

WESTONIAN

ENTREPRENEURSHIP + TECHNOLOGY + EMPOWER

Spring 2021



WEST SIDE AVE

HEARTS & ROSES JEWELRY COLLECTION

NAMASTE

Martial Arts With

TIGERMANTIS

INSIDE

CTE

Career &
Technical Education

JUMP START YOUR CAREER

EDITOR'S LETTER

The role of an Editor in Chief, assistant to an elite Principal, an entrepreneur, and a super mom can be fun and also challenging at times. It requires balance, a few minutes of yoga, and lots of patience. This is life as Nadia Camacho. I am extremely proud of the women who share commonalities with myself. I encourage you to be consistent and stay in the race. Remember this is a marathon, not a sprint.


Fatima Salaam discusses her catering company "Fatz Kitchen" on page 12. She is balancing working hard, branding her company and understanding that hard work ethics is important. Miranda Finley teamed with her sisters to create their make-up brand Gene Cosmetics. She is balancing being an entrepreneur and an English teacher page 7. Diona McDonald speaks on Sahaaj's Creative Expressions. She balances being a super mom, an entrepreneur, a Science teacher and the cheerleading coach.

The population of students and educators at West Side High School is a mixed cohort of talented superstars and creators. A few of our students have their own hair braiding business- The L & L Brand page 33. They were creative over this yearlong pandemic and figured out a way to bring revenue to their home and balance being students.

We have several programs that you will also read about in the Career and Technical Education article to help students for life after high school. Students will have the opportunity to learn new skills in supply chain management, cosmetology, the Junior MBA program and more. The West Side High School student support team has worked diligently maintaining programs, student attendance, and family communication over the pandemic, & NOW students are in school for hybrid learning- read article on page 4. As we all know The Lights ON! Program is expanding into New York City with our OSG family. This is extremely exciting!

Principal Cook is still making it happen!!

Nadia Camacho
Editor in Chief

 @nadibri

 @westside_highschool



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STUDENT SUPPORT STRUCTURED TO SUSTAIN SUCCESS BY ROBERTA WASHINGTON

“Every child deserves a champion, an adult who will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection, and insists that they become the best that they can possibly be”.

Dr. Rita F. Pearson

West Side High School started its first school year fully virtual. Based on the reflection of the 2019-2020 March integration into virtual learning, the student support staff was geared up to enter the 2020-2021 school year eager to employ a number of collaborative, data-driven, innovative moves with the goal of supporting all students and staff with exploring effective, efficient, evidence based instructional and operational moves aligned with the promotion of students’ proficiency in providing proof of progression towards mastery of instructional and SEL goals. Furthermore, these goals were framed with the importance of getting our scholars life, college, and career ready. Although every student leaving West Side may not choose to enter college, our goal is to assure that they have the academic exposure needed to prepare them for any educational or professional goal they choose to pursue upon exiting our school. So what’s the role of the student support team in this process of preparation? In this article we will highlight the various teams and their efforts to thank them for their efforts and keep the community informed of the meaningful work they perform on a daily basis. Their roles are organized in terms of students’ experience with entering West Side High School’s Business School/Finance.

Enrollment Specialist- Mr. Maharaj, is the lead clerk that’s committed to assuring continuity in the welcoming of our new students. His key function is to collaborate with families and various staff members to assure all essential paperwork needed to formally enroll new students is completed. With the Schoolmint platform, collaboration with fellow staff, and commitment to clear communication, West Side has been able to sustain 97%+ compliance with enrollment responsibilities and provide incoming students and their family with essential information to for them to enter our doors (virtually or brick-n-mortar) ready to learn.

Office Clerks-Ms. Bexiga, Ms. Daniels, and Mrs. Lawson Miles manages live and virtual office responsibilities inclusive of a diverse set of clerical tasks inclusive of budgets, formal entry into the PowerSchool System, and transcript request fulfillment. This team handles all of the behind the scene data entry for students and staff needed to process functions such as grade change forms, payroll, and transfers. Their communication skills and passion to support others keeps the community connected to West Side via in person, virtual and phone inquiries.

RIP TEAM-This team distributes all laptops, wifi devices, and student support for mastery of West Side's R.I.P. (Relationships.Innovation. Passion) model. Mr. Chillious, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Wilson and Ms. Camacho are charged with performing outreach efforts to help students and their families understand how to meet the expectations for a variety of school initiatives. They lead the disengagement prevention call center, learning kit distribution, Wednesday's community food bank distributions, and using innovative communication moves to assist students with understanding how to build meaningful teacher-student and student-student support relationships in order to sustain meaningful engagement in the learning process.

Guidance-Mrs. Jamison, Mrs. Holt, Mrs. Brooklyn-Jones, and Mrs. Garwin collaborate to create the schedule for every student entering West Side High School. In addition, they actively review and match students to a variety of educational pathways available to them. These can range from the newly implemented Dual Degree program to After School Academic programming. They support students with the insight needed to apply to college, complete FAFSA requirements, and action plan steps needed to graduate.

Family Engagement Specialist-Ms. Salaam actively seeks to form meaningful relationships with the parents and students. It is these relationships that help match our West Side students and families to a variety of resources designed to meet a variety of needs connected to their ability to navigate through their life experiences running parallel to their enrollment at West Side.

Attendance Counselors-Ms. Cross and Mr. Arubakkr collaborate to address the attendance needs of our students. They use a variety of tools inclusive of phone calls, emails, home visits, staff collaborations, attendance contracts, and referrals to motivate our youth to regularly trend school and avoid chronic absenteeism.

CST- Mr. Edwards, School Psychologist; Ms. Helsel, CST Social Worker, and Ms. Schechter. CST LDTC collaborates to meet the needs of our special education population. They've made commendable strides with converting their services moves virtually to assure all of the needs of their students are met.

