

NJ LEAP

Annual Report

July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021



Dear NJ LEEP Community Members,

I thought they said 2021 was supposed to be a lot better than 2020? In many ways it was, but that does not mean 2021 was easy. Whether it was the class of 2021 having to select a college from a list of schools they had largely never visited or attempting to entice rising 6th and 9th graders to voluntarily spend another month (this time a summer month!) in front of a Zoom screen or it was figuring out how to safely return our staff and students to in-person work. This year was hard! But, true to form, the members of the NJ LEEP community did what they always do – their absolute best. And fundamentally that is what so much of life is about.

Through the continued adversity of the last couple of years, we also have seen so clearly the strength and resilience of our community. Often times the range and depth of challenges folks in our community were navigating felt insurmountable. But that never stopped our students, families and staff from doing their absolute best to ensure our students have every opportunity and resource necessary to unlock their dreams.

One way of describing the approach of NJ LEEP is that we operate from a place of high expectations and compassion. We academically and intellectually challenge our students, while also seeking to recognize and honor how much of an emotional load everyone is carrying right now. We remain committed to both of those strands as mechanisms to enable our students to achieve their goals in life.

Another critical strand of our work is more deeply rooting the work of NJ LEEP in racial equity. We have made a commitment to creating an environment that ensures our students feel loved, seen and celebrated for who they are and because of their identities, not despite them. It is about a deeper, more holistic and more honest approach to elevating Blackness and Latinx heritages (to name two), racial justice and equity, and giving our students an environment that allows them to believe the world is theirs.

Over the course of 2021 we have deepened that commitment by reviewing and beginning to redesign our HR systems, reviewing and redoing all of our curriculum and instructional practices, and taking on the individual work of reflecting on our own personal identities and how those impact the work we do at NJ LEEP.

While I have no idea what 2022 will hold, I do know that we are going to keep pushing to find students and staff who are searching for a special community, we are going to keep asking ourselves and our students what we have learned from each new experience or activity, we are going to keep investing in our team, our students, our facilities and our programs, and we are going to keep listening to our community to understand how we can better serve them every single day.

That is our decision – to be the best version of NJ LEEP we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Feinstein".

Matt Feinstein

2020-21 Program Overview



MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

In 2019 we launched our program and will scale to approximately 120 6th, 7th, and 8th graders by summer 2021.

Our school-year Saturday program focuses on Math and ELA skill development, social-emotional and project-based learning, and STEM and critical-thinking enrichments.

Summer focuses on hands-on experiential and project-based learning, STEM, and math and reading skill development.

6TH GRADE

Summer Project: a "Pitch Competition" to convince a company to choose Newark as the location for their new headquarters.

7TH GRADE

Summer Project: Present on social justice issues like Human Trafficking, Bullying, and Black Lives Matter, and talk about the "Game Changers" who lead and influence these movements.

HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

Students attend programming during summer, after school and also participate in our Saturday Writing Program twice a month to develop into better writers and readers.

SUMMER LAW INSTITUTE

Rising freshmen learn criminal law and participate in a mock trial competition.

9TH GRADE: Life Skills

Freshmen learn study skills and professionalism, explore colleges and careers, and navigating relationships.

SUMMER WEEK-ON-THE-JOB

Rising sophomores participate in four experiences at corporate offices.

10TH GRADE: Law-Related Education

Sophomores develop writing and public speaking skills and work with an attorney mentor during our Constitutional Law & Debate Program

SUMMER ACT TEST PREP

Rising juniors take a 5-week ACT prep course.

11TH GRADE: ACT Test Prep

Juniors learn test-taking strategies and build math, verbal, and writing skills to improve their ACT score.

SUMMER PRE-CAP and 12TH GRADE

Seniors participate in our College Access Program.

COLLEGE SUPPORT

Students receive consistent staff support throughout their college years, including:

- Academic counseling
- Help with scholarship applications
- Internship placement
- Career and graduate school preparation

COLLEGE ACCESS

Students work with our staff on all components of the college application process, including:



Drafting and completing personal statements

Creating a resume



Creating college lists
Visiting colleges



Conducting research on colleges



Completing the Common Application

Completing scholarship and financial aid applications

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Our goal is to create a seamless path for families to support their children through college graduation and beyond. Family workshops and 1-on-1 meetings increase family involvement, improving educational outcomes for students.

OUR STATS



college acceptance & enrollment



college graduation

over  5.7 million awarded in scholarships

2020-21 Program Overview (Cont.)



