

# HARVEST TIME

3 SEEDS NEWSLETTER | VOLUME 2



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## BEES FOR JAYS 2.0

SPELLING COMPETITION FINALIST POSE WITH HOST BRANDON WILLIAMS AND PRINCIPAL RENEE SIMMS.

On Wednesday March 15, 2017, 3 Seeds Mentoring Group hosted their second Bees for Jays spelling competition at Hillcrest High school. The purpose of this unique event is to improve the spelling ability and increase the vocabulary of students here in the south suburbs. Several local business owners supported this effort by donating or discounting their services to help make the event possible. Bees for Jays 2.0 was a freshman-only competition featuring 12 contestants with 5 finalists who advanced to the last round. The winning student was Aaliyah Ferris- Goins, a member of our TRiO program. She received a \$200 giftcard from Footlocker as well as a \$200 scholarship from the AC Green Show. Our host for the event was Brandon "Realtalk" Williams, a national spoken word artist.



## FRESHMAN WINS SCHOLARSHIP!

BEES FOR JAYS WINNER AALIYAH FERRIS- GOINS ALONG WITH RADIO PERSONALITY AC GREEN AND 3 SEEDS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JASON THOMAS.



The BEES for JAYS spelling competition has grown every year as a result of the support received from the community. We are seeing the impact of our efforts and we are excited as we keep moving forward. Over the years we have had the awesome opportunity to partner with barbershops, churches, and schools to get the word out. One of our long time sponsors AC Green from the AC Green Show donated a \$200 scholarship to the winner of this year's competition.

## HILLCREST ROBOTICS ROCK

MEMBERS OF THE HILLCREST ROBOTICS TEAM ALONG WITH PRINCIPAL RENEE SIMMS AT THE SOUTHWORKS OLYMPICS COMPETITION.



Hillcrest was one of the 13 high schools who participated in the Southworks Engineering and Robotics Olympics. Team sponsor and teacher Mr. Polyak was very committed to the project and his freshman students played a major role in troubleshooting the robot during the design process. To read more about this event, see the full article on page 3.



## GOVERNORS STATE PROVIDES OPTIONS

HILLCREST STUDENTS ON A CAMPUS TOUR VISITING PRAIRIE PLACE, THE FIRST ON-CAMPUS RESIDENCE AT GOVERNORS STATE UNIVERSITY WHICH OPENED IN THE FALL OF 2014.

Governors State University (GSU) admitted its first freshman class in August 2014. For the first time in the school's 42-year history, they were finally in a position to serve Illinois as a full, comprehensive, regional university which would give students in the south suburbs an affordable educational option close to home. Freshmen who are seriously considering attending GSU have two pathways to degree completion. They have the option of direct admission to GSU as a freshman or admission to a community college with a plan to complete the associate degree before transferring to GSU or to another university under GSU's existing Dual De-

gree Program. The university serves students of all ages, nontraditional and traditional, working adults and recent high school graduates; it offers programs at all times of the day; and provides strong incentives to community college students to follow a seamless pathway from a community college associate's degree to a GSU bachelor's degree. With the cost of tuition rising, community college is becoming an attractive, affordable option. With the agreements in place to assist with the transition, students are more comfortable in making decisions about their educational future without having to take on large amounts of debt.

## LEADING LADIES



Leading Ladies is a mentoring program at Hillcrest High School created by Kristie Nieman that commissions young ladies to realize their highest potential by empowerment through self awareness, scholarship, and social responsibility.

## JUNIOR EXECUTIVES



Junior Executives is a male mentoring program that focuses on character, careers, and entrepreneurship. We support these young men by exposing them to career fields of the future and we develop their entrepreneurial abilities through various workshops and assignments.



# GRAND VALLEY

STUDENTS IN ONE OF THE LECTURE CENTERS AT GRAND VALLEY.

On Friday January 27th, the TRiO students at Hillcrest High school took their first out of state college trip with our program. All 37 students arrived close to 6:00 am to a chartered bus and together we made the 3 hour trip to Grand Valley University located in Allendale, Michigan. Grand Valley University is a very affordable option that is cheaper to attend than most in state schools. They are also recognized as one of the top Division II sports programs in the country. They consistently attract talented young people from Illinois because of their academics and athletics.

During the visit we were able to connect with a former Hillcrest student who was part of the panel. The Hillcrest alumna spoke about how she successfully transitioned to college and life in another state. She also addressed the rigor of being a student athlete at the collegiate level. It was a fantastic experience that left a lasting positive impression on our students.

# SOUTHWORKS ROBOTICS OLYMPICS

SOUTHWORKS ENGINEERING AND ROBOTICS OLYMPICS WAS COORDINATED BY REGGIE GREENWOOD FROM CSEDC, MOLLIE DOWNING FROM OAI, AND JASON THOMAS FROM 3 SEEDS MENTORING GROUP.