SW2- Ms. Jamila Hammond, MSW, LSW (9th and 10th grade) and Ms. Karen Towns-Worsley, MSW, LCSW (11th and 12th grade) are our School Social Workers. As students engage in their learning responsibilities, life happens. In order to help build up our students' self advocacy, efficacy, and engagement, our social workers provide a number of preventive and crisis management services to support our scholars. They are responsible for the following services:

- Individual Counseling
- Group Counseling
- Members of the Student Support Team (SST)
- Provide referral services to outside community agencies (when needed)
- Intervention and Referral Services/504
- HIB Specialist (Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying)
- Collaboration with DCP&P
- Delivery of Social/Emotional Learning pathways for students and staff
- In class support for Behavior Modification Plans
- Grief and Loss Counseling
- Conflict Resolution/Restorative Practices
- Family/Home Issues
- Participation in Grade Level PLCs





STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IS THE PRODUCT OF MOTIVATION AND ACTIVE LEARNING. IT IS A PRODUCT RATHER THAN A SUM BECAUSE IT WILL NOT OCCUR IF EITHER ELEMENT IS MISSING.
— ELIZABETH F. BARKLEY

DC of Special Education-Ms. Washington, uses her passion for supporting schools with nurturing a culture of academic excellence inclusive of efficient, equitable, and engaging learning experiences to collaborate with all of the student support staff noted above (as well as the instructional staff). She's charged with providing support to staff and students'with the mastery of the goals and strategies linked to Principal Cook's 2020-2021 Strategic Plan and Superintendent Leon's The Next Decade: 2020-30 strategic plan.To do this she employs a laser-like focus on the management of the Child Study Team, Student Support Team, and School Social Workers. She also closely collaborates with the Enrollment, Attendance, and Academic Administration. The two quotes listed below highlight the growth mindset paradigm she uses to motivate others to engage in a variety of pathways that promote student and staff progression towards proficiency in various research-based teaching, learning, and leadership strategies.

The review of the roles and goals of the student support team is put forth to remind us of the reality of it taking a village to meet the needs of our students.





GOOD JEANNES COSMETICS

INTERVIEW WITH MIRANDA FINLEY

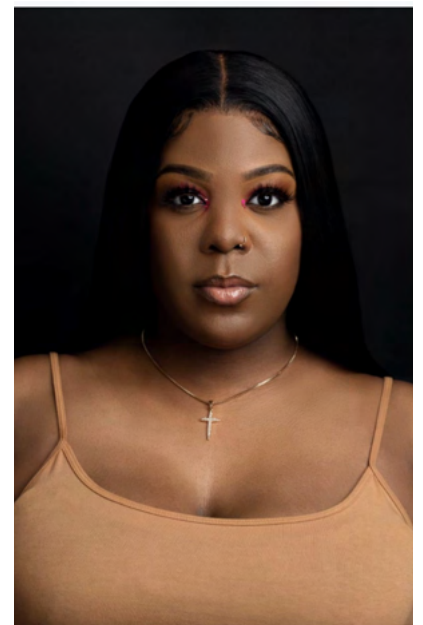
BY: NADIA CAMACHO

Q: What is your name and position at West Side High School?

A: My name is Miranda Finley and I am an English teacher

Q: What college did you attend and what organizations were you a part of?

A: I received my bachelors degree in education at Seton Hall University & during that time I also became a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc.





Good Jeannes Cosmetics

Q: What is the name of your business, your title, and is there a meaning behind the name?

A: My sisters and I are the proud owners of Good Jeannes Cosmetics LLC. Good Jeanne's is a tribute to our grandmother BarbaraJeanne Wright, a woman who was beautiful inside and out. She was a force of love, light and positivity. She made my sisters and I feel like we were the most beautiful women in the world. She gave us Good Jeannes and now we want to share them with you.



Q: Where is your business located or are you an online-business?

A: We are currently only operating online.

Q: When was your business established?

A: Although the ideas were in the air for years, we finally decided to go forward and bring this into fruition December of 2020.





GOOD JEANNES

Q: Are there other members of your business? If so, names/positions?

A: We pride ourselves on being 7 sisters, with 7 different looks and stories, representing 1 brand. The effort and work is divided equally. The owners from oldest to youngest are; Krystál, Jessica, Ashley, Erica, Shelby, Heather, and Miranda.

Q: What service do you provide for your clients?

A: We provide high quality cosmetics that we want our clients to use to enhance their good genes and feel beautiful.

Q: How will you promote your business to gain clientele?

A: We have already started to promote the brand through different social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook.



THE TM
"LIGHTS ON"
PROGRAM

STILL ON THE RISE

LIGHTS ON STILL ON THE RISE

Article By: Nadia Camacho

The Lights ON Program has been a part of West Side High School since 2016. Being an innovative person, Principal Akbar Cook provided a program to end gun violence, hunger in the community, and recreational activities for our students. He chose to do "HIS PART" in the West Ward of Newark, NJ. The program runs on the first floor of West Side High School and when the weather permits in the front yard of the school. Because of the Pandemic, hours of the program and occupancy limitations have changed tremendously. On May 20, 2020, we began Lights On Quarantine Grab & Go Food Distribution where 350- 400 families were served fresh produce (which included apples, lettuce, onions, potatoes), pasta, pasta sauce, eggs, and granola bars. Since then we have served over 3,000 families, during the pandemic, in our community as a neighborhood school considered to be "THE HUBB".



LIGHTS ON



Fatima Salaam, a cook for the Lights ON program since the program began, has been bringing love to the program through the delicious meals she prepares along with Sheri Cook. During the pandemic it has been very different not seeing familiar faces of families who come to the program regularly. Fatima shares her experience as the Lights ON program still rises every Friday evening from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm.

