

Phillips Brooks House Association Summer Newsletter



<http://www.pbha.org>

September 2007

Unscheduled Stops, Remarkable Destinations

Angelico Razon '08

PBHA President



PBHA's Summer Urban Program (SUP) is more than just 12 summer camps employing 125 dedicated college

students to work with more than 900 incredible youth and children from Cambridge and Boston. While SUP provides youth jobs and a safe space for children, it is also a powerful experience for us as college students. SUP is a prime example of PBHA's mission - immersing students in communities so they can develop their skills to contribute to social change while at college and beyond.

In my third year with PBHA, I visited all the camps and became more familiar with the geographic and cultural characteristics of the communities with whom our programs work. Driving from Cambridge Youth Enrichment Program to Franklin I-O with a stop at Roxbury Youth Initiative truly tested my navigational skills. Despite carefully plotting a route, I have found things that are not always on a map when I start driving. While a map gives a

good frame of reference, hands-on experience is an invaluable teacher.

Driving with a well-studied map is similar to the overall summer experience at PBHA. "Unexpected one-way," "missed turn," and "construction ahead" were my vocabulary this summer. In the time between reading a map to then navigating Boston and Cambridge, lines on a page become real decisions on the streets. After several months of planning and laying out a vision, the summer is filled with unexpected discoveries.

This summer, I personally helped coordinate and participate in a trip to New York with the oldest group of children from Chinatown Adventure. Despite having to keep up with the challenging pace of the summer, it was worthwhile for me to see the awe in the faces of the youth when they were served a banquet in downtown New York and climbed to the top of the Empire State Building. Although transportation did not always come through as planned and we had to make unscheduled stops, I later realized that I had shared a remarkable journey with the same



From left to right: SUP directors Richard Kelley '10, Frances Tompkins '09 (seated), Sarah Lockridge-Steckel '09 (seated), Nene Igietseme '09, and Dara Wilson '09 scout out North Shore beaches in a PBHA van.

youth over my last three years at PBHA. For the campers, the staff, and me, this trip was not only a reward for the hard work of the summer but for being committed to the same community and values. It is no wonder that so many people believe in SUP that they contribute in various ways to the PBHA community year after year.

SUP 2007 has been about the planning during the spring and strengthening relationships during the summer. This newsletter expresses our deepest

gratitude for your support of PBHA. You have made these transformative experiences for children, youth, young adults, and communities possible. Without support from individuals and groups like you, turning a vision into a reality would not have been possible.

The following articles will give you a picture of our accomplishments this summer. Whether you are interested in the service learning curriculum of the Mission Hill Summer Program or the ESL focus of Boston Refugee Youth Enrichment, I hope that you will take the time to learn more about the summer programs of PBHA first hand.

SUP 2007 is...

- Boston Refugee Youth Enrichment (BRYE) ♦ Cambridge Youth Enrichment Program (CYEP)
- ♦ Chinatown Adventure (CHAD) ♦ Franklin I-O Summer Program ♦ Keylatch Summer Program ♦
- Mission Hill Summer Program (MHSP) ♦ Native American Youth Enrichment Program (NAYEP)
- ♦ Refugee Youth Summer Enrichment (RYSE) ♦ Roxbury Youth Initiative (RYI) ♦
- ♦ South Boston Outreach Summer (SBOS) ♦

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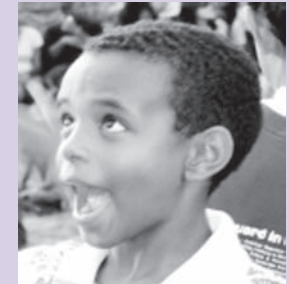
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(Continued on page 6)

Centennial Campaign Funds Six Summer Scholar Awards

PBHA is delighted to announce the recipients of our *Summer Scholar Awards* for Summer Urban Program staff who achieved excellence in service to the children of their camps this year.

The *Ellsworth S. Grant Award* honors outstanding service by a rising sophomore, and the Cambridge Youth Enrichment Program deserves recognition for two honorees this year: director Richard Kelley '10 (see front cover) and CYEP oldest girls' senior counselor, Adia Matthews '10. Richard was selected for his amazing enthusiasm for all directorial duties, especially his fundraising! All winter and spring, Richard took on the task of providing resources



Jessica Ranucci '10

for the Cambridge camps and developed a team of CYEP directors that cohesively ran SUP's largest camp, which operates out of three different sites. Adia's

nominator states: "Adia ... puts her heart and soul into every part of her curriculum and her day. She has endowed these girls with greater self-confidence, pride for their work, and a realization that attitude doesn't get you what you want. She has transformed Jefferson Park Oldest Girls (the "JP Ladies") into a model class where learning and fun naturally go hand in hand."