On Saturday April 8th, thirteen local high schools and thirteen regional manufacturing companies worked collaboratively on the Southworks Engineering and Robotics Olympics. This robotics competition was host to several competitions where participants included students and their manufacturing mentors. There was no fee to participate and each company donated \$1,000 to support each school. Our company, 3 Seeds Mentoring, was one of the coordinators for this event along with OAI and CSEDC. We were responsible for creating the competitions and worked with the South Suburban Manager and Mayors Association to connect school with local manufacturing partners. To find out more visit [www.southworkrobotics.com](http://www.southworkrobotics.com).



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## HILLCREST HBCU NIGHT!

VARIOUS HBCU ALUMNI AND HILLCREST HIGH SCHOOL STAFF MEMBERS POSE DURING THE PANEL DISCUSSION.

On Wednesday April 19, 2017, 3 Seeds Mentoring Group hosted their first HBCU night in partnership with Hillcrest High School. Students and parents asked for an event like this here in the south suburbs so they wouldn't have to commute to where these events are typically held just to participate. This event featured 10 historically black colleges and universities from around the country. Students spoke with college recruiters, heard a panel discussion from HBCU Alum and enjoyed an awesome stroll performance by members Phi Beta Sigma, Zeta Phi Beta, and Sigma Gamma Rho. There was a DJ keeping the energy level high along with raffle prizes and giveaways throughout the night. Thanks to all our sponsors and supporters for making this a successful event and we can't wait to do it again next year!



## LOCAL VENDORS SUPPORT HBCU NIGHT

PRINCIPAL RENEE SIMS WITH HILLCREST STUDENTS SUPPORTING THE HBCU NIGHT EVENT DURING THE RAFFLE GIVEAWAY DURING INTERMISSION.



HBCU Night was all about the experience. It was about educating students and parents about the value of attending Historically Black Colleges and Universities while also assisting HBCUs in locating quality candidates in the south suburban area. Local vendors also contributed by providing items such as swag bags for registered students as well as gift cards and refreshments. The local movie theater Marcus Cinema also donated movie passes which were given away as raffle prizes.

## PRAIRIE HILLS SUMMER STEM

PRAIRIE HILLS PRINCIPAL MR. SMITH ALONG WITH ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDANT MRS. VEAZY AND 3 SEEDS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MR. THOMAS.



Prairie Hills Junior High will be working in collaboration with 3 Seeds Mentoring on their summer STEM program. The summer project will include not only computer classes but also two college visits that will take place during the month of June. The computer classes will use Adobe photoshop to create projects that focus on global warming.



## UIC MAKES A BIG IMPRESSION

HILLCREST STUDENTS ON A CAMPUS TOUR VISITING UIC IN THE NEWLY RENOVATED MAIN LOBBY AREA IN FRONT OF THE SCHOOL'S REDESIGNED LOGO.

When surveying our students regarding in-state colleges they would like to visit, UIC is always in the top 3. Over the last several years, students from previous Trio programs under the leadership of Jason Thomas, have graduated and gone on to pursue work in the fields of engineering, accounting, graphic design, and psychology. It is a campus that is far enough away from home but just close enough to make trips home on the weekend if necessary. The University of Illinois at Chicago features 15 academic colleges, 83 bachelor's, 93 master's and 64 doctoral degree programs. That means that potential students will have plenty of opportunities

to explore their interests and really find their niche. Located in the heart of one of the world's great cities, the University of Illinois at Chicago is a vital part of the educational, technological and cultural fabric of the region. As Chicago's only public research university with 29,000 students, 15 colleges, a hospital and a health sciences system, UIC provides students with access to excellence and opportunity. During the visit students were able to speak with representatives from 2 of the strongest academic support programs on campus: The CHANCE program and the African American Academic Network. It was time well spent for all who attended.

## PRAIRIE HILLS AT UIC



As a part of the summer STEM experience, students from Prairie Hills got a chance to visit UIC and connect with students from the CHANCE program. They were also given an opportunity to participate in their summer engineering experience.

## FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE



During the visit to Chicago State University students were exposed to the First Year Experience program which offers support and workshops designed to help students address common issues and concerns that can impact a student's first year and beyond. College student ambassadors gave campus tours and also led a brief panel discussion.



# TRIO SENIOR DAY

A TRIO STUDENT POSES WITH REPRESENTATIVES FROM SOUTH SUBURBAN, THE LOCAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

Tuesday, May 2nd, marked our first annual Senior Day which served as a wrap up session and celebration for all the seniors in the TRiO program. Partnering with 3 Seeds Mentoring for this event was South Suburban College (SSC) of South Holland, IL.

Students were required to finalize all unfinished business that would prevent them from attending college in the 2017 Summer or Fall semesters. Students and parents completed financial aid registration and each student applied to South Suburban College, regardless of any school they may have selected to attend in the fall. In addition to assisting with the online application process, South Suburban shared information about free credit hours and potential scholarships that would cover tuition costs for their first 2 years at SSC.

