

Justice Scholars: Social Justice Focused, College-Preparatory School-University Partnership

Esohe R. Osai, Ph.D., Shanyce Campbell, Ph.D., Erica Roberts,
Kaleah Malloy, Kelcey Bailey, Jackie Spiezia

University of Pittsburgh School of Education





Esohe Osai, PhD
Asst. Professor in Education



Shanyce Campbell, PhD
Asst. Professor in Education



Erica Roberts, MA Program Manager



Kelcey Bailey, MSW
Program Coordinator



Kaleah Malloy
Program Coordinator



Jackie Spiezia
Research and Evaluation Coordinator





Let's Talk!

What barriers or obstacles did you face in your first year of college?



The Systemic Challenge

Troubling racial inequities in education in our city

42%



% of White Students who graduated from PPS Earned a College Degree

16%



% of Black Students who graduated from PPS Earned a College Degree

*For Black students attending school in socioeconomically marginalized communities only 6% of student earned a college degree.

Justice Scholars is a school-university partnership focused on enhancing educational opportunities for high school students in Pittsburgh.

In partnership with the University of Pittsburgh's College in High School (CHS) program, Justice Scholars provides a rigorous college preparation program for students in underserved Pittsburgh Public Schools



Why College in High School

“ The relationship found between a rigorous high school course load and success in postsecondary education serves to encourage the spread of dual enrollment for middle and low achieving high school students... it is hypothesized that challenging students through dual enrollment programs will lead to high levels of college success. ”

Bailey, T. R., Hughes, K. L., & Karp, M. M. (2002). What Role Can Dual Enrollment Programs Play in Easing the Transition between High School and Postsecondary Education? Report for Office of Vocational and Adult Education. Washington D.C.





What Makes JSI Unique


- We intentionally work within an equity framework to serve students in underserved schools within PPS
- We offer direct support to our students for classroom success and college preparation
- We provide additional resources through workshops and out of school programming to foster non-cognitive skills, focus on justice issues, and college readiness
- CHS courses are offered to students at our schools for FREE




The Aims of the Justice Scholars

 **Educate** students about the concept of educational opportunity as a ***social justice*** priority.

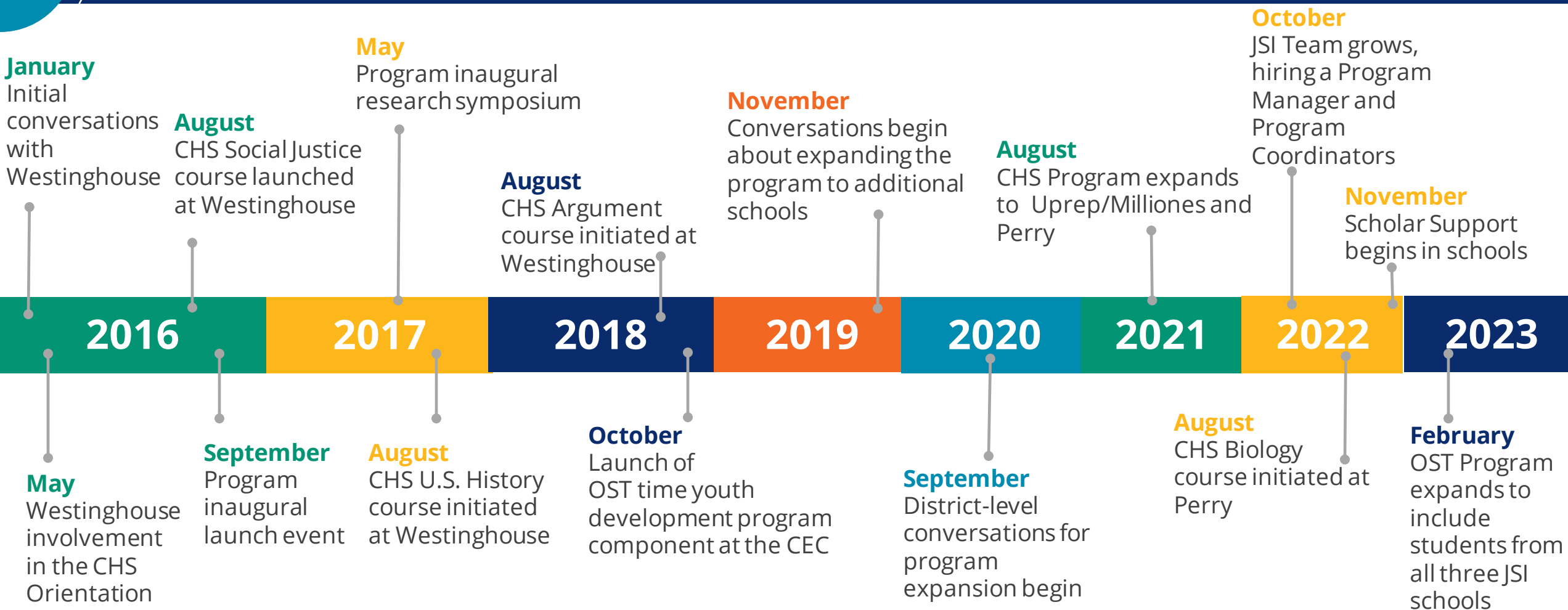
 **Enrich** students' educational prospects by providing a framework for academic achievement and skills for ***college success***.

