



BRIDGES at Gilman

2021-2022 PROGRAM YEAR: FALL RECAP

UPDATE 2 OF 4

THIS YEAR AT BRIDGES AT GILMAN

Bridges at Gilman opened in 2014 under the leadership of Ned Harris and is in its 8th year of operation. The program is committed to the long-term success of Baltimore City youth and to life-changing opportunities for students in the Gilman school community.



In 2021-2022, Bridges at Gilman is serving **95** Baltimore City youth ages 9-18 and **61** Gilman school community volunteers.

The Baltimore City Student Experience

- Baltimore City Youth enter Bridges at Gilman just after third grade via a handful of Title I public elementary schools in northeast Baltimore. They can participate through age 23.
- The year-round program helps Baltimore City Youth find consistent academic success from elementary school through college and enter fulfilling career paths with financial security.

The Gilman Volunteer Experience

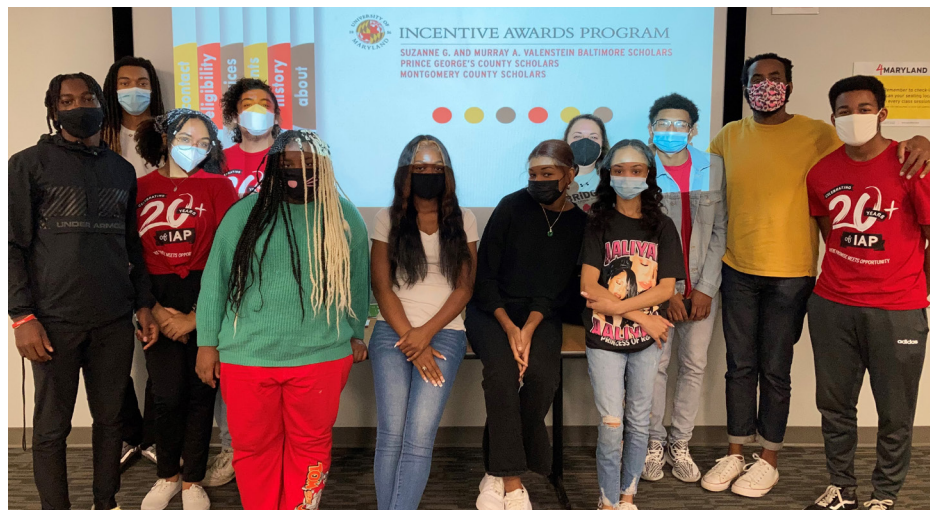
- Upper schoolers from the Gilman community engage in programs with Bridges' youngest students. **During the school year**, they volunteer as tutors in Bridges' after school program and **during the summer**, they volunteer as assistant counselors in the Bridges Summer Institute.
- The volunteer experience creates a space for Gilman students to build close and caring relationships with Baltimore City School students, learn about issues of unequal access and opportunity in Baltimore, and be part of building a more inclusive and equitable society.

THIS FALL AT BRIDGES AT GILMAN SCHOOL



The Elementary/Middle School Division focused on four key program segments this fall: the After-School Program, Weekend Enrichment, middle and high school guidance, and individualized student support. Elementary-aged students and volunteers from the Gilman School community returned in-person to the After-School Program on Gilman's

campus for weekly enrichment, outdoor activities, and homework help. Middle schoolers took part in the Weekend Enrichment Program, visiting places around Baltimore and developing academic and interpersonal skills. Bridges 5th and 8th graders received school guidance support to determine their best-fit schools and prepare for the school admissions process, and all students had access to support individualized to their specific needs.



The High School Division kicked off the school year with three major areas of programming: the Saturday Institute, post-high school guidance, and individualized student support. In the first few Saturday Institutes of the year, students focused on a range of topics designed to help them find success this year, including resume-writing, health and wellness, and adjustment to an in-person school year. 12th-grade students received support with the college application process, including visits to several college campuses across Maryland. Finally, each student received individualized support, including access to tutoring, one-on-one meetings with staff, and other resources as needed.

THE TEAM AT BRIDGES AT GILMAN



Dave Menard,
Site Director and
Elementary/Middle
School Program
Director



Annelise Royles,
Elementary/Middle
School Public Service
Fellow



Sydney Michener,
High School Program
Associate Director

FALL STUDENT FEATURE



Bridges 12th grader Chris D. first joined Bridges in the summer before his 5th-grade year at The Green School of Baltimore, and has been part of the program for 8 years. Chris spent this fall taking six rigorous courses, applying to fourteen colleges, and running on a championship cross-country team.

“My biggest accomplishment this year has been getting through my college applications, despite taking six classes,” Chris shares. “It’s tough to manage time, but this quarter really shows the hard work that I’ve put in.”

Chris has been working closely with Bridges throughout this year to set him up for success during a hectic time. From SAT prep, to college application and financial aid guidance, to physics tutoring, to learning about time management and social-emotional health, Chris has taken advantage of every resource Bridges offers. “If you’re a part of Bridges, you have to make the most of it...every day counts,” explains Chris.

Though Chris’s focus this fall has been on excelling academically and completing the college application process, he believes that Bridges’ greatest benefit to him goes beyond this semester. “Bridges helps you to make lifelong connections. They check on me every day and give great advice. Ask them anything, and they will get you resources to help you out. Bridges is not going to ‘move on’ from you.”

“The biggest thing I’ve learned is just how to be myself,” Chris reflects. “I believe that Bridges was the first place that allowed me to be who I am.”

OTHER NEWS AT BRIDGES AT GILMAN

Bridges at Gilman’s first cohort of students will be graduating from high school in June of 2022, and we are excited to continue supporting them through college and into the start of their careers.

FALL VOLUNTEER FEATURE



Gilman student Tony K. ‘23 volunteered as a tutor-mentor in the Bridges After-School Program this fall. Tony, who attended the After-School Program himself as a Bridges student seven years ago, had the unique opportunity to come “full-circle” this year with Bridges.

“This year was my chance to go back and be a part of the After-School Program,” shares Tony. “It was funny to be on the other side of it – in the same classroom but looking from a different perspective.”

As a volunteer, Tony felt that his most important job was to be a trustworthy mentor to the 4th and 5th graders. “When I was in their shoes, I remember having a favorite volunteer who meant a lot to me,” Tony reminisces. “Then one day this fall, one student didn’t want to play the game with the rest of the group, so he came to play with me. We played catch for the next two days together. He could have gone to anyone, but he came to me.”

Tony believes that the key to building great relationships is to be open and thoughtful. “Flow off of the kids’ energy,” Tony says. “A kid can come in with their head down, and they might need space, or they might need a pick-me-up. Be responsive.”

This ability to remain receptive towards people in any situation is Tony’s greatest takeaway from his volunteer experience this Fall. “Working with people you’ve never met and adapting on the fly is an important skill in anything you’re doing.”

FALL VOLUNTEERS FROM THE BRIDGES AT GILMAN SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Beatrix Brockman, BMS ‘22
Ella Cooper, BMS ‘24
Jacob Devine, GIL ‘22
Arther Du, GIL ‘23

Sanjay Geevarghese, GIL ‘23
Tony Kees, GIL ‘23
Kaydin Lunn, GIL ‘23
Haroon Malik, GIL ‘23

Burk McGill, GIL ‘23
Abena Opare, BMS ‘24
Samuel Steinmetz, GIL ‘22
Spencer Suval, GIL ‘23

Aisha Tarar, BMS ‘24
Ariana Wilson, BMS ‘24
Juno Yoon, GIL ‘23



TO LEARN MORE, VISIT: @bridgesbaltimore bridgesbaltimore.org