

## TUTORING NEWS: INSPIRED YOUTH

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### INDIVIDUALS IN TUTORING PROGRAM

2017-2018 (11/25/2017)

	STUDENTS	TUTORS
Mon. HS Tut.	6	19
Mon. 5 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> Tut.	22	
W/Th 1 <sup>st</sup> -4 <sup>th</sup> Tut.	30	26*+ 12 HS fr NewTrier

Sat. P4- 8<sup>th</sup> 21\*\*50total 7 + 49 fr. WJHS  
Individ. in Tut. Prog. 79 52 + 61 HS/Jr Hi Tutors

\*Several tutors volunteered more than one day per week.

\*\* Sat. students who are not in weekday Tutoring Program.

### STUDENTS DO WELL

In the afternoon tutoring program, David C., 2<sup>nd</sup> gr. came over to his little brother, 1<sup>st</sup> gr. He took out his brother's school folder and found the homework so he could do it. That's a good, big brother.

Michelle E., 3<sup>rd</sup> gr., is very studious. She does her homework and extra reading, writing, and arithmetic every day.

Cherish T., 4<sup>th</sup> gr., is doing better this year. In the Saturday program she works with an 8<sup>th</sup> grader who guides her well.

Carlos F., 5<sup>th</sup> gr., takes care of his sister in kindergarten. His brother, Armando E., 6<sup>th</sup> gr., came from Mexico in July 2017 and is just learning to speak English. Carlos helps him.

Betania D., 6<sup>th</sup> gr., keeps working very hard and is gaining.

M. O., 8<sup>th</sup> gr., does exceptional work at Saturday tutoring, and he also does well with his tutor from Loyola on Monday evenings.

Nathan B., 8<sup>th</sup> gr., is doing better every year. His two older siblings, Shana and Sam, were in the program many years ago. Now Nathan is working hard, too. He has been doing well in the Monday night program and the Saturday program. His parents and tutors are trying very hard to have him do well.

Roberto S., 9<sup>th</sup> gr., is in the International Baccalaureate program at Amundsen HS. Jovanny S., 9<sup>th</sup> gr., is in the IB program at Senn.

Preschool children age 4 have started to come to Saturday Tutoring. They all work hard.

***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.***

## **OCTOBER FAMILY DAY, 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> GRADERS**

It was a crowded afternoon at Bezazian Library when parents and siblings came to visit the Wed. afternoon Tutoring Program. For an hour, there was regular tutoring because it was a school day and the children had homework. After an hour, the parents and siblings came. Altogether 51 parents, tutors, students, little brothers and sisters came. Parents and tutors got to meet. Several of the parents had not been to a Family Day at the library. After a time of acquaintance, the children's choir sang 5 songs with the audience singing along. Everyone loved it! Tutor Scott R. took a video, which is on IY's Facebook page. After singing, the people were treated to large chocolate chip cookies and juice. Everyone was in smiles. It was a good day.

## **OCTOBER FAMILY NIGHT FOR FAMILIES OF MONDAY NIGHT 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> GRADERS**

The October Family Night for 5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> graders was significant. 46 people came on Columbus Day evening for the Family Night. The parents and tutors talked with each other about how the students could keep doing better. Leonela's mother, Aisha, took wonderful photos, which you can see on Inspired Youth's Facebook page.

During the evening, an amazing thing took place. Five child accompanists and one brother/ sister duet played the keyboard to accompany the Inspired Youth Singers and the audience as they sang familiar songs. Do you know how hard it is to play the piano? It's even harder to accompany people singing! The child pianists were Leonela C., 7<sup>th</sup> gr., Gregorio F., 6<sup>th</sup> gr., Betania D., 6<sup>th</sup> gr., Phyllis R., 5<sup>th</sup> gr., Itzel V., 5<sup>th</sup> gr., Tembet B., 4<sup>th</sup> gr., and Raul V., 2<sup>nd</sup> gr. All the students played perfectly, and the choir and audience sang well. Everything was so smooth it was hard to realize how significant it was.

The other amazing thing that happened was that seven parents from four cultures spoke into the microphone and told how the Tutoring Program is helping their children: Gregorio's father, Leonela's mother, Phyllis' mother, Betania's mother, Tembet's mother, Meklet and Eden's mother and Miguel and Marco's mother. Later Nathan's mother also told how the program had helped her three children.

## **Parents' Speeches, Parents' Night, Oct. 9, 2017**

### **Dorie Burrell, mother of Phyllis**

Hello, everybody! It's good to see everybody. So far, I thank everyone for coming out. It's been a tremendous blessing to have this program for our children, and I recommend it to each parent. If you know a friend or another family member that's in the community, invite them to the program, because it's been a blessing. I have four children, starting with the oldest, James. He's 31. He'll be 32. My daughter is 30. She'll be 31. And my youngest son is 29. My youngest daughter, Phyllis, is 10 and is in the program now. My older children were in it when they were younger, too.

I also thank the program for blessing Phyllis with piano lessons, because it's been good for her. And her math is improving. Everything has been improving.

