

SUCCESSBEYONDLIMITS



SUMMER
REPORT



2013

SBL

SUMMER REPORT

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SUCCESSBEYONDLIMITS

The summer program was a space where every individual involved could learn, question, and grow; all the while making amazing memories and building long lasting friendships. Having the opportunity to work with SBL also opened my eyes to the positive impact that such collaborative, community organizations can have on youth development.

NIHAL HASSANIEN
[SUMMER PROGRAM ASSISTANT]

Running a summer camp in a new space and developing new relationships with students has been an exciting opportunity. The summer was a chance to, once again, take on the challenges and opportunities that come with impacting youth in our community to achieve their first high school credit. This summer meant watching our mentors, for 6 whole weeks, take ownership of the knowledge distribution in the classroom and throughout the day. This summer was a year to witness our senior mentors who once were students in our program now leave to discover post-secondary education and beyond.

MOHAMED AHMED
[ACADEMIC & SOCIAL COORDINATOR]

WRITTEN & EDITED BY:

Andrien Pargassingh, Brandon Truong, Chris Penrose, Crystal Penrose, Denise Campbell, Japjit Singh, Kaneka Watkins, Mauricio Araya, Mohamed Ahmed, Pat Saul, Rownack Chowdury, Sam Teclé, Saraya Elwin, Saraya Elwin, Shyanne Witter, Tesfai Mengesha, Tesfai Mengesha, Toota Hassanien, Tyrone Manners, Whitney Smith, Winston Luc

PHOTOGRAPHY BY:

Brandon Truong and Mohamed Ahmed

DESIGNED BY:

Monica Nguyen

I think what made this such a great success was the dynamic, flexible teachers in the program, who were able to bring out the best in our students. I observed students having fun in class, and doing work, while indicating to me that this was the most work they have done all year. Having our mentors being the foundation of the program (being present in every aspect of the day) also contributed to the students' feeling excited to come to the program, join into various activities, and a support to help them earn their credit.

KANEKA WATKINS
[PROGRAM MANAGER]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The success of the summer can be attributed to the dynamic and diverse mentor team, the dedicated staff, the energetic and knowledgeable teachers, and the committed volunteers. Of course the summer wouldn't be successful without the talented, driven and hardworking youth from Brookview and Oakdale, who made the commitment to show up to the buses every morning at 8:15am working relentless towards their first high school credit.

TESFAI MENGESHA
[ACADEMIC & SOCIAL COORDINATOR]

2013

This summer was a hint of what the future holds for us. We had our staff team taking on new roles and responsibilities. We had a great group of former mentors working in new roles that they initiated, mentoring the mentors. We saw our 2013 mentors step up in impressive ways. And we saw a group of students dedicated to the model.

CHRIS PENROSE [EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR]

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SUMMER PROGRAM OVERVIEW

SECTION 1

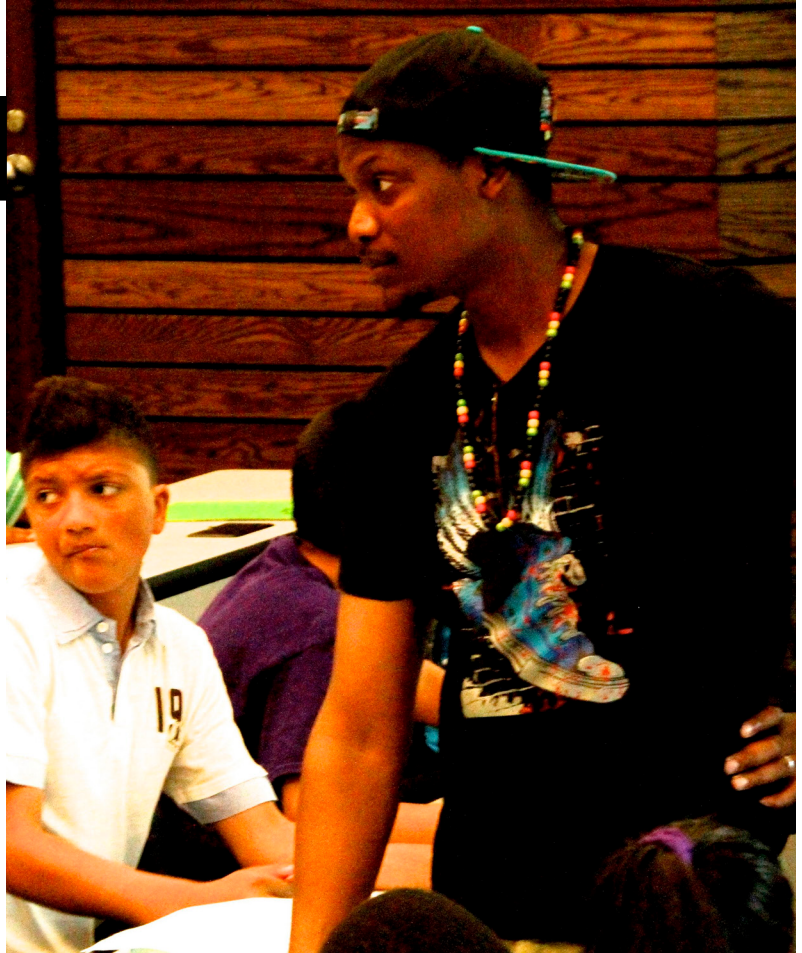
OVERVIEW | JULY 2nd • AUG 9th

MORNING CLASSES: WHEN LEARNING IS FUN

Our location in Osgoode Hall Law School on the York University campus allowed for the use of state of the art classrooms, equipped with technology that facilitated dynamic lesson designs. The teachers used a mixture of dance, spoken word, art, and physical activity within their lessons that provided students with a wide array of outlets to interact with and demonstrate their knowledge. Walking into a classroom you would notice students working intently, supported by youth mentors, often listening to music of their choosing.

The credit they were working towards was a grade 9 General Learning Strategies from the Toronto District School Board Continuing Education, and was focused on literacy, numeracy and life skills.

01



EATING HEALTHY MEALS TOGETHER: A RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Throughout the years, SBL has offered the students enrolled in the summer program a healthy breakfast and lunch. Providing two meals throughout the day reflects SBL's determination to eliminate any barriers that may hinder students from achieving their full potential within the classroom. With their dietary needs fulfilled, the students have the necessary nutrition and energy to complete each day and to grow both academically and socially. The time allotted for both breakfast and lunch also yields a great opportunity for the students, mentors and staff to bond and strengthen their relationships. For these reasons, food provision within the SBL summer program has been, and will continue to be, a high priority for the SBL management staff, one that is an integral component of SBL's success.



TRANSPORTATION: ACCESS & EXPLORATION

The York University setting for SBL's summer program offers an invaluable environment for our youth who are climbing the various steps of their educational lives: mentees about to enter high school, and our volunteers and mentors soon to trade their high school experience for post-secondary dreams.

In order to access this ideal setting, there are some barriers to overcome. Although York University is located in the Jane and Finch Community, problematic urban planning provides obstacles to foot and TTC travel. Therefore, providing school buses to pick up and drop off students becomes the essential mode of transportation.