Q: What purpose has the Lights On program serve during the pandemic, especially your role?

A: The Lights On Program still serves as an aid to our community in this difficult time. We not only provide hot meals but have fresh produce delivered for our families to utilize. I help make this happen by preparing free meals, made with love to our community. I've ALWAYS felt that just because it is free, doesn't mean it can't look and actually be as good as if it were from a restaurant.

Q: Are more families in need of meals during this time?

A: Judging from our numbers I would say it would be hard to determine if families are in more need now than before the pandemic. I have seen an increase in adults (parents) attendance and a decrease in the youth, seeing how our

program is not open 100% (for recreational purposes). Aside from the weather changes, we still average between 200-300 families.

Q: What transitions have occurred in the Lights On Program since the pandemic?

A: Seeing how virtual has become the new norm, being out of reach physically has been a change in our program's functionality. I've grown so used to seeing and talking with the many youngsters that crossed my path in the program, it saddens me that the community doesn't have that "safe haven" for our babies anymore due to the pandemic, and we ALL feel that.

Q: How does it feel to still be able to serve the community during this difficult time?

A: Being able to still serve the community during this difficult time is an honor. I get to continue doing what I love-cooking-and providing for my community some sort of comfort knowing families are fed, for free, on Fridays. Born and raised in the West Ward it is a privilege to give back, so cooking with love as I like to quote is natural. I want to expand my "cooking with love" concept with my very own kitchen, FATZ Kitchen, I plan on making a way to your community and hearts too!



FATZ KITCHEN



"WHERE LOVE & SERVICE GO HAND IN HAND".

Fatz KITCHEN

ARTICLE BY FATIMA SALAAM

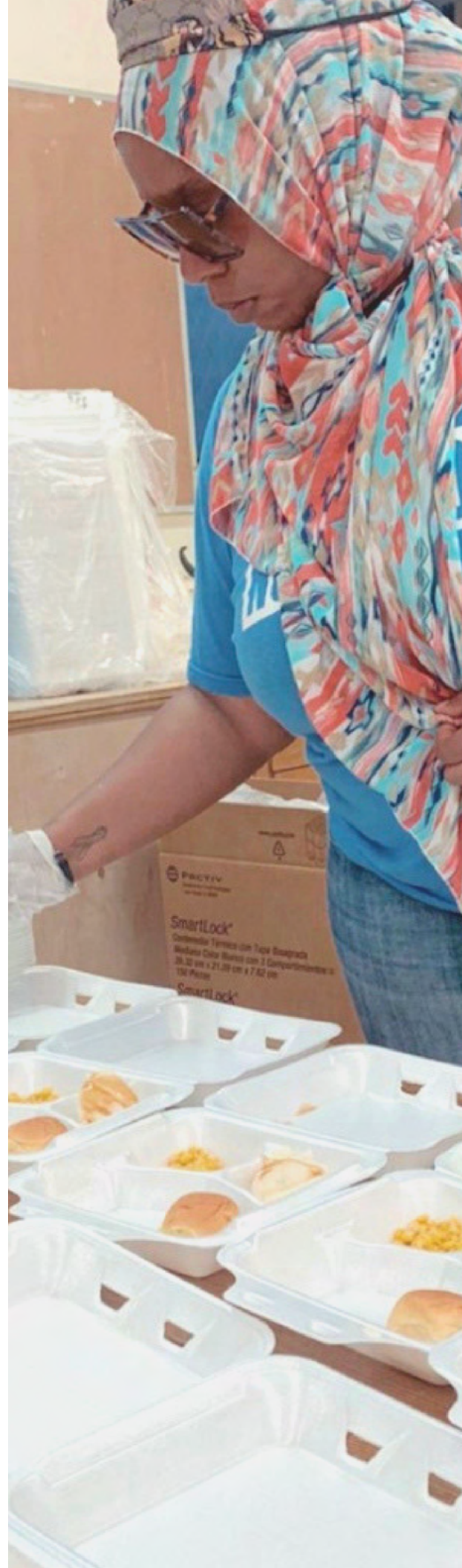
My name is Fatima Fatz Salaam and I work at West Side HS as the Parent Liaison for the last 5 years. My business name is FATZ Kitchen (nickname given by my mom from proper pronunciation of my name) and it is located in Newark, NJ. I provide catering services, bi-weekly dinner choices, and I work as a personal chef for more intimate settings.

Since the start of my business venture back in July 2020, I have acquired all legal documentations—shout out to Entrepreneur Consultant Firm LLC—and decided to stop procrastinating and go for it! Gods Plan.

I have always been good with and had a passion for children and cooking. Eager to learn and try new things I went to culinary school (Star Career Academy 2012) while working as a Food Service Worker with Newark Public Schools since 2006. My love for cooking started in my younger years watching both my grandmothers cook, that eventually led me to Life Camp Inc. I worked in the kitchen for many years at Life Camp, to fundraising for our senior classes, to being one of the cooks at our very own Lights On program here at West Side. I must say the feedback and my passion led me back to my first love.

The hardest part about building the business for me was starting; many times I've been sidetracked, discouraged, and frustrated but with support I kept my head in the game and started to brand my business with logos and thank you cards to show appreciation to ALL that support the movement. The plan is to continue to expand, and get my name out there to provide jobs for students that are normally too young for work or are troubled teens from the "Salaam House" (an upcoming transitioning home for troubled youth).

I started promoting my business the old fashioned way, word of mouth, but quickly learned how to advertise on social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram.





