teacher pages. Parents were also given a tutorial on how to log into the Genesis Parent Portal, which allows parents to monitor student attendance, grades, and assignments. Community service and extracurricular activities were also highly recommended, beginning in freshman year.
- In October, the School Counseling Department and administration welcomed parents and students from all grade levels to the Fort Lee High School Open House on October 17<sup>th</sup>, which was designed to showcase our academy programs, athletic teams, and clubs. This event was especially important for college planning as students were given the opportunity to see all the extracurricular activities available to help build their college resumes.
- Also in October, Fort Lee High School in conjunction with the Fort Lee Municipal Alliance Committee highlighted the town-wide Stigma Free initiative by offering Stigma Free related assemblies to students in all grade levels. The goal of the Fort Lee Stigma Free initiative is to generate an open and non-judgmental discussion regarding mental illness as well as to create a culture within our community in which individuals feel supported by those around them and are empowered to seek treatment. The assemblies were presented both during Week of Respect, School Violence Prevention Week, and Red Ribbon Week.
- In October, freshman English classes participated in classroom lessons presented by the Center for Alcohol and Drug Resources. These lessons were sponsored by the Fort Lee Municipal Alliance in connection with the Stigma Free initiative. The objective of the lessons were to educate students regarding the dangers of substance abuse as well as to raise awareness of different coping skills that can be used to productively combat anxiety and depression.

- On October 3<sup>rd</sup>, seniors watched a presentation entitled “Tormented: A Story of Survival and Bullying Prevention.” This presentation sought to raise awareness of the negative impact that bullying can have both on the victim as well as on the school climate.
- Also on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, juniors viewed a presentation by Alumni in Recovery(AIR). The goal of this presentation was to raise awareness regarding the dangers of substance abuse and addiction.
- On October 17<sup>th</sup>, sophomores witnessed a very engaging presentation by Dr. Michael Fowlin. Dr. Fowlin is a trained actor as well as a clinical psychologist. His presentation focused on building self-esteem, ending the stigma associated with mental illness, as well as welcoming diversity.
- On October 20<sup>th</sup>, the tenth grade Parent Counselor Breakfast was held. The theme of the meeting was the importance of extracurricular activities in the lives of the students. Counselors emphasized that extracurricular activities help distinguish each individual student’s accomplishments throughout their four years of high school. Counselors had a panel of students who were involved in various activities in school. Each student spoke about the activity they were involved in and how it had not only impacted their social lives but their academic lives as well. Parents reported that they enjoyed the presentation and felt that the information given was quite valuable. The experiences that each student spoke about was important for the parents to hear and to understand the impact that school involvement makes. Parents left with several handouts, most importantly a list of all the clubs that are offered and how to access all the information through the google classroom portal.
- Also on October 20<sup>th</sup>, the Bergen County Prosecutor’s Office presented information regarding the dangers of opiate addiction to the freshman class.
- On October 25<sup>th</sup>, Fort Lee High School hosted the “15 Minute Child Break” presentation led by the Partnership for a Drug-Free New Jersey. This informative presentation discussed the ways in which parents can prevent child and adolescent substance abuse while strengthening family connections.
- On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, the eleventh grade Parent Counselor Breakfast was held. A Junior Year To Do List was presented along with expectations for post-graduation success. The differences between the SAT and ACT, the two standardized college entrance exams required by most U.S. colleges and universities were also discussed. Most of the event focused on getting all parents onto Naviance, our college and career readiness program used by the counseling team to match students to their postsecondary goals. Important features of Naviance were highlighted: college search, creating initial college lists, overlap schools, scattergrams, Super Match, resume builder and the precollege survey. With such a large turnout, counselors were able to ensure that most parents had created and signed onto their Naviance accounts - allowing them to have a greater impact on their child’s future goals.
- Fort Lee High School hosted the SATs on October 7, 2017, November 4, 2017 and December 5, 2017.
- Fort Lee High School hosted the ACTs on September 9th, 2017, October 28th, 2017, and December 9, 2017.

