Bryan Finds a Pathway: The Turning Points
November 12, 2015

Bryan Diaz has had an amazing year, a year that has changed his life.

As he entered high school, Bryan had a vague hope: college. But like many young people who will be the first in their family to go to college, Bryan didn’t know how he would get there, or what he wanted to do in college. He just knew he should go.

Ask Bryan now, however, and he bubbles with excitement and plans. Travel. A Masters in Civil engineering. “I want to be a universal person,” he proudly proclaims.

Bryan’s first turning point began when he joined PEF’s MOTH (Matter Observed Through Hombres) young men’s group. Hiking, museum and college visits and service days began to build new skills and open up possibilities. “I got in touch with nature by putting down the phone,” he laughs. But it was his trip to Costa Rica with MOTH that made his dream concrete. Working with real scientists and local staff members at OSA Conservation introduced him to people who are making a living following their passion for nature and conservation.

Back in Paterson, his principal at the School of Architecture and Construction Trades convinced him to participate in Project Lead the Way, exploring engineering and design. Bryan finished the year as the Best Engineer in ACT 2015.

To cap off the amazing year, Bryan served as a Junior Park Ranger for the summer at the Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park. Part of his work took him to Joshua Tree National Park in Palms Springs, where all his hiking, traveling and leadership skills were thoroughly tested.

But as exciting as that trip was, it is his Paterson service days that stand out. Bryan says, “Here I was talking about the history of Paterson and the Falls with people from all over the world, many who know more about Paterson’s history than I do but we connected. I am an example of the great young people who live here in Paterson. Our visitors are curious about my city and I am proud to show them who we are.”

PEF is looking forward to Bryan’s next amazing year. Aren’t you?

To learn more about PEF’s college and career readiness activities, see page 3.
Our View: NOW Is Paterson’s Time for Local Control

When I began working with PEF 22 years ago, Paterson was in the 2nd year of what was purported to be a 5 year takeover by the State of New Jersey. July 2015 marked 24 years of State control. That’s way too long. Over this time period, we have been led by 6 Superintendents, 10 Education Commissioners and 5 Governors, each one with his or her own ideas of how to improve outcomes for our children. Enough already!

In 2005, we welcomed NJ QSAC as the pathway to return to local control. According to QSAC, if we consistently scored 80% or higher in any area of five areas, that area would be returned to local control - at the Commissioner’s discretion. That “broad discretion” language has made it a more difficult path. One Governor was reported to say that local control would only be returned “over my dead body!” Thankfully, the State has changed its thinking and wants to be out of the Takeover business. The Commissioner returned control of Operations in 2014 and there is an expectation that Fiscal may be returned soon. That would still leave the State in control of Instruction and Program, Personnel and Governance. We regain full local control only when all 5 areas are returned.

The shift in the State’s intent did not happen by chance. PEF has been engaged in constant advocacy. We have testified at countless legislative hearings and State Board of Education Meetings. We have met in small groups with Governors, Commissioners, Legislators and other policy leaders and we’ve closely monitored the QSAC process.

You can help make the case for local control! While the professionals inside the district have the primary responsibility for meeting the 80% marker, there is also a role for us as members of this community. The overarching goal of QSAC is to ensure that Paterson can provide a system of education that leads to the success of our students. PEF’s programs are designed to be catalysts for change, to show what our children can and will do when given the right support and opportunities. As you can see in this newsletter, they soar! If you already have any part in this work – by giving, partnering or volunteering – Thank you! If not, let us help you. You can mentor, tutor, staff events, attend hearings, read to kids, lead conversations, advocate for adequate resources, or invest in specific programs.

Let’s work together to show the State we are ready for local control!

Once we gain local control, we can turn our full attention to making sure ALL our kids are on the pathways to success.
Creating Pathways to College and Career

PEF is committed to building pathways for our children toward college and career success. Here’s some of what we did this year to reach our goal line.

Success starts early, very early! Do you know that attendance in pre-school and kindergarten predicts your child’s success in school? PEF Paterson Reads Early program pilot focuses on reducing chronic absenteeism (missing 18 or more days per year) in 6 district and community preschools. More than 5,000 parents viewed our “Bringing Home Attendance” video at Back to School Night and you can view it on our website at www.paterson-education.org/for-parents/bringing-home-attendance-2/.