Whether SBL mentees, volunteers, and mentors live in the north, south or middle areas of Jane and Finch, everyone is only a few minutes walking distance to their place of pick up. Brookview Middle School, Firgrove Public School, and Oakdale Park during the summer months are the centers where large numbers of youth gather for bus service to and from York University. Although SBL participants are growing into older youth and young adults, the bus transportation reassures parents and guardians knowing that their children will have safe and documented travel to York, as daily bus attendance is also taken.

Getting our SBL youth to York University is definitely a priority, but being mobile for the various Friday trip locations is important, especially to the students! Travelling downtown to go to the beach, Richmond Hill for Bowling and movies, Etobicoke for go-carting, North York to roller-skate, and Brampton for a day of fun at Wild Water Kingdom would not be possible without our buses (given students are in class until lunch). It is an amazing opportunity to gain a greater love and appreciation for the city we live in, as SBL tours the Tdot!

TRIPS: MENTORSHIP BONDS & SEEING THE CITY

Each Friday afternoon during the six weeks of the summer program is dedicated to a field trip. These outings are opportunities to have fun and continue building relationships in a space outside of the classroom or the York University corridors. These trips bring our teachers, SBL staff, volunteers and mentors together with our students. Winning a game of bowling or going through the awkwardness of roller-skating builds bonds and memories that carry over into the classroom.

The trips for the summer of 2013 were roller blading giving a 70s feel while riding around a rink with music playing; Bowling trying hard to make the top 40 players in next week's slideshow; Wave Pool swimming against the tides; Movies spending an afternoon at the theatre watching a new marvel comics film; Go Karting racing and getting a taste of driving; and Wild Water Kingdom enjoying the lazy river and water rides.

03



AFTERNOON ACTIVITIES: A ROUNDED LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Students in our program make the most of the state of the art facilities of York University, including the pool, the gym, the movie theatre, and music recital space. In addition to the activities that take place in these spaces, there are numerous activities included swimming, recreational sports, games, martial arts, mentor activities, samba drumming, dance, drama, art, and interactive workshops, which are offered to provide a full learning and engagement experience.

The recreational sport sessions engaged students in cooperative, interactive and physical activities with their mentors. The benefit that the students received from these activities was that they were developing the ability to work in groups with other students, increase their physical activity levels, and listen to instructions given to them by their leaders.



GRADUATION!

Held on Tuesday, August 6th in the Price Family Theatre at York U, we were delighted to welcome over 300 people to celebrate the success of youth in the Jane and Finch community. The evening was full of performances, awards and our end of summer slide show, always a crowd pleaser.

Highlights included Matthew receiving the Jays Care Mentor Among Mentors Award (voted on strictly by the mentors) for the second year in a row, and Moose receiving the newly launched Student's Choice Mentor Award.



In addition to the many acknowledgements of accomplishment and growth throughout the evening, we were most proud that 100 students earned their first secondary school credit!

We were honoured to have our grad covered by the North York Mirror.

"I LOVED SEEING MY
CHILD GRADUATE AT
YORK UNIVERSITY. THIS
WAS A VERY SPECIAL
NIGHT." —PARENT



MENTOR TRAINING PROGRAM:

EMPOWERED TO EMPOWER

While most students were just returning after March break with thoughts on finishing the school year, SBL Mentors were already planning and preparing for a summer of leadership.

The extensive mentor training program kicked off in April with a workshop to help our 2013 group understand what it means to be a mentor and to lay the right foundation for developing the skills needed for teamwork.

If the mentors are to be the backbone of our program, it is important for them to have decision-making power. With that in mind, they were able to shape what our afternoon component to the summer would look like, to decide the daily menu for lunches, and to work with a budget to choose the six Friday afternoon student trips.

AMONG THE TRAINING TOPICS COVERED WERE:

- CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT 101
- BEING AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR
- INTRO TO THE GENERAL LEARNING STRATEGIES CREDIT
- CONFLICT MEDIATION
- PROGRAM PLANNING
- PROGRAM EVALUATION
- CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCACY



THE BENEFITS OF THIS TRAINING PROGRAM WERE NUMEROUS:

- MENTORS PRESENTED A UNITED FRONT WHEN WORKING WITH THE 110 MENTEES;
- THEY HELD EACH OTHER ACCOUNTABLE AND UTILIZED THE STRENGTHS WITHIN THE GROUP;
- AS CO-WORKERS THEY WERE ABLE TO DEVELOP A COMFORT LEVEL THAT ALLOWED THEM TO MAKE MISTAKES AS THEY LEARNED, KNOWING THEY HAD A TEAM TO SUPPORT THEM;
- THE OLDER MENTORS IN THE GROUP TOOK ON THAT BIG BROTHER/SISTER ROLE IN SUPPORTING THE YOUNGER MENTORS; THEY ALSO TOOK A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN PROVIDING THEIR INPUT AS SENIOR MENTORS DURING THE TRAINING PROCESS.

MENTOR DE-BRIEF WEEK: CELEBRATING SUMMER, READY FOR SEPTEMBER

After a successful 6-week program in July and August, our mentors were able to have a week to de-brief about the summer. We were able to discuss and break down the summer, section by section. Mentors reflected on what went well and what could have been improved.

The sections to reflect on included: Morning buses, breakfast, morning assembly, classrooms, teachers, lunch, afternoon activities, field trips, student engagement, other student and staff dynamics, and over all experience in the program.

After breaking down the summer in that way, mentors were able to make connections they did not see in the heat of the moment during the summer. The purpose of this week was for mentors to share and have these conversations. Mentors reflected on the challenges that come with working with 110 mentees and the growth they saw in them as relationships developed; they were also able to see how they themselves had experienced growth as a result of their work as mentors.



We then moved to looking at mentor responsibilities during the school year. It was important for our mentors to set the expectations they will bring to Westview C.S.S when they return for a new academic year with new students and old. Some of that discussion included preparing for Head Start Day at Westview for new grade 9s, planning a workshop for the York Centre for Education and Community (YCEC) conference held during the final week of August at York University, and participating in amazing school year partnerships like those with the Toronto International Film Festival and the Manifesto Festival.

One of the challenges a program as intensive as ours can face is that by week six, people tend to be pretty exhausted. However, one of the big markers of how this summer went was that our mentors finished the program energized and missing the students – they said they were ready to go for a few more weeks!



A NEW SPACE: OSGOODE HALL LAW SCHOOL

One of the most beautiful spaces on the York University campus is the recently renovated Osgoode Hall Law School. With sunshine pouring into the fantastic glass structure, a strong sense of community in the open concept hallway, and the state of the art lounge, classrooms and event facilities, this space was like a physical symbol of our aspirations of excellence for our students.

Being welcomed into this great space made a tangible difference in the atmosphere of our summer program, which was unanimously acclaimed to be our best yet!

In addition to the inviting design of the space, the many staff in the building made us feel incredibly welcome. Their warm 'good mornings' to our students, smiles and waves throughout the day, and their consistent comments that they 'love the energy we bring to the building' put the experience over the top. One remarkable anecdote summed it all up: an Osgoode staff member felt so inspired watching our mentors working with our mentees, that he went and signed up to be a big brother.