The *Edward S. Fleming Award* goes to one of the

junior counselor coordinators, a central SUP position that works with our high-school age counselors across multiple camps. Jessica Ranucci '10, our honoree, has redesigned PBHA's Leaders! program, which she will direct in the fall. She volunteers with Strong Women, Strong Girls and Haley House, is a member of the Student Labor Action Movement, and serves as PBHA's vehicles and space coordinator.

The recipients of the *Maye R. Zoffer Award* were nominated for having made a substantial contribution to SUP as directors. The

Zoffer award, which honor the mother of PBHA alumni Gayle '82 and William '83, goes to Michael Nguyen '09 of Boston Refugee Youth Enrichment, Randy Ojukwu '09 of Roxbury Youth Initiative, and Sarah Lockridge-Steckel '09 of Franklin I-O Summer Program. Each of these three students stepped up at their respective camps and ensured that the campers had an exceptional summer.



Michael Nguyen '09, Sarah Lockridge-Steckel '09, and Randy Ojukwu '09

CYEP Surges Ahead in the Classroom and Beyond

Andrew Berry '09

CYEP Co-Director 2007

The Cambridge Youth Enrichment Program (CYEP) had many new and exciting changes this year even before the first day of camp. Before the summer had even begun, CYEP expanded from 130 to 150 campers, adding one classroom to both the Newtowne Court and Roosevelt Towers sites.

During the summer, CYEP also saw positive changes coupled with the traditional staples of the program. CYEP campers enjoyed field trips to the Children's Museum, the Museum of Science, and Nantasket Beach but also had the opportunity to visit new venues such as Channel 7 News, the Butterfly Place, and the Franklin Park Zoo.



CYEP's bake sale by the Science Center raises money for the final trip.

Additionally, CYEP campers were the benefactors of completely revamped Friday Workshops. This year, five workshops were offered: a community service workshop in which the kids made homemade ice cream with residents in a local nursing home; a performing arts workshop where campers

learned salsa, step routines, and received vocal coaching; a science workshop where campers launched rockets and participated in multiple dissections; a fine arts workshop which culminated in the construction of a community quilt; and a team-building and strategy workshop which culminated

in a day-long field trip to a local ropes course.

Within the classroom, campers improved math and literacy skills and were stimulated by creative classroom themes and curricula. The calling card of CYEP is the flexibility that the camp gives to the teaching staff. The 15-member staff proved particularly exceptional this year. Classroom themes ranged from "Community" to "7 Continents in 7 Weeks" to "Under the Sea." Classrooms encouraged students to explore music, poetry, culture and heritage, geography, dance, Egyptian history, and algebra among many other topics. The dynamic changes and the unique CYEP traditions made 2007 one of the most successful summers ever.

Keeping Up with PBHA Proves No Small Task

Gene Corbin

Class of 1955 Executive Director



It is not uncommon for an observer to remark to me, “So your job is to inspire college students to commit to public service.” The reality of PBHA is that my job is to try to keep up with them. It gets harder each year – perhaps I’m getting old!

The dedication of our students is nothing short of staggering. The students boarding their vans before 7 a.m. every day to pick up their children for camp are often the same students who were up until 2 a.m. the night before making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. Whenever I have an opportunity to step back and take it in, I’m overcome with the dedication of our PBHA students to serving others.

The same goes for their contribution. When I see community leaders, they often exclaim, “Where would we be without PBHA’s summer camps?” I can think of many reasons for such remarks, but perhaps these three will suffice: First, as news stories all too frequently convey, the Boston community remains plagued by youth violence due to a lack of positive summer programs. Second, the Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University continually warns that summer youth employment has declined to the lowest level since WWII and disproportionately impacts low-income and minority youth.

Third, a recently released study by the Nellie Mae Foundation (*The Learning Season*) is creating a buzz – it finds that summer learning loss is highest among low-income students.

SUP is making an enormous contribution on all fronts: a positive summer experience for 825 campers, summer jobs for 85 youth, with mornings filled with academic enrichment and afternoons packed with opportunities for social development.

If that were not enough, PBHA students are making contributions beyond SUP through numerous other summer service programs. For example, students in our Habitat for Humanity program devote their summer to working in a hot warehouse to recycle furniture and other items discarded by students for reuse in the fall. The St. James Homeless Shelter provides a vital summer transitional program. The Small Claims Advisory Service (SCAS) continues to help people navigate the civil court system. Partners for Empowering Neighborhoods (PEN) teaches ESL, computer skills, and GED classes to adults living in several housing developments. Summer Science travels to the summer camps enriching the curriculum for the children through innovative science projects.

Whew! Our students inspire me daily and the contributions they make are enormous. Many thanks to them for a great summer!



Mission Hill campers with the scale model of their vision for Parcel 25.

Mission Hill Architects of the Future

The model shown above is a concrete example of the visionary work of Mission Hill campers this summer on a vital neighborhood issue – what Parcel 25 in Mission Hill could look like in the future.

Under the inspired direction of architect Ann Sussman, 15 Mission Hill campers and their junior counselors imagined what Parcel 25 could look like in the not-too-distant future, following guidelines established for the parcel’s development by the MBTA. The MBTA, which owns the empty two-acre site opposite the Roxbury Crossing Station, expects to sell the property to the highest bidder this fall.