FATZ KITCHEN

My business is still up and coming although I have been cooking for over 15 years. My first dinner choice options (platters) were Valentine's Day 2021 and another in light of Black History Month. Both were very successful. My late grandmother always told me "no matter what you do, make sure you do your best" which leads me to my catch phrase "where love & service go hand in hand". I love what I do, I want you to too!

-Fatz ♥

SAHAJ'S



CREATIVE EXPRESSION

My Granny told me that I was a caregiver, always wanting to see other people happy. That has stuck with me my entire life.

CREATIVE EXPRESSIONS

I found love in the art of Mehndi at a vending event in 2013. Although I didn't think enough of my ability, thank goodness for friend. She had confidence that I had the ability to not only to teach myself how to create the designs but to do it well enough to make it a successful business.

Determined to master the art form of temporary body designs, I practiced on my daughter. In the beginning, the designs were very messy and had no clear, concise lines. This was harder than I anticipated. Armed with determination, and lots of prayer, everything fell into place.

My very first "for hire" event, I was noticeably nervous because I didn't want to disappoint the guests. Thankfully, after the first person left my booth beaming over her artwork, I knew I had found my niche. I noticed how my temporary body art brought smiles to people's faces and it warmed my soul. This made me decide to extend my services to children.

This is such an unexpected gift that I am able to share with all races, ages and genders.



Creative Expressions Chief Executive Officer

Iselin, NJ

Mehndi & Custom Attire

"Making people feel beautiful."

IG: Henna Celeb

IG: Off Da Rack Clothing

Teaching myself the artform of Mehndi. Believing that I am "good" enough.

Anything that I can contribute to inspiring a young, fearless, creative mind... I am willing to do.

Social media (IG and YouTube) business cards, flyers

I am always available for small private parties and vending events. I also lend out my services on a near volunteer status to help my business grow.



Namaste

MARTIAL ARTS WITH LESLIE JULIAN

Over the years, I have had to discover, rediscover, and rediscover myself over and over again. I take the philosophy day in and day out of not doing something until I do it right, but doing it until I can't get it wrong. So, one thing I've come to realize is that as time goes on, I will push myself harder and harder, even if it hurts, by practicing as if I've never lost, and performing as if I have always won.

I may not be as good as I want to be, but I am ten times better than anyone thinks I am!



TIGERMANTIS

First off let me start by saying that I am a mathematics teacher at West Side High School. I have been teaching here since 2016. This has been a wonderful journey for me and one that I will always iterate has taught me to become a better teacher every day.

My interest in the martial arts started when I was very young, I would say around 7 or 8 years old. It started with boxing, watching the old Muhammed Ali and Joe Frazier fights, and then On to watching the trifecta of Hagler, Hearns, and Leonard. Then as I grew a bit older in the early 80's my dad would take my brother and I to the movie theatre on Flatbush and Church Ave, and that's when I saw 2 movies called The 36th Chamber of Shaolin and the Ten Tigers of Kwantung --watching my idol Bruce Lee. From then on I got hooked. I wanted to be and fight just like those guys however, my parents had other plans. They got all 3 of us into the classics like playing the piano, going to see Alvin Ailey, and the Dance theatre of Harlem, as well as the ballet, the opera, or anything that had to with strictly African culture. I was a little bored of it, because it didn't provide me with the action that I craved.



TIGERMANTIS

I have to laugh at that one, because I wasn't interested in my own culture but interested in another foreign one. I remember begging my parents to let me study karate, but they had other plans since I came from a family of educated folk, they wanted me to be more cultured. So, no martial arts!

My first real introduction into the arts started in my freshman year at Rutgers New Brunswick, where I became a member of 100 black men of Rutgers University, and being a part of the security arm called Black Nia Force. My first teacher happened to be a black belt himself in Kenpo karate, as well as being a student at the school, and I took to it, really quick. After I left Rutgers, it took me a while to find another martial arts school, but this instead of continuing my journey into kenpo karate, it led me to Choy Li Fut Kung Fu under a Sifu by the name of Chan Tai San. I was there for 4 years before I left, and I needed a break from the arts, because I had soured on it from my time at Chan Tai San kung fu center. I was working a dead-end job and I just wasn't happy with my situation, station or progress. I remember my coworker who picked up on the fact that I had studied for a while, and proceeded to tell me about this gentleman who happened to be a Sifu, but it wasn't with anything that I was familiar with. At first, I wasn't interested, but after weeks of bothering me, I decided to give it a try. So, I took a trip to Bethpage, New York and met Sifu Raul Ortiz, and I have been with him ever since for twenty-three plus years. My years of training paid off, and on September 6, 2021 I became a full fourth Duan master, or Sifu, in my art, as well as being a 9th generation disciple and official lineage holder of a 400-year-old art that is a combat fighting form in seven star praying mantis.



It took 2 years of training and six days a week of careful preparation to pass the test to become a sifu. I literally had to train 6 days a week, for 3 hours a day. It wasn't easy, nor did I care if it wasn't. The only thing I cared about during the process was that I enjoyed the intensity of the training to the point where the brutal aspects were enjoyable. I know it sounds sadistic, but it was more passionate for me than anything else.

When I started the martial arts program at West Side, honestly, I was a bit skeptical I would get any students, however, on my first day eight students showed up, then thirteen and then finally twenty. With that many students I didn't know where to start but I started somewhere. Teaching them proper stances and techniques, how to execute a punch and how to deliver that punch was my primary task. It was fun teaching a group of kids who were really interested in my passion, and were even more interested when they understood how to apply it. It meant more to me that they were having fun and that they chose to be there rather than me having to chase them down to teach them.



