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# SEMESTER REVIEW



*UBMS students on a tour of Brown University in November.*

## From the Director's Desk

The reports are in. In the last month our office has been working on the UBMS Annual Performance Report (APR) for the 2017-18 year. These reports are mandated by the Department of Education for all TRIO grants, and track whether the grants are successfully meeting the objectives set forth by the Department. I am pleased to announce that both our programs – Middletown and Meriden/New Britain – are wildly successful! Our Middletown program met all seven of the

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objectives it was eligible for in its first full year, and Meriden/NB met six out of eight. Meriden/NB also achieved our ultimate goal of graduating its first full class from post-secondary education. Fifty-five (55%) percent of the 2012 cohort that enrolled into post-secondary institutions after graduating high school have earned Bachelor's degrees! Contrast that to the 11% that low-income and first-generation students are completing college within six years of enrolling nationwide, and you can say that not only are our programs successful, but our alumni are as well!

We know that this is only the beginning. We will continue to provide fantastic opportunities for our students to explore different interests and help better prepare them for their future. I believe that we have accomplished that this past semester, as you'll read in this newsletter, but the best is yet to come! We value your voices, so let us know what else we can do to help keep you motivated and successful. Keep striving while taking advantage of the resources and opportunities afforded by UBMS. You'll be successful - the proof is in the APRs!

## UBMS Recognizes Enza Macri for Continued Support



*Director, Miguel Peralta, presenting Middletown's Associate Superintendent, Enza Macri, an award at the Middletown Board of Education.*

Earlier this fall, our director, Miguel Peralta, visited the Middletown Board of Education to recognize Enza Macri, Middletown's Associate Superintendent of Schools, for her continued support of UBMS and our mission of serving first-generation, low-income, and underrepresented students in their pursuit of higher education. Dr. Macri has been a friend and advocate of UBMS for years, and we are grateful for her support!

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## College Tours

Throughout the summer and the fall, we took our students to various college campuses to gauge interest during the application process. These trips included tours and information sessions with the admissions office and current students (at Brown, students even got to meet up with Isaiah Thompkins, a UBMS alumni!). Visiting these colleges and universities give our students an opportunity to get a firsthand view of a college. A college brochure or website can only show you so much. College tours are a great way for students to get a feel for a college or university because they are able to walk around the quad, sit in on a class and talk to students from that college or university. Below is a list of the colleges our students visited this semester!

**Brown University**

**Clark University**

**College of Holy Cross**

**Mitchell College**

**Springfield College**

**University of Rhode Island**



**Right:** When students visited Brown University, they listened to UBMS alumnus Isaiah Thompkins, a current student at Brown, talk about his college experiences and advice.



**Left:** Students on a college tour of Springfield College on a rainy day.



*Students in front of the University of Rhode Island during a college tour.*

## Saturday Sessions

This semester we held a variety of Saturday Sessions that ranged from interactive activities with outside organizations, to simply providing a vehicle in which our students could be productive and get their schoolwork done with the assistance of some of our tutors. Here is a look at a few of our Saturdays throughout the course of the semester.

In **September**, during our fall kick-off meeting, UBMS welcomed new students and parents this semester! This event was a chance for our new parents to come together and share their inquiries, concerns and hopes for the upcoming year. Every semester, we remind students and parents that the UBMS staff are always available via phone, email or scheduled appointment to meet with you and answer any and all questions you may have.



*Senior Aishalys Montes presenting her group's ideas at our October Saturday Session*

In **October**, UBMS was involved in the second annual PIE Brunch. PIE stands for Pathways to Inclusive Education, which includes programs such as, Upward Bound, McNair, Mellon Mays, Posse, and WesMass, all of which are programs that serve underrepresented, low-income, and first-generation students at Wesleyan. At the Saturday Session, students split up into groups to collaborate with Wesleyan students to brainstorm and present their ideas for another PIE event with a small budget. Students got really creative and later voted for the best event idea, which will come to life in the spring semester! Check out the images below.



*Our students listening to other presenters at the PIE Brunch.*

In **November**, our students attended a Saturday Session that featured academic success workshops. Wesleyan college admissions officers walked our students and parents through a mock college application process and talked about what colleges look for on student transcripts. Additionally, Ralph D'Amato, the Head of Guidance from Middletown High led an interactive workshop with students/parents about how they can get the most out of their high school experience. Students also took the LASSI academic skills assessment to identify their strengths and areas for improvement.

In **December**, UBMS continued on the theme of academic success from the previous session, with workshops on course selection for next year and reviewing LASSI academic skills assessment results. We also had a presentation from an Upward Bound alumna about getting involved with the Air National Guard in college (and getting paid for it). Afterwards, students were treated to a holiday lunch!



*Students and Program Coordinator, Durga Nyame, working on another PIE Brunch idea with a limited budget.*

## Tutoring

Tutoring sessions are an integral facet of the UBMS program. We selectively hire tutors of various backgrounds and academic fields of study who are currently attending Wesleyan University. We highly encourage all of our students to take advantage of such a great and free resource at their disposal.

