College Week a success at Gateway

Huntington –The school week leading up to Thanksgiving was College Week at Gateway Regional High School. Gateway’s Guidance Department set up different workshops and events for students to attend so they could learn about applying to college, paying for college, and college life in general.

On Monday November 21, students from grades nine through twelve attended a resume workshop where they learned how to develop an effective resume. A mock interview workshop also took place on Monday, where Assistant Principal Mr. Anthony Sabonis interviewed students to practice what a college interview might be like. That night, the Director of Financial Aid at Westfield State University came to Gateway to give a presentation to families about paying for college.

On Tuesday, guidance counselors were available throughout the day to support seniors completing online applications to college. Several colleges also visited Gateway to offer instant admissions for seniors, including Holyoke Community College, Springfield Technical Community College, American International College, and Western New England University. In order to be considered for instant admissions, students were required to fill out an application and submit their transcripts. Forty three applications were submitted for instant admissions and all were accepted! Instant admissions were part of the statewide and national Massachusetts College Application Celebration designed to celebrate and promote students applying to college. The accepted seniors were recognized at the end of the school day in an assembly where each student signed their name to an “I applied to college” banner. A scholarship workshop was also open for seniors to attend, where current seniors received scholarship booklets.

In addition, Westfield State University and Mildred Elley College waived their application fee for Gateway students submitting paper applications.

On Wednesday, November 23-- the final day of college week—thirteen Gateway Regional High School graduates returned to Gateway for the Alumni Panel. Panelists shared their college experiences with current high school students and answered questions relating to college in general. Topics such as: applying for college, how to choose which schools to apply to and attend, choosing majors, getting along with roommates, coping with sleep deprivation and college food were among those talked about.

“Ramen is NOT a meal,” answered Jade Tarris (GRHS ’13), when panelists were asked to offer one piece of advice to seniors. “Eat some protein and something green every day.”
Advice from the panel also included enjoying their time at high school; don’t let money deter you from applying to private schools; start buying supplies NOW for next year (and make sure the twin sheets are extra long). “I would spend way more time applying for scholarships,” said a panelist.

“Appreciate what you have at Gateway,” added Brennan Foley, ’16. “All of you are very lucky to go to school here.”

Taking part in the Alumni Panel were Sarah Williams (computer science) and Jade Tarris (English, creative writing) both attending MCLA; Christian Tweed (WPI – computer science); Davis Britland (UMASS, electrical engineering); Fay-Valerie Grzbowski (UMASS, hospitality); Gabby Ramirez-Lyons (UVM, PE/physical therapy); Casey Pease (UMASS, political science and economics); Cory Bisbee (Clark University, political science and Asian studies); Brennan Foley (St. Michael’s College, elementary education and economics); Kyle Besette (Holyoke Community College, nursing) and Ben Jameson (HCC, liberal arts). Bresette (navy) and Jameson (air force) will be starting military service soon, which will help pay for their bachelor’s degrees.

The two and a half-day event also included College Trivia and spirit points awarded for students wearing college or military apparel. College week is always a worthwhile experience for college bound students, no matter what grade!

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Photo: Alumni panelists (left to right) Christian Tweed, Davis Britland, Fay-Valerie Grzbowski, Gabby Ramirez-Lyon, Casey Pease, Cory Bisbee, Brennan Foley and Ben Jameson.