



Phillips Brooks House Association Summer Newsletter

2009

<http://www.pbha.org>

Fall 2009

SUP and the WOW Factor: Thoughts on the Summer

Richard Kelley '10
PBHA President

Wow! The only way to begin this short and inherently incomplete effort to capture what occurred this summer is "Wow." I am awestruck by the successes of this summer, due to the unmatched effort of the directors, counselors (both high-school and college), parents, community members, partners, staff, and alumni to come together to make this truly remarkable experience possible.

What was most exceptional was not that we added another great summer to our list, but that we surpassed ourselves in spite of one of the most difficult economic climates we have seen. It is what we do when we are challenged that truly defines who we are; this summer demonstrated the unwavering dedication of all involved to the communities with whom we partner and the work that we do.

It is impossible to capture this summer in one

word or phrase, but if I were to take a picture that most represented power of SUP 2009, I would show you the Midsummer Celebration. In this its 10th year, the event was exciting and stressful at the same time. Donations were harder to come by, and the shortened summer, a result of changes to the Harvard calendar, meant the celebration was always right around the corner. Yet it was a huge success. The carnival went without a hitch – we even added a dunk tank! The talent show was breathtaking – I am constantly amazed at the vast talent of our campers. However, what best represented the progress made this summer was the community-action project, community fair, and farmer's market. The Junior Counselor or LEADERS! Program strongly focused on advocacy and action within communities. The teens produced a documentary on their thoughts and feelings



The SUP BBQ welcomes junior counselors to Phillips Brooks House to socialize and break down barriers between neighborhoods early in the summer. Later, teens from across the city are paired to work together on shared projects.

about the mass budget cuts affecting youth jobs.

Moving beyond Midsummer, Mission Hill Summer Program partnered with a community environmental agency and promoted environmental justice on a variety of levels, based the age of its campers. From visits to the State House, to writing letters, to engaging in service projects, this was a summer of community action.

At the end of every summer, I always leave wishing for just one more week (or two or three). Seeing our youth engage with their communities in such a deep way reinforced how important it is that these camps continue to exist within our partner communities. I cannot help being excited for next summer, knowing that we will all continue to work to make these summer camps possible for the youth that truly need and deserve them.

SUP 2009 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)

Nothing Beats Dedication



Philip Chu, left, pictured here with one of his campers during CHAD 2009.

Annie Wu, BU '11
CHAD Co-Director

It is 9:15AM. Seventy campers wait eagerly for breakfast in a large dark basement room. In one corner of the room sits a little boy who was scared to come to camp, but excited to see what the first day would bring. Little did he know that this summer program would become an enormous part of his life. This boy's name is Philip Chu, and this is his story.

It has been a decade since Philip sat in that big room waiting for the first day of Chinatown Adventure (CHAD) to begin. In his seven summers with CHAD he has seen nearly 50 counselors step in and out of the program. Each one of those counselors gave more than they received and made it their ultimate goal to make that particular summer a most memorable one. Each one influenced Philip in profound ways. From learning about states and capitals in Group 2 to understanding the Holocaust in Group 7, Philip never forgot their valuable lessons. CHAD taught him about traditional academic subjects as well as life.

Meeting such dedicated high-school and college counselors encouraged Philip to apply to be a junior counselor in 2008. He dreamed of someday becoming one of the counselors who wholeheartedly dedicate themselves to the children of Chinatown. He wished to become a mentor and role

model for Chinatown youth. He hoped to inform his campers and wanted to explore Boston with them. Philip made sure that he accomplished these goals during his first summer as a junior counselor.

During the 2008-2009 school year, Philip participated in the term-time junior counselor program, called LEADERS! He was paired with a college student who mentored him one-on-one. Monthly Saturday workshops on current issues, debates, public speaking, and tours of Boston neighborhoods greatly influenced Philip's involvement in his own community. This past year, Philip dedicated himself to service in Chinatown. He volunteered for various fairs and festivals in the neighborhood and spent two evenings a week tutoring students through the term-time PBHA Chinatown Afterschool Program.

