



November 21, 2016

## College leadership center opens at Markham Intermediate School

by DIANE C. LORE

A college leadership center for seventh- and eighth-graders officially opened Monday at Markham Intermediate School (I.S. 51), Graniteville.

The center is a partnership between Wagner College, Port Richmond High School and Markham, explained Markham Principal Nicholas Mele.

“The idea is to get students used to the idea that they are going to apply to and go on to college in a few years. These are students who wouldn’t necessarily be exposed to the expectation at home,” he said.

Education officials, including Mele, Wagner College President Dr. Richard Guarasci, Port Richmond Principal Tim Gannon, and Staten Island Schools Superintendent Anthony Lodico, cut the ribbon to the second-floor classroom, as curious students peered inside.

The center will feature a library of materials on careers and college classes, as well as programs available in city public high schools, along with opportunities available for community service work in the Port Richmond neighborhood.

Markham teachers and staff have identified about 18 seventh- and eighth-graders to serve on the school’s Leadership Team, which will also be based out of the office. Those students will organize and sponsor activities for their peers to benefit the school and community.

Gannon said he was pleased that Port Richmond could serve as the model for the new center. “We’d like to think of it as a pipeline, a continuum, a path students can follow that will guide them from intermediate school to high school, to college,” Gannon said.

Guarasci also said he was pleased to see the effort extended to middle school students. Wagner will provide a full-time counselor to staff the office at Markham, as well as other resources for students.

Markham was one of 22 pilot schools throughout the city selected in June to participate in the Department of Education’s “College Access for All” program.

Through “College Access for All” intermediate school students will have the opportunity to visit a college campus by the 2018-19 school year, and there will be new student and parent workshops themed around high school, college and career success.