While the pandemic certainly creates fear, anxiety, and frustration, the holiday season is often a time of peace, joy, and deep connection to friends and family. My hope is that while remaining safe and diligent in your observance of safety precautions, you are still able to feel a sense of peace beyond your understanding, experience periods of great joy, and find ways to connect deeply with your friends and family.

We are asking all families to participate in our ‘Safe and Healthy Return’ campaign and have children fully quarantine in their homes beginning immediately after the New Year and before the return to school. We know this may be inconvenient, but it will increase the chance that when we do return to instruction on January 19th it is a Safe and Healthy Return.

Thank you for your partnership and for the privilege of educating your children.

Constance F. Horton
Executive Director

Happy Holidays, Freedom Prep Charter School Families!

As you know, we have delayed the start of hybrid instruction to January 19, 2021, out of an abundance of caution. One consideration in our decision to postpone the start of in-person instruction was to allow families, who might need to travel or will entertain guests during the holiday season, to have the opportunity to quarantine for 14 days afterward.

Thank you for your continued support, and please stay safe.

Constance Horton
Executive Director

Greetings Freedom Prep Community!

As we approach the holidays, we are reminded of the importance of giving and celebrating the generosity and volunteerism that unites people of all ideologies. In the face of much adversity in our community through these last few months, we remain inspired and encouraged by the work and dedication put forth by all of you in support of our students every day. While adhering to the necessary covid safety mandates, so many of you have remained connected with our Freedom Prep community through social media, email communication, and phone calls. We want to encourage you to keep reaching out with any needs, questions, or feedback so that we can continue to offer a high quality education for our students. So many of our families have shared great advice on how to support students with at-home learning, and in the spirit of giving, we’d like to share a few of these with you:

- Ask your child every day about their assignments. Engage them in conversations around their classes.
- Ask what their favorite recent assignment or discussion was in class, and which grades they want to improve on this week.
- Support them in creating a schedule to complete both synchronous and asynchronous work.
- Create a schedule together with your child to create structure and predictability.
- For siblings, utilize older siblings to support younger siblings in their school work. This supports joint problem solving and reinforces learning for both.

If you have additional advice or tips you’d like to share with our community, please reach out to your child’s school!

This month at Freedom Prep, our scholars will learn about holiday celebrations from around the world. These holidays include Winter Solstice, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Christmas, Las Posadas, and Three Kings Day. For more information about our Global Citizens program, scan the QR code!

Constance Horton with GOTV Postcard Winner, Alejandra and her sister Cindy, on a November 17th Zoom call.

Scholars on Korean Trip 2019
SEVENTH GRADE SCHOLARS DISCUSS IMMIGRATION AND IDENTITY
by Candice Smith, Teacher, 7th grade English Language Arts

In November, seventh grade scholars at Freedom Prep Middle School began their second literature module, “Home and Homeland.” In this module, we will read selected poems from Cool Salsa: Bilingual Poems on Growing up Latino in the United States, edited by Lori Marie Carlson, and The House on Mango Street, by Sandra Cisneros. Both texts deal with the impact of immigration on a person’s identity, and one of the enduring understandings we try to convey in this unit is that immigrants may face many obstacles, as well as new opportunities. To prepare, scholars put themselves in the shoes of immigrants who choose to leave their homes. Some drew upon their own experiences and the experiences of their families to help their peers empathize and understand what it would be like to move to another country.

Here is how FPM seventh graders responded to the question:

What might be scary about immigrating to a new place? What might be exciting?

What’s scary is how different you are from people and the pressure of being somewhere you’re not used to being. The exciting part is living life and living your dream and accomplishing your goals...There will be ups and downs, but that’s the step from learning to growing.”
-Lizmeiry Rosario

“...It might be scary to immigrate to a new place because of the language and how the system works (What are your rights in this new place?) and how people might think of you. The amount of hard work needed to [reach] success in this place is a lot.”
-Alan Soto-Vargas

“From my own personal experience immigrating to another place, [what is scary] is the fact that you might not know anybody there...You might be worried about what might happen to you if you don’t know what you did or didn’t do wrong. [This] can sometimes lead to confusion. What might be exciting is the fact that you can be exploring new places and have lots of new adventures. And the fact that you might meet some new people [who] can help you in the new place you’re in. In conclusion, going to a new place can be exciting and frustrating and confusing all at the same time.”
-Cimmantha Mickey-Vito

“Something that might be scary about immigrating is re-adjusting to the new system, adjusting to a different culture. It can also be exciting. We can learn a new language or [get] new opportunities.”
-Maria Garcia-Tineo

“The first thing [that’s scary] is they may not like you because of where you come from and your skin color...But also there is a good side. Just because they say things [it] doesn’t matter because we know our ancestors worked hard to get here so don’t let anyone make you feel down because of what you are or because of where you are from.”
-Dae’Joun Williams

SAME AT HEART.
By David Senquiz, 7th grader at Freedom Prep Middle School

DIVERSITY. ONE OF THE BIGGEST TOPICS OF OUR TIMES...

