

# EVkids Horizons

Celebrating 40 Years

Spring 2020

## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The current public health situation has touched every part of our community. While the health impact on individual EVkids students, families, volunteers, and staff has been minimal so far, our operations are significantly altered. You can find details about that on the last page of this newsletter.

As we are all seeing in our own lives, everything is different and yet so much is the same. High school seniors are still deciding where to go to college; 4th graders are still learning to read. While we may not see them in person every week as before, the work continues, the mission remains intact, and your support is critical as ever. Thanks to you, EVkids is adapting and still working to ensure youth and their families have the support they need, even in this unprecedented situation.

Especially now, I am grateful for your support.

Take care,



Eric Thompson  
Executive Director

## EVkids 5th grader schools the mayor

EVkids 5th-grader Fatoumata was shocked when she learned that she would be interviewing Boston Mayor Marty Walsh to support the Mayor's Mentoring Movement during International Mentoring Month in January.

If she was nervous, you wouldn't know it. Fatoumata traveled to the mayor's office in City Hall and smiled for the camera as they talked about life

goals, what mentoring means to them, and how to pronounce "Harvard." Fatoumata said the experience was very fun, and very cool.

The Mayor's Mentoring Movement is an initiative with Mass Mentoring Partnership, which supports EVkids, that aims to increase the number of youth mentoring relationships

in Boston. Who better to deliver that message than an EVkids mentee?

Check out the videos on the EVkids homepage to see what the mayor says when Fatoumata tells him she is going to run for the Senate one day. You'll want to vote for her too.

Check out the videos on the EVkids homepage, the mayor's instagram, or at [www.evkids.org/mayor](http://www.evkids.org/mayor) and [www.evkids.org/itsharvard](http://www.evkids.org/itsharvard)



### INSIDE:

7 EVkids seniors are charging forward to college



# EVkids Class of 2020



**Ashna**

Still deciding whether to go into sports journalism or law, this Celtics mega-fan has been accepted to four colleges so far. Here's Ashna with her tutor of four years, Liz Moison (Tufts '20).



**Enrique**

Anime enthusiast Enrique is choosing whether to go to Wentworth, Salem State, UMassBoston, or Merrimack to get his computer science degree. Here he is with tutor Aidan Kokodynski (BC '20).



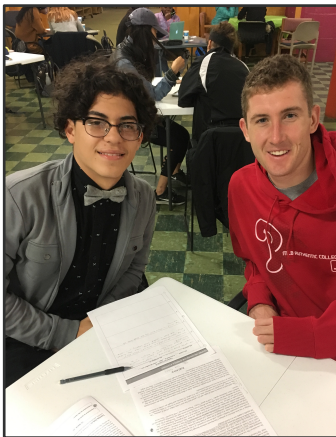
**Angelis**

A student athlete who loves volleyball, Angelis plans to put her energy to use as a social worker for school-age children. Here she is with former tutor Arianna Fisher (BC '21).



**Claudia**

This future pediatric nurse will major in pre-med at UMassBoston. Here's Claudia with Camp Co-Director Erin Ginnaty-Moore, hiking a mountain during EVkids Camp.



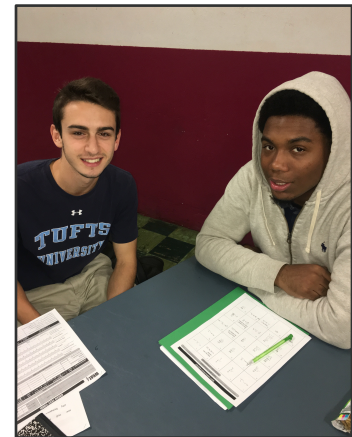
**Jancarlos**

After deciding between fashion design and electrical work, this hands-on student just doesn't want to be stuck behind a desk all day. Here's fashionable future electrician Jancarlos with former tutor Stephen Gleason (Harvard '17).



**Nazik**

Future engineer Nazik has been racking up college credits during her senior year of high school through dual enrollment at Wentworth Institute of Technology. Here she is with her tutor Emily Jane Wachtler (BC '20).



**Lascelle**

This future industrial engineer will take advantage of the Tuition-Free Community College Program by going to Bunker Hill Community College for his first two years. Here he is with his former tutor Angelo Massaro (Tufts '16).



# Rise and shine, it's SAT time! Sometimes mentoring is a 24/7 job

## Alumni Spotlight

The first time EVkids high school senior Enrique took the SAT, he had to walk four miles to get to the test site. Buses don't run that early on a weekend, and there was no one at home who could drive him. Enrique arrived on time, but exhausted, and ended up with a score he knew would not do him much good.

Enter recent Boston College graduate Ben Neuwirth ('19), who had been Enrique's tutor for two years until Ben's graduation. When he heard from Enrique about his SAT, he decided he would drive Enrique to his next SAT. On the morning of the test, Ben picked up Enrique around 6 a.m. and took him out for coffee. They talked comfortably like they normally do as they drank their coffee. Afterwards, Ben dropped Enrique off with

*Ben picked Enrique up before dawn on a Saturday so Enrique didn't have to walk four miles to take the SAT.*

plenty of time to spare.