Skills || Habits || Exposure

By the Numbers

100% of program graduates matriculated to college

85% of alumni graduated from college or are currently enrolled

31 2020 high school graduates

27 2020 college graduates

3 points - average student ACT score improvement

We ensure that **more than 600** community members have access to the services they deserve

● **70** middle school students

● **148** high school students

● **127** college students

● **300+** family members

“Because of NJ LEEP, I am more confident. I’ve learned how to deal with failure and success. My favorite thing about NJ LEEP is the opportunities that they provide their students with.”

-Maciah Dewitt, NJ LEEP Class of 2020, Rutgers University Class of 2024

CAREER EXPOSURE

Nearly 50 corporate partners offer our students career exposure.



20 Summer Week-on-the-Job Hosts

OUR MODEL

SKILLS

Building the academic and social-emotional skills necessary to thrive



HABITS

Creating opportunities to develop the habits required to excel

EXPOSURE

Exposure to the professionalism and maturity needed for college and beyond

2020's Most Attended Schools

1. Smith College
2. Rutgers University-Newark; Rutgers University-New Brunswick
3. Rider University
4. Middlebury College
5. Seton Hall University
6. Montclair University



100+ Attorney Mentors assist students in debates



400+ Volunteers
1,046+ hours served

Thanks to our partners, our students and families are more connected to each other and to their community.

570 Broad Street Newark, NJ 07102

www.njleep.org

2020-21 Virtual Learning Pictures

NJ LEEP was virtual for the 2020-21 school year. We held synchronous programming for summer, after-school, and Saturdays.



We held our Debater of the Year Competition on Saturday, May 8th, which featured three VIP judges presiding over the final round. They were: NJ State Supreme Court Justice Fabiana Pierre-Louis, NJ State Supreme Court Justice Anne Patterson, and Fruqan Mouzan (Of Counsel, McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter, LLP). Pictured above is Joanna Saint-Pierre, NJ LEEP Sophomore and 2021 Debater of the Year.



Special thanks to our Attorney Mentors who supported our students this year! Your service is truly making a difference in the life of your mentee, and has an enormous impact on our community. Click above to watch the 2020 Mentor Awards at our virtual Fall Harvest celebration and hear how two mentors went above and beyond.



On Saturdays throughout the school year, all of our high school students attend programming to develop their writing, reading and critical thinking skills. The Saturday Writing Course covers five main writing styles: Narrative, Expository, Persuasive/Argumentative, Literary Analysis, and Research Writing.



We are so lucky to have hosted 21 virtual field trips this year! In the photo above, Merck led a virtual field trip with our 6th and 7th graders. Students learned how vaccines are developed, met scientists who shared about their careers, and did an at-home science experiment on density (with skittles and hot water)! Thank you to all of our hosts!



In 2020-21 NJ LEEP served more than 600 community members and made sure they had access to the services they deserve.

70 Middle School Students	148 High School Students	127 College Students	300+ Family Members
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NJ LEEP is a college access and success program serving low-income and first-generation students in the greater Newark area. Our College Bound Program empowers middle and high school students with both the academic and social-emotional skills necessary to succeed in college and beyond. Our goal is to help students gain admission to, enroll in, and graduate from four-year colleges and universities.

Skills

Building academic and social-emotional skills necessary to thrive.

Habits

Creating opportunities to develop the habits required to excel.

Exposure

Ensuring exposure to the professionalism and maturity needed for college and beyond.

100% of program graduates graduated high school	Free for all students	85% of alumni have graduated from college or are currently enrolled
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Class of 2021