As the students’ 1/8”-scale model shows, the new development could revitalize the neighborhood by adding five-story buildings, both residential and commercial,

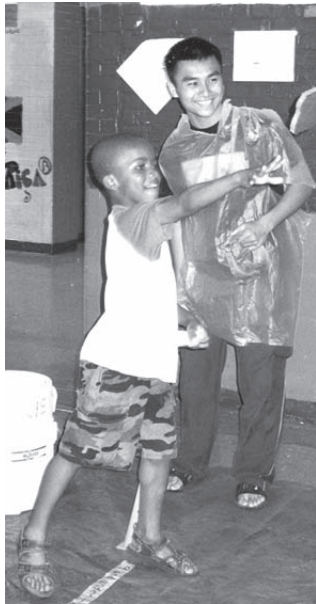
well-defined open space, as well as taller 10-story towers in the northeast corner. Other aspects of the campers’ vision include a hospital, a rooftop pool, and even a McDonald’s. The models were ingeniously crafted from wood, modeling clay, styrofoam, and other leftovers from the same materials architecture students use to build their mock-ups.

This “Community Visioning” project, held in collaboration with the Department of Architecture at Wentworth, is a Boston Society of Architects’ Learning By Design program, funded by a grant from The Memorial Church of Harvard University.

The sense of agency that the project hopes to instill in the children, as they plan the future of their neighborhood, will inspire them to become active participants in their community.

BRYE Embraces Diversity, Teamwork

Boston Refugee Youth Enrichment has fostered learning, confidence, and growth among Boston's refugee and immigrant children since 1987. Over the past four years, the camp had diversified. This summer's 90 campers come from Vietnam, Cape Verde, Latin America, Haiti, Afghanistan, Tibet, and more. Here are three of the highlights of BRYE's fun-filled summer.



Clad in a plastic bag, Michael Nguyen '09 supervises a camper throwing a sponge in a spirited (and wet!) game of hit-the-counselor at the BRYE carnival.

BRYE CARNIVAL

The carnival, a BRYE tradition, was set up as a surprise for the campers, to be unveiled after class. Games included a bean-bag toss featuring a giant teddy bear, a fortune-teller's booth, face painting, and a whipped-cream nose roll.



FRANKLIN-BRYE

BRYE collaborates with the Franklin I-O Summer Program, in an effort to foster cross-cultural communication and bridge the gap between two Dorchester neighborhoods with a history of tension. The BRYE-Franklin collaboration culminates in a field day. Teams of children from both camps compete in games that stress

the importance of solidarity. Favorite activities included parachute and water balloon games, tug-of-war, a three-legged race, and a human knot, with ice cream as a reward.

FINAL SHOW

BRYE ended on a high note with its Final Show, where campers and counselors showcased their talents. The evening included pieces as diverse as a dance number

with umbrellas, hip-hop, ABC by the Jackson 5, and a spirited appearance by a BRYE assembly calling themselves the "2 Steppas."



"2 Steppas" shake up the stage at the Final Show.



A BRYE junior counselor and campers enjoy parachute games at the Franklin-BRYE Olympics.



Community Builder Awards were presented at Midsummer to the Boston Center for Youth and Families, the Associated Grant Makers Summer Fund, and the Action for Boston Community Development by Maria Dominguez, Gene Corbin, and Angelico Razon '08.

SUP Alumna Returns at Midsummer



Michelle Dionne '05 (left), who directed South Boston Outreach Summer in 2004,

paid SUP a visit during the Midsummer Celebration. She is pictured with Nicole Young (right), one of this year's SBOS directors. Nicole, who hails from South Boston, started out as a camper, then rose in the ranks to become a junior counselor, senior counselor, and director for two years. She will be studying abroad this year.

St. James Offers Residents a Leg Up

Eliza Dewey '10, Charlotte Johnson '08 & Anya Manning, Co-Directors

Located in St. James Episcopal Church in Porter Square, St. James Summer Shelter houses 12 homeless people for eight weeks each summer.

The shelter not only provides guests with three meals a day and a clean, safe place to live, but the staff also work closely with these individuals to achieve the long-term goal of stable housing and employment. They do this by offering guests resources such as Internet access, an address and phone number (important for communicating with potential employers), and assistance in resume preparation and other important components of the job search process. As co-directors, we act as case



Shelter supervisors assemble beds at the start of the summer.

managers for all the guests and build relationships with them over meals and conversation, stressing the importance of continued involvement on a personal level. We are privileged to be part of a 15-member staff composed entirely of college students and supported by 30 volunteers ranging from high-schoolers to college professors.

Supervisors also work on individual projects such as research on mental illness in the homeless community and fundraising. Some of our fundraising initiatives include a letter-writing campaign, a canvas of local businesses, and a candy sale.

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