TIGERMANTIS

In the near future, by next year if things open back up, I plan to compete in Hong Kong for an international Jin Woo Federation, and International Mantis tournaments. It has always been a dream of mine to compete against the traditionalists of any Kung Fu style, in weapons, open hand, and full contact free fighting. It also gives me an opportunity to see how I stack up as a master in any division against what I consider, the Mecca of the martial world. The visit isn't just a visit, but a mission. It allows me to meet other Sifus or Gurus in their art, learn from them and talk strategy about fighting and technique; the best and possibly effective training methods in teaching students how to defend themselves and fight with a clear conscience. This trip also allows me to expand my base, group of friends, and see my Si Gong (grandmaster), Lee Kam Wing, and get my name out there in terms of reputation in the three phases of martial arts: fighting, weapons, and forms. But the most important part of the trip is to learn about another culture on their soil, see the origins of seven star praying mantis and how it has evolved over the course of time, and how it is becoming popular from traditional kung fu into MMA and UFC. The trip is to take 10 to 14 days and I plan to visit the Shaolin temple and Taoist temple, Wu Dan, monastery, probably one of the most beautiful places in the world.



West Side Avenue

*Hearts & Roses
Jewelry Collection*





West Side Avenue

West Side Capital was created as an investment into the students of West Side High School to provide them with robust exposure to business, while earning an income. The concept incorporates earning while learning. Students will learn the five pathways of West Side High's newly instated business curriculum. The five pathways include the following: entrepreneurship & management, accounting & finance, advanced manufacturing, sales & marketing, supply chain management. Westsideave.com is the first business that was created through West Side Capital to market

and sell a variety of products including West Side branded items! All products on West Side Ave will be sold in bundles at the most attractive price with free shipping! Students will market and sell products on the website virtually, and earn a portion of the proceeds from each customer's purchase. It takes a village to raise a student! West Side Capital was created to be a pathway within the village, progressing students at West Side toward a brighter future!

Michael Ojo



ACHIEVING IN VIRTUAL LEARNING

BY ROSEMARY MORIN

“The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet.” – Aristotle. As we approach our 4th year of leadership under Principal Cook and celebrate the achievements of our Rough Riders, there are still some students that are not achieving their dreams. The challenges are big, but they can be overcome.

As a school, we must continue to overcome barriers in order to empower the students we service with multiple opportunities and pathways to success. Upperclassmen and underclassmen achievement is possible with the Credit Pathways after-school program at West Side High School. We recognize that while achievement gaps have narrowed for the 102 scholars in our program, there is still work to do in order to open opportunities for all the students we service. We believe in accelerating student achievement and improving reading Lexile scores even during the pandemic.

Our after-school program is a partnership with Essex County College. West Side High School is composed of large enrollments of disadvantaged students, of which 99% are students of color and many are undocumented; these students are underrepresented in higher academic arenas. The program’s aim is to increase the number of students who are enrolled and participating competitively in a college curriculum in order to amass college credits prior to high school graduation. By the end of senior year, students will graduate high school with a Business Administration Associate’s Degree upon completion of the after-school program pathway.





ACHIEVING IN VIRTUAL LEARNING

*"This after school program has really helped me learn and get my work done faster. I'm challenged and excelling."
~Nevaeh Reed*

During the school year, high-achieving West Side High School students serve as role models, tutors and mentors. As a bridge to a successful college experience post-graduation, West Side High School students take classes at Essex County College where they train in reading, writing, language arts, mathematics, computer applications, and study skills.

The program was launched in September of 2020 with three cohorts of students. With the support of teachers and guidance counselors, this after-school program — a crucial part of students' path for collegiate success — commenced. There are currently 102 students enrolled in the after-school program. In Fall of 2020, our junior cohort has accumulated a total of 322 college credits!

In SY 20-21, we have continued to offer these academic opportunities to our students with a focus on higher-level learners. Data is tracked quarterly on student progress and success. Through RISE at Rutgers, students are given mentors, and we are in partnership with Rutgers University for the associate's degree to move into the bachelor's program.

In order to support students' ability to successfully partake in our after-school program with Essex County College as juniors and seniors, we provide a dual enrollment to West Side High School's underclassmen in the Credit Pathway program. This program develops students academically through a rigorous curriculum by providing three after-school classes to students during their freshmen year and three after-school classes to students during their sophomore year, so they are on track as 11th graders to get in the associate's degree pathway. The path to college requires a roadmap including the following: academic readiness support, the idea of college and college campuses exposure,

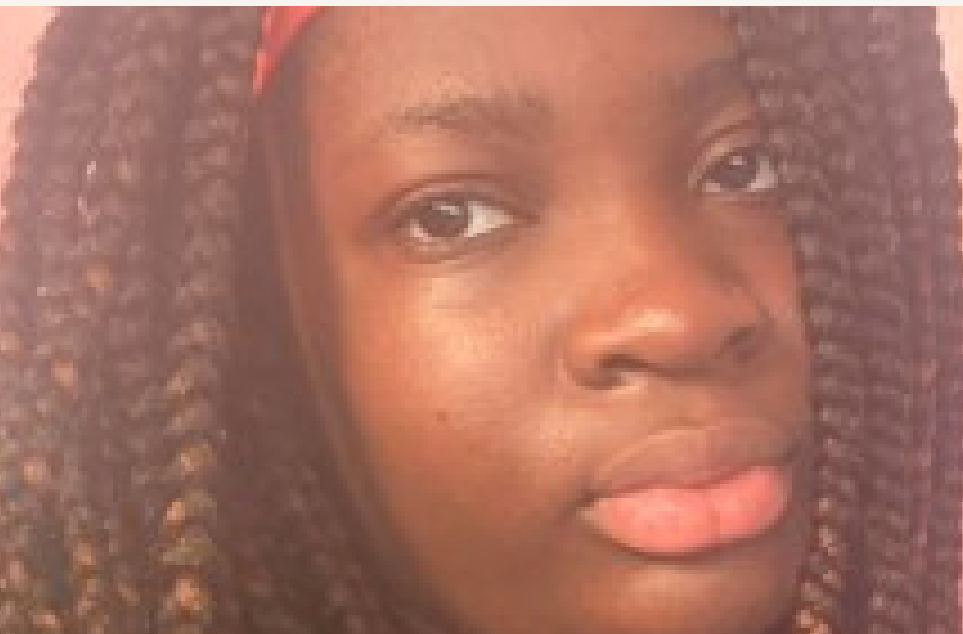
career and financial aid counseling, and social networks of support. It also provides a concerted effort to keep children safe, inspired, and engaged in activities that support their emotional and academic development.

