

CREATING A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS

Increasing access to Precollege Programs
for high-achieving, low-income teens



Brandeis
UNIVERSITY

Transforming Life Trajectories

Few things are more powerful than opening lifelong pathways for high-achieving, low-income teens.

Building on 20 years of successful Precollege Programs, Brandeis can expand access to this unparalleled opportunity.

"For these remarkable students, Precollege Programs offer a firsthand experience that says to each participant: 'I can reach for a selective institution of higher education, and it can be a place of value and belonging for me.' "

-Sue Marsh, executive director, Brandeis Precollege Programs

Several hundred high school students have participated in Precollege at Brandeis since the Program's inception. Due to limited funding, only a handful of these participants have come from low-income families.

Now is the time for Brandeis to expand access to its transformational Precollege Programs for high-achieving, low-income students.

With your generosity, we can create more opportunities for these exceptional students to alter the trajectory of their lives.



Service Leadership Participants

ADVANCING
SOCIAL JUSTICE

*Brandeis was established
to increase access to
top tier higher education.*

*Expanding access to
Precollege Programs for
high-achieving, low-income
teens is a critical part of
the University's enduring
commitment to this mission.*



App Design Students

Building Resilience as a Pathway to Success

Brandeis offers one and two-week Precollege Programs that aim to positively influence the future of exceptional high school students from across the U.S.

Led by prestigious Brandeis faculty, Precollege allows teens to cultivate their talents and abilities, enhance their readiness for higher education and influence their postsecondary school plans.

Precollege Programs at Brandeis are grounded in the social justice themes of inclusion and equity and offer students an outstanding residential experience on the Brandeis campus. Here, participants meet peers from different backgrounds, cultures and traditions, while exploring academic pursuits with others who share their commitment to improving the world.

Precollege Programs **enable teens to build resilience** by:

- » **learning** in a challenging environment
- » **living** on the Brandeis campus among peers from all walks of life
- » **navigating** new relationships and performance expectations

*For promising youth, **developing qualities of resilience offers a pathway to knowing that a selective college or university such as Brandeis can be within their reach.***

Through the precollege experience, teens develop self-confidence and discover their own ability to persist amidst new challenges. These are important building blocks that help students succeed as they begin their careers and enter young adulthood.

Leveling the Playing Field

Expanding access for high-achieving, low-income youth to rigorous precollege courses and residential experiences is essential to leveling the playing field.

For these exceptional students, participating in Precollege Programs represents a once-in-a-lifetime pathway to attend a top-tier college or university.

For most, this is a leap they may never have imagined possible before being exposed to college-level instruction of the highest caliber.

Creating Leadership Readiness

In our rapidly changing world, every community needs strong leaders to maximize opportunities and navigate adversity present in societies of today and tomorrow.

Precollege Programs at Brandeis create an intellectually challenging experience to equip teens with the skills and knowledge required to assume leadership roles in their own areas of interest.

Did You Know?

- » The vast majority of high-achieving, low-income students do not apply to any selective colleges or universities despite being well qualified for admission.

(Brookings Institute, 2013)

- » High-achieving, low-income students who attend selective schools carry less debt and have access to dramatically more career and leadership opportunities than their peers who attend less selective institutions.

(www.matriculate.org/college)



Service Leadership participant
Andy Nguyen with
Leland Home Resident

*In these times, it is
critical for teens to
learn how to become
courageous in
their communities.*

An Enduring Gift

Precollege Programs at Brandeis offer an experience of lasting change for participants, enhancing their capacity to become agents of positive change throughout their lives.

Champions of the Precollege Programs are vitally needed so Brandeis can expand its capacity to build strong and vibrant future leaders from disadvantaged communities.

The importance of strengthening the ability of exceptional teens to meet the challenges of our time cannot be overstated.

Precollege Course Offerings

Brandeis offers the following academically rigorous programs for high school students who might consider this opportunity as their next step:

Queer Academics and Activism (QAA)

A first-in-the-nation precollege program about the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, plus (LGBTQ+) experience in America, QAA participants gain insights into queer activism and theories of practice that guide effective engagement, and develop a plan of action for their own communities. The curriculum covers a historical perspective of LGBTQ+ issues, identity concepts, activism, religion, education and community engagement.



*QAA can be summed up
in just a few words:
affirmation, education,
friendship and community.*

QAA participant Emma Fox
presents her research (2019)

Service Leadership

The Brandeis Service Leadership Program is anchored in the University's national reputation as a leader in student community service engagement and justice education.

Service Leadership students have completed practicums at organizations including: Lurie Institute for Disability Policy, The Right to Immigration, Jewish Family and Children's Service, and Waltham Community Housing Authority.

App Design

Under the guidance of the Brandeis Computer Science Department, students delve into learning about cutting edge software, innovative web design and mobile applications through a college-level STEM curriculum.

Brandeis Precollege Programs will introduce two new courses in 2020:

Race, Inequality and Social Justice

Students will examine racial disparities the U.S. has been grappling with since its founding. Participants will use case studies, statistical analyses and first-person accounts to learn about systematic racial injustice. Additional topics include inequities in access to education, housing and healthcare; foster care placement and wage inequities.

Global Health: Science, Medicine and the Social Determinants of Health

For students considering a future in medicine or health policy, participants will learn about the most pressing health challenges of our time and learn how public health experts determine whether situations require medical interventions, social solutions, or integrated approaches.



App Design students Matthew Quetell, Jai Damani and Ahsen Malik visit the MakerLab (2019)

Pre-College Program Alumni

Khurshedmo “Sunny” Akobirshoeva '20 (App Design)

“Participating in App Design was one of the most decisive experiences of my life and sparked my interest in STEM. I learned about the power of teamwork, trusting my abilities and being open to new experiences, no matter how challenging they may seem.

Returning to the program as a TA four years later was a special indicator to me of the growth that I began that summer — from someone who has never written a line of code in their life, to becoming a Computer Science major at that same university.”



Evelyn Bernstein (Queer Academics and Activism)

“I’ve never had the experience of sitting down in a formal place and having someone go over the history of LGBTQ+ issues. I’ve never met people who do queer studies professionally... To see how people approach these issues as adults is really useful.”



Darren Tran (Service Leadership)

“Before coming to Service Leadership, I did not fully understand the process of providing ‘meaningful’ service. My project enabled me to dive deeper into a subject I was passionate about. This allowed me to learn more about myself and to fully explore the potential I had to make actual change.”

Darren Tran’s video testimonial can be viewed here: <https://bit.ly/2YMo8dC>



Audrey Rogers '22 (Service Leadership)

“The program certainly helped me decide where I wanted to attend college. It also helped me to realize that I should continue doing community work no matter what professional field I decided to pursue. Thanks to this eye-opening experience, I continue to do community service on a weekly basis.”



Charlie Apple (Queer Academics and Activism)

“I’ve never thought of queer studies from a scholarly point of view. So I appreciate the new perspective. It’s a lot better to learn it here than, say, on YouTube, because I’m surrounded by people who are qualified to speak about it and experienced in the field.”



About Brandeis University

Ranked as a top-tier private research university with a focus on the liberal arts, Brandeis University offers students direct access to small classes with faculty who become transformative mentors. As one of its founding principles, Brandeis is committed to assembling a fully inclusive student body and welcomes students from all backgrounds, experiences, cultures and religions. Animated by a set of values rooted in Jewish history and experience, Brandeis applies rigorous academic work of the highest standards and critical thinking to make the world a better place.

*Brandeis Precollege Programs empower teens
to apply lessons learned in the classroom
to issues they care deeply about out in the world.*



Ethan Katz, QAA participant (2019)