We want to thank the Dean of Osgoode Hall Law School, Dr. Lorne Sossin, all of the Associate Deans and Osgoode Staff Members, the Community Legal Aid Services Programme, and the amazing Osgoode friends and alumni (Norton Rose Fulbright, the LAWS Program) for giving SBL such a great summer home.



HIP HOP LITERACY

As Hip Hop further entrenches itself in the academy, its use in the classroom is becoming more prevalent. This summer, SBL had the opportunity to pilot a Hip Hop Curriculum that is being developed through a partnership with the Toronto District School Board, Educational Attainment West, and the Toronto Hip Hop community.

When we decided to pilot the Hip Hop Curriculum it was because of the huge success we had seen in our own Hip Hop Literacy programming, which was led by SBL staff and teacher, Tesfai (one of the writers of this emerging curriculum). It was also in response to the consistent call from our students to see curriculum that they related to. Moving beyond the idea of looking at Hip Hop lyrics and using them to teach English, this curriculum content aims to engage students with higher order thinking skills on critical issues such as class, gender and media literacy. This curriculum was a remarkable complement to the General Learning Strategies course that our students work towards. The lessons explored and critically examined schools, communities, economic structures and gender norms. Students had the opportunity to bring their lived experiences into the classroom to make the lessons meaningful through their analysis of various media forms. The curriculum was also featured on a segment of CBC News and will be available in the form of a book this fall.

If you missed the airing of the piece, you can check it out on our website!



LAWS PROGRAM

Hosting the summer program in Osgoode Hall Law School made it fitting for the LAWS program to facilitate legal education seminars.

The LAWS program provided workshops in each classroom exploring the justice system, legal issues and the legal profession, which was the precursor to mock trials. The students became familiar with the myriad of roles in a courtroom, which led to a mock trial where they had a chance to select their roles. As each scenario played out, students got a first-hand preview of the opportunities within the legal profession.

SITE VISITS: PARTNERS AND FRIENDS JOINING US FOR THE DAY

Over the course of the summer, we have an amazing time. That is why we are always excited about hosting friends and supporters to come and visit the summer program and get a sense of what it's all about.

We would like to thank our numerous partners from the Toronto District School Board, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Child and Youth Services, SNAP North York, and CBC News.

08



RAMADAN

As you may know, the Islamic holy month of Ramadan was observed this year over 28 days stretching through July and August. Our summer program was designed to respectfully accommodate the students, mentors, volunteers, teachers and staff who were fasting.

THIS INCLUDED:

- A prayer room
- A cool, relaxing (and fun) food-free space to stay over breakfast and lunch
- A low-energy games room for afternoon activities
- Additional accommodations, when required, throughout the daily schedule

As a result of the incorporation of Ramadan into our summer program design, awareness and knowledge of this important faith observance in the community was shared.

SBL TEACHERS:

Rownack Chowdury, Sam Teale, Nigel Hunter, Saraya Elwin, Mauricio Araya, Tesfai Mengesha, Crystal Penrose, Andrien Pargassingh

OUT
REACH
TEAM

SECTION 2



SBL STAFF:

TOP: Mohamed Ahmed, Denise Campbell, Saraya Elwin, Tesfai Mengesha, Chris Penrose

MIDDLE: Whitney Smith, Kaneka Watkins, Toota Hassanien

BOTTOM: Shyanne Witter, Winston Luc



SBL MENTORS:

TOP: Orlando Blair, Robin Pariah, Destiny Henry, Kevin Jagrup, Sam Adigun, David Huynh

MIDDLE: Jauvan Samuels, Jermi Fernandez, Abdulkadir Nur, Matthew Alay, Saifullah Khan, Kadisha Murrar, Cindy Jaikissoon, Tyrone Manners, Tysha Tomlinson, Akifa Forde, Aliyah-Suvvanah Burey, Peter Bunkuna

BOTTOM: Kareem Bennet, Princess Hoddinott, Shukri Adullahi, Maleeha Maleeha, Hafsa Mohammed

Amazing Mentors That Were Missing From This Photo (but can be seen in later parts of this report): Brandon Truong, Japjit Singh, Shajan Ganesharajah

SUMMER PROGRAM EVENTS

SECTION 3

SPECIAL EVENTS

JAYS CARE COMMUNITY CLUB HOUSE

One of the greatest supporters – year in and year out – of the Success Beyond Limits' summer program is the Jays Care Foundation. Part of being a recipient of their Grand Slam Grant, we received an invitation to come out to watch the Blue Jays play from the vantage point of the Jays Care Community Club House.

On June 17th, 30 mentors, students and staff enjoyed all of the baseball worthy munchies you could ask for (popcorn, hot dogs, pizza), had a visit from the Blue Jays' mascot, made an appearance on the Jumbotron, and had Devon "The Catch" White come by to say 'keep up the good work'.



OPENING DAY: Q-MACK!

On the first day of our summer program it is important to leave a lasting first impression. Q-Mack and Scott Jackson (aka J-BOX) came in on the afternoon of July 2nd as our guest speakers and took to the stage with a bang. Q-Mack is an international performer and motivational speaker and J-Box represented Canada in the World Beatboxing Championship in Germany.

Q-Mack spoke to our students about his path to success; he spoke about discovering, at an early age, the impact self-esteem can have on child development and did all this while showing us some mind-blowing basketball tricks. They were able to engage the crowd by getting everyone involved in trying out and practicing his ball tricks. The one trick they were not able to have students try out is when Q-Mack held a large 7-foot table on his chin! Students and staff were able to walk away with key strategies to having a successful approach for the challenges that may cross their paths in the future.



TRACK MEET @ YORK U CITY OF TORONTO TRACK & FIELD CENTRE

On July 18th, Success Beyond Limits held the annual Track and Field Day for the young and old during the summer. It is an opportunity for students to develop or enhance their track and field related skills. We encouraged our youth to sign up for the following events: Long Jump, High Jump, Hurdles, 400 Meter race, 800 Meter race, Shot Put, and Relay. Many students were shy and some were excited to showcase their talent while looking at that empty large sign-up sheet taped on the wall. It was important to see our mentors communicating to students that this is not a try-out for a team but an opportunity for everyone to have fun through sports. The highlight of the day was the annual relay race between the mentors and mentees, where the ladies' mentee team took the victory!

CAREER DAY: YOUNG DIVERSE PROFESSIONALS

During the morning of Tuesday, July 23rd, 110 Success Beyond Limits students engaged in our Career Day. From 9:30am – 12:00pm presenters representing various career paths (law, child and youth work, martial arts, teaching, and journalism) shared their educational journeys with our youth. All seven SBL classrooms were filled with the exchanges between professionals, new



grade nine students, volunteers, and high school mentors. This event helped to solidify dreams and spark newfound paths of interests.

Many students were able to discuss important and even personal information ranging from the required high school courses, length of study, value of volunteering, how to stay motivated, managing finances and of course...how much money will they make!

Concluding with a warm SBL appreciation, one student from each class presented invitees with words of gratitude and an SBL gift package. The students who received the opportunity to speak to all in attendance gained some valuable public speaking experience, while engaging in the virtue of thankfulness.