College Acceptances

Adelphi University
Agnes Scott College
Allegheny College
Amherst College
Bard College
Bloomfield College
Boston College
Bowie State University
Brandeis University
Butler University
Cabrini University
Caldwell University
Catawba College
Cedar Crest College
Clark University
College of the Holy Cross
Columbia University
Cornell University
Dartmouth College
Delaware State University
Drew University
Drexel University
Elon University
Fairfield University
Fairleigh Dickinson University (Florham)
Fairleigh Dickinson University (Metropolitan Campus)
Felician University
Florida Atlantic University
Florida Gulf Coast University
Florida Southern College
Fordham University
George Mason University
George Washington University
Gettysburg College
Goucher College
Hampton University
Harvard University
Hobart William Smith Colleges
Howard University
Ithaca College
Kean University
Le Moyne College
Lehigh University
Lincoln University
Louisiana State University
Loyola University Maryland
Lycoming College
Manhattan College
Marymount Manhattan College
Marymount University
Middlebury College
Monmouth University
Montclair State University
Morgan State University
Mount Holyoke College
Muhlenberg College
New College of Florida
New Jersey City University
New Jersey Institute of Technology
North Carolina A & T State University
North Carolina Central University
Old Dominion University
Pennsylvania State University (Altoona)
Pennsylvania State University (Main Campus)
Pennsylvania State University (World Campus)
Pepperdine University
Pomona College
Princeton University
Providence College
Radford University
Ramapo College of New Jersey
Rider University
Rollins College
Rowan University
Rutgers University (Camden)
Rutgers University (New Brunswick)
Rutgers University (Newark)
Sacred Heart University
Saint Elizabeth University
Saint Leo University
Salem College
Sarah Lawrence College
Seton Hall University
Siena College
Simmons University
Smith College
St John's University (New York)
Stetson University
Suffolk University
SUNY at Albany

Class of 2021 College Acceptances (cont.)

Syracuse University
Temple University
The College of New Jersey
The College of Wooster
The New School
The University of Tampa
Tulane University of Louisiana
Union College
University of Connecticut
University of Mary Washington
University of New Haven
University of North Carolina Wilmington
University of North Florida
University of Pennsylvania

University of Rochester
University of Scranton
University of South Florida (Main Campus)
Ursinus College
Villanova University
Virginia State University
Wake Forest University
William Paterson University of New Jersey
Williams College
Xavier University of Louisiana
Yale University

Thank you to our Corporate & Community Partners

Summer 2020 Virtual Week-on-the-Job Hosts

American Express	Faegre Drinker Biddle & Reath LLP	Ogletree, Deakins, Nash, Smoak & Stewart, P.C.
Aspen	Guggenheim	Panasonic
Barclays	Hachette Book Group	Prudential Financial, Inc.
Cadwalader, Wickersham & Taft LLP	McCusker, Anselmi, Rosen & Carvelli, P.C.	Sullivan & Cromwell
Chiesa Shahinian & Giantomasi PC	McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter, LLP	Shearman & Sterling
Deutsche Bank		Verizon
Endeavor		Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, Inc.

2020-21 Virtual Field Trip Hosts

Audible	IMC	Sugar23
Bank of America	KPMG	Verizon
Barclays	McKinsey	Walmart
Citi	Merck	Wells Fargo
Deloitte	Panasonic	Zocdoc
Deutsche Bank	Pfizer	
Goldman Sachs	Prudential Financial, Inc.	
Hachette Book Group	Samsung	

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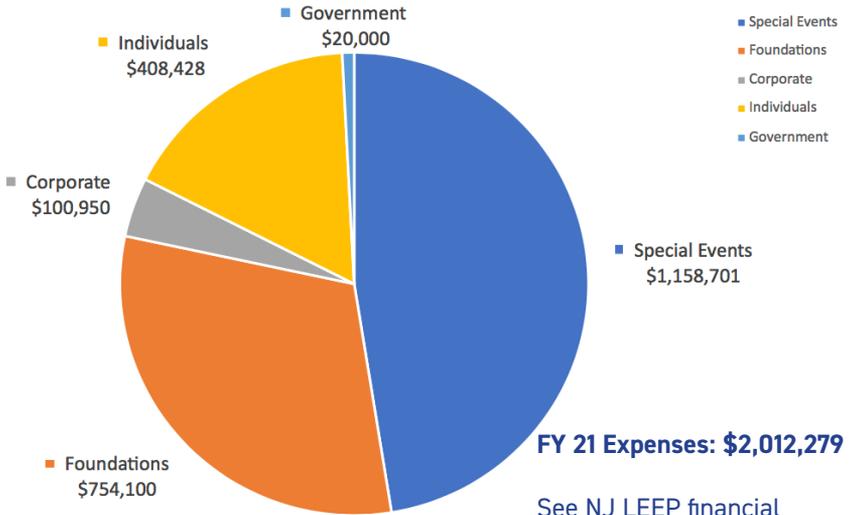
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FY 21 Revenue

FY 21 Revenue: \$2,442,179



FY 21 Expenses: \$2,012,279

See NJ LEEP financial information [here](#).

Ms. A Celebrates 10 Years with NJ LEEP!



