

# TUTORING NEWS: INSPIRED YOUTH

5715 N Ridge, Chicago, IL 60660, 773-561-4759, inspiredyouth2@yahoo.com

www.inspiredyouthchicago.org, www.facebook.com/inspiredyouth

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## Fall 2013

### AMAZING STUDENTS

#### 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Graders

Several new 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> graders joined the program this year. They are far behind the students who have been in the program for one or two years. We are working hard to help them catch up. A tutor commented on a student who had been in the program last year, "This 2<sup>nd</sup> grader does better than some of the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders!"

Many of the students are excelling. **Celeste** (3<sup>rd</sup> gr.) started in the program in 1<sup>st</sup> grade. She was the smallest one of the 1<sup>st</sup> graders. Often she cried as the group of tutoring children walked the 3½ blocks from school to the library. In December amid 3-inch deep fluffy snow, Celeste was wearing thin beach shoes, no socks. Her feet got red. A tutor told her to step in her tracks. Finally a big 4<sup>th</sup> grade girl carried her. At the library we dried her feet (with something) and wrapped them (in something). At the end of tutoring she agreed to get a ride home with a parent

Last year in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade she still often cried when her mother made her go to tutoring after school, but at the tutoring program she was happy! In the spring she said she wanted to read *Junie B. Jones*. The Tutoring Program lent her a book that she could take home and bring back. She said she read it, but it never came back. We waited and waited. Finally she brought it back. The cover was off, and the pages were dirty and ripped. Her little brother did it. We gave her another *Junie B. Jones* book to read during tutoring. When summer came, she said she had better not take a book home; she'd wait until next year.

Now in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Celeste is one of the few Latino students in the program assigned to an all-English class. She does very well in school, and her tutor noted, "Very good reader, enjoys stories, very focused, fun to work with!!" She still reads *Junie B. Jones*, and she hasn't cried on the way to tutoring all year.

Another student got excited about learning and began to make fantastic progress. **Christian** (2<sup>nd</sup> gr.) entered the program this fall. His attendance was irregular, but his mother wanted him to come.

Finally, we started meeting him at the door of the school and escorted him to the group waiting to walk to the tutoring program. His math skills were very low, but he could read a little. Gradually he did better and better. He started coming to every session and began to zoom through difficult math homework. Now he calls out to other children on the playground to come to tutoring. Christian may become one of the "bright lights."

The twins, **Diocelyn** and **Keyde** (3<sup>rd</sup> gr.) are taking off in math. One had a whole pile of flash cards. "I know all these!" she boasted. The other twin couldn't add 2+3 in September. By Oct. she was doing + and -, 6+8, 12-5, etc. Her tutor couldn't get over it. She laughed, "My student is going crazy over math!"

One student said about her Thursday tutor, "I want to work with you every day."

A tutor bought a new math workbook for the 1<sup>st</sup> graders. It has the variety of problems the students study now in school: place value, time, graphs, measurement, comparisons, word problems. We purchased Books 1-5. The books are challenging for the students and excellent for them to work on.

#### 5<sup>TH</sup>-8<sup>TH</sup> Graders, Monday Tutoring

**Summone** (7<sup>th</sup> gr.): "I learned about Roman numerals tonight! They were always confusing to me, but I understand them now. Ask me one."

**Roberto** (5<sup>th</sup> gr.): "I learned how to add fractions tonight! Can we have that tutor again?"

**Mario** (8<sup>th</sup> gr.) is doing more and more every week. He worked the whole time. He trusts his tutor.

**Jaely** and **Fatima** (5<sup>th</sup> gr.) studied the parts of the respiratory system and the digestive system.

**Melissa** (5<sup>th</sup> gr.) was intrigued with the book *Mole's Hill*. The artwork is Native American ribbon appliqué and bead work depicting flora and fauna of Wisconsin.

#### SATURDAY TUTORING

"This is the smoothest first day we've ever had!" a teacher from Wilmette Jr. High exclaimed, as we

### **Saturday Tutoring, cont.**

assigned the 8<sup>th</sup> graders from WJHS their Chicago tutees.

On the first day the students chose from among five famous scaring paintings and wrote a scare story about it. One boy who usually is in a lot of trouble wrote and wrote--1½ pages. The students were creative.

One of the group activities was for the tutoring pairs to develop a fancy hand shake and demonstrate it to the group. A couple of the pairs went on and on. How could they remember all the combinations and moves?!

“I learned how to multiply!” **Damarian**, a 5<sup>th</sup> grader was excited. “In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade we moved. In 4<sup>th</sup> grade the kids already knew. Now in 5<sup>th</sup> grade [at Sat. tutoring] I finally learned.” Hurray!

**Sean** (K) can read! He was accepted into Disney, a magnet school and assigned to the gifted class. His mother, a tutoring grad, is “on top of” his education. She said he has to take an I-pad home to do his homework, and that he is in the 96% centile in reading. She is making sure he does well.