Not only was he committed to service work relating to Chinatown, he was one of the most active teens in any of PBHA's term-

time programs. This past spring, Philip played a huge role in a series of Massachusetts State House budget cut rallies. Many of those cuts would have a serious impact on the lives of inner-city Boston youth. Philip was the only teen present at those rallies, but he proudly utilized the public speaking skills he has just acquired in LEADERS! He is determined to stand up for himself and his rights.

This year, Philip spent his second summer at CHAD as a junior counselor. Ten years ago, he was in this same building as a camper. Philip was given the opportunity to grow and learn even more when he was assigned to work with the second oldest group of campers. A switch from working with the youngest to some of the oldest was quite a challenge, but Philip always stayed on top of his game and often led the class in a new direction.

Philip plans to continue his participation in LEADERS! during the coming school year. He aims to one day become a senior counselor and possibly a director for CHAD. He is now part of the executive board of the Boston Latin School's biggest student organization, Asian Students in Action (A.S.I.A.), and wants to keep serving the Chinatown community through it. Philip Chu loves CHAD, and he loves Chinatown even more.



That's a much younger Philip Chu, third from left, taking in the Boston skyline with some of his CHAD classmates. Notice the PBHA "lost camper" bracelets.

Summer Experiences around the SUP Camps

“The Best Thing about RYSE”

Refugee Youth Summer Enrichment is a great place for you to hang out in the summer with your newfound friends. In RYSE, you can meet people from different countries, different cultures, and different backgrounds.

RYSE is a great program for English Second Language learners to learn English or improve their English. We do many different activities here every day. Also, we get to go on field trips every weekend. This is a great chance to meet and communicate with teens from different communities.

In conclusion, I think the best thing about the RYSE program is you get to learn and meet new friends from different communities. I am looking forward to joining the RYSE program again next year.

—Minyi H., RYSE Student

Towards Environmental Justice

This summer, the Mission Hill Summer Program and Roxbury Youth Initiative partnered with the Roxbury Environmental Empowerment Project, where former SUP director David Jenkins '03-'05 works, to learn about the asthma epidemic in Boston, air quality, and diesel pollution. Later, the Mission Hill campers deployed a Community Action Project to get Boston's biggest city contractor garbage hauler, Capital Waste Services, to apply for stimulus funds to retrofit its trucks. Campers met with the owners of Capital, city and state officials, and organized their families and community. Once the funds are awarded, this will constitute the biggest win for Boston's air quality – taking a chunk out of the most polluting diesel mobile source in Boston – in five years. Congratulations are in order to these environmental-justice-super-hero-campers and to Mission Hill for promoting environmental justice!

Summer Urban Program Spring Auction Action!

This year's annual SUP Auction drew bids on 109 live and silent items and again raised \$50,000 to benefit the summer camps. Events Coordinator Sophie Sakellariadis '11 made sure the guests enjoyed plentiful hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, live jazz music, and each other's company. Singer-songwriter Livingston Taylor graciously agreed to serve as our auctioneer and drove the live bidding sky high with his energy and enthusiasm, while camp directors helped out, presenting with passion the work they do in the community.



Auctioneer Livingston Taylor (far left) and Dean of Harvard College Evelyn Hammonds (far right) socialize with Cathy McLaughlin and Bill Purcell from the Institute of Politics.



Three past SUP Directors: Alicia Rodriguez '07, SBOS, with Eveleen Hsu '07 and Angelico Razon '08, CHAD.



PBHA board member E. Abim Thomas '96 chats with Tom Roberts and Nene Igietseme '09, LEADERS! co-director and former SUP Program Group Officer.

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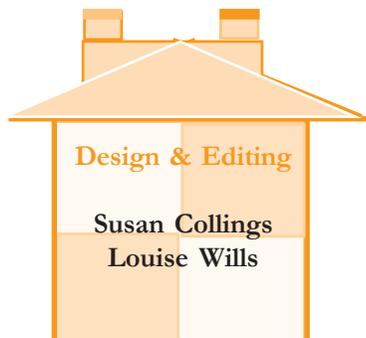
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LEADERS! Rocks Summer 2009

Nene Igietseme '09
LEADERS! Co-Director

This summer, the junior counselor program merged with the term-time LEADERS! program to form a year-round community leadership program for teens. Some changes included a weekly leadership workshop that explored the implications, power, and responsibility that comes with being a youth leader. In addition, LEADERS! planned the 10th Annual Midsummer Celebration.

