

# THE FALCON POST

FOREST HILL COMMUNITY HIGH SCHOOL

## PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE



Falcon Families,

I hope each of our students and families were able to take the time to rest and recharge over Spring Break. I am sure we can all agree that the week was much needed. Now, as we advance into spring, the warmer temperatures typically tend to remind our students of the summer time. However, there are still ample amounts of goals that are ready to be reached by our scholars before we get there!

In addition to sunny days, the months of April and May bring State, AICE, and AP testing exams. The testing window will open up in the beginning of April and will not conclude until the beginning of June. Multiple communications will be used to inform our families of the specific testing dates and times Falcons will need to sit for exams. Please make sure you are currently accepting and receiving emails and phone calls from our school.

As always, I also encourage you to follow us on our social media platforms to stay involved and remain up-to-date on all the latest information. You and yours can follow us on our school Facebook account or Twitter account (@FHH\_FalconFury) to receive continuous updates. Information is also shared and discussed at our monthly School Advisory Council meetings hosted the second Tuesday of each month.

With two quarters of the school year completed, we have many fantastic achievements to be proud of at Forest Hill Community High School. As you read through the following pages, I am excited for you to view the various accomplishments our faculty and scholars have made despite the hard times faced by the community. Let's all work together in guiding our students to have a positive and successful end of the school year.

Educationally Yours,

Esther M. Rivera  
Principal

Administration

Principal

Ms. Esther Rivera

Assistant Principals

Mr. Provenzano

9th grade

Mr. Loyd

10th grade

Dr. McDonnough

12th grade

Dr. Saarela-Vening

Academies & 11th/12th IB

Mr. Greenberg

Assistant Principal

Ms. Younce

Community School

Ms. Cook

Single School Culture

Coordinator



March 2021 ◀ Volume 2 ◀ Issue 4 ◀

6901 Parker Avenue ▶ West Palm Beach, FL 33405 ▶ 561-540-2400 ▶ fhhs.palmbeachschools.org



# School Contacts

## Guidance Counselors

- ▶ Ms. Tolbert  
9th & 10th grade, A-C  
Social Services
- ▶ Mrs. Noel  
9th & 10th grade, D-M
- ▶ Mrs. Paul  
9th & 10th grade, N-Z
- ▶ Ms. Sanchez  
9th & 10th grade ELL
- ▶ Ms. Corcoran  
11th grade, E-Z  
AICE Diploma
- ▶ Mrs. Kokotoff  
11th/12th grade, A-D  
IB, DP & CP
- ▶ Mrs. Proby  
12th grade, E-Z
- ▶ Mr. Lares  
11th & 12th ELL

## Coordinators

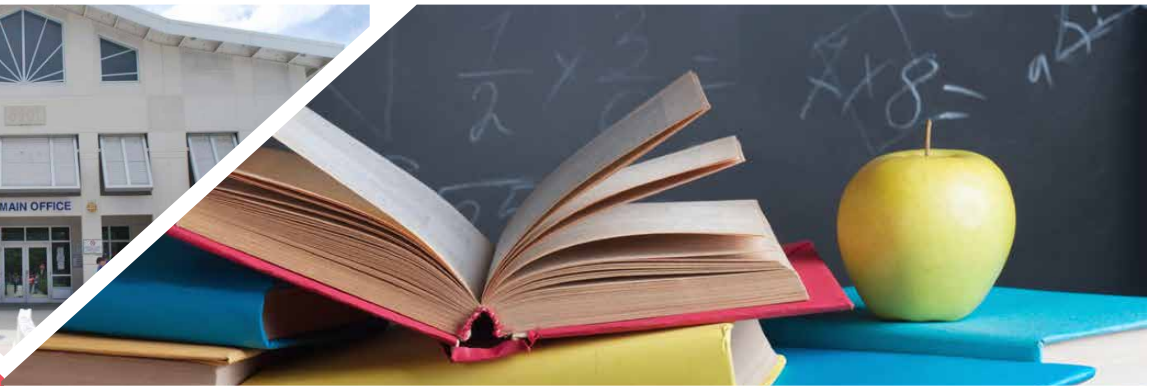
- ▶ Ms. Lopez  
ESE
- ▶ Ms. Palan  
ELL
- ▶ Ms. Malone  
IB MYP & Choice  
Programs
- ▶ Mrs. Skowron  
IB, DP & CP
- ▶ Dr. Vening  
AICE & AP

