



phillips brooks house association

2017 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

pbha.org

Fall 2017

SUP is Family

Karina Buruca '18

Summer Programming
Group Officer



The Summer Urban Program (SUP) is not just a summer camp. It is a family. And working for SUP is not just about creating a curriculum or managing a staff. It is about creating a safe space in which our children can learn and grow.

My journey with SUP started in the Mission Hill Summer Program (MHSP), where I found my first source of inspiration in Chris Pizarro. Chris started the camp when he was five, then worked there as a junior counselor throughout high school, became a senior counselor and ultimately a director. I was inspired by his commitment to his community, his dedication to making a difference, and, most importantly, his love for his staff. As someone who did not know

anything about Mission Hill, the people in the community, or the culture, it was heartwarming to me to join a staff that very quickly felt like a family.

In my second summer with SUP, I worked in my home community with the Cambridge Youth Enrichment Program (CYEP). There I found a second source of inspiration in my co-director, Javion Rookard, and realized that such profound relationships are not a coincidence. This is what SUP is all about.

Last fall, during my first semester as the Summer Programming Group Officer, I immediately felt the excitement of a most impressive group of camp directors when I walked into our first Friday meeting. Being in a room with such an outstanding group of students, some of whom were returning for a second, third, fourth summer or more, shows you the impact the children of SUP have on all of us.

Throughout this past summer, I saw the relationships between staff and camper blossom in amazing ways. I saw a fourth grade class learn about communism and actually understand it. I saw a middle-school class talk about why being a black man in today's society is scary. I saw a shy junior coun-

selor lead a classroom. I even saw senior counselors and directors stay up late the night before camp to make sure they did everything they could to make the next day the very best for their campers.

"As a member of such a loving and supportive team, I have formed new relationships I hope to carry into the future."

- SUP Senior Counselor

As a child raised in the Cambridge projects by a single mother, I understand firsthand the importance of SUP. Without programs like SUP I would not be in college today. This program, a second home for children in which to grow and learn in safety and with support, is necessary but all too rare. At SUP, I have learned that it is not just about the summer you work, but rather the long lasting relationships you find, the never ending love you receive, and the dedication of college students, community members, and PBHA staff to making this world better. To my directors, thank you for challenging me. To my staff, thank you for guiding me. To my campers and counselors, thank you for continuing to inspire us. SUP is a family and I am so proud of what our family accomplished this year.

Stand with SUP

Maria Dominguez-Gray, Ed.M. '94
Class of '55 Executive Director

The theme for SUP 2017 was:

Stand with hope. Stand with youth. Stand with SUP.

In times that feel particularly uncertain and when the news seems to reveal a new tragedy or moment of human suffering every day, standing together, let alone standing in hope, seems less and less possible. Yet this summer, like all summers with SUP, was filled with moments of children engaging with issues in the world around them, learning strategies to support themselves and others as they take a stand, and leading us in possibility. In all, 126 college students and 86 high school students offered 825 youth and their families across Boston and Cambridge seven weeks of academic learning, community building, and difference making. SUP campers practiced math and literacy for at least one hour each day, then participated in science, music, and civics workshops, went on field trips, camped in state forests, made friends, and inspired those of us who were lucky enough to see them in action. Each week, the lights in a



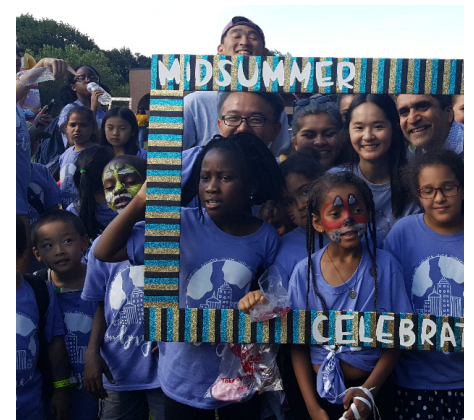
Cambridge Youth Enrichment Program (CYEP) fourth-grade classroom flashed on and off as campers traveled through a cardboard time machine to Ancient Egypt or the Civil Rights Movement. Members of Chinatown Adventure's (CHAD) oldest classroom practiced public speaking and learned elements of debate as they courageously stood in front of their peers and took a stand on current issues. At the Jackson Homestead in Newton, first and second grade students at South Boston Outreach Summer (SBOS) explored a real stop on the Underground Railroad and learned about the Abolitionist Movement in Massachusetts. Children from the Boston Refugee Youth Enrichment (BRYE) program stood united on "International Day" as they celebrated the best of their own and others' cultures. Children were also encouraged

to develop strategies and skills to help them better understand the world around them and stand as leaders. At the Roxbury Youth Initiative (RYI), children made "mindful jars" with water and glitter glue to use in calming and guided reflection techniques. Through restorative justice circles at Franklin I-O Summer (FIO), the camp community learned ways to address conflict productively. The Native American Youth Enrichment Program (NAYEP) also explored restorative practices through peace circles and turned their collective strength towards advocating for Native issues.