We entered the field of education with a passion to change the lives of the children we service. It is our responsibility to prepare students to live lives that are economically self-sufficient, emotionally sound and socially secure. The stakes have never been higher for our children or for our nation's prosperity. Current outcomes are not inexorable; they are unquestionably the product of decisions adults make, from the classroom to the U.S. Congress. What decisions will we make going forward?

For three after-school classes a week, West Side High School educators improve and expand their services using an approach linked to, but separate from, the school system to help program. This Credit Pathway program is a model and agent for systems change, integrating after-school into the school day in order to enhance school culture, climate, and student achievement.

Whelmina Nadia Koomson - 10th grader

"The after school program supports my social, emotional and academic development. It also provides a safe and supportive environment."



*"Thus far, this program is so much fun! If you are looking to improve your college applications and stand out from the crowd, join the program! If you want to be academically challenged, or feel your day classes are not enough and you are bored out of your mind from the short school day, join the like minded students of West Side focusing on excelling. This program is the way to go."
- Fathia Ajibola*

Students' Feedback:

"I appreciate the after-school program. It allows me to learn and interact with my friends and teachers while learning. I have a really nice teacher, Mr. Bastin. He really helps with my studies, and his class is fun."
- S. Kamara

"The after-school program supports my social, emotional, and academic development. It also provides a safe and supportive environment."
- W. N. Koomson

"Thus far, this program is so much fun! If you are looking to improve your college applications and stand out from the crowd, join the program! If you want to be academically challenged, or feel your day classes are not enough and are bored out of your mind from the short school day, join the like-minded students of West Side focusing on excelling. This program is the way to go."
- F. Ajibola

"This after-school program has really helped me learn and get my work done faster. I'm challenged and excelling."
- N. Reed

"After-school programs can be good because it makes one finish school early which allows them to pursue their goals or career earlier. It also helps you financially, because you don't have to pay for two years of college. This program allows you to graduate early and start working two years earlier, so you can make more money."
- A. Kalejaiye

"This program has given me a chance to work on certain concepts after school. I can even learn how to read music. In these classes I have more social bonding time than in mainstream classes in the morning."
- E. Brodie

"This program helps me to improve in many ways. First, in middle school I used to be so scared to go to high school only because of how I used to act. I was such a wild person and didn't really have a support system in middle school. But once I got into this program, it was fun learning and I got help from my teachers like Mr. Robinson, Mr. Ebunlomo and Mr. Bastin. They showed me that there are nice and helpful teachers out there. This program helped me really focus on my school work and helped me solve problems that I didn't know I could. My academics improved and my behavior improved. Thank you for accepting me into this program. Thank you for actually helping me reach my goals."
- Z. Henderson

"I believe the after-school program is beneficial for me, and my academic career because you're able to gain extra knowledge, that wouldn't be provided in regular classes. Being in after school classes like physics, and US History, really helped me with my regular classes such as math and World History. I was able to use the skills and concepts in my other courses. This will have a positive impact on my life. I'm grateful for the program."
- S. Scaife

Guidance Counselor & Teacher Feedback:

“The program for a Business Administration Associate Degree is our baby. It is a great benefit for our children. The after-school program eliminates barriers by avoiding placement testing and remedial skills. Our students’ skill set is developed for college material. The fact that we are putting our children on the right path to college graduation, eliminating two years of college tuition and providing undocumented students a degree makes this a rewarding program. I am proud to be affiliated with this program.”

- Ms. Garwin, Guidance Counselor

“This program gives me the opportunity to expand students’ historical knowledge and engage in complex discussion and analysis with highly motivated students. What’s really great about this program, is that the students are able to dive deeper into the topics that interest them, and are able to build stronger bonds with their peer.”

- Mr. Bastin, History Teacher

“Teaching this program allows my students to develop a deeper understanding of the world around them through the strengthening of their reading skills. My students’ confidence has grown by taking this program as it has allowed them to develop cross-curricular connections among their classes as a result of their burgeoning lexicon and literacy. This program creates a sense of community and purpose that has greatly advanced my students’ academic accomplishments.”

- Ms. Clarke, Reading Specialist Teacher

“I must say this is an incredible program, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be able to contribute to the success of my students.

I’ve noticed my students appreciate the classes because they are able to receive more personalized advising and academic support. Additionally, the fact that the students are taking control of their academic careers early sets them up for future success at West Side and beyond.”

