



2020-2021 Program Update

October 8, 2020

Preface:

We thank you so much for your support of Boys Hope Girls Hope of New York. We have had a successful year with our scholars and could not have done it without your support! As a valued supporter, I would like to share an update on Boys Hope Girls Hope of New York's programming in the upcoming school year.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed many things in our lives these past five months, including what Boys Hope Girls Hope New York will look like. Since the spring, schools have been closed and students have been learning virtually from home. That virtual transition also included the programming of BHGHNY. We have had our academic success program, college access program, therapeutic and wellness services, mentoring, as well as events such as graduation, all virtually.

Due to the pandemic itself as well as the school schedules of Cristo Rey and Bishop Loughlin, we will be delivering our services virtually for the 2020-21 school year. In compliance with New York City and State regulations and guidelines, the residential component of our Programs will be suspended this academic year for the male and female scholars. The health and safety of our scholars is our major concern, and we want to ensure that their exposure is as limited as possible. The in depth programs we have previously had will now be delivered through our new Virtual Scholar Academy.

What does the Virtual Scholar Academy look like?

Although a Residential Program is an essential component of our Boys Hope Girls Hope model, it is not the only component that separates us from other afterschool programs. The Virtual Scholar Academy is a comprehensive model through which the Scholars will be supported in specialized areas, the curriculum of which, includes: **Academic Success, College Access, Service Learning, Socio-Emotional Development and Experiential Learning.** It is also important to know that in lieu of our Residential Component this coming year, we will be virtually enhancing our Foundation Programs with some of the key residential activities. This is part of our effort to build upon the positive results of our virtual program last spring and to increase the effectiveness of this year's effort.

BHGHNY Virtual Scholar Academy

Our brand new Virtually Academy consists of the following.

- **Academic Success Support:** This includes tutoring; meetings with each scholar's teachers to review their work and performance; our Cover-To-Cover literature program; our Financial Literacy program, Technology Presentation Projects; and additional educational activities, such as "Guess who's Coming To Dinner"
- **College Access:** This includes our per grade College Knowledge & Career Exploration programs; virtual college tours; senior essay development; PSAT/SAT prep; College Alumni Speakers; and other college-focused activities that will assist and prepare our scholars for their college choice and college life.
- **Experiential Learning:** Service and Community engagement are pillars in our organization's DNA. We believe that scholars develop character through service learning activities related to social justice and civic responsibility. Our goal is to graduate socially aware, civic-minded and active, lifelong citizens. Service Learning includes Social Justice issues such as Gentrification, Mass Incarceration, Food Justice; virtual Community Service projects during our annual Day of Service and throughout the year; a Senior Capstone Project Seminar whereby scholars demonstrate their accumulated knowledge from completing our Service Learning in Action curriculum.
- **Wellness and Therapy:** It has never been more important than now to provide an outlet for our scholars to share their anxiety and concerns about the pandemic and the current social unrest. Both of these will have a

lasting effect on our scholars. Ways to help our scholars through this include weekly art therapy sessions, open studio for virtual art making, character development exploration through Values Clarification workshops; and wellness and counseling services under the guidance of our Director of Wellness and Therapeutic Services.

Friday-Saturday Support Activities: Our once a month Friday night social activity will continue virtually with programming intended to have scholars engaged in positive activities such as... Additionally, once a month there will be a Saturday session that will support our curriculum, including Career Day, Alumni Day, and our Visual Arts exhibition; as health guidelines will permit, activities may be virtual or in-person at Bishop Loughlin either in their gym or auditorium or other large spaces. A new component will be to include parents from time to time.

The 2021-2022 & 2022-2023 Female Scholar Program:

The 2020-2021 school year will mark the end of the Residential Program at Cristo Rey Brooklyn High School, who has been a great partner in every facet our program. It is important for you to understand that we will continue to offer our program services for your daughters until they graduate. The current scholars who are in the Junior and Sophomore classes will be seniors and juniors next year (2021-2022). The current scholars who are sophomores will be seniors in the year after (2022-2023). The format for those two years will be: currently virtual for this year; next year in-person, after school at Bishop Loughlin; or potentially a hybrid of both as the pandemic changes over time. Our long-term plan is to start a residential Girls Hope program at Bishop Loughlin in 2021-2022.

The 2021-2022 Male Scholar Program:

As City and State guidelines will permit, our plan will be to restart a Boys Residential program at Bishop Loughlin. If there are still COVID-19 issues, we will adhere to the guidelines and, most likely, continue with our Virtual Scholar Academy.

Summary

Our intention is to provide the same excellent programs and services to our scholars that we always have, despite COVID-19 or any other factors. We are committed to the mission of Boys Hope Girls Hope and providing them with the opportunity to graduate from college and grow into positive individuals who care about others. We hope that you will be as encouraged and excited about the future of this program as we are during this time. We will need your support now more than ever as we continue to strive to have a positive influence our scholars and provide as many opportunities and resources as we can.

If you have any questions or thoughts that you would like to share, please contact Mike McManus the Chief Operation Officer, Samantha Hartsoe the Development Manager, or me at the following:

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Sincerely,

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Executive Director

