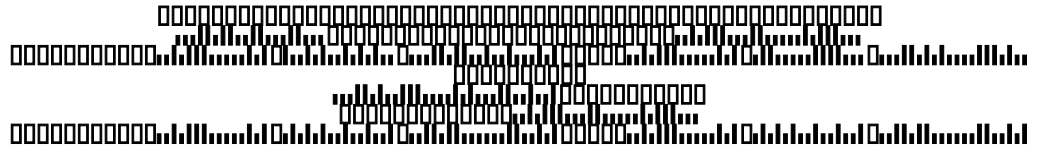


FREEDOM YOUTH ACADEMY

LETTER



FreedomYouthAcademy.com

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2005 ACADEMIC SUMMER ENRICHMENT EDITION

Ms. Kendra L. Gaskins
Editor:

25th Anniversary:

This academic summer enrichment newsletter is dedicated to the 25 years of exemplary service to the children and youth in the greater metropolitan area

Dr. Henry J. Gaskins and Mrs. Mary Ann Gaskins are to be commended for their outstanding service to the community. This newsletter demonstrates that “hard work does pay off.” Each child that was a part of the summer program was given an opportunity to participate in innovative pilot programs. As you read this summer report, I hope you are as overwhelmed as I was by the accomplishments of my parents in assuring that students “East of the River” are given unique opportunities to learn and explore positive learning experiences.

Kendra L. Gaskins

27 - August 26, 2005

The Freedom Youth Academy through a grant from the DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation (CYITC), operated a nine week academic summer enrichment program from Monday, June 27 through Friday August 26, 2005. The program was held in the three church portables of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church (OLPH) at 1600 Morris Road, SE, Washington, DC 20020.

The curriculum was exciting and innovative. There were courses in reading, writing, arithmetic, Spanish, and science. Students also participated in our Chess program, a pilot comic book project, VERB Crossover, and arts and crafts. Each of the students received a math workbook, a reading comprehension guide, a journal for daily writing exercises, and a library book that required them to read on a weekly basis. They received science workbooks for soil and electricity as well as books for a special “Brave Black Girl Reading Club.” Many of the students also received lessons in canvas sewing and crocheting.

Last year we were fortunate to have 11 college interns from Senator Edward M. Kennedy’s Office. This year we were blessed with nine college students. They worked a six-week period from Monday, June 27 to Thursday, July 29, 2005. They worked Monday through Thursday for three hours each day. The students enhanced their “ivy league” academic experience by participating in an “inner city” program that by all expressions were mutually beneficial. The interns imparted assistance that made positive impacts on the participants while providing them with one-to-one consistent attention and educational support.

There were 67 students registered in the camp. The following synopsis reflects the outcomes achieved with each segment of the program.

PHONICS, READING, WRITING, AND MATH PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS GRADES KINDERGARTEN TO FIRST:

Mrs. Sharon St. Clair, Lead Teacher for kindergarten and first grade along with her staff, reinforced the younger students in

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phonics, reading, writing, and mathematics. Each student was given a workbook for each subject. The students were also reinforced in their

writing skills. Each student received 20 minutes per day of computer time. They went on field trips and enjoyed the daily arts and crafts activities.

COMPUTER PROGRAM:

Mr. Molver Fieffe, the computer teacher allowed each student to spend 20 to 30

minutes daily on the computers. He installed educational software that was age appropriate.

READING PROGRAM

Students in Grades K-4 read books from the Academy's Library and the older students wrote book reports on what they had read. They also participated in daily Higher Order Thinking (HOT) Skills, vocabulary building and reading comprehension sessions to increase their reasoning skills.

BRAVE BLACK GIRLS READING CLUB:

Ten 3rd to 4th grade girls were chosen for a "Brave Black Girl Reading Club." Ms. Joanna Banks of the Anacostia Smithsonian Museum, partnered with this pilot program by creating the club. The girls were able to sharpen their reading, creative writing and thinking skills, and recognized themselves as "Brave Black Girls" who are empowered to affect change in the world. All of the reading selections emphasized this theme and resonated with the young readers bolstering their self-confidence and self-worth. The program was a success and will be a permanent part of FYA.

