

TUTORING NEWS: EPWORTH TUTORING PROGRAM

5253 N. Kenmore, Chicago, IL 60640-2405, 773-561-4759, 773-506-7150, Fax 773-561-6419

www.geocities.com/epworthtutoring EpworthTutoring@ameritech.net

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TRIBUTE TO GIGI HEAD

Gigi Head died on her birthday, March 22, after a long illness. Gigi's three children were in the Tutoring Program, and Gigi was a tutor in the afternoon, Monday evening, and preschool sections of the Tutoring Program from 1992 to 2001. She helped with the Youth Choir and chaperoned on all the Youth Choir trips to nursing homes and the Youth Choir Festival. She was the assistant Girl Scout leader for three sections of Girl Scouts, and chaperoned on all the Girl Scout camping trips. Many days she walked the Girl Scouts home in the evening to be sure they reached home safely. She won an award for being an outstanding Girl Scout leader and an award for Tutor of the Year from Alternatives.

Gigi helped resolve arguments among the children. She wanted to have the children talk out their problems. She set high goals for the children to aspire to, and constantly kept them on the right path. As the children prepared to go on the CROP Walkathon one year, they were behaving very badly. Gigi talked and talked to them to get them to settle down. By the time the children calmed down and the group took the el to the start of the Walk, all the other 900 walkers had already left. Epworth was very late! The woman in charge felt so compassionate for the children, that she gave them each a Walkathon T-shirt, which some of the children wore for 2-3 years.

Gigi was an inspiring speaker. She spoke at Senn High School, and she spoke at the Kiwanis Club of the North Shore. She made such an impression on the Kiwanis Club members that for several years afterwards, they asked about her.

When Gigi's children got old enough to look after themselves, Gigi began looking for a job. Someone suggested she get a job in a field where she had previous training. She replied, "It doesn't make my heart soar."

Gigi Head nurtured, influenced, and deeply affected many people. Over 200 people came to Epworth Church for her memorial service, held on a Monday afternoon. Friends, relatives, friends of her children, past and present students from the Tutoring Program, past and present Girl Scouts, and parents of former students kept coming and coming to be present to pay tribute to Gigi Head.

During the time in the service for witnessing to Gigi's life, many people told how Gigi had impacted their lives. One young man who had lost his grandmother the week before tried to say, "We're all we have left," but he broke down and cried, and he and several people who cried with him left the sanctuary.

Gigi's younger brother Donte Head told how Gigi was the first one in their family to go to college; in fact, she was the first one he ever knew to go to college. That inspired him to stay in high school, to train for the wrestling team and excel at wrestling; as a result he got a scholarship to go to college. Gigi was a real influence on his life.

One of the highlights of the service was a professional drawing of Gigi, surrounded by her four young adult children, done by her son Tyree, who wasn't able to be present.

People brought food for the repast after the service, which was served by members of Epworth Church. During the repast people saw friends and relatives they hadn't seen for a long time and caught up on life stories and telephone numbers.

The large memorial service showed the many deep relationships that had been nurtured and developed over many years, creating a fabric of community. The Tutoring Program was a deep part of the fabric, but it wouldn't have been what it was without Gigi Head. Gigi, we miss you. You made our hearts soar.

Parent/Grandmother Dies Norma Fuller, mother of Harif Abina and grandmother of Nathan and Isaiah, died suddenly on April 17. She was a wonderful supporter of the Tutoring Program and always had good things to say about everything.

The Memorial Service

1ST-4TH GRADERS' PARENTS' NIGHTS
The first through fourth graders had two Parents'

Nights this spring, in February and April. In February it started snowing, and 85 people came. In April there were tornadoes in the area, and 75 people came.

In February the children put on a "Parade of Heroes," each child telling about a different hero, emphasizing Hispanic and African American traditions. An Hispanic tutor suggested heroes new to many of us: Diego Rivera, Don Miguel Hidalgo, Emiliano Zapata, Luis Muñoz Marin, Cesar Chavez, Julia Alvarez, and Fray Junipero Serra.

The 1st through 4th graders spoke in front of a large artistic backdrop, made by tutor Elaine Tormey, which said, "Parade of Heroes."

The students did a good job of reciting lines about their heroes. One grandparent said, "How did you ever get my shy 7-year old granddaughter to stand up in front of people and say her lines so well? She never says anything!"

In April the students each recited a poem they had memorized. The parents loved the evening. They couldn't get over how the children could memorize their poems so well.

BUTTERFLIES

On the last day of afternoon tutoring, the children got to watch painted lady butterflies being set free. Science Coordinator Joan Sheffield purchased the butterflies as larva, and taught the children about the larva, chrysalis, and adult stages. The children were excited to see the butterflies fluttering about their net cage. As Joan took the butterflies out of the cage and let children hold them in cupped hands, the children were thrilled to feel them.