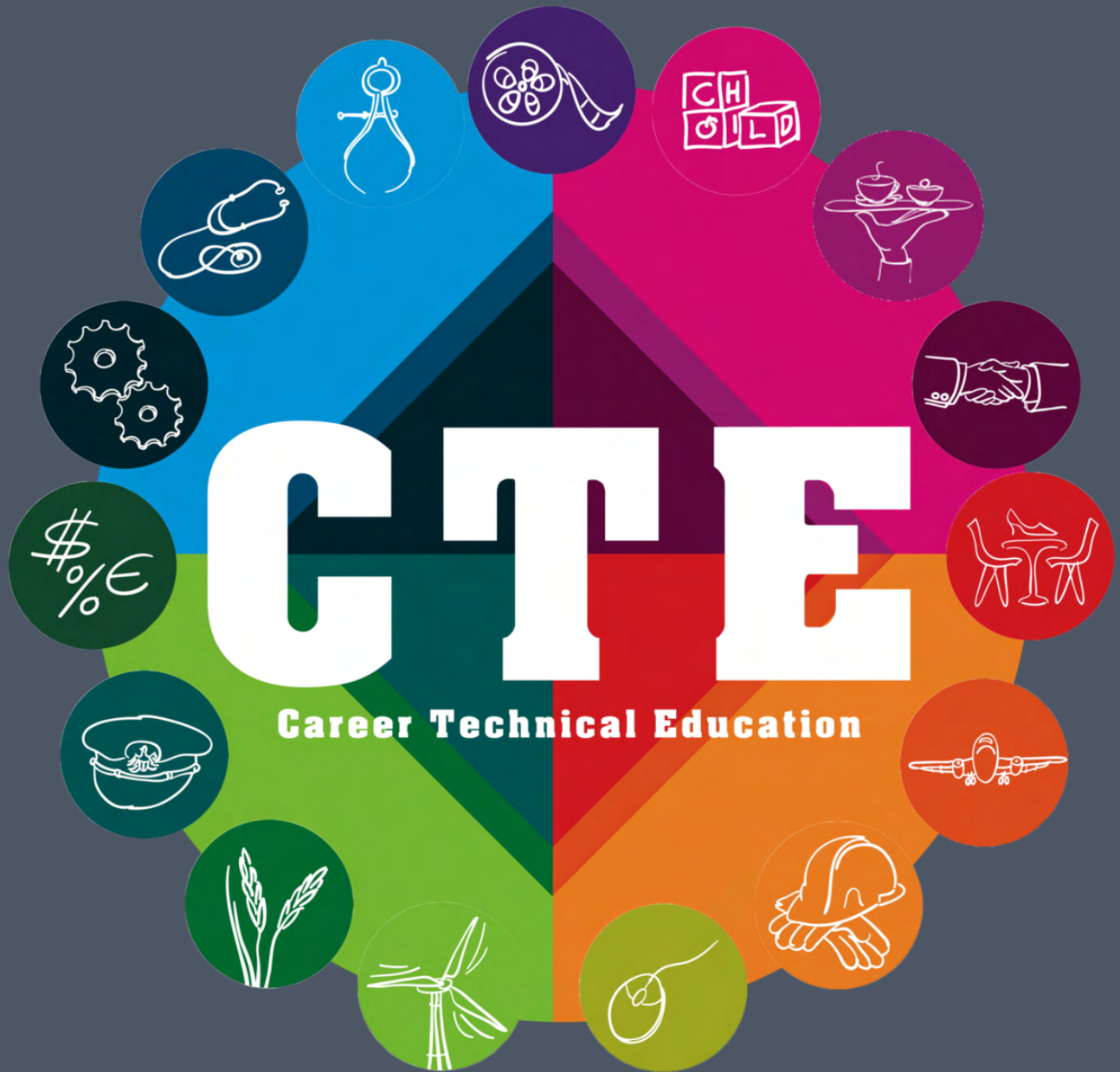
- Mr. Ebulomo, Science Teacher

“I am thrilled to be a part of such an inspiring program that promotes student growth and achievement. The consistency and effort that the students and teachers have been putting forth is proof that with a ‘can do, must do’ attitude we can get the job done together. The additional time allows for more opportunities to build and foster relationships with students, even in a virtual setting. I am so excited to see this program expand and hopefully be adopted by other schools.”

- Ms. Finley, English Teacher

“This program allows me the opportunity to enhance students’ lives for the better. Not only does it provide a space to develop their musical abilities, but it also gives me the chance to have everyday conversations with them and give them encouragement and insight on life’s experiences.”

- Mr. Robinson, Music Teacher



LEARNING THAT WORKS
FOR NEW JERSEY



The acronym CTE is generally associated with Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy. A quick Google search of CTE and you may see football players as CTE is generally associated with head injuries related to playing football and contact sports. In education we are striving to change the narrative associated with CTE with a more positive spin. For educators CTE stands for Career and Technical Education. In essence, we are trying to put knowledge in your head! At West Side, we focus on the love and we ensure we are pouring into our babies addressing all of their needs. You hear about all the partnerships and community building activities we are involved in but you don't know the entire story. We are the school of business and finance and research shows that students in CTE courses perform better in school, are more engaged in learning and have a higher graduation rate. CTE programs speaks directly to real world relevance of what they are learning and motivates our students to attend classes. Having the school of Business and Finance at West Side is a blessing and allows our students numerous opportunities to find what interests them and make decisions that will have a positive impact on their future.



“A brand for a company is like a reputation for a person. You earn reputation by trying to do hard things well.”

- Jeff Bezos



Career and Technical Education
By: *Troy Long*

I believe planting the seed early in student's high school journey can shape them for the remainder of their respective lives. While there is minimal evidence of CTE programs having long term effects on students. The true evidence points to any school that has a high-quality CTE program moves the needle in a positive direction in areas of graduation rate, employment opportunities, and potential earnings for their graduates. West Side will be that school. We are ensuring that we have multiple pathways to success and CTE enhances not diminishes learning outcomes. In the upcoming school year (2021-2022) West Side will offer students five pathways. These pathways are: Entrepreneurial Studies, Supply Chain Management, Advanced Manufacturing, Cosmetology and Jr. MBA (year 1).