The four planning groups were Carnival,

including a basketball tournament; Talent Show and Community Builder Awards; Publicity; and Community Action Project. Junior counselors in the Community Action Project group also filmed a documentary addressing the issues they would face with budget cuts to youth programs, jobs, and schools. Ultimately, the junior counselor position is about being a leader and role model for the children in the camps. Paul Woodley, a third-year junior counselor,

said working with the oldest boy campers in Roxbury was his favorite part of the job.

LEADERS! has accepted 25 junior counselors into the term-time component of the program. These teens will work in community organizations and come together twice a month to educate each other on the issues and current climate of their neighborhoods, culminating in the designing of a relevant and exciting training program for next summer's junior counselors.

Quoting 2009 LEADERS!

"The leadership workshops made me feel like I have power, and in that hour I learned that I really do have a big impact in my community."

~ **Cherisse Howe, RYI JC & former camper with Roxbury Youth Initiative**

"The one-hour workshops helped many of us realize that we are a major part of our community and that it needs our voice to make a change."

~ **Courtney Cox, a first-year JC**

"July 29th was named The Phillip Brooks House Association Day in the City of Boston."

~ **Mariah Allison, NAYEP JC**

CYEP, Cambridge, and the Butterfly Connection

Emily Parrott '09
CYEP Co-Director

Kianis, a six-year-old Cambridge Youth Enrichment Program (CYEP) camper, asked me three times, "When are we going to see the butterflies?" On our field trip to the Franklin Park Zoo, I discovered that though the park holds a vast array of animals, from the barnyard goats in the petting zoo to the kingly lion in the field, my campers were most interested in seeing the butterflies. "Can we go there *now*?" they asked.



I didn't quite understand the fascination with butterflies until we were entering the enclosure and Tenzin, Kianis' classmate, turned to me and asked, "Emily, did you know that Cambridge is in the shape of a butterfly?" Yes, I did know that, but what I didn't know was that our campers knew it as well. Understanding the connection between our city and their enthusiasm, we explored the area together. Inside, the butterfly attendant explained to us that though butterflies weigh only as much as two rose petals, they can fly thousands of miles. This fact, for many reasons, is the one I remember most.

As one of the co-directors for CYEP for the last two years, I've been behind the scenes of what we do. Between budgeting, hiring senior counselors, coaching junior counselors, finding sites, registering campers, fundraising, and calling parents, it's often hard

to see the real reason we're here. During the summer, when our energy is low and tension is high, it's difficult to imagine how much we actually accomplish. Yet just as butterflies can fly thousands of miles, CYEP can affect hundreds of lives. Anyone working with CYEP has seen it.

CYEP's mission states that we are "focused on providing an academic foundation from which students may actively and enthusiastically follow their own curiosity." By offering curriculum each morning in math, literacy, art, and science, our youth have outcomes beyond what we can see in the classroom. CYEP is about more than what we can measure: the confidence that youth build in camp and take home, the role models they may follow throughout their lives, and the passions they find at camp and share with their families. Our youth, butterflies themselves, travel thousands of miles in their lives without us ever knowing.



Scholar Awards Honor SUP SCs

Susan Collings
Director of Development

PBHA is once again proud to announce the winners of our *Summer Scholar Awards*, which honor SUP staff who achieved excellence in their roles as leaders, mentors, and teachers.

This year's **Maye R. Zoffer Awards** recognize three SUP senior counselors who were each called a "shining star" by their directors. **Rachel Park '11**

Reyes praises her work motivating a challenging group. Linda says, "The oldest girls taught me how to think on my feet, look for solutions, and problem solve more so than any class could possibly teach me."