## Activities

- ▶ Mrs. Cook  
Director

## Athletics

- ▶ Coach Kotouch  
Director



## Guidance Corner

### Credit Recovery Opportunity

If you received a D or an F on your report card for the 1st semester, there is an opportunity to recover the credit through our Co-Enrolled, after school, E2020 program. E2020 is a self-paced online program that will take approximately 6-8 weeks to complete in order to earn credit for a failed class, and/or improve your GPA. This opportunity is available both virtually and in room 4-302 Mondays and Thursday from 4-6PM with Ms. Waksmunski. Reach out to your school counselor to sign up today! In-person space is limited.

### Has Your Child Completed Their Community Service Hours?

Community service is defined as non-paid volunteer work with a non-profit agency. Students need a minimum of 20 hours in order to earn their high school diploma. Completing this requirement is one way that students can prepare for graduation before 12th grade year.

Here are a few ways that students can earn hours

1. Join the Forest Hill key club and participate in the volunteering opportunities
2. Bike Repairs - Jack the Bike Man - <https://jackthebikeman.org/volunteer/>
3. Community Angel Network -- <https://www.pbccan.org/> (search for local nonprofits)

### WAIT!! THERE'S ONE MORE

Due to COVID-19 students can now earn hours for virtually tutoring a younger student (including siblings). Students can also earn hours if it is necessary for them to provide childcare for a younger sibling after school. This option is limited up to 20 hours only.

If your child qualifies to meet community service hours in this way, please email your child's counselor with the following information:

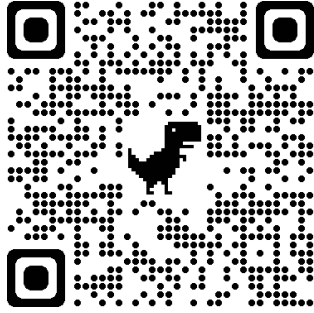
- ▶ Student name and number
- ▶ Dates of service
- ▶ Hours per day
- ▶ Description of service (tutoring/responsible for the care of ...)

Don't wait! Take advantage of our upcoming spring break. Submit your hours to us as you complete them.



### Guidance Website

To access our Guidance Department site, scan the QR code below! Students who need to request an appointment with a counselor can visit this site and complete the short Google Form.



### Honor Roll Celebrations

With the assistance of our School Advisory Council and Guidance Department, our school has been able to continue hosting Honor Roll celebrations for our scholars that have earned All A's and A's and B's for Quarters 1 and 2.

For both Quarters, Forest Hill held an on campus celebration following social distancing guidelines and a drive-thru celebration for our virtual Falcons to pick-up their much deserved certificates, masks, and t-shirts. The school plans on hosting another celebration for Quarter 3.

Many thanks to our Chorus, Band, Latinos in Action, and Student Government programs for their help with providing entertainment, decorations, and a lot of energy!



### Beginning Teacher of the Year

*Pictured: Shari Verge (Reading Coach), Ashley O'Brien, Esther Rivera*

Ms. Ashley O'Brien has been selected as the Beginning Teacher of the Year for Forest Hill Community High School. Ms. O'Brien joins our school as a first year reading teacher and has also hopped into our athletics where she has coached girls and boys volleyball.

We appreciate all of the hard work and dedication Ms. O'Brien puts into executing fun lesson plans for her ninth grade classes. She has a holistic approach to teaching and not only focuses on the learning standards, but also adds life lessons on how to be kind and respectful people. We sure are lucky to have her here!



