

Phillips Brooks House Association **2016** Summer Newsletter

<http://www.pbha.org>

Fall 2016

Teaching the Whole Child

Morgan Millon '17

SUP Programming Officer

How do we define camper success? Each year, SUP directors attempt to answer this question using grants, literacy initiatives, and unique curriculum. There is no doubt that academic success and preparation for the upcoming school year is a critical part of our programs. Recently however, we have expanded beyond summer learning. This year, we intentionally promoted socioemotional learning among our 800+ youth.

Socioemotional learning (SEL) is the process of helping students develop the intra- and interpersonal skills needed to succeed both in school and in their future adult lives. Successful and intentional SEL programs not only increase short- and long-term academic outcomes but also positively impact behavior and school climate.

To address SEL needs

in our program, we introduced a new SEL framework in our senior counselor training. The goals of the framework were twofold: 1) training counselors to be attuned to their campers' social and emotional needs and 2) providing counselors with ways to create classroom environments grounded in SEL. Adapted from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), our framework fostered inter- and intrapersonal skills by teaching socioemotional competencies such as self-management, self-awareness, social

awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making.

For example, Franklin I-O (FIO) promoted SEL through literacy. Using books provided by CASEL, Franklin's youngest campers read stories about managing emotions and building positive relationships. FIO's director, Frankline Mardi '17, noted the progress of her six- and seven-year old campers, "The 7's became really good at talking things out before finding a counselor and the 6's got really good at talking about their feelings."

The benefits of SEL

resulted in improvements that even parents noticed. According to our family surveys, the majority of parents agreed that their child built relationships with new people. Similarly, parents also agreed that their child was able to speak his/her mind in a respectful way. This further emphasizes that SEL is not just about our campers, but about everyone around them.

It takes the hard work of our directors, senior counselors, and junior counselors to ensure that we are constantly providing quality, holistic programming to our campers and their families. By the end of the summer, we are more than just teachers; we are youth advocates genuinely committed to the academic, social, and emotional growth of our children.



SUP Transforms

Maria Dominguez-Gray
Class of '55 Executive Director

SUP transforms. It transforms the lives of the children and families in the camps; it transforms the future of the teens who are leaders in the program; and it transforms the development of the college students who serve as teachers and directors.

We believe by participating in SUP, children grow in hope and determination, in the skills and attitudes that lead to academic success, and in the sense of self-worth that contributes to healthy life choices. Through SUP, campers will strengthen their support network and understanding of themselves as leaders in their communities.

In 2016, those areas of transformation were woven throughout the program. Campers from the Cambridge Youth Enrichment Program (CYEP) hiked in the White Mountains and participated in ropes course



SUP 2016
“Supporting the whole child



activities that built resilience. Campers in Boston Refugee Youth Enrichment (BRYE) studied the science of space exploration. The second graders in Mission Hill Summer Program (MHSP) studied philosophy while 5th graders from Chinatown Adventure (CHAD) developed budgeting skills through real-life scenarios. South Boston Outreach Summer (SBOS) held weekly socioemotional workshops focused on self-esteem and substance abuse prevention, while campers in Roxbury Youth Initiative (RYI) reflected daily on current events in their communities and the intersection between their own identities and leadership.

“I’m going to be a kindergarten teacher because of Keylatch.”

This summer, more than 80% of our teen leaders reported positive growth in indicators of future success like empathy and reflection; relationships with peers and adults; and critical thinking, motivation and perseverance. The Leaders! Program, which supports the teen counselors, ensured that youth identified and worked towards their own personal goals and offered support for her transformation through workshops, mentorship, and activities like

college visits. As one junior counselor shared in their end-of-summer survey, “I feel ready for another job and school year. This experience prepared me for future goals as it taught me a lot about dealing with others in various environments and situations.”

Dean of Harvard College Rakesh Khurana sees the mission and purpose of education at Harvard through the lens of intellectual, social, and personal transformational growth. College students working in SUP grow in each of those ways: learning about the theoretical frameworks guiding effective teaching and education; growing in the skills and awareness needed to work with others, especially across difference; growing in confidence and their own sense of purpose and understanding of the world around them; and growing in clarity about their professional vocation and transferable leadership skills.

“It has made me more aware of the social injustices intrinsically present in our education system.”