SBL's Career Day 2013 will always be especially memorable, as it was officially documented by Snap Magazine!



PARENT NIGHT: TALKING ABOUT OUR FUTURE

On the warm summer evening of July 23rd, SBL staff, teachers and parents gathered in an Osgoode classroom to talk. The conversation covered a wide-range of topics, including how to support children in secondary school, how to make the most of the school one's child attends, what parents can expect from teachers as well as the perceptions and stereotypes of the community.

For the small but powerful group who gathered to talk, and share experiences, it was a valuable and enjoyable evening.

JUSTBGRAPHIC & SBL EVENT

On July 25th, JBG staff along with their numerous youth leaders led a two-hour jam-packed event. This showcased their many talented members, plus awarded SBL participants the opportunity to test their skills within various artistic genres.

Jump-starting it off with a live dance crew performance added to the hype of the four stations of fun JBG had planned for the SBL youth. Rotating to sessions of dance lessons, drama skits, outdoor field games, and a beep boxing workshop, not only allowed SBL participants to engage in various art forms, but in addition, provided JBG youth who led the activities



with heightened workshop facilitation skills, while showcasing their multiple talents.

However, no one could forget the closing concert that had the SBL youth dancing, cheering, and a little star struck! Seeing youth who were their peers (or just a little bit older) putting together such an amazing professional showcase of their gifts and passions ended the event with feelings of pride, admiration and aspiration!

YORK U GLENDON CAMPUS TOUR

On Monday, July 29th, a group of 15 students and mentors from our program boarded the York U shuttle bus to the Glendon Campus for a tour of this small, yet beautiful part of the university. Students were told stories about the history of Glendon and also led through the full spectrum of post-secondary student life at from the athletic facilities, residence and the academic environment that emphasizes the French language.

A highlight of the trip was the tour of the office of President Emerita Dr. Lorna Marsden. Then when Dr. Marsden treated us to lunch, everyone felt like a VIP guest. The impact of an experience like this was evident in the conversations on the bus ride home when everyone talked about post-secondary education as a cool life experience and something to be excited about.



PLAY DAY: SBL MENTORS TAKE OVER!

Only July 30th we held the highly anticipated annual Play Day event which was a smashing success. The day contained the following key ingredients: lots of water, food, games, smiles, laughter and the SBL family all coming together to create what's been called a 'wild and fun' event. This year's event consisted of ten stations all created and operated by SBL Mentors. The stations ranged from eating competitions to water-balloon-dodge ball. As most staff members are aware, it is also a time when mentors plot against the staff with the goal of soaking them down to their socks. This year our rookie staff member was caught off-guard, causing her to end the day with a bucket of water tossed on top of her. We are happy to report that all other staff members escaped the day reasonably dry.

SBL BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

This summer marked the inaugural SBL Basketball Tournament on August 7th. The event involved co-ed basketball teams represented by staff, teachers, mentors, volunteers and mentees. The basketball tournament took place at York University's Tait McKenzie Centre, where games such as Staff Vs. Mentor, Mentees Vs Mentees, and Mentors Vs. Mentees were vigorously contested.

The youthful mentors felt confident going into their games, describing their starting lineup as 'pretty good', and saw themselves as favourites to win the tournament.



The game that attracted the most buzz was the Mentors vs the Staff/Teacher team, which was the first matchup. Though the game was close, the SBL staff/teachers maintained control. Much to the disappointment of the SBL mentors, they ended up losing 30-23 to the of out of practice (but highly-effective and well-coached) staff team.

The second game involved two energetic mentee teams facing off, with the winner playing the mentors. The winning mentee team gave the mentors quite a challenge. The game ended with the mentors winning by a narrow margin of 4.

The success of the tournament has led to it becoming an annual event, one that the SBL family is looking forward to.



CANADA'S WONDERLAND

Our team of Mentors began 14 weeks of training for the summer program in April. When many students are thinking mostly about the end of the school year, the mentors were preparing for the impact that they could make in the summer. Then just before starting our 6-week summer program they had one intensive week of preparation. When the summer program was completed, they had one more week to debrief in order to be ready to start September off on the right foot.

On August 16th, to celebrate their accomplishments, we had one final trip for the summer – Canada's Wonderland. We sparked off the day with a group ride on the absurd roller-coaster called The Leviathan (only a few mentors sat out). This final trip, a highlight of the summer was true to the adage, work hard and play harder.

ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM & ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO

Much of our focus in the summer is on students, but we are always looking out for our parents. Thanks to a generous donation provided to us through Kids Up Front, we were able to provide a number of passes to the ROM and the AGO, extending more of the fun of the summer program to the whole family!

"I LOVED THE TRIP TO WONDERLAND, AFTER OUR WORK ALL SUMMER, I FELT LIKE I WAS THERE WITH FAMILY" – JERMI

"IT WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE AS WELL AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO BOND WITH GREAT PEOPLE"
– KAREEM

ROGERS CUP AT REXALL CENTRE @ YORK UNIVERSITY

Every summer, elite tennis players from around the globe descend on York University for the Rogers Cup. With the tournament located at the end of Shoreham, our buses pass by the tents, banners, and droves of tennis fans that signal that the tournament has begun.

Thanks to Westview Centennial and Kids Upfront, we were able to bring a number of students out to take part in the festivities (making a few new tennis fans in the process).



HEAD START DAY AT WESTVIEW

Concluding the SBL summer program is always bitter sweet, as we celebrate the accomplishments of our students, volunteers and mentors, but are saddened to say goodbye to those we have just spent six wonderful weeks with. However, the feelings of separation are only temporary as we all unite for the Westview Centennial Head-Start Day!

"ALL OF YOU HAVE PLAYED A TREMENDOUS ROLE IN MAKING THIS DAY A SUCCESSFUL ONE AND IT REALLY SPEAKS TO THE SPIRIT OF OUR WESTVIEW STAFF AND COMMUNITY WHO GIVE SO MUCH OF THEMSELVES TO HELP STUDENTS FEEL WELCOMED AND EXPERIENCE SUCCESS. I KNOW WITH THIS KIND OF SUPPORT WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A GREAT YEAR IN 2013-2014."

—BRUNO BERTO (VICE-PRINCIPAL,
WESTVIEW CENTENNIAL)



On Wednesday, August 28th, grade nine students entered the doors of Westview for the first time with emotions of wonderment, excitement, and nervousness. However, a lot of anxiety was eased when the first steps into their new school was infused with the familiar faces of SBL mentors, volunteers, teachers and staff. SBL's registration table in the main lobby of Westview provided reassurance that SBL was not over, and was only just beginning a new phase, the school year program!

SBL mentors engaged as tour guides and the high school specialists. This built on their role as mentor, which further instilled feelings of responsibility and confidence.

Observing the grade nines signing up for 10 more months of SBL engagement, parents reconnecting with staff, and Westview staff working hand-in-hand with community partners was an inspiring way to get ready for September.

