



EXPERIENCE THE FUTURE

At the core of the Freire Schools mission is the belief that **every student has the power to build the future**. Preparing all kids for college and their professions ensures their futures are boundless. That is why Freire Schools is committed to ensuring that all students participate in engaging and meaningful professional prep programming as part of their college prep experience.

Freire Forward is a network-wide experiential learning initiative that helps Freire students connect their classroom learning to hands-on experiences and begin to establish a vision and framework for their future. Through classroom lessons, dual enrollment courses, career days, job exposure field trips, and now our new Freire Experienceship Program, our students cultivate work readiness skills while forming valuable connections with businesses and professionals that guide and inform them as they plan for their post-Freire lives.

Professional career exposure programs significantly impact students, both during high school and in their future lives. These programs increase college matriculation rates, lower unemployment rates, and expose students to contacts and career options they may not have previously considered.

Freire Forward is made possible through a deep and diverse network of business partnerships throughout the region committed to creating real-world opportunities for kids to experience the future and dream bigger than they ever have before.



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PROFESSIONAL PREP AT FREIRE SCHOOLS

Under the leadership of Director of Career Exploration Joe Hennelly, Freire Schools has been expanding our Freire Forward programming, integrating hands-on professional prep opportunities into our college prep model. Three of our exciting professional prep programs include:

CAREER FAIRS/CAREER DAYS

To expose all students to different careers, colleges, and trades, we host annual career fairs or career days at every campus. We invite regional business professionals and community leaders to spend a few hours talking with students about their jobs and companies and the paths they took to get to where they are today. This is a great opportunity for students to learn about a wide array of professions in a short period, often tied to classroom career exposure lessons.

In 2023-24, some of our career fair partners included Children's Hospital of Pennsylvania, Boeing, Philadelphia Flyers, Mayor's Office of Philadelphia, OCF Real Estate, PHLI Sports media group, Philadelphia Police Department, and attorneys from the Philadelphia Defenders Association.

JOB EXPOSURE TRIPS

In 2023-24, we launched a job exposure program. Our high school students take career interest surveys and we then match them to field trips where they have opportunities to tour workplaces and shadow professionals aligned to their interests. A typical trip includes an ice breaker activity, students interviewing company employees, a company tour, a lunch with informal conversation between students and company employees, and time for reflection. Our pilot year job exposure trip partners included Gambone Group, REC Philly, Delmarva Power, CITI Bank, Reed Smith LLP, and WSFS Bank.

EXPERIENCESHIP PROGRAM

In 2023-24 we also launched our Experienceship Program as the centerpiece of the Freire Forward professional prep program. In this two-week paid internship program, students take part in soft skills lessons, an improv team building leadership course, job shadowing, and reflection on the experience and lessons learned. Both students and participating businesses found the Experienceship Program to be quite meaningful, and we are looking to expand the number of students and campuses served in summer 2025.

"The Experienceship taught me the fundamentals of finding the career that could best fit me ... I've met and gained connections with people that will last a lifetime and possible career opportunities after my four years of college."

HASAN LOPEZ

TECH Freire Class of 2024, Lincoln University Class of 2028

2024 EXPERIENCESHIP

HIGHLIGHTS

In June 2024, we launched our Experienceship Program with our first cohort of 30 students from TECH Freire and Freire High (selected from over 75 applicants). Students were immersed in a two-week paid internship program that combined soft skills and leadership training with six days of job shadowing at eleven different companies/organizations. And, our students jumped right in, engaging with constituents with Philadelphia City Councilmember Jeffery Young Jr.'s office, executing social media projects with TCG's marketing team, touring jobsites with D'Lauro & Rodgers and Quantum Restoration, meeting in judge's chambers to debrief a case, and much more.

The Experienceship not only enriches students' learning experiences, but it also makes them more competitive when applying to college and for jobs, and helps them develop critical skills that are valued in the workplace (e.g. punctuality, problem-solving, communication skills, collaboration skills).

"I would do this experienceship again because it pushed me out of my comfort zone, I connected with people I would have never met, and I became more open minded in career fields I haven't considered before."

A'YANA HOLLOWAY

Freire High School Class of 2024, Penn State Class of 2028



"Bringing the Freire students through the jobsites made it an exciting experience for everyone. The people on the jobsite loved showing the kids around and telling them what they have been working on over the past couple months. The Freire students were just as excited learning about all the manpower, materials, coordination, and communication that goes into all our projects."

JEFF TABERY

President, D'Lauro and Rodgers Inc.



PARTNERS

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The Office of Philadelphia Municipal Court Judge Colleen McIntyre Osborne
Parkway Corporation
Quantum Restoration Services
TCG (Tester Construction Group)
The Office of PA Representative Ben Waxman
The Office of Philadelphia City Councilmember Jeffery Young, Jr.

ABOUT FREIRE SCHOOLS

Freire Schools is a high-achieving urban public charter school network with four campuses serving about 2,000 students in grades 5-12 in Philadelphia, PA, and Wilmington, DE. Committed to ensuring every student can succeed and grow through a college prep program infused with professional prep opportunities, Freire Schools was recognized in 2023 by Stanford University's Center for Research on Education Outcomes (CREDO) as a "gap-busting" charter network for closing the achievement gap.