“To be successful, you have to have your heart in your business, and your business in your heart.”
*—Thomas Watson Sr.,
Chairman and CEO of International Business Machines*



When students are allowed back, we have an ambitious undertaking that we are planning. The number one goal is to finalize all course offerings and pathways for students. We are going to break ground on construction of a new cosmetology room, we plan to upgrade our technology in our content areas and most importantly continue growth and promoting the opportunities that exist at West Side to the students in Newark. There are two ways to enter into a CTE program at West Side. You can start the cosmetology program as a freshman or during CTE month (February) we host a CTE Fair for all 9th and 10th graders. During the fair students get to sample each of our program offerings and select their top two choices. We designed our programming with our students' interest in mind. Also, our CTE programs will fill local needs for specialty jobs and business ownership in our community.



Vocational education programs have made a real difference in the lives of countless young people nationwide; they build self-confidence and leadership skills by allowing students to utilize their unique gifts and talents.

~Conrad Burns



*Career and Technical Education
Interview by: Nadia Camacho*

Q: What are the programs under Career and Technical Education?

A: Entrepreneurial Studies, Supply Chain Management, Advanced Manufacturing Cosmetology and Jr. MBA (Sept 2021)

These are the 5 pathways we currently offer and the goal is to have one more starting (Sept 2022)

Q: How do the students enroll in the CTE program?

A: During CTE month (February) we host a CTE Fair for all 9th and 10th graders. During the fair students get to sample each of our program offerings and select their top two choices. We designed our programming with our students' interest in mind. Also, our CTE programs will fill local needs for specialty jobs and business ownership in our community.

Q: How does each program benefit the students if they start early on?

A: Research shows that students in CTE courses perform better in school, are more engaged in learning and have a higher graduation rate. CTE programs speak directly to real world relevance of what they are learning and motivates them to attend classes. Having the school of Business and Finance at West Side is a blessing and allows our students numerous opportunities to find what interests them.





Q: What are the long term effects of the students being in the program?

A: This was a tough question because it's hard to track and keep data on students after they leave you, but the one thing I did find out was that there is minimal evidence of long term effects on students. The evidence points to schools that have high-quality CTE programs moves the needle in a positive direction in areas of graduation rate, employment opportunities, and potential earnings. CTE enhances not diminishes learning outcomes.



Q: What are the future plans for CTE when students are permitted back in the building?

A: When students are allowed back, we have an ambitious undertaking that we are planning for our students. The number one goal is to expand our course offerings for students. We are going to break ground on construction of a new cosmetology room. We plan to upgrade our technology in our content areas and most importantly continue growth and letting the students in Newark know what we have to offer.





L & L EXPRESS

Meet the owners of "L & L Express"

THE TWINS

Ludmilla Dortilus & Ludjina Dortilus

Sophomore Students at

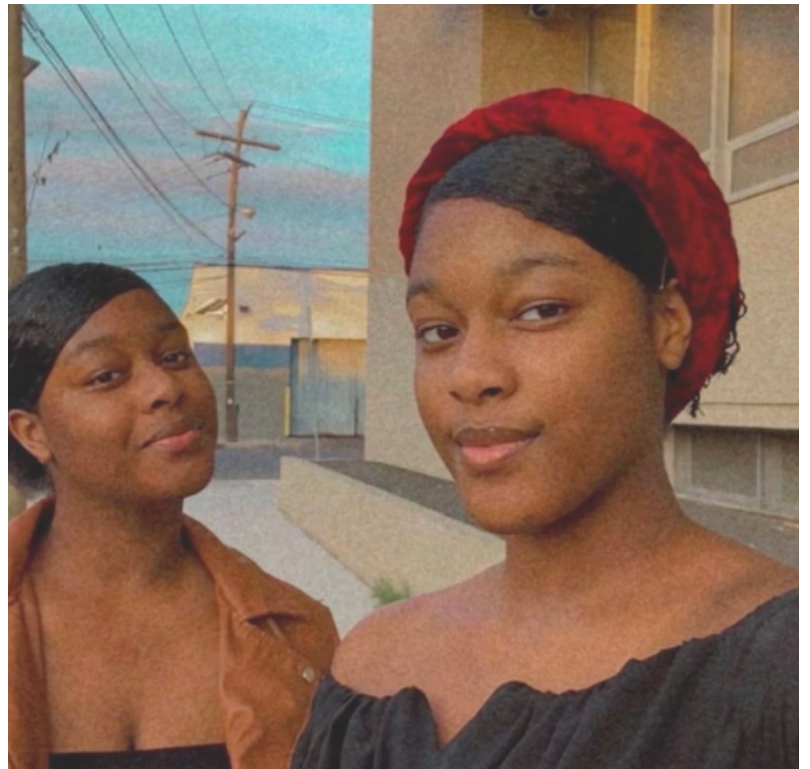
West Side High School

The name of our business is "The L&L Express", a braiding company we started during the pandemic to assist our family with income.

We started doing our friends and my mom's hair and getting pretty good at it. Then we realized we should start a business providing hair services- specifically braiding- because of how we started to perfect our craft. The L&L Express was created because we always wanted a business to call our own. I began expressing the idea of being entrepreneurs and owning a business to my sister Ludjina and we immediately started planning it together in April 2020. By our birthday in July, the L & L Express was up and running. We were excited and ready to be entrepreneurs. Our first clients were some friends and family. Then they began referring us to their friends and family; before we knew it our business began to grow!



The pandemic affected our family income because people were getting laid off and not a lot of money was coming in. Then with virtual learning it was a struggle but we found a balance by figuring out what times we would be booking appointments. Our business has done quite well during the pandemic. In the next 3 years, we see our business just sky rocketing up. Our dream is to be the CEOs of a SUCCESSFUL company and provide jobs for other young people.



VACCINATED