YCEC SUMMER INSTITUTE 2013: COMMUNITY & SCHOOL COLLABORATIONS

Since 2008, SBL has participated in the annual York University Centre for Education and Community (YCEC) Summer Institute. This year SBL took part in the planning process for the Institute that took place at York University on August 27th and 28th. The theme was school and community partnerships – a perfect fit for us.

Following a keynote address by the Toronto District School Board's (TDSB) associate director, Gen Ling Chang, on community and schools, SBL staff, mentors, teachers, board members, community partners, and funders formed a panel and provided the conference participants with an engaging workshop on SBL's model of what it takes to have a school/community partnership of impact.

Our presentation began with a youth-led poem from Moose (one of our mentors) who shared his vision of collaboration, and helped to draw in the audience. Destiny, another mentor, also shared a poem and song written for the occasion that brought the room to a reflective pause and excited applause. The panel discussion, facilitated by Kaneka (Program Manager) and Hafsa (Mentor), turned the room into a fully interactive conversation where learning was shared among all who were present. We were happy to have the Trillium Foundation

"POWER IS FOR THE PEOPLE BUT MOST PEOPLE DON'T KNOW THAT THEY HAVE POWER. WHEN I WAS MODERATING, I WAS ABLE TO HELP ASK QUESTIONS THAT CAN HAVE A MAJOR INFLUENCE ON THE WAY PEOPLE THINK AND FEEL, AND HOW THE CONVERSATION FLOWS IN A CONSTRUCTIVE MANNER" —HAFSA

and JustBGraphic join our staff, mentors, and youth board members on the panel to illustrate how many partners it really takes to make a school and community partnership work.

This activity moved into a brainstorming session based upon SBL's own experience of developing partnerships; for example, items such as the importance of building relationships, initial steps, TDSB and organizational agreements, navigating various philosophies, and challenges were discussed. Moderated by an SBL mentor, pre-determined questions were posed to panel members representing the multiple stakeholders involved with SBL (SBL staff, mentors, teachers, Westview staff, a board member, community partner, and a funder). This dialogue assisted in enriching the audience's understanding of the numerous roles required to sustain effective partnerships and programming.

In addition, the numerous SBL mentors that performed, moderated, and sat on the panel experienced an opportunity that further developed their public speaking skills, networking abilities, and also made space for them to participate in a dialogue where they asserted themselves as a great source of knowledge and were consequently viewed as experts.



SBL: SUMMER PROGRAM 2013 EVALUATION METRICS*:

SUMMER
PROGRAM

EVALUATION

SECTION 4

# of Students that completed the program	107
# of Students that earned the grade 9 credit	100
# of Transfer students that started the program	45
# of Transfer students that finished the program	44
# of Transfer students that got the credit	42
# of Westview students that started the program	61
# of Westview students that finished the program	56
# of Westview students that got the credit	54
# of Volunteers for the summer	20
# of Volunteers hours contributed (combined)	1080
Average daily grade 9 attendance	95
# of Co-op credits attempted by mentors	18
# of Co-op credits achieved by mentors	18
Average attendance over the summer for mentors	24 of 25/day
# of Mentor training hours	105
Graduation attendance	350
Parent night attendance	14

**Given that some student information (i.e. high school they will be attending) was not available or changed without our knowledge, these numbers are as accurate as possible.*

Through the implementation of self-report measures, inferences were drawn regarding the overall social and academic impact of the SBL 2013 Summer Program. The measures were given in the form of pre and post program surveys which were developed by researchers from the York University Faculty of Education and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) at the University of Toronto.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE RESULTS INCLUDE:

The 2013 SBL summer program had a significantly positive impact on students' academic performance, confidence level on entering high school, and on their overall confidence in succeeding in academia.

•A total of 97% of the students enrolled in the 2013 summer program stated that their overall experience was very positive. 93% of the students enrolled in the 2012 SBL summer program indicated that their overall experience was positive. Both these high percentages indicate the consistency in student satisfaction rates.

•Results also indicate that 91% of SBL mentors feel more confident in their ability to provide youth with academic support following the 2013 SBL summer program.

The confidence expressed by the students enrolled in the 2013 SBL summer program on completing assignments is reflected in the high percentage of students that passed the program, and received their first high school credit.

•94% of the students enrolled successfully completed the 2013 SBL summer program, and received their first credit towards high school.

•96% of the prospective Westview Centennial Secondary School students in the program passed the program and received their first credit towards high school.

•Reflecting on their grade 8 school year, a mere 46% of students indicated that they could easily complete the work given to them in the classroom in sharp contrast to the 86% of students who felt capable of completing their classroom assignments during the SBL summer program.

•Following the SBL summer program, 89% of students indicated that they could definitely envision themselves attending University or College.

The success of the SBL 2013 summer program was not only reflected amongst the students involved in the program, but also in the cohort of mentors.

•A strong correlation was present between students feeling confident in completing classroom assignments, and the support of SBL mentors, teachers and staff. This finding indicates that collaborative support within the classroom was a major determinant in student academic success during the 2013 SBL summer program.

•88% of students indicated that following the SBL summer program they feel more prepared to pass high school with good grades. This value indicates an 18% increase in student confidence ratings on passing high school courses from the start of the 2013 SBL summer program.

•87% of mentors agree that the SBL program developed their leadership skills and developed the skills needed to work effectively in a team environment.

•91% of mentors agreed that their overall employment experience with SBL was very positive.

"LEADERSHIP IS A BIG PART OF BEING A MENTOR AT SBL. YOU MUST LEAD BY YOUR ACTIONS, NOT ALWAYS BY WHAT YOU SAY." —**AKIFA**

OUR
MENTORS
SAY

"SBL is a great program. I love this program and I hope it continues to grow. I can see the impact it has on kids."
—**SHAJAN**

"Being a mentor is an amazing experience. The reason being is because most high school students do not get this position that I was granted with." —**PETER**

"I will never give up trying and trying to prove myself to be eligible for a position. SBL made me that way."
—**JAUVAN**

"Best program ever!"
—**HAUSA**

"SBL has been great. I love being an SBL mentor"
—**JERMI**

"MY ROLE IS TO MENTOR AND ENGAGE IN ACTIVITIES WITH STUDENTS AND TO SHOW THEM THAT STUDENTS REALLY DO HAVE SUPPORT."
—**OLANDO**

OUR
PARENTS
SAY

"I want to make sure all of my children are involved with this program"
—**PARENT**

"What you at SBL are doing for the children and for us parents is amazing"
—**PARENT**

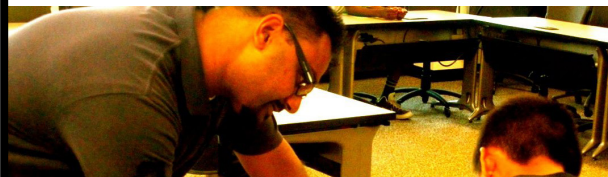
"SBL is so considerate of our child and family's situation, and our needs"
—**PARENT**

"The most exciting time for me as a teacher is the summer. Each year I look forward to teaching in the SBL summer program and meeting new, vibrant and energetic students. Most thrilling is witnessing the growth and progression of students in a program that takes a holistic approach." —**MR. MENGESHA**

OUTREACHERS SAY

"What makes the SBL teaching experience so exciting is knowing that most of these students have never been engaged on this level before. Effective mentors, Hip Hop curriculum, supportive colleagues, approachable SBL staff, and awesome mentees were all significant in the creation of another wonderful teaching (and learning) experience for me."