EVALUATION OF TUTORING PROGRAM

A team of graduate students from Loyola University has taken as their class project an evaluation of the Tutoring Program. They interviewed parents, tutors, and staff. They obtained data from the Internet for comparing the tutoring children with other children. They designed separate questionnaires for parents, tutors, and students in English and Spanish. Besides evaluating the program, they hope that some of the tools and methods they designed can be also used by the Tutoring Program in future evaluations.

Saturday Eighth Grade Tutors Are Special
Eighth graders from Wilmette Junior High come to

Epworth in Chicago two Saturday mornings each month to work with children from preschool through seventh grades. This year the 50-80 eighth graders who came have been outstanding.

Anna Hersh has worked with 9-year old Pablo all year, patiently listening to him learn to read. At the beginning of the year he could not concentrate; now he reads with her willingly, due to Anna's beautiful patience

Eighth grader Bennett Sher speaks a little Spanish, and asked from the start to work with Jorge, who only speaks Spanish. During the year Jorge has calmed down and is learning English.

Ten-year old Christopher C. loves the Saturday tutoring program. It is one of the few places he experiences success. Samantha Levy and Rachel Yelin have worked with him all year and always get him to do difficult work.

Besides tutoring, the eighth graders have led sessions of training in conflict resolution, read stories to groups of children, led the kindergarten section, and helped in the arts and crafts section. The Chicago children love the eighth graders.

Saturday Arts and Crafts

In Saturday tutoring the children get to work with a variety of media in the arts and crafts section. This year the sessions were led by two students from Loyola University, Sarah Newsham and Christine Holmes. The children got to make African mankala games out of egg cartons, make clay pots and paint the pottery, do sand painting, make wind socks, valentines, dream catchers, and gingerbread houses, and write their names in ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Saturday Language Arts

Every Saturday tutoring day volunteer Bonnie Frame, an ESL teacher in Wilmette District 39, leads two groups of children and their tutors in reading books with certain themes and writing about what they've read. Among the books students read were *Too Many Tamales* (honesty), *Keep the Lights Burning, Abbie* (responsibility), *Amazing Grace* (self-esteem), *Ruby Bridges* (respect), and "Pandas" (endangered species and care of the earth). The students wrote thoughtful interpretations of the stories.

5th-8th GRADERS' FAMILY NIGHT

The May Family Night for the 5th-8th graders was warm, low-key, and high quality. 45 people came,

a lower turn-out than had been hoped for; but that included a brother and sister who hadn't come to any of the earlier family nights. We learned later that two families were with their daughters in hospital emergency rooms that evening.

After a shared supper the students reciting their poems were tops. Carly and Ramiro R. recited long poems by Robert Frost. LaDonna S. recited a long poem by Langston Hughes. Several students recited poems by Shel Silverstein. All the students were poised. The audience was impressed at how the students said their poems.

As the warm-up act to the poems, four tutors told about their jobs. Tena Burns, Iris' tutor, told about being a model. The part she didn't like was living out of a suitcase in order to go to New York and Miami to do modeling. Now she models part-time, but also works full-time for Navigation Technologies, the company which makes the maps for MapQuest on the Internet. Tena's job is to bill Yahoo for all the times people log onto MapQuest on the Internet.

Fred Burke, Tyrone's tutor, writes comic books. He wore a t-shirt with a huge picture of Batman, so people could get the idea. Fred works with Japanese comics. He's given the script in stilted English, roughly translated from the Japanese, and he puts it in readable, exciting English. His translation is then translated into all the European languages. He writes Bey-Blade.

Stefanie Shanebrook, Maricela's tutor, works for the Terra Museum of American art. She leads art projects for school classes that visit the museum. She shows teachers art projects that can be done with their classes, and goes to schools to lead classes in art projects. The Terra Museum is free, and several students have been there.

Jessica Cañas, Carla's tutor, has been working at the Field Museum of Natural History every summer since she was a sophomore in high school. One summer she worked on a bio-diversity project: she collected insects in a forest preserve, identified and counted them. Another year she worked on an educational venture with an organization in Ecuador, teaching people about care of the environment. This summer she will work with the anthropology collections at the Field Museum. She suggested that if students are interested in the Field Museum, that they volunteer there during the summer. Her sister will volunteer there this summer.

Three tutors work at NORC, a research organization at the University of Chicago which does surveys. Dan Bartels, Joshua's tutor, told about doing surveys to find out why teens start smoking. He said their results are given to ad agencies which design anti-smoking campaigns for TV and magazines. Pam Loose, Gabino's tutor, is in "operations." She trains staff members and people in other companies who use their services. Shinya Kodama, Martika's tutor, is in the programming end. When he gets the results from Dan's department, he designs computer programs so the clients can use the results of the surveys. Dan and Pam both majored in sociology in college. They said students who liked social studies should major in sociology in college.

