

Platinum Minds



“SOAR TO YOUR HIGHEST POTENTIAL”

Platinum Minds

95 W. Main Street
Suite 5-166
Chester, New Jersey
07930

Contact Information:

Mrs. Yvette Long
Executive Director

Phone: (908) 470-1459
Fax: (908) 374-6954

Visit us online at:

www.PlatinumMinds.org

*Founded in 2006,
Platinum Minds is a
privately funded, NJ
501c3 non-profit
organization.*



Board of Directors

Janaka DeSilva
Tanya Jeffords
Peter Neuberg
Karen Kerby

Advisory Board

Marilyn Carnicelli
Daniel Patracuolla
Eva Outhwaite
William Vaughan

Advisory Council

David Donovan
Timothy Duffy
Michael Ewing

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Platinum Minds? *Platinum Minds* is a non-profit, educational and leadership development organization that provides academically motivated boys from challenged communities (i) a strong literacy program for students (grades 1-5) and (ii) assistance in secondary school placement, educational mentoring, and leadership development (grades 6-12).

Why Platinum Minds? *Platinum Minds* was created in response to the increasing dropout rates, especially for young male students from underprivileged neighborhoods where there are insufficient resources to adequately sustain and encourage learning. With a focus on the male student population in NJ, she developed a program that reinforces and expands education in a supportive environment, celebrating achievement, leadership in the community, and the value of college and career goals.

What are Platinum Minds programs? *Platinum Minds* programs: **Arête Leaders: a leadership program developing young men** (Grades 6-12) with two component a. **Frederick Douglass Reading & Literacy Arête Component:** (Grades 1-5), b. **Bridges – Peers Connect Arête Component:** "Bridges" provides students with an opportunity to assume leadership roles, by joining with students from varying backgrounds and socio-economic classes. **Educational Scholarship Initiative:** Our scholarship program provides deserving students an opportunity to attend top-tier, private secondary and parochial schools. **Mentoring Initiative:** Our students are matched with caring and supportive adult mentors and role models. **Summer Initiative:** Every summer, we work to place our students in interesting programs in which they can explore new activities, experience the out-of-doors, and have fun!

Who are the students participating in Platinum Minds? We work with our younger students (grades 1-5) to provide a strong foundation in reading, and then offer a more comprehensive academic and leadership program to our older students (grades 6-12) in our Student Scholar programs. This year we have 23 Student Scholars from northern New Jersey including Newark, Asbury Park, South Orange, and Jersey City. Additionally, we have another 120 boys participating in our "Frederick Douglass Reading Programs" (grades 1-5) and "Connect to Your Dreams" (grades 5-8).

How are Student Scholars selected? Each year, Student Scholars are recommended to our program through their school, church, or a community organization. Through interviewing and academic assessment, we identify those candidates who show great leadership potential, and a commitment to the goals of our programs. Our Student Scholars participate in the *Platinum Minds* program throughout their high school years and into college. Alumni are encouraged to return as mentors and speakers, thus reinforcing the leadership skills central to our philosophy.

What makes Platinum Minds unique? We are committed to ensure the success of our young men, one student at a time, and thus focus our time and resources on a core group of potential young leaders. We work with our students throughout the academic year, mentoring outside of school and during the summer months, and even providing internships and job opportunities when available. Our goal is to ensure that these young men graduate high school, pursue higher education, and return to their communities as innovative leaders.

Profile of *Platinum Minds* Programs

- **Arête Leaders:** (Grades 6-12) The Greek term Arête refers to "being the best you can be" or "reaching your highest concern of our communities and nation as a whole. This program develops self-confidence, leadership skills, life skills, and career awareness to best equip the students to make a difference in their schools, communities, and future. Activities and workshops are designed to help students think outside their norm, foster innovative ideas, and develop strong interpersonal skills to be effective in building connections to school, family, and the community. Student scholars meet twice per month, where they also are exposed to speakers in varying careers and leaders across the community. Since 2004 Platinum Minds has help over 300 boys excel. Changing their lives and those around them for the better.
- **Frederick Douglass Reading & Literacy Arête Component:** (Grades 1-5) Reading is fundamental. Studies indicate that when students get off to a poor start in reading, they rarely catch up. In 2009, *Platinum Minds* launched a literacy program using a standardized Reading System and other specially tailored programming. Platinum Mind scholars work with small groups of elementary-age boys in two-hour sessions each Saturday morning for 10-12 weeks. The pilot program started in 2010 at the Neighborhood House in Morristown, and demonstrate success in helping students read on or above grade level. *Platinum Minds* student scholars act as mentors and work one-on-one with the younger boys in this program.
- **Bridges – Peers Connect Arête Component:** "Bridges" provides students with an opportunity to assume leadership roles by joining students from varying backgrounds and socio-economic classes on writing, speaking, and presenting common problems and concerns of our nation. The "Bridges" program allows our scholars to engage in round table and panel discussions with students from various communities. Students learn how similar they are, how together they can accomplish more as they celebrate the uniqueness of each other's opinions and approaches to problems. Solutions to problems are more likely to be effective when varying ideas, beliefs, and resolutions are allowed to influence the process.
- **Educational Scholarship Initiative:** Our scholarship program provides deserving students an opportunity to attend top-tier, private secondary, and parochial schools through a competitive selection process. Those who are awarded the scholarship are placed in exceptional education institutions throughout New Jersey.
- **Mentoring Initiative:** Our students are matched with a caring and supportive adult mentors and role models. Our volunteers provide guidance, understanding, and tutoring while helping students' master complex subjects. Mentors assist our student scholars with balancing extra-curricular activities, schoolwork, and college preparation.
- **Summer Initiative:** Every summer, we work to place our students in exciting programs in which they can explore new activities, experience the out-of-doors, and have fun! Specialty summer camp programs in such disciplines as science and mathematics are offered to students wishing to learn in these fields. Many of these camps incorporate academics, leadership development, health, and life skills. Participants receive instruction in a variety of sports not traditionally offered in urban settings. They learn about the rules of the game, etiquette, sportsmanship, positive attitudes, fair play, self-esteem, responsibility for choices, and management of emotions. These life skills are integrated throughout the program, and instructors routinely demonstrate how they apply to real-world situations. For many, this is a rare opportunity to be carefree without the looming threat of danger. They learn to communicate and get along with people from all over the world.