Kids who READ, SUCEED! The good news: This year more than 1,900 elementary students read 50 books or more, supported by school librarians and the Paterson Public Library. The bad news: budget cuts created by not fully funding the state funding formula reduced the number of librarians in our schools. We know that this will reduce children’s access to books. Better news: Paterson’s Summer Reading program reached more children than ever. A strong partnership among PEF, the Paterson Public Library and the Paterson Public Schools reduced the “summer slide,” the skills kids lose when they don’t read for two months.

We have STEAM! Our Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math programming with the YMCA 21st Century afterschool and summer program for middle grade students developed new informal science curriculum. The kids learned lessons tied to Paterson’s natural resources and history. Our teachers presented the model to local, state and national audiences. Among our teachers were former Paterson students who used PEF programs to build their personal pathway to college and career success. They ROCK!

We have a STEAM Hero! NY Giants football player and hometown hero, Victor Cruz, became a supporter through a grant from his foundation!

Travel to learn! PEF’s College Track trained 15 JFK students as peer facilitators who led student workshops, took students on college visits and produced the 2014-15 College Guide, The Next Hurdle. Check out the guide on PEF’s website. MOTH boys traveled to Costa Rica on a science, ecology service learning project. They are currently focused on astronomy. GUFE (Girls United for the Earth) girls are focused on food scarcity and sustainable agriculture as they prepare for a 2016 service learning trip to Grenada.

Leadership matters! Sarah Sterling-Laldee, former director of the YMCA 21st Century afterschool and summer program and leader of GUFE, moved from classroom teaching to become the Supervisor of Science for the Paterson Public Schools. Keyera Johnson, member of GUFE and former intern for the YMCA 21st Century program has completed her student teaching. Following graduation from Montclair State University, Keyera hopes to be teaching in her very own classroom. She joins Elizabeth Nuñez, former intern and MSU graduate, in the teaching profession. Elizabeth successfully completed her second year of teaching while managing to volunteer as a GUFE leader. MOTH leader Mario Benitez completed his teacher’s degree and graduated with honors from William Paterson University.
Foundations
National Economics & Social Rights
Public Interest Projects
The Blum-Merians Foundation, Inc.
The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation
The Henry & Marilyn Taub Foundation
The Nicholson Foundation
The Schumann Fund for New Jersey
Victor Cruz Foundation

Corporations
ADP Foundation
Bank of America
PNC Bank
PSEG Foundation
TD Charitable Foundation
Wells Fargo Community Relations Group

Local Businesses
American Dream Management
Anti-Poverty Network of New Jersey

AXA Advisors, LLC
Bergen County Community Action Partnership
Classic Auto Body
Downtown Paterson Special Improvement
Franklin Mill Associates
Friends of Benjie E. Wimberly
Hamilton Partnership for Paterson, Inc.
Hammond Traier and Burns
Joyaux Associates
Mountainview Caterers
Nellie Pou for Senate
New Destiny Family Success Centers
Nextwave Web LLC
Nicholas Real Estate Agency
North Jersey Federal Credit Union
Otterstedt Insurance & Surety
Paterson Alliance
Paterson Free Public Library
Paterson Task Force
Railroad Construction Co., Inc.
Rotary Club of Paterson
Sealy Mattress Company
Shavonda Sumter for Assemblywoman
State Farm Insurance
Tenth Avenue Associates
The Tablecloth Company, Inc.
The Seminary Baptist Church
The Unitarian Society
TRB/Andarn Electro Service, Inc.
United Way of Passaic County
YMCA of Paterson
4C’S of Passaic County
Individuals
Michelle Abel
Leslie Agard-Jones
John & Debra Algera
Joseph Andruilli
Daisy Ayala

Daniel & Rosalie Bespalko
Alan & Kathy Bowen
Thomas & Mimi Brome
Rosa Brown
Robert & Katherine Brundige
Mary Burgin
Candace Burns
James Castellanos
Anthony Cavanna
Sandra Corpuz
Candice Cotton
Edward Cotton Jr
Edward Cotton III
Ruby Cotton
Linda Crescione
Mary Crooms
Leah Dade
William & Nancy Dailey
Juvenal Davila
Ralph & Marcia DeLuccia
Lois Deyo
Tony DiNizo
Teri Duda
Terry Duffy
Andrew & Barbara Dunn
Jamie Dykes
Vilma Ferreri
Nancy Forsberg
Corradina Fronte
Eddie Gonzalez
Barbara Gorski