### Mentor Teacher of the Year

*Pictured: Ashley O'Brien, Shari Verge, Mrs. Harper*

Congratulations to Mrs. Shakena Harper! She has been selected as Forest Hill's Mentor Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Harper is a superb reading instructor for our tenth grade students and has been teaching for nineteen years in the School District. She mentors our newest reading teacher, Ms. O'Brien, and works with her to develop teaching strategies that will move students to become proficient readers.

We are lucky to have Mrs. Harper on our campus, as she is an educator that is creative, strong, and cares deeply about the success of her students.

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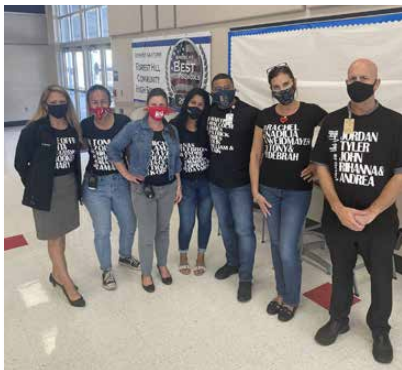
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## Heroes on the Hill

The month of February brought celebrations honoring African American History, organized by Mrs. Emmanuel-Kelly and Mrs. Proby. Each day highlighted a hero selected by an administrator from different categories, such as, African American Athletes, Local African American Heroes, African American Authors, and more.

Teachers also joined in on the celebration by changing their Google Classroom banners, adding information to their 'Bitmoji' classrooms, and also decorating their physical classroom doors!

Forest Hill enjoyed taking the time to reflect and celebrate on the many achievements of African Americans in all fields.



## Falcon Chorus is in a New York State of Mind

A big congratulations goes to our Chorus Director, Mr. Frederick, and his choral group, Dimension 20. Dimension 20 has been selected to open for the Radio City Rockettes in New York City next December 2021. The group, which is made up of 13 students, will perform three selections in front of thousands of fans!

Dimension 20 will also tour the famous Music Hall, meet and greet renown Rockettes, and site see in the Big Apple!

In addition to their invitation to New York City to perform with the Rockettes, Dimension 20 has also been invited to perform in Carnegie Hall in the Spring of 2022 as part of the COA Nationals for Top Choirs. Word is traveling fast about the talents of this fine group and Forest Hill is very proud of them and all the work they have done to shine.



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 3300 Forest Hill Boulevard  
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 Issue #4

## "Baby Come Back"

We are ready for our students to start making their way back to school campus for brick and mortar learning! Our custodians have been working hard to make sure our campus is sanitized and safe for all of our students, faculty, and staff members. If your scholar is distance learning and would greatly benefit from coming back to school to meet academic success, let us know today and we would gladly welcome him or her back on campus. You can email [Lauren.Cook@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:Lauren.Cook@palmbeachschools.org) to make the switch and come back today!

**FOREST HILL HIGH SCHOOL**  
**"BABY COME BACK TO SCHOOL"**  
**WE MISS YOU!**  
 Ready to make your way back on campus? Is distance learning not working out for you? Contact Ms. Cook to schedule your return at 561-540-3089 or [Lauren.Cook@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:Lauren.Cook@palmbeachschools.org)

**FOREST HILL HIGH SCHOOL**  
**"Bebe Vuelve" a la Escuela**  
**Te Extrañamos!**  
 ¿Listo para hacer tu camino de regreso a Forest Hill? ¿El aprendizaje a distancia no funciona para usted? Llama al 561-540-3089 o escribe a [Lauren.Cook@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:Lauren.Cook@palmbeachschools.org)



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 CRISTINA LAMPURI, M.D., F.A.A.D.  
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## Thank You, Coach Blessington

After eight successful years as head football coach, Jude Blessington is stepping down to spend more time with his family. Being a high school coach, especially over football, often requires countless hours of working with students during both the season and off season. Coach Blessington was the type of coach that dedicated all of his time to coaching the whole student. In addition to time spent preparing and practicing football during summer, fall, and spring, Blessington held SAT tutoring sessions for his boys to help make sure they were graduation and post-secondary ready.