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Help students revise or create resumes
and prepare for interviews

Speak to students about your career

Coach debate students to prepare them
for their oral arguments

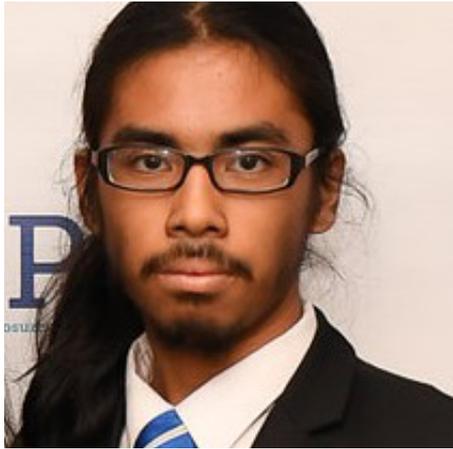
Hire our alumni

Serve as an Attorney Mentor

Host students at your office

njleep.org/getinvolved

High School Class of 2021



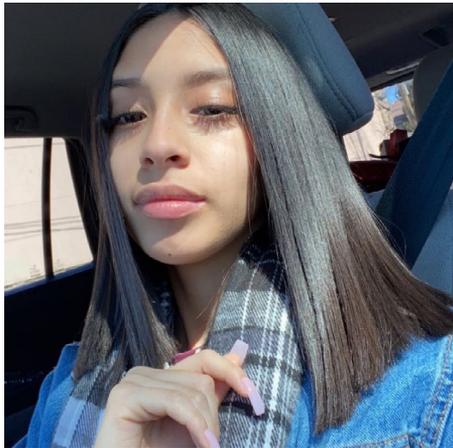
Janic Aguirre, Yale University

"NJ LEEP has helped me develop a stronger academic voice. Through NJ LEEP, I gained confidence in reading and writing, which will help me in every situation I will come across."



Anthony Apantenco, Syracuse University

"At the start of high school, I feared failure. Through NJ LEEP, I learned that failure is part of the process of growth. My peers and I learned to step out of our comfort zone and accomplish our own goals. I am confident that the skills I have gained have successfully prepared me for college, work and life."



Alexandra Barbaran, Rutgers University-Newark

"I am different from when I started because I have developed a professional and mature side of myself. I will not give up on my future goals and I am not afraid to speak publicly or to others."



Beatriz Blanco, Wake Forest University

"NJ LEEP has given me more confidence. I am someone that my younger self can be proud of. The community is my favorite part because it made me feel welcome and like a part of a family."



Carla Blanco, Wake Forest University

"My favorite thing is the people and environment at NJ LEEP, which helped me to push myself out of my comfort zone. Because of NJ LEEP, I got into my top choice college!"



Daniela Calderon, Montclair State University

"NJ LEEP helped me grow by pushing me to challenge myself no matter where I am at in life. Because of NJ LEEP, I will be going to Montclair State University on two great scholarships!"



Leonardo Cruz, College of the Holy Cross

"While I've always held the potential to achieve greatness, NJ LEEP has helped pave the path to success. The community we have created is beyond a group of friends with similar goals. We are a family in pursuit of success."



Leina Delma, Rutgers University-Newark

"NJ LEEP helped me become more resilient. My favorite thing about NJ LEEP is that we are such a community. The staff care a lot for us."



Lucas Estevis, Rutgers University-Newark

"Because of NJ LEEP, I learned how to tackle real world problems. My favorite thing about NJ LEEP is the family I have built here."



Troye Fernandez, Middlebury College

"NJ LEEP gave me the support system I needed to drive myself forward. Because of NJ LEEP, I am going to the college of my dreams."



Nicole Giao, Drew University

"I wouldn't be who I am today without them. NJ LEEP has helped me grow in such a beautiful way. NJ LEEP and its community of people introduced me to a whole new world. A world where there are people who care about us and want to see us succeed. This community showed me the importance of SELF and gave me the space to be just me. And I could never thank them enough."



Richard Gual, Jr., The College of New Jersey

"My favorite thing about NJ LEEP is how they have become my second family. They helped me learn how to be more open and how to voice my opinion."



Ramon Jack, Drew University

“Sophomore year, I met someone special, my Mentor Steve. Words simply cannot express my deepest appreciation to him for always encouraging me, calling me, giving me advice, and directing me in the right path. He helped me grow into my potential and I would not be where I am today without him.”



Cedric Jeudy, Rowan University

“NJ LEEP helped me learn how to speak confidently. My favorite thing about NJ LEEP is the sense of family and community that is present whenever I am in the building.”