Ultimately, SUP also transforms the sense of possibility for those of us who have the privilege of supporting and witnessing the amazing work of the SUP camps. We hope you are transformed by the stories in this newsletter and we thank you for your continued support of the difference SUP makes.

Thank You, MLK Summer Scholars & John Hancock!

An Interview with Nyerrrie Hale '17
Leaders! Director

Since 2011, Nyerrrie has witnessed the important work of the MLK Summer Scholars Program at John Hancock. Back then, he was returning to Keylatch for a second summer as a junior counselor. As written on their website, the MLK Summer Scholars seeks to “develop a future skilled workforce while adding significant value to the community today.”

Junior counselors chosen as MLK Summer Scholars work for their respective camps Monday through Thursday and attend professional development workshops on Fridays. They acquire teaching and leadership skills from working in their classrooms and additional professional skills on Fridays.

Nyerrrie has had the unique experience of working with the

MLK Summer Scholars Program as a junior counselor and this past summer as a Leaders! Director, working directly with the new junior counselors selected by PBHA to participate in MLK Summer Scholars.

His experiences as a junior counselor differed from his experiences as a Leaders! Director, Nyerrrie explained, “When I was an MLK Scholar, as a JC, I enjoyed it a lot. It gave me the chance to connect with junior counselors from other SUP camps, as well as learn some valuable skills. This past summer, as a Leaders! Director, I reflected a lot, and figured out ways that my junior counselors and the teens I met at the MLK workshops could get as much as possible out of the MLK events.” Nyerrrie also talked about the importance of the partnership with MLK

Summer Scholars, “They (MLK Scholars) pushed our youth to exceed expectations, provided them with valuable financial literacy tools, and created a network for our junior counselors. It’s a unique opportunity for our youth.” Lastly, when asked how MLK Scholars is developing teens into community leaders, he said, “The workshops at the MLK Summer Scholars program are centered around health, finance, and community building. The program pushes them to think about personal and systemic change. These focuses help develop the teens into community leaders.” Thank you to the MLK Summer Scholars and John Hancock for nine years of support!



Thank you Thaddeus & MassHousing!

Thaddeus Miles
Director of Community Services

At MassHousing, our commitment to housing communities goes well beyond the brick-and-mortar. We are dedicated to creating and partnering with innovative programs that empower residents and enhance their quality of life, while supporting and strengthening their communities. SUP stands out as an exemplary program in accomplishing MassHousing’s goal of improving the lives of those in the Commonwealth.

Through its innovative model, it allows youth from a range of backgrounds to combat summer learning loss, build relationships in their communities, and have fun! Not only do these summer camps provide academic, social, and cultural enrichment for kids, but they provide teens with the opportunity to gain practical experience, acquire leadership skills, and foster a sense of community responsibility. We remain a proud partner of SUP for its important contribution in enriching the lives of children in the Boston and Cambridge neighborhoods.



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Examining the Roots



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NAYEP Directors

This summer, NAYEP went back to its roots in its revitalization of a partnership with the North American Indian Center of Boston (NAICOB). After the summer, Karan Doczi, a trainer for SUP and the person responsible for helping NAYEP re-connect with NAICOB, reflected on the partnership. She described “seeing everyone finally meet” as “the best part of her year.” In previous summers, the partnership between the two groups had been intermittently manifested in a few field trips over the seven weeks, but this summer, the partnership was re-established as a weekly collaboration.

In many ways, the rekindling of this partnership was necessary for both communities. For NAYEP, the collaboration offered a chance to be re-grounded in the community, and for NAICOB, it gave their center more life by having its space filled with children throughout the summer. NAYEP took campers and their families to the center, some for the first time, and NAICOB was able to share with

them their unique curriculum and activities and further connect with the Native communities of Greater Boston.

The impact of this partnership was two-fold, having a positive effect on families and counselors as well as on staff members at NAICOB. For young people and families, it built a sense of community not in terms of geography but in terms of cultural commonality. For junior counselors, senior counselors, and directors, it connected them to a community they need to humbly learn from and join.