"My child gained a lot of knowledge, met a group of new friends, and grew stronger, more independent, and braver."

- SUP Parent

We are so proud of our children, families, and high school and college students for standing with hope. We are grateful to all of you who stand with youth every day and stood with SUP this summer. We look forward to many more years of standing together.



**BRYE ■ CHAD ■ CYEP ■ FIO ■ KSP ■ MHSP
NAYEP ■ RYI ■ RYSE ■ SBOS ■ LEADERS!**

Students Who Lead

Robert Bridgeman

Director of Programs



When I started at PBHA, I thought I would be here for six months. It was a time of great transition, and I was hired to find creative solutions to some very tricky problems. It was only after I signed on that I began to see the tremendous mission before me. Those six months turned into 24 years and some of the best times of my ca-

reer working with so many bright, young achievers assembled in one place.

One thing I have observed during these nearly two and a half decades is a shift in the dynamics between students and professional staff. In my early years, the Cabinet of student directors was a somewhat radical group of undergraduates committed to complete student leadership. They sought out social justice issues to rally around and fought for the cause. Sometimes, I think they wanted just that: a fight! I can remember times when even we, the staff, represented the enemy. When we stood in the way of their autonomy, they were determined to find their way without us. Now some-

times that worked and sometimes it didn't, but, either way, it served as a learning moment that helped our students to grow and challenged us to support them better.

Today's undergraduates, while appearing less "radical," still exhibit a unique commitment to service and passion for social change. They operate differently from back in the day, exhibiting great patience in decision making and good judgment in asking for staff support. Above all, they continue to deliver consistent programming to communities around Boston and Cambridge. It has been a privilege to work with and learn from them for so many years. They have made my time at PBHA truly unforgettable.

This Work Endures

David Dance '74

Director of Programs

This autumn, I am proud to have completed my 15th summer with SUP supporting the Roxbury Youth Initiative (RYI) and Franklin I-O Summer (FIO) camps. In truth it was more than 40 summers ago, in 1972, that I started at PBHA as a camp counselor in a precursor to SUP called the Columbia Point Special Summers Program. There have been many other jobs between now and then, but working with students to produce the magic of SUP and seeing how much they learn and grow in the summer has been one of the joys of my life.

It is with much emotion that I announce my retirement. Hardly a day passed this summer that I didn't see some example of what we call "SUP love," whether it was a Mission Hill director on the final field trip to Washington D.C. letting his group of middle-schoolers paint his nails and shave his legs, parents from FIO cooking on a camping trip and running fundraisers throughout the summer, or RYI alumni rolling in deep at the annual Midsummer Celebration and posing for a photo that I'll cherish always.

A few weeks ago I saw a graduated camper who asked me about volunteering. I reminded him that I would not be at camp



next summer, assured him that camp would be there, and encouraged him to apply. It was a reminder that, as we all come and go, this work endures. With new generations of campers and student leaders, SUP will continue to grow and change, but I have no doubt that the family we have built through PBHA will, as we have done for decades, continue to show up for the youth in our communities.

Thank you to our 2017 PBHA

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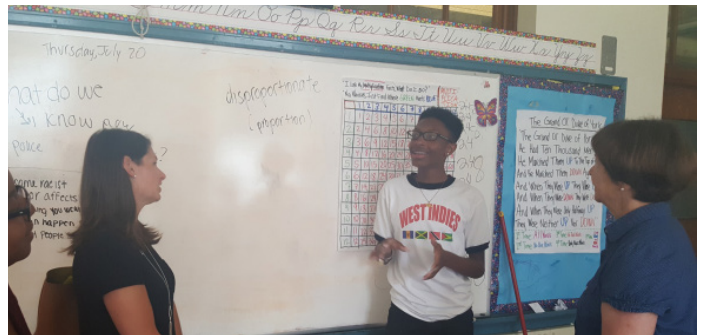
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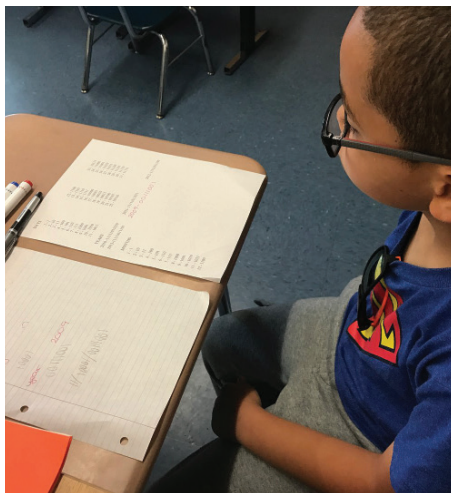
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Senior Counselors, South Boston Outreach Summer (SBOS)



Part of PBHA's commitment to education is finding effective and innovative ways to teach students. This past summer, South Boston Outreach Summer (SBOS) implemented a curriculum that used technology as the backbone for student learning. SBOS took the initiative of teaching students some of the benefits of understanding coding and programming languages.