Shantreea Johnson, Bowie State University

“NJ LEEP has helped me grow by teaching me how to network and enhance my communication skills. I am more confident when I introduce myself, especially when I am telling others about my skills and goals.”



Asianna Kennedy, Boston College

“NJ LEEP’s immense support has helped me blossom into a confident, intelligent Black woman. I can compare my growth to the growth of a plant. When I started, I was merely a seed. With positive support and everlasting love, I continued to grow. As I sprouted, I was introduced to more opportunities and resources that enabled me to blossom. Because of NJ LEEP, I can proudly say that I will be a successful young lady.”



Jason Kusi, Marymount University

"NJ LEEP helped me overcome my fear of college through instilling hard work and dedication. Because of NJ LEEP, I am able to say that I am ready for college!"



Ashley Lindore, William Paterson University

"Because of NJ LEEP, I am able to speak in a public setting and I am comfortable networking. My favorite part of NJ LEEP is the bonding experiences we have every year to feel closer to my peers and the staff."



Alisson Lopez, Rutgers University-Newark

"Because of NJ LEEP, I am more confident about my future. I have a support system and I do not have to struggle alone. The support of the staff was pivotal in my growth throughout high school. I learned how to respect myself and the world around me thanks to the many mentors I've had. The community is truly wonderful. We all blend together to create a welcoming and loving environment."



Cielo Marrero, Monmouth University

"NJ LEEP helped me mature in every way possible. They have been a helping hand through the whole high school experience. Because of NJ LEEP, I will be the first one in my family to graduate from college in the US."



Claryssa Martinez, The College of New Jersey

"NJ LEEP helped me in so many ways to become the young lady I am today. My favorite thing was being able to intern at major companies. These internships taught me how to network, learn about the legal field, and practice legal research. I am that generation that will influence and change the world!"



Daniela Montero, The College of New Jersey



Alyssa Morales, Lehigh University

"Because of NJ LEEP I no longer limit myself or my aspirations because of what might happen. They helped me realize that my dream of becoming a social justice lawyer is possible. My favorite thing is the community because no matter what, academically or personally, I can always rely on them to help me pick myself back up."



Nancy Oliveira, Drew University

"Throughout the past years I have had the privilege of knowing and developing strong bonds with the most amazing, determined and brightest individuals who constantly inspire me to become a better version of myself. By being a part of this family, I have seen my colleagues flourish and achieve greatness. Because of NJ LEEP, I am now determined to inspire and help others."



Victoria Reghitto, Kean University

"My favorite part of NJ LEEP are the people who are always there for me if I ask for help."



Leah Rego, Rutgers University-New Brunswick

"NJ LEEP students understand each other's struggles, and are close because of it. It not only makes students feel as though they're in a comfortable environment, but in an environment where they can be happy and bond with students with similar interests. Because of NJ LEEP I know that I will succeed."



Yasmin Rodriguez, Rutgers University-Newark

"NJ LEEP has helped me find my voice. I am able to motivate myself to achieve what I thought I was not capable of. Because of NJ LEEP, I believe I can succeed. We are all one huge family and I wouldn't ask for anything else."



Liliana Sanchez, Harvard University

"As a young, Hispanic woman in this society, I am often told words of doubt. NJ LEEP taught me to pay no mind to those stereotypes and to forge a path for which I can succeed. They helped me believe in myself. NJ LEEP works tirelessly to make sure that students have everything we need to succeed."



Gary Sancho

"Everyone here is like a family and we help each other out. When I first started I wasn't motivated. I was struggling in my classes, especially in grammar and English. I have matured as a person and NJ LEEP helped show me the potential I have. Because of NJ LEEP I will be successful in the future and I will give back to the NJ LEEP community all they have given me."



Elizette Santana, Williams College

"Because of NJ LEEP, I have been able to achieve many of the things that I thought were unattainable for me. Whether I was having academic or personal problems, I always knew that there would be someone at NJ LEEP who I could talk to and find the much needed support I was looking for."



Courtnee Simpson, The College of New Jersey

"NJ LEEP has helped me grow by allowing me to improve my writing and public speaking skills, and allowed me to understand what career path I want to pursue. I am grateful to have been part of a new supportive family. NJ LEEP has and continues to set students up for a better future."



Camila Villa, The College of New Jersey

"I have more confidence in myself than before. NJ LEEP helped me learn that I am a strong woman and can accomplish whatever I put my mind to."

2021

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