The book club culminated in a closing club meeting with each of the girls receiving a certification of completion and a "goodie bag," including a personalized scrap book of their time as a "Brave Black Girl." The girls had such a sense of accomplishment and pride after this recognition, that a formal tea followed with a celebration for all young girls in the summer program.

NBA ALL STAR PARTY:

While the young girls were attending the Tea Party, the young men were attending a NBA All Star Party, with special gifts from Que Gaskins, Vice President of Global Marketing RBK for Reebok International, and Ms. Dawn-Marie Gray, President of DMG colors, the months, and some phrases of greetings.

Management, LLC.

CREATIVE WRITING PROGRAM:

A one day creative writing workshop was held at the Anacostia Smithsonian Museum taught by Ms. Joanna Banks for students grades 2-4. The children were given a creative writing assignment which was based on the current mural exhibit. The exercise was designed to heighten their attention to detail. Each student was given a journal at the end of the workshop and encouraged to continue writing to expand their imaginations through writing.

DOLL MAKING WORKSHOP:

Ms. Joanna Banks held a doll making workshop. This activity was open to the girls and boys in grades 2-4. In the interest of time, the dolls were pre-fabricated by Ms. Banks. Each student was able to create clothing, hair, and a face for their doll. The students created dolls in their own likeness and were proud of their accomplishments.

SCIENCE PROGRAM:

The National Science Resources Center, operated by the Smithsonian Institution and the National Academy of Sciences offered an opportunity through the D. C. Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation for programs to participate in their pilot science project. The students participated in a pilot program for soil and electricity.

Ms. Sharon St. Clair, teacher for grades K-1 and Mrs. Rose Brown, teacher for grades 2-4, along with their staff, introduced the students to the study of soil. The students examined the soil sample to see what they could observe, they performed tests on the soil by

adding water to each of the three types of soil, and watched what happened. The students in Mrs. St. Clair's class talked about what they had done while the students in Ms. Brown's class wrote down and outlined what they had seen in **VERB CROSSOVER PROGRAM:** Through CYITC, the students participated in the "VERB Crossover,"

their notebooks. Ms. Brown's class also examined electricity. To help the students understand how electricity works, the students performed hands-on experiments with electricity that taught them the properties of electricity. They performed experiments using batteries to show how a light switch goes on and off as well as other exciting experiments. The final culminating activity was to design a room inside of a cardboard box and wire the lighting for the room. The children did an outstanding job.

THE COMIC BOOK PILOT PROJECT:

Through CYITC, the students participated in a "Comic Book Pilot Project," created by Michael Blitz from New York. His comic book club has been adopted by 45 schools in New York, Baltimore, Chicago, and Cleveland. He states that "Teachers say students in the comic book club improve their writing and reading skills by refining and editing the project over a long period of time."

Approximately 30 students participated in the project. The theme was "Leadership." Each student received an activity booklet, manuscript starter, and comic book canvas. There were 16 sessions for creating the comic book. At the end of the project, 10 outstanding books were presented to CYITC for Mr. Blitz to highlight on his website. Mr. Blitz is also making plans to host a reception to display the comic books in the Washington, DC area.

SPANISH PROGRAM:

Maurice Scott, a senior and the class president at School Without Walls, was accepted as a Freshman at North Carolina A&T, taught the students beginning Spanish. They learned to count up to 40, the days of the week, their

program. The program was designed by the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services' Centers for Disease

Control and Prevention to increase and maintain physical activity among kids. VERB Crossover's aim is to encourage kids to have fun, to get, and to stay active. Maurice Scott managed this project. The children participated in games that crossed basketball with other sports and activities, the result, VERB Crossover. The games included Baskickball, Hoopscotsch, and BaskeTag. Each day for six weeks, the students participated in a hour of daily VERB Crossover activities.