There are many diverse groups at Freedom Prep. May this be ethnically wise, sexuality or how we grew up as a whole. But, there is one thing everyone has in common with each other. We are all human, people that live on this earth and have hearts. We have hearts meaning we can all love and that will never change. Despite our differences, I have always noticed that students who go to Freedom Prep always choose to accept one another. They never disrespect someone based on their religious beliefs, ethnic customs or sexual preferences. We all come together as a group of many different people but all the same at heart. We never let this affect us, and this is a highlight about our differences at Freedom Prep.

“...We may have different religions, different languages, different colored skin, but we all belong to one human race.”
-KOFI ANNAN

Art as Activism: Still Life Photography

Our middle school art teacher, Ms. Cooke, has planned lessons centering Still Life photography.

Still Life photography is a genre of photography used for the depiction of inanimate subject matter, typically a small group of objects. Similar to still life painting, it is the application of photography to the still life artistic style.
On November 20th, a group of Seniors from Georgian Court University joined FPM’s Town Hall Zoom! First, the college students spoke to our scholars about their educational journeys to and through college. Then, they opened the floor to questions. FPM scholars had the opportunity to craft questions prior to the meeting, and we were so proud of the questions they asked.

Seventh grader Jane Hernandez Mendez asked, “Why did you choose to attend this college?”, Eighth grader Kingston Cooper asked, “What was your Freshman experience like?”, and Seventh grader Lizmeiry Rosario asked, “Did anything surprise you when you first became a college student?” These questions were great because they helped our middle school scholars visualize what it would be like for them to pursue and attend the college of their choice.

Kirstin Connor, a senior at Georgian Court University and one of the guest speakers said, “We know we all come from different backgrounds and we each have our own individual and unique journey, as does everyone on this planet.” She made it clear to our scholars that each of them will have a different route to college. That is why we work so hard at Freedom Prep—so that our scholars can have options when it comes to their future.

**COLLEGE STUDENTS FROM GEORGIAN COURT UNIVERSITY SPEAK TO FREEDOM PREP MIDDLE SCHOOL DURING TOWN HALL**

BY CANDICE SMITH, TEACHER - 7TH GRADE ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

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**FIVE FIRST-TIME VOTERS ON THE 2020 ELECTION**

A Freedom Prep High School Scholar was featured on Teach for America’s national website.

Check out our very own, Nateka Miles, on why she votes, how she stays informed about candidates and issues, and what it’s like to vote for the first time during a global pandemic. Read the full article by scanning the QR code below.

**What is your favorite kind of ice cream?**
**What is your favorite toy?**
**What is your favorite color?**

This has been a much different start to kindergarten than we are used to but we are making the most of each moment and taking the time to learn all about our new kindergarten scholars. Exploring new skills brings so much joy to our virtual classrooms!
This past month, Freedom Prep had the opportunity to connect with Nyree Davis from Headstart at Center for Family Services. Through this connection, FPCS partnered with the organization to bring “Hats and Snacks” to the community and the tiny students who attend headstart and their families. Everyone wore fun hats and enjoyed tasty snacks! Mask and safety measures were used during this great event.

If you would like your organization to partner with us to bring events and activities to the community, contact us today!

Middle School Scholars of the Week
10/26-11/6

DECEMBER'S TEACHER HIGHLIGHT

This month's staff spotlight is shining BRIGHT on FPH's Ms. Morin! Though she is only in her second year at Freedom Prep, Ms. Morin is an exemplary staff member. This year she is piloting the Self Contained Program in the high school and rocking it! She is continually looking for ways to improve her instruction and her classroom culture all while learning to navigate the trials and tribulations of a new program on top of virtual learning!

Ms. Morin has been doing a great job supporting our highest needs scholars. Whether she's recording welcome videos, progress report updates, or math lessons, Ms. Morin is consistently looking for new ways to support her scholars and their families. Ms. Morin has also been super helpful with materials distribution. She put together personalized backpacks for her students and even came into the school to make sure she was there to meet them when their families came to pick them up.

If you ever pop into her class, she's working simultaneously on three screens, two computers, two break out rooms on Zoom, a Classkick, and monitoring GoGaurdian! She's doing all the things, all the time and it is not going unnoticed! Thank you, Ms. Morin, for all that you do! We can't wait to see how much you and your scholars continue to grow this year!

Follow us!

THE FREEDOM FORECAST
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