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# 2025 Evaluation Report

*provided by 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders*



**“The best program I've ever been to, thanks to everyone, this program has defined an essential part and pillar of my future. This is the place that makes me feel comfortable and where I want to be, I will be.” -Santiago Morales, Cross Keys High School, Class of 2026**



# ABOUT THE PROGRAM

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Founded in 1989, 21st Century Leaders (21CL) is a non-profit organization that connects, transforms, and inspires high school students in Georgia to leverage inclusion, explore career opportunities, and become leaders in their school, community and ultimately the workforce.

The Film and Entertainment Institute (FEI), **sponsored by Warner Bros. Discovery**, is a week-long, residential summer leadership institute for high school students in Georgia. In its 20th summer, this institute focuses on providing equitable access for all students to receive high level leadership training and workforce development for the film and entertainment industry. Held at Georgia Institute of Technology on June 15-20, 2025 for 53 high school students from across the state, the institute took diverse leaders on an exploration of media careers and leadership development through hands-on experiences with industry professionals, workshops, student-led productions, networking sessions, and behind the scenes tours. Students walked away with a life-changing experience through professional development, including dining etiquette, elevator pitches, and working in teams to present a final pitch presentation.



## Statewide Student Diversity

**53** Students

**46** High Schools

**18** Counties

**70%** Female Identifying

**30%** Male Identifying

**55%** African American

**21%** Caucasian

**11%** Hispanic/ Latino

**6%** Asian

**6%** Other/ Mixed

**2%** Middle Eastern/Northern  
African

**“I definitely came out of my shell as a leader more and learned how to work with many different people.”**

- Mia Linco, Central Gwinnett High School, Class of 2026

**20%**

of students reported that this was their first time interacting with peers outside of their geographic area

# Student Impressions & Impact



**"It's a once in a lifetime experience that can teach you a lot, and to pass it up would be a big mistake, especially if you want to work in the film industry." - John Clark, Northgate HS, Class of 2026**

**"I am more of a leader than I thought. "**  
-Destiny Cochran, Ringgold High School, Class of 2027

## LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

**98%** of students reported that their **Critical Thinking skills and Business Knowledge improved** after attending the program

**96%** of students reported that their **confidence as a leader increased** because of the program.

**96%** of students found that the program helped **improve their Interpersonal skills, networking and teamwork skills.**

**94%** of students are **more likely to seek out a leadership role** or continue seeking out leadership roles



**"My biggest takeaway was to take as many opportunities as you can. Take those internships. Shadow someone. Learn about the career you want to pursue before you realize you don't want to do it. And make connections. They'll help you later in life." -Brooklyn Fields, Jefferson County High School, Class of 2026**



# Student Impact

21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders' programs are focused on developing skills in seven core leadership competencies. Students reported understanding the following competencies and knowing how to use them or expand them, after attending the Film & Entertainment Institute.

**92%**

**PROBLEM  
SOLVING**

**90%**

**INTEGRITY  
& TRUSTY**

**88%**

**COMMUNICATING  
EFFECTIVELY;  
TEAM BUILDING**

**86%**

**CAREER  
AMBITION**

**80%**

**SELF  
DEVELOPMENT**

**80%**

**ACTION  
ORIENTED**



## Access + Opportunities

**56%** of students reported that this was their first time visiting a corporate campus/office

**44%** of students reported that this was first time participating in a program focused on developing leadership skills

**26%** of students reported that FEI was their first time on a college campus.

**"I can take up space, that I can be a voice."**

**-Lily Perry, Murray County High School, Class of 2027**



# Student Impressions & Impact



**"My biggest take away from touring the Warner Brothers studio was that breaking into the film and entertainment industry takes a lot of hard work and that getting any experience and networking is integral to success."**