Arlene Greenbaum Lemelson
Miriam Greenhouse
Annette Hale
Elaine Harrington
Barbara Jarosz
Karen Johnson
Valerie Katz
James Kiamie
Victoria Knight
Glenn Lagatol
Fred Lang
Gwenn Levine
Tamika Lewis
Mark & Melissa Litwin
Kathleen Long
Sherry Lottero
Gregory and Beverly Luciano
Victoria Madden
Andrew Mainardi
Kim Mapp
Karen Mayo-Hogan
Eileen McCoy
Zatiti Moody
Kenneth Morris

Dolores Most
Hugh & Janice Murray
Laurie Newell
Tracy Pearson
William & Ellen Peters
Meredith Peters
Philip Pope
Charles & Barbara Reilly
Emilie Renna
Friends of Ronald Rice
David Roth
Stefanie Rotsaert
Romain Royal
Migdalia Santana
Andre Sayegh
Mireille Schuck

Suzanne Segura
Eileen Shafer
Frank Smith
Glenn & Deb Smith
Alveria Spencer
Marie Stallard
Harvey & Dorothy Starr
James Staton
Irene Sterling
Karen Sterling
Chris & Sarah Sterling-Laldee
Geraldine Flach-Sybesma
James & Nancy Thomas
Jeanette Thompson
William & Bernadette Tiernan
Robert & Diane Tirri
Jerry Traille
Stacey Tsapatsaris
Brenda Turnbull
Zoraida Uceda
Mark & Dawn Van Denend
Don Vanderbeck
Dorothy Vanderbeck
Richard Guy & Elaine Vinopal
Dennis & Carole Vroegindewey
Mamie White-Bridgeforth
Etrudes Williams
Richard Williams
Mary Wilson
Maria Workman
Cyril Yannarelli

Volunteers
Yesi Alejo
Anthony Arenas
Doris Arnett-Gary
Linda Arnett-Tinsley
Tamasha Balmer
Demetrius Balmer
Mario Benitez

Latita Blount
Lillian Branch
Volunteers, Cont’d.
Phyllis Bronson
Karen Brown
Gerard Burns
Destinee Canty
Nazmere Canty
Shamaysha Canty
Windella Canty
Shakia Carter

Pat Caulfield
Jonathan Chavez
Fonda Collier
Samantha Combs
Luz Corado
Akiaya Curry
Damiens Curry
Kierra Dailey
Robin Daniels
Christie Encarnacion
Vilma Ferreri
Angeline Francois
Omar Grant
Janelle Grant
Tyshai Grant
Ellen Greenwood
Nancy Grier

School Breakfast Campaign
Paterson Schools moved into third place statewide for the percentage of children eating Breakfast After the Bell. We feed more 23,000 children or 93% of the district. Thanks to our partners, the Parent Education Organizing Council and the Paterson Alliance. Yea!

Marquessa Guthrie
Louise Hanania
Zakiyyah Harrison
Samuel Hinds
Gloria Hunt
Raven Jones
Myriam LaTorre
Audrea Leiva
Debbie Liberato
Daniel Lupa
Dayanara Magallenes
Kim Mapp
Candace Mapp

April Martin
Luis Matos
Karen Mayo-Hogan
Little McElveen
Irvin Mendoza
Michael Moro
Dottie Natale
Lorie Nye
Nelson Olivo
Margaret Padilla

Christian Padilla
Ryan Palmer
Paterson Girl Scout Troop #112
Karen Pearson
Meredith Peters
Mayra Piereschi

Jim Quinlan
Kenyatta Reid
Kwashon Reid
Ty’Jahnay Reid
Mi’Heaven Reid
Terry Reid
Amy Rios
Chantelle Rosario
Jerson Sanchez
Gladys Sinclair
Jareen Singletary
Irene Sterling
Sarah Sterling-Laldee
Marlene Tartaglia
Ky’Zirah Townes
Demile Townes
Cee-Asia Walker
Tamika Wiggins
Jason Williams
Lutricia Wilson

What do the new PAARC tests say about your child?
Come hear NJDOE’s Dr. Bari Erlichson explain how to read the new NJ School Report Cards on March 10 at 6 pm, Place TBA.