 **Enhance** students ***writing skills*** through a cross-content literacy focus.

 **Equip** students with tools to become change agents in their school, community, and the broader world through ***relevant, engaged research projects***.



Program History Timeline



Pittsburgh
Perry
Traditional
Academy



Pittsburgh
Westinghouse
Academy
6-12



University
Preparatory
School at
Margaret
Milliones



Student Enrolled in JSI College Credit Courses

Enrollment has expanded from 13 students enrolled in a single course in the 2016-17 school year at Westinghouse, to 84 juniors and seniors in multiple classes across the three program schools in 2022-2023.

2016: Social Justice (Social Work 1000)

2017: United States 1865 - Present (HIST0601)

2018: Argument (COMMRC 0500)

2021: African American History Since 1865 (HIST 0671)

Basic Applied Statistics (STAT0200)

2022: Preparation for Biology (BIOSC 0100)

20th Century African American Literature (ENGLIT 1230)

United States to 1877 (HIST 0600)

School Year	Students Enrolled
2016-17	13
2017-18	21
2018-19	47
2019-20	53
2020-21	-
2021-22	70
2022-23	84



Justice Scholars Institute *Program Components*

School Support

Support of the College in High School courses at schools. Includes course enrollment, provision of academic support for course success, attaining needed resources for classes, and work with the school contact to address challenges and pursue opportunities.

Workshops and Events

Implementation of four Justice Scholars Institute workshops to take place across all three schools. Also includes coordination for any events that students may participate in through their involvement in the program and the College in High School students.

Teacher Collective

Development of a teacher-focused initiative to support transformative pedagogy with an emphasis on socially just institutions, curricula, and teaching practices. Includes a community of practice to foster a supportive environment that enhances our capacity to serve students' post-secondary opportunities.

Out-of-School-Time

Paid out-of-school (OST) opportunity for students to engage in conversations related to social justice and their community and to participate in youth participatory action research (YPAR).

Scholars Support

Implementation of efforts to support students' postsecondary aspirations, both at the precollegiate and collegiate levels. Includes support for the engaged scholars research paper process, college application support, and other activities to enhance prospects in the post-secondary transition.

Research and Evaluation

Conducting empirical analysis to help understand educational experiences of students in the local context and to guide the success of the program. Uses community engaged approaches to engaged stakeholders in the research process.



College Bound Workshop Series

The Justice Scholars College Bound Seminar Series is a sequence of workshops that occur throughout the year for all students enrolled in the College in High School courses.



Justice Scholars Studio

The Justice Scholars Studio is an out-of-school (OST) space that offers an opportunity for additional engagement related to social justice, equity, and community development.

- This youth-adult partnership experience uses a youth participatory action research (YPAR) methodology to invite youth to interrogate their experiences in school and in the community.
- Students are involved in self-exploration through the writing of their own story.
- Students have opportunities to participate in social justice actions in communities — tutoring younger students, volunteering at community events, and engaging in various community-based, service-learning experiences.



Youth Participatory Action Research

Youth participatory action research (YPAR) is a social justice-oriented research approach that allows youth to take initiative in positive community development.

- YPAR emphasizes skill development, apprenticeship, mentoring, and ways of healing that build intrapersonal strength and confidence.



Scholar Support



- **One on one Support in High School**
 - Relationship building
 - Help students find their strengths, interests, and purpose
 - Help students build their post-secondary plan
- **College preparation resources**
- **Scholarship resources**
- **Continued support through transition to college**



Teacher Collective

- In addition to supporting students within the program, the Justice Scholars Institute provides support for the teachers who are teaching the JSI CHS courses.
- Teachers from across the three participating schools gather monthly, reporting on progress within their classes as well as reflecting on program goals, and strategies.
- Teachers work collectively to guide and develop research questions to help inform practice.





https://youtu.be/8zqqaDR1_wk





<https://www.education.pitt.edu/about/equity-and-justice/justice-scholars-institute>

justicescholars@pitt.edu