-Lisa Saxon, Dekalb Early College Academy, Class of 2026

## CAREER READINESS

**88%** of students reported that they are clearer in knowing their career path after high school

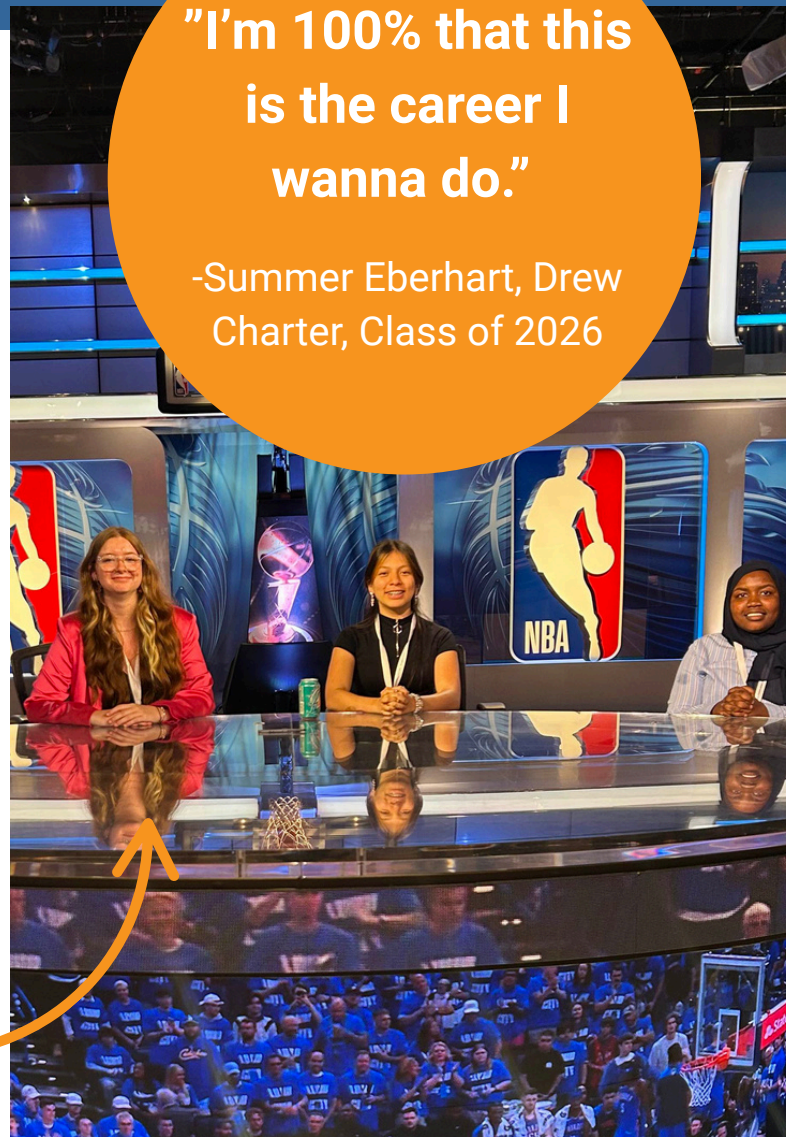
**64%** of students career Interest was reaffirmed as a result of the program

**58%** of students **discovered a new career field** that they are now interested in that they didn't realize prior to attending

**"You will leave this program a different person. You will know what it is like to be an authentic and true leader...and will get experiences most kids will not get and make connections that will last lifetimes. I would say do not pass up the opportunity to become a 21st Century Leader!"** - Rosalie Brune, Davidson Fine Arts, Class of 2027

**"I'm 100% that this is the career I wanna do."**

-Summer Eberhart, Drew Charter, Class of 2026





# INSPIRING YOUTH TO LEAD

## 103 Volunteers



**"Thank you to *Jacquelyn Nestinger*, she was so inspiring to me and gave me great advice as a student who really doesn't know what they want to do in life, I truly feel like we connected and she's a truly awesome person, I can see she loves what she does and she was made for it."** -Aaliyah Willis, Rockdale Magnet School, Class of 2026