It was not an easy eight years for Coach Blessington. Prior to him taking over the team, the Falcons had won only two games over the previous two seasons. Through a lot of hard work, dedication, and patience, he was able to lead the Falcons to six winning seasons. In particular, the 2017 season brought the Falcons their first playoff game for the first time in over 30 years.

Jude Blessington and his wife, Valerie, have three young children at home that are very involved in their own sports and activities. By stepping down as coach, he will be able to spend more time with his family. We are so very appreciative of the hard work Coach Blessington has put into growing the football program and helping our student-athletes to become the best they can be on the field and in the classroom.

It was recently announced that offensive coordinator, Jim Basford, has been promoted to head coach for the Falcons. Coach Basford was one of Coach Blessington's right hand men and played a large role in building the program. Many thanks to Coach Blessington and best wishes for a bright future to Coach Basford.



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## Alumni Spotlight



*Beatriz Ramon '15*

Beatriz Ramon is a 2015 IB Diploma recipient from Forest Hill Community High School (FHHS). Since her departure from FHHS, she graduated magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Florida's Honors program with a degree in Political Science, International Relations, and Public Leadership. She served as a Graham Center Fellow at the Bob Graham Center for Public Service, a Local Government Fellow for the City of Gainesville, and worked as a paralegal for the Legal Aid Society of Palm Beach County in the Immigrant Advocacy Project where she helped assist in cases concerning undocumented abused children and battered women. She is currently a Public Policy Fellow for the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute.

Beatriz was born in Havana, Cuba, and later immigrated to the United States with her family; she will be attending Harvard Law School in the fall in pursuit of becoming an attorney.



*Aldair Hernandez '18*

Aldair Hernandez graduated from Forest Hill Community High School with his classmates in the Spring of 2018. He was an active member in an array of school activities including Key Club and the Student Government Association.

After graduating from high school, Aldair began his post-secondary education journey at the University of North Florida in Jacksonville, Florida. It is there that he is majoring in Political Science with a double concentration in Public Administration and Public Policy. Mr. Hernandez served as President of the Residence Hall Association, an Orientation Leader, and campus Tour Guide all during his tenure in college. One of the roles he is most proud of is his participation in assisting the President's Office in the creation of the Community Alliance for Student Success (CASS) program. The program was designed to pair minority students with minority leaders in the Jacksonville area.

Most recently, Aldair Hernandez was admitted to Georgetown University in Washington D.C for their Masters in Emergency and Disaster Management program.

## Welcome, Mr. Greenberg!

Forest Hill recently welcomed a new Assistant Principal to our school. Please join us in providing a warm welcome to Mr. Larry Greenberg. Mr. Greenberg has worked within the Palm Beach County School District for 27 years and is excited to become our newest Falcon!



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## Senior Shake Down

Class of 2021,

- ▶ Do you need community service hours?
- ▶ Are you missing credits and need more time on E20/20?
- ▶ Do you need SAT or ACT tutoring?
- ▶ Do you need help writing your college essay or completing the FAFSA?

This Spring, we are hosting Senior Shakedown throughout several Saturday dates.

Be sure to come onto campus and get the help you need. For information, reach out to Mrs. Proby, Mr. Lares, Mrs. Kokotoff, Ms. Cook, or Dr. McDonnough!

We are all here for YOU and want to see a 100% graduation rate this year for Forest Hill High School.

Check out the flyer below for all of our upcoming "Senior Shakedown" Saturdays!

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Meet in the Caf

**Mar 13**  
Credit Recovery; SAT Tutoring, & Community Service Hours  
9AM TO 11AM  
Meet in the Caf

**Apr 10 & 24**  
Credit Recovery; SAT Tutoring, & Community Service Hours  
9AM TO 11AM  
Meet in the Caf

**May 8th & 22**  
Credit Recovery; SAT Tutoring, & Community Service Hours  
9AM TO 11AM  
Meet in the Caf

Want to know MORE?  
Contact your Counselor ASAP!

You can also email your Senior AP, Dr. McDonnough at:  
Pamela.McDonnough@palmbeachschools.org!!!