**Sara** (1<sup>st</sup> gr.) can read! Her mother is so proud. She has an older sibling who has been in the program for 6-7 years; he goes to a special school because of a learning disability. Sara’s mother saw how the Tutoring Program helped children and began teaching her daughter from an early age.

Ten new families (15 children) are coming to Sat. tutoring this fall, with another family possible (2 children). All the new children love the program and can’t wait for the next Sat. to come.

**Diocelyn** and **Keyde** (3<sup>rd</sup> gr.) begged and begged to come to the Sat. program, but we had thought their mother said they were doing something else. We found out that was just for the first day. The girls came the 2<sup>nd</sup> session and love the program.

**OVERALL PROGRAM** The students are studying hard this year. These students and tutors are in the tutoring sections through early November:

Mon. 5 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> graders	39	Tutors: 29
Wed./Thurs 1 <sup>st</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> graders:	25	Tutors: 38
Sat., K-8 <sup>th</sup> gr. (Total 54), only Sat:	25	Tutors: 5 adults 51 youth

**TOTAL:** Students: 89 Tutors: 72 adults  
*1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> graders come 2 days. + 51 youth  
Some tutors come 2 days.*

### **MONDAY FAMILY NIGHT, for 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Graders**

Snow all day on Armistice Day, Nov. 11, Just the day of Family Night? 43 hardy souls walked through snow to come to Family Night for the 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders’ Family Night.

Parents and tutors brought delicious, healthy food. **Valeria**’s mother and **Jaely**’s mother cooked hot dogs and heated fried rice provided by the tutoring program. **Kallio**’s grandmother made her famous pasta salad. **Roberto**’s mother brought four different kinds of sliced fruit. **Armando**’s mother brought delicious bite-sized (a big bite) cookies--some families got to take some home.

Before the meal people took turns at the microphone saying what they were thankful for, with **Roberto** (5<sup>th</sup> gr.) translating between English and Spanish. The main part of the evening was a time for tutors and parents to talk with each other. People had time for real conversations.

To close the evening, the youth choir sang five songs including “The Little Drummer Boy” because of an important upcoming concert. The audience loved it. The songs resounded so loudly in the Fellowship Hall that Mimi, who was on security at the end of the hall, came to listen. She was impressed.

### **FAMILY DAY, for 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> Graders**

Family Day on Wed. afternoon was very important. Many parents came. They sat at the tables with their children and the children’s tutors, and they talked about the children’s progress. Several tutors and parents spoke to the total group about the importance of education. Their remarks are included later in this newsletter. At the end of the day there were cookies for everyone. The children received individually labeled boxes of Halloween candy especially prepared by tutor Zak. Each student chose a book from a collection of new books the library was able to give away. The students got to keep the books. This was valuable because the parents were able to be involved in their children’s education.

### **TUTORING GRADS**

**Cortez Y.** is a senior in high school this year. He will possibly go into a branch of the military next year.

A tutoring grad from 20 years ago, **Larry White**, still remembers the Tutoring Program. His mother, Gigi Head, was in charge of crowd control

### ***Tutoring Grads, cont.***

for many years. Larry currently lives in Oklahoma City and has multiple jobs and interests. He drives a pedicab; he's a bouncer; he's selling Mary Kay products and something else; he played "arena football" last season; he has a possibility of being in charge of a football camp for youth; he's still doing a lot of drawing and painting that he wants to get framed; and he's trying to find someone to help him write his life story. Larry is on a positive and creative course. He has energy, breadth of vision, and resourcefulness. Larry brings joy to all who know him.

Alex Boyce, a tutoring grad from the Saturday Tutoring Program, graduated from DePaul and got a good job. He decided to switch careers, and this fall he is going to Spain to teach English as a second language.

Emmanuel H. graduated from Harold Washington College and is looking for a job. Jonathan H., still remembers the Tutoring Program and Youth Choir, which he was in several years ago.

Earnest Marshall is still in the military. Chris Carter has a job. Jasmine Wood is just beginning training to be a medical technician.

*A story by Beth Palmer with a theme of "Hope."*  
I work with 100 children in the Tutoring Program and Youth Choir and I'm driven by hope. I know these kids can shine. All I have to help these kids with is faith and hope. A colleague added, "and love."

Two students in the first year of Epworth's Tutoring Program in 1985 were Q and her brother D. When Q was in 6<sup>th</sup> grade she couldn't understand her math homework. Her tutor went to talk with Q's teacher and demanded he explain it better. Q finally understood it.

In 9<sup>th</sup> grade Q got pregnant. She hid it all summer with a long sweater and never had a check-up. In December she gave birth to the baby in her bathroom. Her brother D cut the cord with a butcher knife. Q wanted the baby put in the garbage, but D put the baby under a bush outside, where it was found and taken to the hospital. The nurses named it "Pearl," because it was born on Dec. 7. Q was also taken to the hospital. Meanwhile, their grandmother, their main care-giver, had just had an operation for throat cancer and was in the same hospital – so three generations were there.