—**MR. PARGASSINGH**



"It was an amazing summer filled with old and new friends, challenges and barriers that we gracefully overcame. Immeasurable successes was the theme for the summer, the first of many for all of our students."

—**MR. TECLE**

"The SBL summer program is an amazing opportunity where teachers are able to incorporate a holistic approach to the education of the students. By incorporating literacy, numeracy, life skills and their everyday experience into the curriculum, the students are engaged in the learning process." —**MS. ELWIN [SITE LEAD]**



"SBL has provided students with the opportunity to actualize their own success and continue to strive to accomplish greater things in their respective lives."

—**MR. HUNTER**



"The SBL program gives me the opportunity to work with some amazing youth at a key time of their life."

—**MS. CHOWDHURY**

"SBL, a place for youth to grow, learn, explore, and tap into their strengths. It is also a place where bonds are formed and new families are made."

—**MRS. PENROSE**



"I get to see students that didn't do well in grade 8 in a different environment with a fresh start trying to prove themselves and succeeding. The amazing thing about second chances is you get to see the true potential of a student when they feel like they are a part of something special, and this program is that something special to them."

—**MR. ARAYA**



SUMMER PROGRAM STORIES

SECTION 5

SUCCESS STORIES

MENTEE SUCCESS STORIES

HASSAN ALI

The transition from middle school to high school is not always an easy one, especially when a student's middle school experience is fraught with challenges. Hassan Ali, a student in the SBL summer 2013 program, has been described by teachers as, "someone who did not do a lot of work in grade 8." In high school – where students can fail courses – the reality and consequences of this could be serious.



The SBL summer program was Hassan's first opportunity to get a feel for a high school course. As Hassan compared his experiences both in middle school and the summer program, to being in high school now, he says, "it's different now, because what teachers do is mostly talk and make us write notes. I took a lot from the SBL teaching strategies where they did things like play music to get the students to chill and ready to work".

He also highlights how the structure of the summer program has helped him be successful: "In school, teachers aren't always going to be available to help you. During the summer I was able to rely on mentors and volunteers in the classroom to help me, so I have more people that can help me."

Hassan has become a familiar face in the SBL youth space at Westview. He describes the space as somewhere that is chill, where he has people he can talk to. As he continues his transition into high school, we will continue to share more of his story.

STAY TUNED!

DONIKA PAUL

Donika Paul was walking the halls of Osgoode Law School during this past summer as she uttered the following words, "I have never worked this hard." She was making reference to her past academic habits, which she describes as, "not the best."

When asked what motivated her during the summer where she received her first high school credit, she says, "the teachers I had were comforting. They helped to relieve some of the anxiety I had about high school. I had mentors that taught me math in a different way, a way that helped me understand the work."

The SBL summer program is short (6 weeks) but very intensive and holistic in nature. It strives to help students develop academically and socially using a structure that includes morning classrooms and afternoon enrichment activities. Donika described the impact of the summer program with the following words: "Going through the program, it changed me. It made me meet new friends and feel more comfortable and safe going to high school. It prepared me because it informed me about what kind of work



I would be doing and what kinds of things I should expect."

Prior to entering high school Donika was nervous about going from being the oldest to the youngest in her school. As the summer progressed, she became at ease with that thought: "I got to know mentors, that can guide me through high school and I know the SBL office is somewhere I can feel comfortable and get help when I need it."

"...GOING THROUGH THE PROGRAM, IT CHANGED ME.. IT MADE ME MEET NEW FRIENDS AND FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE AND SAFE GOING TO HIGH SCHOOL..."

—DONIKA PAUL

SUCCESS STORIES

PARENT SUCCESS STORY

A crucial aspect to the success of the 2013 SBL Summer program was the support and enthusiasm expressed by the parents of our youth. SBL holds a strong commitment to the importance of close communication to the parents of the students involved, which in turn allowed for parents to feel a sense of security and comfort in their child's involvement with the program.

The SBL summer program was positively received by parents not only for the support it provided to students in both the academic and social domains, but also because it encouraged their child's participation in SBL due to the consideration SBL staff, teachers, and mentors held for the needs of the students.

A recent quote from a parent stated, "SBL is so considerate of our families' situations and need." Whether an accommodation was needed for religious, dietary, or cultural reasons, SBL ensured that each and every child felt comfortable and safe when they walked through the doors of Osgoode Hall Law School, where the summer program was held.

The 2013 SBL Summer graduation is a prime example of the positive regard expressed by the parents involved in the

"...ECHOES OF GRATITUDE FROM THE PARENTS BELLOWED THROUGHOUT THE ROOM, SOLIDIFYING THE SENTIMENT THAT SBL IS SUPPORTED BY NOT ONLY THE STUDENTS BUT BY PARENTS ALIKE..."

SBL program. The Price Family theatre was filled from top to bottom with proud parents, siblings and relatives, all there to share in the success of their loved ones. Following the ceremony, echoes of gratitude from the parents bellowed throughout the room, solidifying the sentiment that SBL is supported by not only the students but by parents alike.

While these anecdotes beautifully illustrate the parental support and gratitude found within SBL, the quantitative data obtained from parents throughout the summer program yields very similar findings. This year, SBL implemented the research method of questionnaires in order to determine how parents feel about their child's involvement with the SBL Summer Program and going forward. 95% of parents indicated that they feel very positive about their child's involvement within SBL, and went on to state that they wish a program of this nature was available for their other children, and all children within their community.

One of the greatest measures of our impact is this confidence in our program that parents have shown, and with this SBL will continue to work collaboratively to ensure student success.

SUCCESS STORIES

MENTOR SUCCESS STORIES

SHAJAN GANESHARAJAH

Shajan's high school career started off with obtaining his first high school credit during the SBL summer program right before he started grade 9. Early on, his interest was set on basketball, where he was successful in making it on the very competitive Westview basketball team.

In grade 10, he applied to become a mentor in the hopes that he would develop similar relationships such as those he had as a mentee, which he did better than he had even hoped.

During his final year in high school he made a shift in his focus; his priority was academics instead of pursuing a basketball scholarship that he had dreamed of in earlier high school years.

Mentoring this past summer positioned him to be a leader among his peers for years to come. His unique signature laugh became well known throughout the program, and has been a great icebreaker for him when starting a conversation with disengaged students.

Excited about his future in post-secondary education, Shajan will be starting his

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"...HIS UNIQUE SIGNATURE LAUGH BECAME WELL KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE PROGRAM, AND HAS BEEN A GREAT ICEBREAKER...WITH DISENGAGED STUDENTS"



first semester studying Actuarial Science at McMaster University. With the development of some strong interpersonal and networking skills, and with the support of SBL, he was able to develop a relationship with KPMG to help him succeed in this career pursuit.

Many students will look forward to when he sits on the panel of professionals during our annual SBL Career Day in the summer, as he continues to be a mentor, but in a different capacity.