When financial aid was complete, college acceptance letters were collected and each student submitted their online application to SSC, they were celebrated with pizza, drinks and a Certificate of Completion from 3 Seeds Mentoring Group. They were also recognized at Hillcrest's Senior Awards Night held that evening.

# TEACHING STEM USING ADOBE

3 SEEDS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TEACHES STUDENTS IN THE SUMMER STEM PROGRAM HOW TO USE ADOBE PHOTOSHOP TO CREATE A PROJECT EXPLAINING GLOBAL WARMING.

Global warming is a very serious and real issue. Many people young and old are not really sure of how to explain it and it rarely comes up in daily conversation. Recently in the news there has been a lot of talk about the topic which in turn influenced the summer project. Working closely with the STEM instructors, the idea was for the students to create 3 different shoes that communicate the different areas of concern regarding global warming: The cause, the effect, and the solution. Each shoe would have to be created using elements from the previous day's discussion to help reinforce the learning. After the shoes were created the students also had to create a matching shirt and jacket and include a note card that explained the inspiration and imagery within the shoe.



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## 5TH QUARTER EXPERIENCE

### PLAYERS AND COACHES MAKE TIME FOR REAL CONVERSATIONS

What do you offer a group of (Inner city) high school football players who know what long days of hard practices feel like coupled with the realities of their daily lives? A chance. A chance to explore beyond the boundaries of their zip code and a glimpse into their dreams. This is what we set out to do with our 5th Quarter Experience. We took a group of student athletes on a trip to Northern Illinois University to see just what it requires to be a STUDENT ATHLETE at a top university and to show the importance of establishing the necessary disciplines now. They sat down with coaching staff and players and one student-athlete who was a resident of their neighborhood. They left with the understanding that what you do on and off the field effects everything and that character is built when you make the hard choices in tough situations.



## THE MONSTERS OF THE MIDWEST

### 5TH QUARTER EXPERIENCE TAKES STUDENTS ATHLESES TO SOLDIER FIELD



During the 5th Quarter experience students not only got to visit NIU but they also got a chance to visit Soldier Field home of the Chicago Bears. We wanted them to see just how far they could go with the right attitude and self-discipline. We would like to thank NIU and Coach Carey and his staff for giving our young men a world class experience and an eye-opening encounter. We are expecting great things out of these young men after graduation!

## WE MADE IT! #CO2017

### SENIOR GRADUATION AT TINLEY PARK CONVENTION CENTER



Graduation is always a time for celebration and excitement! This was our first graduating class for our TriO Talent Search program since we began working with Hillcrest High School in the fall of 2016. Our students plan to enroll in various institutions all throughout the country from South Suburban College all the way to Alabama A&M!



## COMMUNICATION AND CODE SWITCHING

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION IS NECESSARY IN EVERY CAREER FIELD AND SITUATION. SPEAKEASY INTRODUCED AND EXPLAINED THE ART OF CODE SWITCHING TO HELP STUDENTS NAVIGATE DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS AFTER HIGH SCHOOL.

Communication is a major problem. A famous quote that illustrates this point is from George Bernard Shaw and it states, "The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." Checking for understanding and using different tools and techniques all work together to increase communication skills. Lauren Wells from Speakeasy is an amazing communicator. She has helped multiple speech teams to win state championships and has helped numerous students to secure scholarships as well as jobs in the entertainment world. In her own right she has performed in different stage plays throughout the city and has a reputation

for pulling the best out of her students. During rising senior camp, she played interactive games to help students to identify negative communication habits. After that she made them do various group and team activities that forced them out of their comfort zones. They had to meet and introduce a person that they did not know to the entire group. The last 2 areas that she addressed were code switching and the importance of sensoring their social media personas. The students were very engaged through her entire presentation and hopefully they left with more tools in their communication toolbox that they can utilize in the near future as they prepare for college.

## KICKOFF 2018

STUDENTS GET A HEADSTART BY TAKING INITIATIVE!



Our goal for the kickoff's are simple. Engage, Acknowledge, Reward and Set the tone for the rest of the year. After an initial meet and greet and a game of trivia, the staff dived right in. The atmosphere was electric as DJ Cell spun the turntables and the chatter from our students filled the air. This is how you start the semester!

## RISING SENIOR ADVANTAGE

SUMMER EXPERIENCE LOOKS TO PREPARE SENIORS BEFORE SCHOOL STARTS



During the summer time students usually work and preparing for college is not normally on the list of things to do. With rising senior camp we leverage all the free time that summer offers and use it for financial aid conversations and college applications. This helps to alleviate a lot of pressure that begins to build when classes and homework begin and students have to add college to their already full plate. We partnered with ISAC as well as Scholarship mom to assist with identifying and applying for local scholarships.