As we move further into the age of automation and the pace of the world accelerates, students need to build the skills that will enable them to thrive in this rapidly changing environment. As technology advances, tasks typically assigned to humans are now at risk for automation. Some economists predict that by 2025, robotic inventions could replace 50% of U.S manufacturing jobs. Families across Boston and many SBOS parents still depend on those types of jobs for income.

For those reasons, SBOS wanted campers to learn the process of instructing machines to perform various tasks so they could help themselves and their families in their future.

That would be a relatively easy task if all computers were like the Siri app in our iPhones, but many machines do not speak the same language we do. Machines speak a more complicated language that, despite its universality, can be intimidating for many. Initially, we expected computer science to intimidate our young students. However, they were so eager to learn about computers that "Computer Science 101" became our most popular workshop. Their enthusiasm convinced us to devote more class time to teaching computer science.

Teaching this technology without access to enough computers was a challenge to our classes, which consisted of five and six-year-olds who initially argued about who would use the one computer we did possess. We feared this would prevent us from teaching important topics like coding, data analytics, and design, but we worked hard to make sure the students' request to learn was met. This meant creating lessons that could be completed manually. We represented 0s and 1s in binary code with black and white beads. We used cardboard boxes to build computers, and the students learned about inputs, outputs, and code errors by acting out their commands. Finally, we used

candy with algorithm games to satisfy their craving for knowledge and sweets! In seven weeks, they developed problem solving skills more impressive than we could ever have imagined.



As summer counselors, we wanted to give our students enduring skills they could apply not only in college, but in their careers and any future ventures. Moving forward, we are excited to continue working with our students through weekly check-ins with parents, monthly workshops at Harvard, and trips to different locations in Boston. We have a year-long curriculum for our students and plan to expose them to the many resources that Harvard offers. At SBOS, we believe that students can reach their full potential when the opportunity presents itself. Therefore, we wanted to be the vehicle that takes them on their path of success! The two of us devoted the summer to a group of two dozen students who, by the end, felt more like younger siblings to us. We only hope that the skills we practiced with them will continue to serve them far into their bright futures.

This Summer in Chinatown

Jesper Ke '19

Director, Chinatown ESL & Citizenship

For Chinatown ESL and Chinatown Citizenship, this summer brimmed with both excitement and uncertainty. Originally formed to provide free ESL and naturalization classes for immigrants from Boston's Chinatown, in recent years our courses have instead been hosted on Harvard's campus. But, after surveying a number of Chinatown-based adults in the spring, we found that the time and cost of traveling to Harvard was an obstacle for our students.

This summer, we moved back into Chinatown for the first time in over a decade. Ten volunteers offered three weekday evening and two weekend courses at the Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association (CCBA) on Tyler Street. This helped us connect with the Chinatown population that our program serves.

What stood out most about our move was the students: the mother who brought her anxious child to class; the student who walked two hours to get to CCBA; the sweet lady who taught us how to make eight-treasure rice pudding using what she learned in



ESL. Our students never failed to leave us smiling.

The tireless work and persistence of our tutors and students built a stronger connection with the working-class, mainly Cantonese-speaking immigrants in Chinatown. As we expand our services, we won't forget the memories and lessons gleaned from this summer in Chinatown.

Building Impact with TripAdvisor

Alexis Dominique '17

Director, Refugee Youth Summer Enrichment (RYSE)

For 31 years, Refugee Youth Summer Enrichment (RYSE) has offered an educational and empowering summer experience to recent immigrant teenagers living in Greater Boston. This spring, Kate Kerrigan from Building Impact, an organization that connects individuals and companies with opportunities to volunteer with high-impact nonprofits, contacted RYSE about collaborating. We knew we needed to address the current political climate around immigration by starting a dialogue and making RYSE a place where



students would feel not only comfortable but also empowered to tell their stories. We decided to let students tell their stories in a work of art that would be displayed in an exhibit at the end of the summer. With Kate's help, RYSE secured sponsorships from several organizations including TripAdvisor, which pledged support as part of their "Trip Gives Month." In June, RYSE staff traveled to TripAdvisor headquarters and met with several employees who had

volunteered to help. After we told them a bit about RYSE, many of the TripAdvisor folks shared stories of their own immigration or of the impact immigrants had on their lives. We spent the next few hours building art kits that included letters of encouragement from them to our students. At the end of all this "work," the entire RYSE team enjoyed a day of food and fun at TripAdvisor. We are so grateful to them and to Kate Kerrigan for working with us to complete this incredible project.

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