**"I really enjoyed this week; thanks for all the WBD employees who came to talk to us. I certainly enjoyed, and felt like I gained a lot from your presentations especially the CNN correspondents *Isabel Rosales and Gustavo Valdez*. I want to be a Journalist, so it was great to hear from actual correspondents."** -Jackson Lee, Chamblee High School, Class of 2026



**"Thank you so much to all the incredible WBD volunteers for creating such a meaningful and inspiring event. Your kindness, energy, and generosity truly stood out today. It was clear how much heart you put into every conversation and activity. I walked away feeling more motivated, supported, and connected, and that's entirely because of the amazing environment you helped create. You made a real difference, and I'm so grateful for the time and care you shared with all of us. Thank you for showing up and showing us what true community looks like."**  
-Jace Williams, Westlake High School, Class of 2026



# Speed Networking with



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**"This was probably my favorite part of any of the sessions, I loved talking and connecting with the WBD employees and they all had good conversations and gave amazing advice."**

-Tessa Hayes, Jefferson County High School, Class of 2026

**"I was a bit nervous about the Speed Networking at first, but after getting to meet the WBD employees I could tell they really loved being there. They were such a diverse group of people that had so much knowledge to offer."**

- Marlee Williams, Dekalb School of the Arts, Class of 2026



**46%**

of students created and delivered their first elevator speech

**42%**

of students reported seeing **someone successful who looks like them** in a career or position they are interested in.

## Leadership Dinner



**I had never experienced eating in such a fancy setting that required table etiquette so I'm thankful for the opportunity.** - Aaliyah Willis, Rockdale Magnet School, Class of 2026

**I really liked how Ms. Robynne (Gordon) said that "a delay is not a denial" because I often worry about everything falling apart if I get a little behind. I took away that setbacks are normal, but it's important to remember that they don't define you and what you may think is a mistake now, is just character development, and it will shape you into who you will become in the future.**

- Kristen Rickman, Columbus HS, Class of 2027







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# Production Challenge



**90%**

of students reported  
that they are now  
interested in pursuing a  
career opportunity at  
Warner Bros. Discovery  
as a result of this  
program



**98%**

of students reported  
that their knowledge of  
Media Production  
expanded because of  
this program

**“My biggest take away was that there is so much more that goes on behind the scenes than we could ever even imagine! It made me appreciate more of the work that we see on our screens because so much goes on!” - Rosalie Brune, Davidson Fine Arts Magnet School, Class of 2027**

**“My biggest takeaway from the Behind- the-Curtain: Techwood Studios Tour was learning more about all the different aspects of production and how teamwork really does play a role in making the final product the best it can be. Overall, the tour really showed me that even the “smallest” roles have a big impact!” - Niya Meadows, Woodland HS, Class of 2026**

**“I never actually had an impression (of WBD) before but now I just loved it actually. I one day want to work there, I love the work environment and how they value team work and diversity.” - Hadil Adam, Clarkston HS, Class of 2026**





# Behind The Scenes Tour



**"I had no idea that there were so many job opportunities in the film industry so it was very interesting to learn about all of them."**

**- Isabella Judd, Lanier High School, Class of 2027**

**"The film industry in Atlanta is way bigger than I ever thought it was, even so that Trilith is the biggest studio in North America".**

**-Aaliyah Willis, Rockdale Magnet School, Class of 2026**



**"My biggest takeaway from the BTS tour at Trilith was I truly do want to become a film director/cinematographer. Getting to see the different sound stages, the entire Trilith campus, and the 360 led screen room really reaffirmed by career path. Getting to see it gave me an insight into what my job in the future might look like."**

**-Marlee Williams, Dekalb School of the Arts, Class of 2026**





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# **LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE**

## *Pitch Presentations*

*During the week, students worked in teams to address a “challenge” and pitch their solution to a panel of judges. The challenge this year, presented by **Warner Bros. Discover**, involved developing a creative Social Impact Campaign, utilizing the power of brands, resources, and social good initiatives to maximize impact in communities and for the business.*