Ask your questions!
Falling OFF the “Fiscal Cliff”: Is There a Way Back?

It is inevitable. If your income stays the same and expenses rise, you have to eliminate something. That is what we call the “fiscal cliff.”

For our Paterson schools, that has meant fewer classroom teachers, fewer librarians and library books, fewer art and music teachers, less support for sports teams…the list goes on.

That is the very unfortunate situation for the children of Paterson and the Paterson Public Schools. The State of New Jersey, responsible for supporting our schools has failed to follow the law, the School Funding Reform Act of 2008 [SFRA], for six years in a row. By not fully funding the SFRA, we find ourselves on the fiscal cliff with more expenses than we have income.

It didn’t have to happen. It should not have happened. But here we are.

Why is the SFRA important? The SFRA is a “weighted” formula. It provides a base amount of money for each and every student so that they can reach the core curriculum standards. Importantly, it also recognizes that some students need extra support: poor students, English language learners, special education students. Those students should receive additional support based on the extra help they will need to reach the core curriculum standards. But for six years, the State of New Jersey has withheld the appropriate financial support leaving our schools with flat funding, raising costs and program cuts.

How do we get off the fiscal cliff? We follow the law and fully fund the SFRA. Or at least start to move towards full funding.

What resources would we have if the SFRA law was followed?

Total Underfunding Over Time
This represents the district’s running total of state aid lost from underfunding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Underfunding</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>$0.0M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>$11.7M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>$34.5M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>$173.8M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>$242.4M</td>
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</tbody>
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If the SFRA was fully funded, we could hire back every teacher, librarian, art teacher and music teacher as well as add more Special Services. We would have our sports teams back. We could expand our community schools.

We would be talking about what we want to make our schools better. Think about what we could be doing with an additional $71 million this year.

Instead, we are agonizing over what we must give up as we continue to fall off the fiscal cliff.

What can you do? Take Action: Like us on Facebook [https://www.facebook.com/PatersonEducation/] and contact your legislators when we send the alerts. Not on Facebook? Watch our website: [www.paterson-education.org]
Save the Date and Join Us!

**December 3, 2015:** Listening Circle on Restorative Justice. Stop the push out! 6 pm at St. Paul’s Church.

**December 12th 9 am to 1 pm and December 18th 9 am to 1 pm:** Holiday Book Wrap at Barnes & Noble, Rt.3 Clifton. Call Doris at PEF to volunteer.

**February 27, 2016:** Celebrate Dr. Seuss’s birthday and “Read Across America,” 2 to 4 pm at the Paterson Public Library

**March 10 at 6 pm:** What do the new PAARC tests say about your child? Place: TBA. NJDOE’s Dr. Bari Erlichson explains how to read the new NJ School Report

**March 21:** PEF’s School Budget Report, Falling Off a Fiscal Cliff? Published

**June 6:** How to Run for School Board briefing, PEF offices at 6 pm. Nominating petitions are due July 26th.

**July 11-August 19:**

**ON YOUR MARK, GET SET, READ!**

Paterson Reads city-wide summer reading program at the Paterson Public Library, its branches, and many child serving organizations across Paterson. Help us stem summer learning loss. Many volunteer opportunities are available for you. Call us at 973-881-8914 for information.

**September 19:** Measuring School Board Performance Forum, PEF offices.

**September 20:** An Educated Voter’s Guide to Paterson School Board Elections published.

**October 6:** PEF School Board Candidate Forum, 6:30 pm, JFK HS TV

**November 8:** Paterson School Board Election on the General Election Day. Look carefully at your ballot to find the School Board candidates. They are listed on a separate part of your ballot.

**May 15:** Jazz Brunch 2 to 5 pm, place TBA

**June 2:** 50 Book Club Celebration, at the Paterson Public Library, 5 to 7 pm. Fun, Food, and Books for our most avid readers.

We’d love to do a College Track session for you!

Call us at 973-881-8914 and ask for Doris for more information.