This past semester, with a growing group of students, we decided to have tutoring at the schools. We had tutoring after school at Middletown High School on Mondays and Thursdays, and at our Meriden schools – Platt and Maloney – on Wednesdays. In addition to these days, we also hosted a Saturday Study Session on December 1st where students came to campus and worked with tutors, had pizza. It was a success and we plan on doing more in the future.

## Meet the Tutors

### **Jake Kwon**

Wesleyan University, Class of 2021

**Hometown:** Suwanee, GA (Born in South Korea)

**Subjects:** U.S. History, Pre-Calculus, Introduction to Biology, Chemistry, Calculus, Physics, English, and Economics

On campus, Jake is also a tutor for STEM Zone as well as a course assistant for the introduction biology course. He is also involved in the KPOP Dance Crew at Wesleyan and loves anything related to Korea (Korean dramas, and the food). Jake is also a member of the Wesleyan Student Assembly. When he's not busy with all of these extra-curriculars, Jake likes to spend time with his friends and really enjoys food and trying new things!



### **Benjamin McDonald**

Wesleyan University, Class of 2021

**Hometown:** Durham, NH

**Subjects:** Algebra, Geometry, US History, and English

Benjamin is a sophomore at Wesleyan majoring in Physics with a focus on environmental studies. He is also on the ski team and likes to play guitar. Coming from New Hampshire, Ben enjoys a variety of outdoorsy activities such as hiking, camping, and fishing among others. He describes this as the basis for his interest in environmental studies.



**Ivanna Morales**

Wesleyan University, Class of 2022

**Hometown:** Bridgeport, CT

**Subjects:** English, Spanish, Government, and History

At Wesleyan, Ivanna is currently studying Sociology and is involved in the labor action groups on campus. During her free time, she likes heading back home, which is only about 45 minutes away, to spend time with her siblings and her two dogs!

**Trinity Hoffman**

Wesleyan University, Class of 2022

**Hometown:** Dacula, Georgia

**Subjects:** Math, English, & Writing

When she's not tutoring our UBMS students, Trinity likes to learn new languages and is currently studying both Chinese and Korean at Wesleyan. In her free time, she likes to choreograph, dance and sing. Halloween is her favorite holiday because she loves watching horror movies with friends and dressing up as different characters. Trinity also spent the past summer studying abroad in China, and can't wait to travel and explore even more new places this summer!

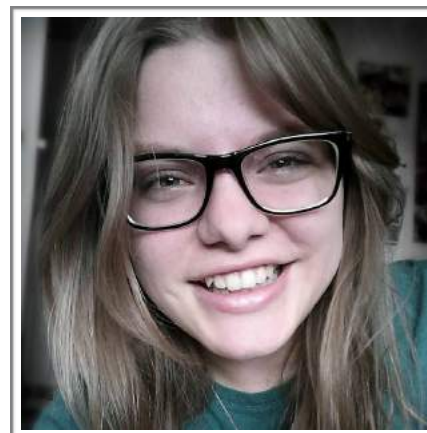
**Jasmine Jason**

Wesleyan University, Class of 2020

**Hometown:** Mountain View, Arkansas

**Subjects:** English, History, Biology, Anatomy & Physiology, Algebra I & II, and Literature courses

Jasmine loves to read, draw, play music, and write, and her favorite pastime is watching movies, television, and plays; She also likes to cook, try different foods, travel to new places and play tennis.



## Other Fun Stuff this Semester



*Students outside of the Bushnell Theater in Hartford, CT after seeing Neil DeGrasse Tyson.*

### **Neil DeGrasse Tyson**

UBMS students got a chance to see Neil DeGrasse Tyson at the Bushnell Theater in Hartford. Students had the opportunity to listen to Tyson as he gave a lesson on astrophysics and space exploration!

### **Senior College Application & FAFSA Days**

This semester, the UBMS office was open late on Wednesday evenings in October and November for seniors and their parents to come in and work on their college/financial aid applications. The office was also open all day for seniors/parents on Columbus Day, Election Day, and Veteran's Day.

### **Raphael Xavier – Point of Interest Dance Performance at Wesleyan**

This semester, a number of students and their families received free tickets to attend the Raphael Xavier dance performance at Wesleyan. This show featured a series of solos and duets set to Xavier's beats, spoken word poetry, and musical rhythms.



## UCONN Biomedical Engineering Discovery Saturdays

This semester, our students had more opportunities to go to the UCONN Health Center for their Biomedical Engineering Discovery Saturday program. Students had the option to work on a heart valve, a prosthetic leg, or neuromuscular stimulation. Whichever event they attended, they were able to keep whatever they created! See photos below.



*Senior Anahi Gutierrez (right) working on a hydraulic arm.*



*Freshman Domenic Lewis (right) assembling a prosthetic leg!*



*Right: Sophomore Leyana McKeithen showing off her stethoscope after the heart valve workshop.*



*Left: Freshman Nicole Linares assembling a hydraulic arm.*

*Above: Sophomore Hajar M'hamdi at the neuromuscular stimulation workshop.*



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