

cru news

a family newsletter, fall 2017



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Catch up with alums Jonathan and Natalya



A Summer of Adventure and Learning

Plus High Ropes at Wheeler Camp

The summer of 2017 was big! From June all the way through August, hundreds of Crusaders participated in our academic, adventure learning, and college readiness workshops. At our **Wheeler Summer Program**, middle school Crusaders honed their critical thinking skills in the mornings and spent afternoons working on outside challenges, including an exciting treetop ropes course. In the **Spirit Summer Program**, they collaborated on six-week learning projects, and in **Write on Sports** they created sports stories and short video reports and learned interviewing and editorial skills. In **Math Matters** they polished their math skills, and in our **CAAP adventure program**, Crusaders met new friends and practiced teamwork and leadership. See inside for more photos and details from the summer!



A message from our president

Andrew Bramson

In October, I went to Philadelphia for a couple of days to attend a conference. While I was there, I had the opportunity to have coffee with **Kyara White**. Kyara is a Crusader who graduated from E-Cubed High School in Providence last spring and is now a first-year student at **Temple University**. We had a great conversation. Kyara talked about how she is adjusting to life at college, how

she is approaching her classes, and how she is handling being away from home for the first time in her life. She talked about how much she appreciated her College Crusade advisors and all the programs we provided for her and her family. I am happy to say that there are hundreds of Crusaders just like Kyara on college campuses this year. We wish them all well!



**THE COLLEGE CRUSADE
of Rhode Island**

Inspire. Support. Believe.

our students

Middle School

Making Good Choices

How do the decisions you make today matter to your success later in life? Sixty middle school Crusaders got started answering that question in our interactive **Choices** workshop in July.



Working in small groups, they talked about the decisions they make every day and where their choices could lead. They learned about time management and goal setting and what it means to take

charge of their lives. In one exercise, they wrote about barriers to education that they faced during the school day and shared positive advice with each other about how to break through those barriers. Congratulations to all of you for supporting each other in making good choices!

We are excited to have a brand new group of 6th and 7th graders joining The College Crusade this fall. A warm welcome to over 500 new Crusaders and their families!

High School

A Week on Block Island — With Squid!

Ten lucky high school Crusaders got to spend five days at the **Block Island Maritime Institute's Dolphin Program** in July. They learned about Block Island ecology, Great Salt Pond water quality, fishing, sea creatures, growing clams and oysters, bird banding, and maritime arts. They met lots of island residents and went paddle boarding. One day, they even got a hands-on experience in dissecting squid (see photo)!



Other programs for high school Crusaders were **Crusade Summer Experience**, held on the University of Rhode Island campus, **Creative College Essay Writing**, and **Passageways**. Crusaders also enjoyed **Project Open Door**, a workshop in digital photography hosted by Rhode Island School of Design, and classes offered by **Brown Summer High School** and **Johnson & Wales University Career Exploration**.



Our College Advisors are Eric, Belisa, Marangely, and Josh. Here's their advice!

"Be proactive and use me as a resource. You might not know where to start, but I can help point you in the right direction." - Belisa Nunez, Community College of Rhode Island, Providence

Postsecondary

Your College Advisor is ready to help you succeed

"Good luck on what is sure to be another exciting year at URI! I am here to support you in your success through one-on-one advising, renewing financial aid, and connecting you to the greater Crusade community." **Eric Calogianes**, University of Rhode Island

"This is a crucial time in your life when you may feel a great range of emotions, from excited and enthusiastic to stressed and overwhelmed. I am here to ease any confusion or stress you may feel and to find you the answers you need." **Marangely Torres**, Rhode Island College

"Here's one of my favorite quotes: To be an over achiever, you first must be an over believer. Never give up the power you give yourself by believing in you!" **Josh Flanagan**, Community College of Rhode Island, Lincoln

Family Engagement

How to get involved as the school year starts

The mission of our Family Engagement team is to engage, empower, and educate all College Crusade parents so you can advocate for your child's academic success and social development and support your child's readiness for postsecondary education.

We are excited to welcome **Olinda Matos** as our new director of family engagement! She works closely with **Enma Velasquez**, our family engagement coordinator, and our wonderful staff of family liaisons – **Terri Rose, Ramon Albino, Patricia Duran, and Jenny Garcia**.



"Parents are their child's first teachers and such an important factor in motivating, inspiring, and encouraging their children to succeed," says Olinda. "We invite parents to attend our fall workshops every Tuesday and Thursday nights to learn about how to help their children achieve their potential in school and how to prepare for college and beyond. Parents are also invited to attend our monthly Parent Council and Family Forum meetings, which encourage families to share ideas, build community, and take advantage of leadership opportunities. I look forward to meeting everyone and talking about how we can learn together!"

Staff & Board News

Congratulations and thanks

Maria Carvalho, our director of high school & postsecondary operations, was recently honored by the National College Access Network with the 2017 College Access Practitioner Award of Excellence, which recognizes the dedication and innovation of an individual working at a college-access program. The award was presented at NCAN's annual conference in San Francisco.

Andrew Bramson, our president and CEO, has joined the Central Falls School District Board of Trustees.

We thank **Paul E. Moran**, our departing board chair, for his enthusiastic and dedicated service to our organization. Paul was a member of our board for 18 years, including 12 years as chair.

We welcome our new board chair, **Edwin R. Pacheco**, who began his new leadership role with us this summer. Ed is interim vice president of advancement and external relations for Rhode Island College and has a longtime commitment to helping Rhode Island students succeed.

Thank You

We are grateful to these generous donors:

The Rhode Island Foundation, \$150,000

ECMC, \$125,000

Angell Foundation, \$75,000

Balfour Foundation, \$75,000

United Way of RI, \$49,972

Amgen, \$40,000

Nellie Mae Education Foundation, \$38,635

Nordson, \$15,000

Textron, \$15,000

Cox Charities, \$13,256

Bank of America Charitable Foundation, \$10,000

Providence Journal Charitable Legacy Fund, \$10,000

Collette, \$7,500

Taco/The White Family Foundation, \$7,500

Rhode Island Rose Award Fund, \$6,300

The Yelp Foundation, \$5,000

Weybosset Research & Management, LLC, \$5,000

Fascitelli Family Foundation, \$5,000

Harry M., Miriam C. & William C. Horton Fund, \$5,000

Our 5th annual Believe Breakfast is coming up fast on **December 7, 2017**.



Join us to celebrate and hear our keynote speaker, **Deborah Santiago**, from *Excelencia in Education*. To purchase tickets, go to www.thecollegecrusade.org/believe17.



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featured alumni



I chose engineering because I liked computers, liked math, and wanted a major where not many other people were. I knew I would be competing for a job after graduation and that engineering was in demand.

Jonathan Bolaño '05 graduated from the University of Rhode Island in 2011 with a B.S. in Computer Engineering and a minor in Mathematics. Jonathan is currently employed as a Power Test Lead Engineer for the U.S. Navy.

There are so many things in our daily lives in school and outside of school that can sideswipe us, but you have to keep your head straight and avoid those distractions. Stay surrounded by positive people. Don't let negative people interfere with your most precious natural gifts.

Natalya Alexander '05 graduated from the University of Rhode Island in 2009 with a B.S. in Finance. She earned an M.S. in Healthcare Administration and Management from Salve Regina University in 2015. She is currently employed as a Contract Administrator for Lifepsan.