# STUDENT ACTIVITIES BY GRADE LEVEL

## Seniors

Since the beginning of the academic year, counselors have been working very closely with seniors in order to prepare college applications and letters of recommendation, which is a very lengthy, but important process. All senior parents were invited to meet with their child and guidance counselor to discuss college options during September and October. Parents were also given log in access to Naviance and shown a financial aid presentation by a Montclair State University financial advisor. Additionally, counselors have been assisting students with completing their FAFSA application upon request. By the end of February, all seniors will have applied to higher education institutions. It is also important to note that as we receive student scholarship opportunities, they are posted on Naviance for students to review and apply.

## Sophomores

All 10<sup>th</sup> grade students will have had a minimum of two meetings with their new counselor by the end of January. These informational sessions are focused on goal setting, choosing the right extracurricular activity, completing different tasks in Naviance such as the Personality Assessment and/or Career Pathway Activity, and planning schedules and/or discussing the criteria for college. It is important to note, that at-risk sophomores will have met with their counselor a minimum of two to three times each marking period.

## Juniors

Mrs. Acosta, Ms. Caddell, Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Lawlor have trained all 11th grade students on how to begin their college search on Naviance and CollegeBoard, the difference between SAT vs ACT, how to complete the pre-college survey, and gave an overview of the college letter of recommendation process via classroom lessons during the academic school day in October, November and December. To date, all juniors have log-ins and passwords to our Naviance program and should be actively using it. We encourage you to sit down with your child and explore Naviance with them as it is an excellent college planning resource.

## Freshmen

All 9th grade students met with Mrs. Serulle-Green and were informed about graduation requirements, reviewed their current schedules, and explored options offered at the high school for extracurricular activities and community service. These meetings gave students the opportunity to ask questions about high school and also served to ease the transition from the middle school. In the months of November and December, Mrs. Serulle-Green trained freshmen on how to complete their Career Interest Profiler a feature offered in the Naviance website which helps students learn more about their personality and strengths. It also helps students explore the occupations that match their interest. The results of this inventory are used in subsequent years by Mrs. Acosta, Ms. Caddell, Mrs. Lawlor and Mrs. Brown to assist students in creating post-high school plans, a process which the counselors are currently working on with the sophomore, junior, and senior classes.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**The Counseling Department will host multiple events during the second half of the school year to assist students with college and career preparation. Please try your best to attend!**

- **College Panel Night:** On April 17<sup>th</sup> at 6pm, six to seven colleges will be at the high school to answer panel questions on what they look for from a student application. This event should be attended by all students and parents in grades 9-11. If students attend College Planning Night every year, they will have heard from over 20 college representatives by senior year.
- **Classroom Lessons:** All students in grades 9-11 will be signed up for Raise.Me. This motivational program assists students in building scholarships from 200+ colleges as early as grade 9. Each college has different standards but most will award scholarships for the following, A in a course (\$100 - \$1,000), Get a B in a course (\$50 - \$600), participate in a school club or sport (\$25 - \$250), etc. Check our Raise.Me on the web! Encourage your children to update their profiles after each marking period.
- **PSAT Scores:** By January, all students will be given their PSAT scores, taught how to interpret these scores, and taught how to link them to Khan Academy for free SAT tutoring.
- **SAT:** Fort Lee High School will be hosting the SATs on March 10<sup>th</sup>, May 5<sup>th</sup>, and June 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- **ACT:** Fort Lee High School will be offering the ACTs on February 10<sup>th</sup>, April 14<sup>th</sup>, and June 9<sup>th</sup>.

# UPCOMING EVENTS BY GRADE LEVEL

## Seniors

For the rest of the year, seniors will be engaging in additional one-to-one counselor meetings to discuss college selection, wait-listed applications, financial aid packages, and any other concerns that arise. In February, an online scholarship application will be posted on the guidance website for all seniors to complete to apply for Academic Awards Dinner Scholarships.