**“I learned that one of the most important aspects in the business world is overcoming biases that we may have for other people so that everyone has equal opportunities.” -Bailey Clark, The Lovett School, Class of 2026**

**“I learned that there are so many things to do and fields to pursue. We shouldn’t limit ourselves by our perceived ability or societal standards in terms of careers. We can have multiple careers, change your plan, or even strive for a field we didn’t consider ‘realistic.’” -Nife Deju, Lanier High School, Class of 2026**





# AGENDA SNAPSHOT

Sun, June 15- Fri., June 20, 2025  
@ Georgia Institute of Technology



## SUNDAY: Welcome to Film and Entertainment Institute

Program welcome and leadership workshops led by 21CL staff and alumni

## MONDAY: Warner Bros. Discovery Welcome

21CL Welcome + Overview- **21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders Staff**

Warner Bros. Discovery Corporate Overview- **Sydney Langdon, Senior Director of Corporate Social Responsibility, Priscilla Medeiros, Senior Specialist of Corporate Social Responsibility**

Special Guests- **Gustavo Valdes, CNN Correspondent, Isabel Rosales, CNN Correspondent**

WBD Early Careers Overview- **Khyra Larkin, Early Talent Sr. Recruiter, Gaby Bermudez, Early Talent Recruiter**

Lunch & Learn: Summer Intern Panel- **Moderator: Kate Jamilkowski, Corporate Social Responsibility Intern, Justin Vainder, Category Management & Strategic Sourcing (Finance) Intern, Nia Matthews, CNN & TNT Sports Inclusion Intern, Brylee Gregory, TNT Sports Talent Relations Intern**

Behind the Curtain: **Techwood Studios Tour**

Introduce Final Challenge- **Kimberlin Bolton, Manager, Corporate Social Responsibility**

Corporate Headshots and Work on Final Challenge

Alumni Roundtables Networking- **21CL Alumni**



## TUESDAY: WBD Lights, Camera, Action!

21CL Tuesday Overview + Welcome- **21<sup>st</sup> Century Leaders Staff**

Special Guest Speaker- **Lauren Jbara, On-Air Talent, WBD Sports**

Speed Networking with WBD

Lunch & Final Projects Workshop

Studio to Screen: Skill Sets that Drive Production- **Careers in the CNN & TCM Studios**

Bowling!

## WEDNESDAY: Embracing Differences and Overcoming Bias

Embracing Differences and Overcoming Bias- **Patrick Solomon, Co-Founder, Lawanda Graham, Consultant, The Collective 180, 21CL Advisory Council**

Group Project/ Challenge Time

Dinner Etiquette- Professionalism Matters! - **21CL Staff**

Leadership Dinner + Dinner Panelists- **Tania Garcia, Chief Marketing Officer, 21CL Board of Directors; Robyne Gordon, Sr. Director, Legal Operations, Tyler Perry Studios; Mallom Liggon, Executive Director, Strategic Partnerships at WBD; Jacquelyn Nestinger, VP of People and Culture for US Networks at WBD; Quiana Pinckney, VP of Communications, Comcast, 21CL Board of Directors**

21CL Talent Show

## THURSDAY: Leadership on Set

Breakfast Sponsored by Chick-Fil-A



On Set Tour: Behind the Scenes- **Trilith Studios**

Art Experience Tour

Studio Tour Experience (Stage 19 Experience, Stage 22 Experience)

Lunch + Learn: Film Catering Stage 23- **Supported by Hanna Brothers**

Trilith Institute + Workshop



## FRIDAY: Presentation Day

Challenge Presentations! - **Brandi Harrison, Owner, Launch Pointe Productions, Contractor, WBD, 21CL Alumna, William Holley, Production Manager I, Content Creation and Moderation WBD, 21CL Alumni Board, Priscilla Medeiros, Senior Specialist of Corporate Social Responsibility, and Kate Jamilkowski, WBD Intern**

Leadership Celebration- **21CL**