CHESS PROGRAM:

Ms. Patricia Sanker continued with the chess program. The participants from grades 2 and 3 were so enthusiastic with having learned these skills that they asked if we could continue the chess program in the winter component. Chess will continue to be an integral part of our program because it was implemented to assist the students with reading, math, and socialization skills. Since chess involves all levels of critical thinking, knowledge, comprehension, analysis, and evaluation, we are hopeful that it will improve the academic skills for the students in grades 2-4.

FIELD TRIPS:

Grants provided by the Far Southeast Family Strengthening Collaborative and the D. C. Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation paid all the student bus and entry fees for the following field

trips: Anacostia Park for Mayor Williams Opening Ceremony for the Summer Camp; Highland Library (2 field trips); Goddard Space Flight Center, Washington Navy Yard Museum, The Fun and Learning Zone Convention Center, Melvin Deal African Dancer Program; Rain Forest Mobile at TheArc; Potomac River Ride, Anacostia Park Roller Skating, AMC Bowling, Rivertown Movie, "March of the Penguins," and the Johnson Horse Farm in Republic, MD.

the Academy for this publication. We will receive copies of the 2006 issue of the report. The students enjoyed taking

ARTS AND CRAFTS:

Ms. Rose Brown, Grade 2-4 teacher and Arts and Crafts Director, worked with the students daily developing the children's creativity and expression skills via this medium. The children made paper flowers, journal covers, toy cars, place mats, patriotic pinwheels, patriotic painted stones, designed cups, paper bag puppets, sports bracelets, shell art bracelets, gliders, tissue paper flowers, embroidery canvases, Plaster of Paris hands, wooden animals, yarn baskets, designed tee shirts, balloon people, fuse beads, tissue paper boats, popsicle sticks, coasters, picture frames, paper hats, yarn octopus, sun catchers, and jars, loom band/belts, book markers, butterflies, and spirit pennants.

The arts and craft program has proven to be one of the highlights of the program because it gives the students a way to express themselves creatively, positively, and openly.

CROCHET AND CANVAS SEWING PROGRAM:

Ms. Gaskins, Mrs. Jones, Ms. Lucas, Ms. Robinson, and Ms. Wortham, taught some of the children crochet and canvas sewing. These activities teach the students to be patient, focused, and organized. The repetition reinforces memory and increases their confidence in design and creative skills. Finally, it gives them a sense of pride in completion of a task, as well as taking pride in their finished product.

SPECIAL GUESTS:

Mr. Robert Rouse, a DC Fireman gave a presentation on how to make 911 calls. Ms. Dawn-Marie Gray, President of DMG Management, LLC, a local business owner, talked about her experience working with Reebok and the special projects she helped market for Allen Iverson, as well as other athletes she represents. She also spoke to the students about what sports marketing entails and that there are other more important jobs than being an athlete or the pictures and are excited about seeing themselves in print.

SPECIAL TRIP: The students enjoyed

rapper in the athletic and entertainment business.

Ms. Marie Wilson, a cowgirl from Oklahoma, and a Docent from the Anacostia Smithsonian Museum, spoke to the children about her experiences as a cowgirl, occupations she has held, and being a Docent for the Smithsonian.

Ms. Janice Corbet a registered nurse, spoke to the students about her occupation, and let them listen through her stethoscope to their heart beat. Ms. Jacqueline Champion, spoke to the students about being a policewoman in DC. The students were put into groups of 10 and were able to spend at least 20 minutes with each guest. The day proved to be quite successful for the students and gave them ideas about different career opportunities.

Mrs. Brown prepared a small reception at the end of Career Day and presented each guest with a FYA Certificate of Appreciation.

COWRIE SHELL WORKSHOP:

Ms. Olivia Aikens-Cummings, a 15 year-old entrepreneur held a workshop at the Academy for the students. Olivia creates and sells jewelry that links us to our past. She also wrote and presented her own historical video. She lectures, presents displays, and produces workshops for all ages on the history of the cowrie shell. At the end of her presentation, each student was able to make a necklace, bracelet, or anklet out of cowrie shells.