## Juniors

In the months of January and February all juniors will have one-to-one scheduling meetings with their counselors to plan their schedules for the 2018-2019 school year. Student course requests can be viewed by parents via the Genesis Parent Portal after this one to one meeting. In the months of March and April, all students and parents will have one-to-one college planning meetings to discuss the college search process and complete the pre-college survey which assists counselors in writing college letters of recommendations. They will also participate in Raise.Me (a motivational scholarship program) classroom lessons.

## Sophomores

In the months of January and February all sophomores will have one-to-one scheduling meetings with their counselors to plan their schedules for the 2017-2018 school year. Student course requests can be viewed by parents via the Genesis Parent Portal after this one to one meeting. By January, all students will be given their PSAT scores, taught how to interpret these scores, and taught how to link them to Khan Academy for free SAT tutoring. Sophomores will also participate in guidance facilitated classroom lessons on the newly designed SAT, ACT, & SAT Subject tests, as well as in group activities that assist students with interpreting their Naviance Career Interest Surveys from last year. This will begin their college search process.

## Freshmen

In the months of January and February all freshmen students will individually begin to meet with Mrs. Serulle-Green to plan their course schedule for the 2018-2019 school year. Student course requests can be viewed by parents via the Genesis Parent Portal after this one to one meeting. In addition to scheduling, Mrs. Green will begin classroom lessons for all 9th grade students to assist them in creating a portfolio for Raise.Me. Raise.me is a platform that helps students prepare for college by earning scholarship money for their achievements in high school. Students can start to earn money as early as freshman year by simply following colleges they are interested in attending and adding their achievements, such as high grades and sports to name a few.

# SCHOOL COUNSELOR HIGHLIGHTS

## **Mrs. Lawlor** **10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Counselor**

- Many of Mrs. Lawlor's seniors have already been accepted into competitive universities. Rutgers, Penn State, Ithaca, Purdue, Pace, New Haven, Stony Brook, and NJIT are only a few!
- Four of Mrs. Lawlor's students earned first team all-league recognition for their respective fall sports.
- One of Mrs. Lawlor's students earned second team all-league recognition.
- One of Mrs. Lawlor's students earned honorable mention all-league recognition.
- One of Mrs. Lawlor's seniors was honored to participate in the highly selective Governor's School of Engineering and Technology, at the Rutgers University New Brunswick campus.

## **Mrs. Brown's Highlights** **10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Counselor**

- One of Mrs. Brown's juniors was published in Rutgers Journal of Bioethics.
- One of Mrs. Brown's seniors is a finalist for a Questbridge scholarship.
- One of Mrs. Brown's juniors was accepted into Harvey Mudd's Future Achievers in Science and Technology (FAST) program.
- 10 of Mrs. Brown's student-athletes earned 1st, 2nd and Honorable Mention All-League honors for their participation across our fall sports teams.
- One of Mrs. Brown's seniors has earned over 500 hours of community service from her work as a teacher's assistant at her church's summer program.
- One of Mrs. Brown's juniors was selected to participate in the neuroscience research program at Cornell University.

## **Ms. Caddell's Highlights** **10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Counselor**

- One of Ms. Caddell's seniors has applied and is in the running for the American Express Scholarship Program.
- Ms. Caddell's seniors received academic scholarships to various colleges and universities including Monmouth University, University of Massachusetts, and Manhattan College.
- One of Ms. Caddell's seniors has been accepted to Montclair State University and will be auditioning in the spring at the John J. Cali School of Music.
- One of Ms. Caddell's seniors was accepted early decision at Cooper Union into the prestigious Albert Nerken School of Engineering.
- One of Ms. Caddell's seniors will be attending Franciscan University. She has been involved with missionary work there every summer.
- Several of Ms. Caddell's seniors have been accepted to Rutgers University with some being accepted into the Honors College at Rutgers.