That Sunday at Epworth Church, Q's younger sister S sat in the front row with all the other kids. She was talking loudly and wouldn't stop. Finally a parishioner carried her out bodily, kicking and screaming. No one said anything about the baby. It was all hush, hush.

Fast forward to 2013. Q has been working at 911 for several years. S is a home care nurse. Q's daughter is going to a Christian college in southern Illinois. Q's mother has been sober for several years, and they are all deeply Christian. Two years ago Q got married to a Christian man, and for their honeymoon they took their immediate family to the Dominican Republic.

In working with children in the tutoring program and the choir, we usually don't know "the end of the story." We know they can shine. All we have is hope, so we keep on working.

### **OVERHEARD**

A former student talking in anguish on a cell phone while hurriedly crossing street, "If they lock me up, then they'll take my baby."

A first grader did a worksheet, front and back, on how to tell time on the hour and half hour. The next page asked a question. "What time do you go to bed?" The child replied "When the news comes on."

### **TUTORS AND PARENTS SPEAK**

Susan Mattison: This year I am working with identical twin sisters, Diocelyn and Keyde, They have shown amazing excitement and improvement in math since the beginning of the year. Something happened. I asked them "What did you do over the weekend? It was a few weeks ago. Just all of a sudden they blossomed in math. They just got it. It's so easy for them now. So it makes a difference: kids coming and working on things here at tutoring and seeing a little different insight into a way to do something, and I'm so happy for them.

Victoria Gordon: This is my first year working with Inspired Youth Tutoring. Since I have started here I have seen so many amazing children doing so many amazing things. It just makes me so happy to see people so excited to learn new things and to understand things instead of just memorize them and or just do it because they're supposed to. When people really enjoy it and are so proud of themselves to get the correct answer and to learn

### ***Tutors and Parents Speak, cont.***

something it makes me so happy. That's why I just love working with everybody here. Education is so important. It's how you're going to get on and move up and move out and do the best things in the world. You can go anywhere with a book. You can go anywhere with education. You're not limited to anything other than what you set your mind to. So thank you so much for letting me work with everybody.

**Adrian Hill:** This is just to echo what she said. Today most jobs require at the very least a high school diploma or a GED. Many jobs above that require a college degree. The best thing I would say about education is that it provides many options. It opens many doors and many avenues. . I'm 33 and I'm still trying to figure out what I want to be when I grow up. I've graduated college, high school, all that good stuff, and I still have many options, many avenues I can take to figuring that out. I haven't been limited because I have an education.

**Alex Erazo:** Buenos tardes, Me llamo Alex Erazo. Soy un estudiante en la Universidad de Loyola. La educacion es muy importante para los niños para abrir puertas en sus profesionales. Si non tienen la educacion, no se abran las puertas para ellos...

### **CROP WALK 2013**

22 people from Epworth Church, including 9 from Inspired Youth, walked 2 miles in downtown Chicago to raise money for Church World Service. 15 children (2 in a stroller) and 7 adults walked past the Thompson Center where the kids played on the sculpture; went to the Daley Center where the kids slid down the Picasso statue; and walked on N. Michigan Av. to St. James Cathedral where kids walked the labyrinth. It was a beautiful day. (See Facebook.com/epworthchurchchildren-chicago..)

### **Thank you, Glenview United Methodist Women, Abigail Circle**

*Beth Palmer wrote the members of Abigail Circle upon receiving their gift of folders prepared for the tutoring students:* "When I opened the packs of beautiful folders in their bright colors, with all the paper and pencils in them, I could feel the care that all of you gave in preparing them for the children. When I see the folders, I think about all the children using those folders in the tutoring program and all the learning that will go on. I think of the tutors as

they are conscientious and caring in working with the children. All of you and your circle have been doing things for the children of Uptown and Edgewater in Chicago for many, many years, supporting and motivating the learning that has been going on for almost three decades. It's beautiful. The folders symbolize that and are central to it. Hallelujah!"

**Facebook** If you have Facebook, look at "Inspired Youth" and see the beautiful pictures of the tutoring pairs and all the activities. You'll like the pictures. You'll see how important the tutoring program and the choir and the piano lessons are for the children – and how beautiful the children are.

### **DONATIONS TO INSPIRED YOUTH, INC.**

Inspired Youth does a lot with minimal funds to enrich the lives of children and families in Uptown/Edgewater in Chicago, because of the many people who volunteer.

Inspired Youth has a wide range of donors. Gifts have come from a foundation, law firm, service organization, church women's group, and individuals, including present and former tutors, parents of 8<sup>th</sup> graders from Wilmette Jr. High School, pastors, friends, family, and community members. Donations range from \$10 to \$7,000. Inspired Youth appreciates all these donations.

Inspired Youth Inc. is a 501(c)(3) corporation with the IRS, so donations are tax deductible.

Contributions to Inspired Youth can be made through PayPal on the Donations page of the website: [www.inspiredyouthchicago.org](http://www.inspiredyouthchicago.org), or mailed to "Inspired Youth," 5715 N. Ridge, Chicago, IL 60660.