The Epworth students were very interested in the reports the tutors gave about their jobs. Everyone learned about the tutors and were able to connect people they know with part of society.

SUMMER TUTORING

This summer we are offering tutoring for students who do not read or do math at their grade level. The sessions are Monday evenings and early afternoons on Mon./Thurs. and Tues./Weds. 29 students and 19 tutors (some at more than one session) are participating so far. If more tutors are available, we will invite more students.

THE PHONICS GAME

On Monday evenings Fred Burke leads a group of students and tutors in the Phonics Game. In April Fred noticed that his tutee, age 10, could not sound out words and didn't know any phonics. He purchased The Phonics Game on E-Bay and organized a group of tutors and students to work on phonics. The students enjoy the sessions and learn a lot.

A FEW OUTSTANDING MENTOR PAIRS

Tony S. (3rd) has worked with Susan Mattison for 3 years. Carly H. (8th) has worked with Heather Thome for 2 years. Alejandro S. (4th) became a good friend of Nick Bibeau. Shonesha J. (3rd) worked with Elaine Tormey for 2 years. Aaliyah M. (3rd) learned a lot from Eleanor Bilby.

GOOD NEWS OF CURRENT STUDENTS

Ten-year old Ramiro L. never brought his homework. Sometimes he sat and did no work. His tutor Adrian Garcia was patient with him and

worked on reading and math. Soon Ramiro started to bring an assignment from school. One day before tutoring he asked if he could type a class project when he came to the tutoring session. That day he came in without disturbing anyone and began to type. Everyone was amazed!

Ramiro's brother Jose was also easily distracted. He might do a little homework, and then he would look out into space. Math is difficult for him. He refused to do long division. One day a new tutor helped him, and he did a whole page of long division. Everyone was flabbergasted!

Mentoring goes on in all the tutoring relationships, particularly with students in the early teens. Thirteen-year old R. talked with his tutor about how he and his girlfriend broke up. "What would you do?" he asked. So they talked about it. Thirteen-year old D. talks with his tutor about everything--school, books, college, growing up. Fourteen-year old C.'s tutor instills in her the value of being on time, thinking for herself, and doing good work. Thirteen-year old S.'s tutor has patiently helped him with basic skills in reading and math for 3 years.

SCHOOL AWARDS TO TUTORING STUDENTS

Kiwanis Club Essay: "What kind of person do I want to be?" Carly Hope (\$50), Jennifer Bollas (\$25), Carla Salazar (Spanish – \$25)

Honor Roll: Laura Gutierrez, Christian Rios, Michelle Martinez, Marco Suarez, Jennyfer Rodriguez, Maria Marquez, Erick Villaseñor, Dennis Frausto, Elizabeth Lawal, Alyssa McGregory

Most Improved: Myanna Smith, Brenda Hernandez, Patrick McCoy, Shanice Mabry, Ambar Arvidez, Niesha Lawson, Elizabeth Arroyo, Carly Hope

Science Fair: Dennis Frausto, Maritza Ochoa, Beatriz Mejia, DeAndre Knight

History Fair: Maria Estrada, Maritza Ochoa

Spelling Bee: Maricela Hernandez, Ashley Lopez, Dennis Frausto

Student Council: Jennifer Rodriguez, Linda Macedo, Maricela Hernandez, Salvador Suarez, Carly Hope, LaDonna Smith

Perfect Attendance: Jonathan Fernandez, Shonesha Jones, Pablo Sotelo, Fermin Estrada, Jennifer Rodriguez, Mayra Sotelo, Cesar Garcia, Johnny Nichols, Elizabeth Lawal, Monique Smith

Improvement in reading on the Iowa Tests (8 percentiles or more): Denzell Steele, Jennyfer

Ridriguez, Christopher Cancel, Manuel Rowe, Danielle Steele, Javier Lopez, Raul Mejia, Iris Crawford, Marcus Dean, Jacky Roman, Ramiro Robles, Maricela Hernandez, Maritza Ochoa, Elizabeth Arroyo, Miguel Monroy, Glenda Watts, Roderick Doxy.

Improvement in math on the Iowa Tests (8 percentiles or more): Patrick McCoy, Jennyfer Rodriguez, Johnesha Jones, Danielle Steele, Mayra Sotelo, Gabino Lugarda, Shanese Watts, LilRita Mangrum, Jacky Roman, Niesha Lawson, Ramiro Robles, Maricela Hernandez, Maritza Ochoa, Elizabeth Arroyo, Carly Hope, Miguel Monroy, Glenda Watts, Beatriz Mejia.

GOUDY 8TH GRADE GRADUATION

The graduation ceremony of the eighth graders graduating from Goudy Elementary School was beautiful. It was held at Senn High School. 88 students graduated in June, 16 of whom (or a family member) had been in the Tutoring Program. In addition there were 4 other students from the Tutoring Program who hope to graduate this August after summer school.