## **Mrs. Acosta's Highlights** **10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> Grade Counselor**

- One of Mrs. Acosta's students became a National Merit Semi-Finalist.
- Two of Mrs. Acosta's juniors were nominated for the prestigious Governor's School of New Jersey residential summer programs.
- One of Mrs. Acosta's students was accepted to Boston University, early decision with a half scholarship.
- One of Mrs. Acosta's students was accepted to Fairleigh Dickenson University with a \$22,000 a year scholarship.
- Three of Mrs. Acosta's football players were named 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-League.
- One of Mrs. Acosta's Soccer Team players was named 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-County, 1<sup>st</sup> Team All-League and League Player of the Year.
- One of Mrs. Acosta's students on the wrestling team placed third in Counties in the 195 pound weight class.

## **Ms. Serulle-Green's Highlights** **9<sup>th</sup> Grade Counselor**

- All freshmen students were invited to be part of Mrs. Green's Google classroom page for reminders, updates, and efficient communication.
- All freshmen students created a profile on Naviance with Mrs. Green and became familiarized with the main page and links for college searches. The focus of the lesson was the Career Interest Profiler in which students took a personality assessment helping them gain more insight into themselves as developing individuals. The results provided each freshmen student with suggested occupations based on the personality type revealed.
- Mrs. Green has been working collaboratively with the I&RS Team as the chairperson to help build effective interventions plans and strategies for academically, socially, or emotionally at-risk students in grades 9-12.
- Mrs. Green nominated two sophomore students to represent the Fort Lee High School for the HOBY Leadership Program.
- Mrs. Green nominated a freshmen student for the Princeton Prize in Race Relations.

# CLASS OF 2017 COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES

Adelphi University	Lafayette College	St. John's University
American University	Lehigh University	Stanford University
Arizona State University	Long Island University, Brooklyn	Steven's Institute of Technology
Amherst College	Lycoming College	Stony Brook University
Babson College	Macalester College	SUNY – Albany
Bentley University	Manhattan College	Syracuse University
Berklee College of Music	Manhattan School of Music	Temple University
Binghamton University	Massachusetts College of Pharmacy	The College of New Jersey
Boston College	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	The New School - All Divisions
Boston University	McGill University	Tulane University
Brandeis University	Monmouth University	University of Alabama
California State University, Fullerton	Montclair State University	University of Arizona
Carnegie Mellon University	New Jersey City University	University of Buffalo
Columbia University	New Jersey Institute of Technology	University of California, Berkeley
Cornell University	New York Institute of Technology	University of California, Los Angeles
Drew University	New York University	University of California, Santa Cruz
Drexel University	Northeastern University	University of Connecticut
Duke University	Pace University	University of Delaware
Eastman School of Music	Pennsylvania State University	University of Hartford
Emory University	Pepperdine University	University of Illinois at Urbana
Fairleigh Dickinson University	Pratt Institute	University of Maryland, College Park
Fashion Institute of Technology	Princeton University	University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Felician University	Purdue University	University of Michigan
Florida Institute of Technology	Quinnipiac University	University of New Haven
Fordham University	Ramapo College of New Jersey	University of Pittsburgh
Georgia Institute of Technology	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	University of Rhode Island
Harvard University	Rhode Island School of Design	University of Richmond
Hofstra University	Rice University	University of Rochester
Howard University	Rider University	University of Toronto
Indiana State University	Rochester Institute of Technology	University of Washington
Indiana University at Bloomington	Rowan University	Vassar College
Iona College	Rutgers University	Villanova University
Iowa State University	Sacred Heart University	Virginia Tech
Ithaca College	Saint Peter's University	West Virginia University
John Jay College of Criminal Justice	School of Visual Arts	William Paterson University
Kean University	Seton Hall University	Yale University