CINDY JAIKISSOON

This past summer, Cindy finished her high school career after spending four years with SBL in her corner. "When I first entered the program as a grade 8 student (in 2009) I also had mentors who quickly made me feel comfortable. Academically, I was not the strongest student, but the staff at SBL made me feel as if I was capable of accomplishing anything I wanted to do", says Cindy as she reflects on her grade 8 summer program experience at York University.

Mr. Pargassingh who taught her that first year speaks highly of her success as he witnesses her growth from being a student in the program to a mentor 3 years in a row. "I was impressed with her ability to focus, produce, and actively be involved in the happenings that encompassed her within the classroom, while meeting the challenges presented to her at home", says Mr. Pargassingh.

During her high school career, Cindy has been able to maintain good grades, develop a reputation as a hard-nosed Rugby player, teach younger students how to play steel pan, work on a part-time basis during the school year, and work in the capacity of an SBL mentor.

There are no excuses for Cindy: what she sets her mind to, she accomplishes. She is not scared of hard work or advocating for herself. Cindy is an excellent role model and mentor for her little sister, as well as all of other youth in her community.

"...THE STAFF AT SBL
MADE ME FEEL AS IF I WAS
CAPABLE OF ACCOMPLISHING
ANYTHING I WANTED TO DO."

—CINDY JAIKISSOON



As she leaves Westview to study at York University she does so with a joy after being accepted into York University's concurrent program in the Faculty of Education. Before we know, she will be a teacher, having the type of impact on others that teachers like Mr. Pargassingh had on her.

ABIGAIL SANTIAGO: A MENTOR IN THE MAKING

Wide-eyed and always smiling, Abigail Santiago graced SBL with her positive attitude and eagerness as one of the volunteers for this year's summer program. Students and staff felt the infectious warmth of her personality and great work ethic, leaving them no choice but to award Abigail with a Volunteer Excellence Award at the 2013 summer program graduation.

Realizing the value in participating in the SBL program, Abigail expressed her keen interest in wanting to become a mentor in future years. The simple fact that Abigail realized her ability to succeed and initiate positive change through her experience with the SBL summer program is an accomplishment that we hold dear.

SUMMER PERSONALS

SECTION 6

YOUTH STAFF TESTIMONIALS

TYRONE MANNERS: PROGRAM ASSISTANT

The beginning of secondary school did not go as planned for Tyrone. A combination of factors, including situations outside of school that would be difficult for anyone to endure, got the best of him.

Absences and lates piled up, grades declined, and credits slipped through his fingers.

With most of the close friends that he came into grade 9 with at different schools or not in school at all, motivation to graduate was fading.



When Tyrone was hired as a Mentor for SBL, there were many that questioned whether he was a role model. In that first summer, and in the summers that followed, he thrived in a leadership role. His ability to understand where youth facing difficulties were coming from, his way of presenting options in a way that is not telling you what to do, and the respect he had built with youth in the community made him a fundamental part of the success of SBL. As much as Tyrone was helping others, things got worse before they got better. After a few substantial setbacks, his desire to succeed only grew stronger.

This past summer Tyrone worked with SBL as a Mentor to our Mentors. While his support of the program and our staff team was vital, one of the key measures of success of his role was establishing a plan for what his next step would be. By the end of July, we received amazing news from him that he was accepted into the St. Stephens employment program, which provides paid training and employment support with the aim of setting youth up for future success.

"...HIS DESIRE TO SUCCEED ONLY GREW STRONGER."

SHYANNE WITTER: RECREATION STAFF

Shyanne Witter was a Mentor with SBL for three years (and voted as Mentor Among Mentors for two of those years). In her third year at Humber College in Social Work, she returned to work with SBL as Recreation Staff for the summer program.

This summer meant another year of growth and building ever lasting relationships. Each summer that SBL runs their program it is a new beginning and challenge for me, which I love. I take the time to get to know each student and help them find a solid foundation of support.

As a Recreation Staff this summer, I saw students develop and transform into mature young adults who are now ready to take on the challenges high school has to offer.

I loved to see the two middle schools that had so much between them getting along and come together as one as opposed to what many may think. During the first few weeks of the summer program we've seen Brookview vs Oakdale mostly through competition, but by the end of the summer they saw themselves as Westview students.

What I am looking for from SBL is that they continue to give youth this wonderful opportunity to get ready for high school. I want them to use the resources and take full advantage of every opportunity SBL has to offer them because not many youth get that chance!



WINSTON LUC: RECREATION STAFF

Winston began with SBL as a Mentor, and as a Westview graduate, York University student, an artist/performer, and small-business entrepreneur. He stays connected to SBL to continue to give and inspire.

This summer was a summer to do what I do best which is being a part of a program where I can utilize my mentoring skills and develop a bond with the students and youths in my local community.

For me, the whole year leading up to the summer was all about trying to maintain good marks, working to pay my tuition, dealing with my health issues and still trying to be involved in community events and I needed some time off of that. This summer was all about getting my mind off of school, personal problems and focusing more on having a great time with the younger generation. From working at the program, I saw a tremendous amount of impact involving the students. I witnessed students from different schools coming together and giving tips to each other regarding schoolwork, and friendship problems.

I also have seen students working together with mentors and staff to come up with different solutions over problematic scenarios. This is all positive because it gives us a moment to realize that the students are capable of uniting and thinking creatively to solve difficult situations as long as they are in a comfortable environment.

WHITNEY SMITH: PROGRAM ASSISTANT

Throughout her four years at Westview Centennial Secondary School, Whitney Smith has been involved with the SBL program both during the school year and throughout the summer. She has used the support and resources acquired through her participation with the program to excel both academically and socially.

Implementing the leadership skills acquired through her mentorship with the SBL summer program, Whitney propelled herself into the position of Student Council President and proudly represented her fellow classmates at the 2013 graduation as the Valedictorian. Recognizing that learning never stops, Whitney expressed her interest in working alongside the management staff for the 2013 SBL Summer Program in order to deepen her understanding of how it works and to build new skills. Taking on administrative tasks, as well assisting in the planning and facilitation of several events, Whitney acted as a crucial contributor to the overall success of the SBL 2013 summer program.

Now entering Ryerson University to pursue a degree in business management, Whitney is exemplary of the SBL motto that success is truly limitless. All of these accomplishments illustrate the strength in character that Whitney has developed throughout her years of involvement with the SBL program, and it is without question that she will continue to accomplish even more.



"During the summer of 2013, the SBL program brought out some challenges. These challenges were a way for me to grow as a mentor and as a person as well.

This summer was very inspiring to me since I was given a new role in the program. I planned to strive for the best and do whatever I can to make sure the program ran smoothly.

The students we had this year were very challenging, most of the students were quiet and shy. After the first few days the mentors became more comfortable with the students, which brought out the best of the students. This created a huge impact and allowed the camp to run smoothly.

These students have unlimited potential and with the support of Success Beyond Limits they will soar high."

BRANDON TRUONG:

PHOTOGRAPHER & VIDEOGRAPHER

Capturing our summer program through film and video has always been a role done by SBL staff members. Last year was the first year we had a team of 5 students take on this position. This group of 5 students had worked on a project with a partnering organization to document our experiences.