One of the student announcers was the ETP student Carly Hope. She introduced the principal, Patrick Durkin. Her speech was beautiful and well received. The other four student announcers were the valedictorian and three salutatorians. Carly Hope also won the Brotherhood Award, which symbolizes working for better race relations. The other students winning the Brotherhood award was Jennifer Bollas, whose aunt and uncle had been in the Tutoring Program several years ago, and whose grandparents were friends of the program.

Dionna Watts also won an award, the Service Award. The plaque she won was beautiful. Dionna's whole family was present, and they were proud of her. The other student winning the Service Award was Elizabeth Arroyo, who was in the Tutoring Program before her family moved.

Other students winning awards were Alyssa McGregory and Elizabeth Lawal, winning the Science Award. We are proud of all the students.

GRADUATES (from High School and College)

Congratulations to Graduates of 2004 who are related to the Tutoring Program:

Naomi Banda, a student from the Tutoring Program, graduating from Fremd High School in Palatine, IL in August; she plans to go to Harper

College in Palatine in the fall; she may study to be a dentist.

Carvell Boyce, a student from the Tutoring Program, graduating from Von Steuben High School in Chicago.

Jeremy Brady, a student and tutor in the Tutoring Program, graduating from Senn High School in Chicago; in the fall he will attend college in Joliet, IL or Chicago State University.

Crystal Bullette, a student from the Tutoring Program, graduating from Senn High School in Chicago.

Jamine Burrell, a student from the Tutoring Program, graduating from Senn High School in Chicago; she plans to go to college in Joliet, IL in the fall.

Samantha Bute, whose parents, brother and sister helped found the Tutoring Program in 1985; Sam is graduating from Pine-Richland High School outside of Pittsburgh, PA; she will attend the U. of Virginia in Sept.

Shopanny Mejia, a student from the Tutoring Program, graduating with honors from Loyola Academy High School in Wilmette, IL; in the fall she will go to the University of Illinois at Campaign/Urbana; she would like to be a dermatologist.

Rebekah Otto, graduating from Northside Prep in Chicago; (her parents, Paula Philbrook and Ken Otto, adopted one of our students), in the fall Rebekah will go to NYU in New York and plans to teach high school English.

Nina Watts, a student from the Tutoring Program, getting her associate's degree in August from Mesabi Range Community & Technical College in Virginia, MN. She plans to finish her BA and go into teaching.

OTHER NEWS OF FORMER STUDENTS

Lorenzo Head is attending Joliet Junior College, and playing football there. He has been "working out," and his muscles are those you might see in a magazine. Amilia Barnes entered the job corps in April. Thomas Barnes signed up to take the GED test; he now has contact lenses. Larry White is studying for the GED at Prologue. Shana Slater is attending Malcolm X College. Lamonica White is attending Truman College. Shantel Beasley is looking for a job. Shaton Watts has applied for the job corps. Portia Hemphill is a freshman at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. Alex Harris is a freshman at DePaul. Stephanie

Combs is a freshman at Columbia College in Chicago. Gerald Boyce is taking classes at Truman, working at The Breakers, and will go to Wright College in Sept. Cynthia Smith is a dispatcher for a taxi cab company in Mt. Prospect. Rachel Smith is taking classes at Truman in pre-med and working at Swedish Covenant Hospital. Terri Walker graduated from Columbia College in June 2003 and moved to Providence, RI.

WRITING GRANT PROPOSALS

In the past few months we've frantically been working on grant proposals to fund the Tutoring Program. In May four of us spent three solid weeks working on a massive proposal to the City of Chicago for a Community Development Block Grant. Before we started we were told there was no money for any more organizations, but that good programs for youth were still needed. We will find about the CDBG grant in the fall.

Three proposals have been rejected since January. We were invited to apply for funding from the Springboard Foundation again, even though they usually don't fund organizations for more than four years, which has been our fortunate situation. We will apply for 2-3 other grants this summer and will hear about them in the fall.

GOOD NEWS OF CURRENT STUDENTS

This was the first year in the Tutoring Program for Maricela H. (7th gr.) and Ramiro R. (7th gr.). They each worked hard at the tutoring sessions and worked hard at school; both made brilliant progress. Laura G. (1st gr.) and Christian R. (1st gr.) are good friends. They each checked out and returned more library books from the tutoring library than all the other students combined. They loved our program and excelled in school. What a joy! Shonesha J. (3rd) and Meliyah H. (3rd) are cousins who did very well. Steve P. (k) learned to read when his tutor showed him rhyming words! Jasmine A. (5th) and her brother Andre A. (4th) both got on the honor roll at Disney School. Jacky R. (7th) worked to bring up her math score and did!