BREAD FOR THE WORLD INSTITUTE:

Ms. Cheryl Adams, a representative of Bread for the World Institute, "Strengthening Rural Communities Hunger Report 2005," and their photographer, Mr. Eugene Mebane, came to the Academy to shoot some pictures of the children for their national nutrition program. Mr. John Stokes, of the DC Educational Office for Free Summer Meals Programs, recommended

the special field trip to the Johnson Farm in Port Republic, MD. They saw farm animals and were treated to a

barbeque and hayride around the 300 acre farm. It was very inspirational for them.

CLOSING PROGRAM: A Carnival was planned for the closing program for the children who had worked so hard during the academic summer enrichment program. A good time was had by all.

SPONSORS:

We give a special "Thank You," to our sponsors and funders: The D.C. Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation, the Combined Federal Campaign, D.C. Parks and Recreation Summer Food Program, Far Southeast Family Strengthening Collaborative, and the Mars Foundation. Also a special "Thank You," to Ms. JoAnna Banks and Ms. Maria Wilson of the Anacostia Smithsonian Museum for their special programs with the students.

The outstanding accomplishments would not have been possible without the love, dedication, commitment and expertise of each member of our wonderful teaching staff, our junior volunteer staff and the volunteers from Senator Edward M. Kennedy's Office. Finally, a special "Thank You" to all the families who provided water, snacks, paper, arts and crafts, and chaperoned for the summer camp. Because of each and every one of you and your belief in the accomplishments of the Freedom Youth Academy, we delivered another outstanding program for the children East of the River.

TRIBUTE:

On Sunday, August 7, 2005, Ms. Brenda Smith, a beloved teacher's aide for grades 2-4 died unexpectedly. She was a great loss to our program. Ms. Smith had been an integral part of the Freedom Youth Academy since 1992. To help the children deal with their grief and let them know that death is a part of

life, I thought it would be a good idea to have each student express their loss through poems, pictures, and messages. They were organized into a scrapbook

by Mrs. Brown, and I presented the book to Mrs. Smith's mother as a gift of love.

Final Report Prepared By:
Mrs. Mary Ann Gaskins

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN AND OTHER CONTRIBUTORS:

Thank you for your contribution. It is a special person who continuously gives from the heart. Because of you and your belief in the Academy we are able to continue our mission of motivating the students to acquire reading, writing, math, and reasoning skills. We are still committed to making education the number one goal for the children. Your concern and support mean a great deal to the staff, parents and students at the Academy. Again thank you for making a difference in the lives of our students and their families.

FRIENDS:

The Freedom Youth Academy is a 501(c)(3) tax deductible organization dedicated to the improvement of the scholastic assessment and educational skills of the children featured in more than 75 newspapers, magazine, books, newsletters, TV, and radio shows. In order for us to continue our outstanding work, provide college stipends to our students, and to continue our academic scholarships to the disadvantaged at-risk children, we need your support now more than ever. Listed below are the ways you can support the Academy:

FRIENDS OF THE ACADEMY:

You can make a tax-deductible contribution to the Freedom Youth Academy by cash, check or money order made out to Freedom Youth Academy, Inc.

PRIVATE SECTOR -

If your employer participates in the United Way Campaign Payroll Deduction Plan, you may contribute a portion of your earning by checking "other" on the list of Charities and specifying The Freedom Youth Academy, Tax Exempt #52-143-2925.

GOVERNMENT WORKERS -

The Freedom Youth Academy's Combined Federal Campaign number for 2005-2006 is 7274.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING GRADUATES:

Ensign Amir Jenkins - U. S. Naval Academy
Ms. Tisa Holly - Florida A&M
Mr. Dante Brawner - Morgan University
Ms. Jenifer Trowell - Gannon University
Mr. Maurice Scott - School Without Walls to NC A&T
Ms. Kayla Tucker - OLPH to Elizabeth Seton
Ms. Molaye Wortham - OLPH to Thurgood Marshall Chartered School
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