April Van Buren '12 is NAYEP's choice to receive the **Ellsworth S. Grant Award** for outstanding service by a rising sophomore. According to Mr. Grant '39, when he attended Harvard in the 1930's, all the awards went to seniors, so honoring first-year



2009 Summer Scholars **Rachel Park '11**, **April Van Buren '12**, **Ngozi Nwaogu '12**, **Emmanuel Padilla '10**, and **Dianna Bartenstein '12**

and **Dianna Bartenstein '12** taught their BRYE classes with distinction and cared deeply about their children in the spirit of Maye Zoffer herself. **Linda Ugbah '12**



Linda Ugbah '12, a **Maye R. Zoffer Summer Scholar Award Winner**

exemplified the award each day at the Keylatch Summer Program, where director Karla

service was his way of balancing the scales! Mr. Grant is proud of April's contribution to her class of Native American children and her standards of excellence as her group learned more about their heritage and the sites of Boston.

Two senior counselors from Franklin I-O Summer are the recipients of the **Edward S. Fleming Award**. **Ngozi Nwaogu '12**, according to her nominator, "approached each day with confidence and a discerning eye and grew by leaps and bounds."

SUP BBQ, A Weekly Event



"Make Mine Well Done": **Michelle Crentsil '10**, **Alyssa Aguilera '08-'09**, PBHA Deputy Director **Maria Dominguez**, and SUP PGO **Jessica Ranucci '10** are grilling them up hot at the Tuesday SUP BBQ.

Corbin, cont. from page 8

summer. Several years ago, financial realities made this difficult. This summer we hit upon a way to preserve this opportunity while keeping it affordable. The oldest campers (mostly 13-year olds) from every camp shared a final trip. More than 60 youth in their final summer as campers (most will return as junior counselors) traveled together to Washington D.C.

Other than the sleeping-on-a-gym-floor aspect, this experience was inspiring and validated for me that SUP is more than deserving of our effort and support. It also reminded me that in addition to the amazing

student leaders, all of us have a role in making SUP possible. In particular, it was gratifying to see our new PBHA-Alumni organization contribute significantly. Several members of the PBHA-Alumni regional group in D.C. visited us. One such alumna, **Kristin Garcia '05**, arranged for us all to visit the White House to meet President Obama's much heralded "body man," **Reggie Love**, along with leaders from the "serve.gov" initiative. As a political junkie, this was the almost the highlight of a great week for me personally. The real highlight was the opportunity to observe transformative SUP relationships firsthand.

Emmanuel Padilla '10 (UC Davis) taught his oldest boys group lasting life lessons, had a great relationship with his junior counselor, and maintained a positive attitude

the whole summer by keeping things light and flexible. He thoughtfully acknowledged a positive trait in each of his campers.

SUP 2009 Ends with a Fantastic Final Trip!

Gene Corbin

Class of 1955 Executive Director

In my position, it's easy to get bogged down in budgets, insurance forms, etc. Whenever I'm able to spend time with our campers and counselors, I realize how much PBHA's Summer Urban Program is a transformational experience for everyone involved. You can't spend more than a few minutes in any of the 12 camps without recognizing that powerful relationships are at the heart of the SUP experience.

It's impossible to capture in words all the transformations that take place in roughly 1,000 lives each summer. Some of the changes that occur in the

context of those relationships, are, however, easier to observe and convey: campers realize that they can learn at higher levels and that they really do have great potential; junior counselors embrace their roles as examples to younger children and as leaders in their communities; and senior counselors along with directors discover that others will respond to their hard work and that they can make an enormous difference in the world. It's truly a beautiful experience.

This summer, I was fortunate to witness the power of SUP while participating in the program-wide final trip. Each camp had a tradition of taking its older campers on a significant trip at the end of the

Corbin, cont. on page 7



PBHA Executive Director Gene Corbin (left), with 2009 SUP 13-year olds and staff on final trip to Washington, D.C., pose in front of the U.S. Capitol.



PBHA President Richard Kelley '10, Kristin Garcia '05, and Jessica Ranucci '10, Summer Program Group Officer, smile in front of the White House.

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