Ben and Enrique first met in 2017, when Ben was a college junior and joined BC's service organization 4Boston. When he showed up in the basement of St. Christopher Church for Tutoring, he met a talkative and friendly high school sophomore who was very, *very* into anime. Ben didn't know anything about anime. But he would learn. Even though their interests didn't greatly overlap, they had similar personalities and

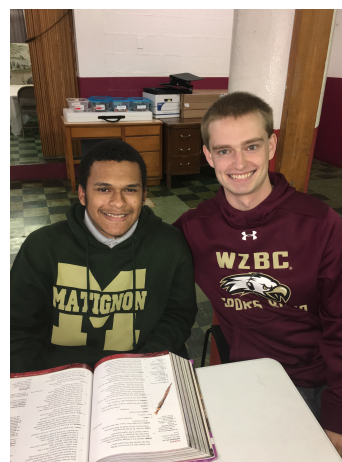
were animated by passion for their respective interests and a penchant for hard work.

Their bond really started to form during Tutor Tutee Day that fall, when they eschewed playing basketball to walk around campus together and talk instead. This was the first time either of them really opened up to one another. They talked about their lives, passions, and interests. The conversation lasted so long that they lost track of time and ended up rejoining the larger group late!

Over the two years they worked together, Ben noticed that Enrique's

focus and interpersonal skills improved. And, with much thanks to Ben for his help, Enrique is juggling multiple college acceptances and scholarship offers. Though tutors often move away after graduation, Ben stayed in Boston where got a job as an accountant. He initially hoped he would be able to continue as Enrique's tutor, but since he was new at his job, it wasn't possible.

However, with the support of the EVkids College Success Project, Ben and Enrique will now be able to continue their mentoring relationship while Enrique is in college studying computer science, starting this fall.



### EVkids events are going virtual for the rest of the spring.

DC Alumni Reunion  
April 23 @ 5:30-7 p.m.

Beers for Bright Futures  
April 24 @ 7-8:30 p.m.

NYC Alumni Reunion  
May 16 @ 5-6:30 p.m.

All events take place at  
[www.evkids.org/virtualevents](http://www.evkids.org/virtualevents)

Additional virtual alumni reunions for Boston, Chicago, California, and Harvard reunion years are in process. Find event details at [www.evkids.org/events](http://www.evkids.org/events).

# How EVkids is responding to COVID-19

This spring has been a challenging time, plunging many of us into the fear, anxiety, and scarcity that is a heart-breaking feature of the lives of many EVkids and their families. As we all do the best we can, EVkids staff and volunteers continue to support the families and children who now have to shelter in place, figure out online education with inconsistent or nonexistent technology, and make ends meet with likely interruptions in paychecks.

Earlier this month, as the COVID-19 threat became clearer, we ramped up after-school Tutoring cleaning and disinfecting procedures according to CDC guidelines. That same week, all of our partner colleges cancelled classes and sent students home, requiring Tutoring pairs to say goodbye for the semester. Tutors have been asked to write letters to their tutees, which are being delivered by EVkids staff. Where appropriate based on age and length of Tutoring relationship, staff are facilitating some pairs staying in touch via phone, text, or online.

All schools and daycares in Massachusetts have now been ordered closed until at least May 4. Program staff will continue to stay in touch with families weekly and help them with additional resources as needed. Staff are also communicating with teachers to ensure that each child is receiving the support and advocacy they need. College Success students are continuing to get 1-on-1 staff support on their college admissions journeys and while navigating college. Support has been moved entirely online or via text or phone, and college tours are suspended until universities reopen.

The tutor director-chaplain team has been in contact with tutors as they are settling in to online classes for the rest of the semester. It is a testament to the commitment of the volunteers that many came to Tutoring just to say goodbye, and have sent letters, cards, or emails to their tutees. Many have also expressed interest in continuing to support their tutees remotely.

EVkids staff has been working from home for the last several weeks; Board and staff meetings take place through videoconference. All program and fundraising events through May have been cancelled or are being moved online. Decisions about events beyond that window will be made on a case-by-case basis. Planning for Camp is still going forward, but will likely require modification based on further developments and health guidelines.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Executive Director Eric Thompson at [ericthompson@evkids.org](mailto:ericthompson@evkids.org). If you want to help youth and families through EVkids, contribute at [www.evkids.org/give](http://www.evkids.org/give) or by using the form below to ensure EVkids remains up and running to support them as the situation changes and new needs arise.

As always, thank you for being a part of the EVkids community of support.

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## Here is my contribution to the cause.

Here is my one-time gift of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

Paid by:  Check enclosed *Payable to EVkids*

Credit card *All fields below required*

**I can contribute monthly!**

Please charge \$\_\_\_\_\_ each month to my credit card below.

Email address for monthly receipt:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
*If different from the one this newsletter was mailed to*

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Security code: \_\_\_\_\_

**You can also make your one-time or recurring contribution at [www.evkids.org/give](http://www.evkids.org/give).**