This year Brandon took on a role previously shared by a team. He actually started off as a volunteer in our school year program taking pictures during the after school enrichment component.

Remarkably, Brandon came in with some uncertainty about what he had to offer as a photographer. After giving him the space to explore with the camera, he started to discover a love for the craft. We were able to see the growth in his skills through the pictures he took. Part of taking a good picture is having patience and a sense of know how about what is happening in the room.

As Brandon got involved in the after school activities such as the Martial Arts program, he developed a stronger understanding of telling stories through pictures.



Being our photographer has also allowed him to further develop his interpersonal skills while interacting with the people he photographs. Brandon will now be entering his grade 12 year at Westview C.S.S. It is not yet certain how much of an influence his interest in photography will impact his career choice when he applies to university next year for a double major in Anthropology and Social Work, but it is something he now has in his tool kit.

VIDEO & PHOTO DOCUMENTATION

We were able to highlight the different aspects to the program beyond what is written on paper through photo and video documentation. The important work was carried out through the eyes of Brandon Truong, a Westview student who worked with us through the TDSB Focus on Youth Program. In addition to documentation, he was able to create weekly slideshows that summarized the past week (a Friday highlight!) and he led a series on our Twitter feed called Photo of The Day. His work culminated in the slideshow for the graduation ceremony will live on through the many forms that the memories of summer 2013 share with the rest of the SBL community.

JAPJIT SINGH: VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

The SBL growth model envisions students going from mentee to volunteer to mentor. For Japjit Singh his journey had a gap. In the summer of 2009, Japjit Singh was a mentee in our summer program. As the school year came around, he retreated away from many of the extra curricular activities Westview had to offer including the SBL after-school program. It wasn't until this past summer Japjit found himself searching for a co-op placement.

Although SBL had already hired all the mentors and the volunteer positions were full, SBL program manager, Kaneka Watkins decided to interview him. Impressed by his maturity and sense of responsibility during the interview, Japjit became the Volunteer Coordinator - tasked with training and overseeing all volunteer duties for the summer program, a position previously designated for senior mentors.

Prior to the summer Japjit described himself as reclusive and reserved. "I didn't think I'd like working with kids. I used to think working alone was the best option. Now I actually welcome an



environment with other people. I didn't consider myself an interpersonal type of person. Working with SBL I was able to express myself in words and speech rather than being a shy and an introverted person." He goes on to say "I didn't realize how much I loved working with kids, it is a role where I can help others and be myself."

Japjit has now transitioned from co-op student/volunteer during this past summer into the role of mentor. Going into his final year of high school, Japjit is most looking forward to "advancing within the SBL organization, taking on more responsibility and continuing to grow."

"I DIDN'T REALIZE HOW
MUCH I LOVED WORKING WITH
KIDS, IT IS A ROLE WHERE
I CAN HELP OTHERS AND BE
MYSELF." —JAPJIT SINGH

Year of lasts was a year of milestones

The Star follows up on the stories of two retiring teachers, a closing school and a Grade 12 student as the school year draws to an end

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/ PHOTO BY BRETT GUNDLOCK FOR THE TORONTO STAR

Despite a rough start to the school year, Matthew Alay has graduated from Westview Centennial Secondary School with honours.

By: **David Graham** Living, Published on Thu Jun 27 2013

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SECTION 7

NORTH YORK

SUBMIT YOUR EVENT | CALENDAR | EDITIONS | DISTRIBUTION LOCATIONS | ABOUT SNAP

RETURN TO EDITION

Success Beyond Limits' Career Day

The sky is the limit, that's the lesson learned during Success Beyond Limits' Career Day held at York University this summer. Their collective of prestigious professionals ranged from Gloria Alfred, a lawyer from the TDSB, to Adisa El, a master martial artist. All eyes were on CTV Canada am news writer Camille Dundas as she discussed pursuing a career in journalism and provided helpful advice for students on their journey towards success. She emphasized the importance of literacy and said that the number one thing that will hinder employment chances is submitting a resume with spelling errors. She also insisted that, despite her early hours and modest paycheck, she is happiest doing what she loves. Success Beyond Limits is an initiative that gathers disadvantaged youths from the Jane and Finch area in order to provide them with support to complete their education. For more information on Success Beyond Limits, visit their website at www.successbeyondlimits.com.

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Photos by Brian Clarke

CBC Toronto

Home News Events Weather Programs Video Audio

Monday August 26, 2013

Teenagers Shot, Again

Matt Galloway spoke with Chris Penrose. He is the executive director of "Success Beyond Limits", a youth education and mentorship program in the Jane and Finch neighbourhood. Listen < (runs 8:15)

Categories: Past Episodes

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North York

Home > News > Program gives edge to students entering Grade 9

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Aug 13, 2013 | Vote 0 0

Program gives edge to students entering Grade 9

North York Mirror

By: Fannie Sunshine

Mohamed Ahmed has seen first-hand how young people living in the Jane Street and Finch Avenue area have benefitted from the Success Beyond Limits (SBL) program.

The free, six-week summer program gives students entering Grade 9 an early high school credit.

Some 100 Grade 8 students from Oakdale Park Middle School and Brookview Middle School participated in the program this year, held at York University, focusing on English and math. The other component of the SBL program is field trips, which were organized in afternoons. York University's Faculty of Education is one of the program's sponsors.

Those who complete the program, which focuses on literacy, numeracy and life skills, earn a high school credit in General Learning Strategies. Most of the participants go on to start high school at Westview Centennial Secondary School.

The SBL program is conducted in small classrooms, with one teacher and three mentors for every 15 students. Mentors are Westview students.

This year's program wrapped up Aug. 6, complete with a graduation ceremony.

Ahmed, who was a student in the program before taking on a mentor role, is now the academic and social co-ordinator for the initiative.

All invited to Oware tournament and fun day

Posted by Admin Wednesday September 04 2013 in Entertainment

0 COMMENTS 268 VIEWS ★★★★★ (2)



Fourteen-year-old Peter Anaide and 81-year-old Samuel Stevens.

MACPRI, in association with Success Beyond Limits, will present the 2nd Toronto International Oware Tournament and Family Fun Day on Saturday, September 28, from 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. at Westview Centennial Secondary School, 755 Oakdale Road (West of Jane St. off Finch) Ave.

The Tournament and Family Fun Day is a

unique opportunity for developing community engagement and strengthening inter-generational togetherness while playing a fun and ancient African board game.

This year's Oware Family Fun Day activities is a free admission family event with fun children's activities, performances, storytelling, an African Market Place, Capoeira African martial arts demonstrations, an international All African Inventors Museum, jewellery making, drumming workshops, storytelling circles, head wrapping workshops, Afrobrics, art and crafts and performances by community artists.

Nana Akpaabe Adessa Oji II, the seven-year-old daughter of the Oware Canada founder, who is visiting from Ghana, West Africa will be a special guest storyteller in the Knowledge Bookstore Storytelling Circle.

FUNDERS & PARTNERS

So many give in so many ways to make Success Beyond Limits possible each year. We thank our incredible partners and funders for opening up endless possibilities through education with us!

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