The collaboration happened every Friday afternoon. Students traveled from the Blackstone Elementary School in the South End to NAICOB’s homebase in Jamaica Plain. For an hour and a half, campers participated in traditional arts and crafts as well as song and drums. For the second hour and a half, campers used the computers at NAICOB to research their tribal identity. They explored a myriad of topics over the summer, some of them being color symbolism, values and respect for all living things, and making protection pouches. The teachings were all student-centered, with hands-on activities and small group learning that ensured “knowledge was transferred” and was interwoven with spirituality. Even for junior counselors, Karan saw throughout the summer how the partnership helped empower them in their roles as mentors and role models for the campers as well as community members learning more and more about NAICOB’s history and resources.

In reflecting on the summer, Karan noted, “what’s really important for me is seeing that there is strong groundwork and activity to tribal identity and culture and seeing that NAICOB becomes a vibrant center again.” The counselors and directors of NAYEP would echo just that as everyone involved witnessed the power of a community coming together and being brought back to life, ensuring that the memories and importance of NAYEP and NAICOB will not be lost to future generations.



A Day in the Summer Shelter

Harvard Square Summer Shelter Staff

So what is a typical day like in the shelter? We operate in the evenings and run overnight until 8AM. The doors open at 6:15PM, and the night comes to life as the kitchen lights are cued. Then the staff and volunteers gather, strategizing like Iron Chefs, fiercely devising a plan to cook the best meal from the resources available for the day. Sometimes experiments happen (and failures, naturally).

When dinner is served, we become a big family. Guests, volunteers, and staff sit at tables exchanging stories until it is time to clean the dishes and do laundry. When the shelter snaps into life again at sunrise, the cooking is repeated. The end of breakfast flows into the sweeping, mopping, and toilet-scrubbing that refresh the shelter for the next day.

Meals are the center of the shelter community. Regardless of one’s



role in the Harvard Square Summer Shelter, during meals we have the pleasure of sharing good food with better company. In Korean, the word for family literally translates to “eating mouths.” By sharing food and conversation with the guests we see every day, Harvard Square Summer Shelter community members have become a real family. One of our morning volunteers, Audrey, says “I like getting to know the people at the shelter in small ways... How you like your pancakes, if you put pepper on your eggs, whether or not you drink coffee. In that moment, regardless of age or gender or anything else, we’re all just groggy people eating breakfast at eight in the morning.”

Staff and volunteers also make the environment brighter. They employ the simplest methods to make the shelter experience more enjoyable for everyone – music, creativity in desserts, jokes that

turn into hysterical inside jokes, random greetings, and sincere check-ins throughout the day. The volunteers and staff realize, though, that a shelter is not where we patronizingly “take care of the homeless.” It is a place of social justice where we serve the victims of the system, illness, and traumas of life, who often do not receive the baseline care that human beings need. And once you ask guests about their days, listen to them and provide them with the simplest pleasures of life that they are often denied, you will (though not always immediately) see you have served well. I consider this magical brightening performed by the staff and volunteers to be one of the most meaningful actions in which we can partake – to be a source of comfort and support for those systemically marginalized.

All in all, shelter work is not easy. At Harvard, we do not even do our own dishes. The constant dishwashing, cleaning, laundry etc., often make shelter staff wonder how our parents do it. We manage the shelter for half a day with multiple volunteers and staff members, yet it takes all of us an entire shift to figure shelter-keeping out. But the hardship is only a sign that we have room for more maturing, and I feel so blessed to have Harvard Square Summer Shelter as a community helping each other do just that.

Classroom Coaches

Kate Johnsen '02

Deputy Director

This summer, four SUP camps expanded the idea of the student leadership pipeline by having classroom coaches, a pilot literacy and classroom coaching program. Each of the four camps had SUP alumni who currently teach in local public schools observe senior counselors during the first two and a half weeks of programming. The special part of this interaction is that SUP alumni know how to teach, are familiar with the camps in which they once worked, and give relevant, targeted, and effective interventions.

One senior counselor commented on receiving feedback from her classroom coach. "My observer provided such great feedback! She gave me the idea of doing more shared reading through weekly poems, which I implemented right away! I was able to incorporate ideas of identity and individuality as well as practice literacy and expand vocabulary through these weekly poems!! She had great insight and advice that I took to heart and to the classroom."

For the second year, observations were compiled, and the data will be analyzed for areas for growth and adapted training. We are looking forward to reflecting on the 2016 observations as we begin our visioning for SUP 2017! Thank you to our alumni coaches: Rachel Bloom '14, Rachel Singh '10, Christian Starling '10, Daniel Villafana '12, and Karan Doczi!



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