**Summer School Support Staff**

**GEAR UP** assisted students who were struggling academically, placing two mentors in Long Island City High School’s summer school program who assisted with Math and Science tutoring. Two mentors were placed in I.S. 10 and three mentors at I.S. 145 assisting in English, Math and History. The scholars helped summer school students review an entire year’s work in a month.

Students received one-on-one assistance as they tackled these difficult hurdles. I.S. 145 mentor Stephanie Montalvo said, “At first it was a challenge to get these kids to write confidently. However, by breaking down the subject matter and making it relatable to them, the students improved dramatically.”

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**Upcoming GEAR UP Events:**

**Back to School Bash** – October 2, 2010
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

**GED/ESL Classes** –
Beginning October 2, 2010
Long Island University
Brooklyn Campus Tour –
October 11, 2010
8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

**Big Apple College Fair** –
St. John’s University –
October 17, 2010
11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

**Game Day Community Service Event** at Elmhurst Center –
October 30, 2010

To register for an event, please call:
(718) 990-2531

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**Summer Camp Experience 2010**

St. John’s University hosted 75 GEAR UP scholars this summer. A combination of newcomers and familiar faces eagerly anticipated a full week of programming held on the Queens campus.

Throughout the week, students attended a series of workshops and projects, and five mock college classes, including: Graphic Design, Developmental Psychology, Criminal Scene Investigations, Introduction to Education and Constitutional Law. Students had a chance to showcase their creative talents in Graphic Design and learned about the horrors of slavery in Developmental Psychology. Each class was a fascinating exploration of a topic to which they were not normally exposed.

Students attended workshops designed to help them understand the college admissions process, gaining a better understanding of financial awards and opportunities offered at universities. Workshops included “Discover Your College Destination,” “Understanding the Financial Aid Package” and “Writing the College Essay.” They also participated in non-academic workshops that dealt with managing stress, and having healthy relationships and took part in a competitive “Battle of the Sexes” quiz bowl. Other activities included team projects documenting their experiences at camp in several different ways, including a GEAR UP magazine, film/video creation, scrapbooking, web design and the creation of a GEAR UP rapchant.

Guest speaker Chappale Linn Burton set the tone for the week by sharing his approach to life and education. His book, *How to Choose Happiness: 30 Ways in 30 Days*, motivated students to set goals and achieve them. During the week, students also had the opportunity to visit other academic institutions, such as CUNY Baruch, Princeton University, New York University and SUNY Purchase. Exposure to these schools offered students another perspective on institutes of higher learning, and, after visiting Princeton, first time camper Kiana Batista observed she would like to apply to an Ivy League school.

As camp came to a close, students attended the award-winning Broadway show *The Lion King*. For some campers, this was their first Broadway show and many were inspired by the positive philosophy of “Hakuna Matata.” On their last night, campers were
Summer Camp Experience 2010 continued

Community Service: Meals on Wheels and Game Day

As summer vacation neared, GEAR UP promoted one final community service initiative at the participating middle and high schools, ending the year in a memorable way.

Last May, 29 GEAR UP middle school scholars traveled to the Elmhurst Medical Center to spend some quality time with the seniors. The students and seniors played board games including Connect Four, Monopoly and Candy Land as students were treated to stories of days gone by from the seniors. The day was a big hit with both students and residents, and a return trip is being planned.

At the same time, 12 GEAR UP high school scholars were chosen to participate in a “Meals on Wheels” event held in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Scholars prepared and delivered meals to impoverished families and bedridden seniors. It was an eye-opening experience for the scholars, many of whom were unaware of the immense number of people that are homeless and poverty stricken in New York City.

“The college essay writing workshop helped me differentiate my essays from other students and stand out.”

Priscilla Fok, GEAR UP Scholar

“I enjoyed the scholarship workshop because I tend to put the search aside. However now I know how easy it is to apply.”

DeAnna Ragin, GEAR UP Scholar

Columbia College Fair

GEAR UP kicked off the summer with the Columbia College Fair on July 15. GEAR UP has always emphasized the importance of meeting with many college representatives before applying to a school, and during the fair students met with over a hundred college representatives who provided them with valuable information regarding entrance guidelines, affordability, scholarships and financial aid, residential life, majors and job prospects following graduation.

Year-End Dinner

At the close of the academic year, GEAR UP celebrated the academic achievement and service of the I.S. 145 graduating class during the annual “Year-End Dinner.” Over 100 parents, faculty and students attended the award ceremony held at I.S. 145. Director Yvette Morgan urged parents and students to continue participating in the GEAR UP Program and emphasized its mission of ensuring that every participant succeeds academically.

At the conclusion of the awards ceremony, parents, students and faculty made their way to the cafeteria for a dinner hosted by the GEAR UP Program. Everyone received GEAR UP t-shirts and autograph books to celebrate their achievement.

Middle-School Graduations

Two years ago, GEAR UP made its debut at I.S.145 and I.S.126. Last June, students marched through St. John’s famed Carnesecca Arena for their graduation ceremony. Both schools were grateful for the positive impact of GEAR UP, and I.S. 145 Principal Dolores Beckham asked GEAR UP staff to continue supporting the efforts of educators in New York City. GEAR UP staff members were extremely proud of all that the students achieved, making all their efforts worthwhile.

Summer Youth Employment

The sixth annual Summer Youth Employment Program was held from July 5 – August 19. GEAR UP students were placed in various offices at the Queens campus of St. John’s University, including the Bookstore, the Office of Design and Construction, The School of Education, the Office of Printing and Distribution and several others. Working on campus provided students with valuable professional experience they might never otherwise have.

“Working in the GEAR UP office allowed me to witness the effort and planning necessary to run a successful program. I felt fortunate to assist in the preparation for the new school year.”

Ilana Dandridge, GEAR UP Scholar

“This experience changed my perspective about community service by making me realize it’s not about work, its about helping others.”

Rebekah Kayser, GEAR UP Scholar

“This experience gave me the chance to reach out and help others.”

Jennhuan Chang, GEAR UP Parent

“...”

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