She's been on the honor roll, and I'm going to try to keep her on it. This program has been helping her, and it's so successful for all the children in the community. I wish they'd take advantage of it, and the piano lessons, too. The students are doing pretty well with Beth Palmer with the piano lessons. And I want everyone to enjoy themselves. Peace and blessings, and God bless everyone.

**Ian Fuller, father of Gregorio, Donovan, Baron, and Baby Ethan**

It's nice to start our new season of tutoring. My kids were in the Tutoring Program last year. Their grades have improved tremendously. They've gone up one whole letter grade. They're now in the gifted classes. And they've been taking up a foreign language. And because of the opportunities through networking and meeting the other parents and meeting the other students, they got enrolled in piano and violin classes. Well, thank you. You guys have a great one!

**Aisha Lopez, mother of Frances Leonela.**

Good evening. I am the mother of Leonela. I also have an autistic son. His name is Leomar. He did come once also. We moved from New York, so at first we didn't know anybody and didn't know the community. So I was blessed when I saw Ms. Beth when we came to the library. I wondered why there were some little groups, so I asked, and they told me to come to see Ms. Beth, and I did ask her, and she was able to put Frances in the program, and I was so happy. Because of just moving here, it was a little bit difficult for Frances to be around new students and a new school, but it was very good for her because she also improved, especially in her math. She still hates math, but she did improve in it, and I'm very happy about that. And also Ms. Beth introduced me to Ms. Eva, who is with the Girl Scouts, so Leonela also enrolled in the Girl Scouts. And she also enrolled her in her piano lessons, so I am very happy and blessed for having them in my daughter's life. And I hope you've also seen your students improve in their academic goals.

**Concepción Ortiz, mother of Miguel and Marco**

Hello, my name is Concepción Ortiz, mom of Miguel and Marco. They are participating in this program. This program is very good for them. It is helping them in some subjects in which they are not very advanced. The truth is, it is helping them a lot. I thank all of the tutors who are taking an hour of their time to help my boys. I want to thank them. May God bless you. *(Translated by Bob Guillen)*

**Meklet and Eden's Mother**

Eden is good. She gets A's and B's. She gets 95%, 96%. Before, her math was good [and it still is]. In science she's better now. Before she got C's. Now she gets B's and A's. It's good. I like it. Meklet is good, too. She likes it here. Both of them are good. My daughters have come for three years now. I want them to do well. I'm interested in having them come [to the Tutoring Program] one day more every week, perhaps Wednesday or Saturday. I like having it at the library. The library is close to my house, and we can walk. It's just 2 blocks away.

**SATURDAY TUTORING: RAIN, TURKEYS!**

Turkey Day at Saturday Tutoring rained all day. 34 children came, most of them walking over half a mile in the cold rain. Once at Margate Park, the Chicago

children did wonderful work with their 8<sup>th</sup> grade tutors from Wilmette Jr. High. After work in the folders, the PS-2<sup>nd</sup> graders wrote Thanksgiving letters to people in a nursing home. The 3<sup>rd</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders wrote about pictures of children from different parts of the world. Then the 28 Chicago families of the Saturday program each received a turkey. It was a good day.

The first two Saturdays were also good. On the first day, after work in the folders with the 8<sup>th</sup> grade tutors, the students wrote "Brown Paper Bag Short Stories," where they were given arbitrary slips of paper naming a character, a setting, and a conflict/problem, and then they had to write a short story using the three. For example, one tutoring pair was given "dog," "outer space," "needs to make the game-winning shot." The Chicago children wrote, with help from the Wilmette youth, and the stories were fun and imaginative.

Group time the second day was conflict resolution. After that the children got to select a book from a collection given by Wilmette Jr. High School, and the students just read. Every Saturday is special.

### **EXTRA TUTORS FOR AFTERNOON TUTORING**

Every Thursday at 4:20pm, a whole van-load of students from New Trier HS in Winnetka come to the afternoon tutoring program to help the 1<sup>st</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> with their school work. The children are glad to see the teen-agers. The adult tutors are glad to see them, too, because they know how much help the children need.

### **TUTORING GRADS**

Arianna T., 11<sup>th</sup> gr., is in the International Baccalaureate Program at Senn HS. Karah P., 12<sup>th</sup> gr., is in the pre-nursing program at Crane HS. Cynthia F., 9<sup>th</sup> gr., is in the nursing assistant program at Sullivan H.S. She is the first in her large family to pursue a professional degree. Jamyla J., 9<sup>th</sup> gr., is at Josephinum Academy. Fernando B., 9<sup>th</sup> gr. is on the football team at Sullivan HS.

Josephine A., 10<sup>th</sup> gr., is playing the clarinet in the Intermediate Band at Chicago International Charter School—Northtown Academy. She has been in the Tutoring Program since kindergarten. In 9<sup>th</sup> gr. she took General Music and memorized the musical staff (the lines and spaces) with help from the Tutoring Program. We are happy Josephine is in the Intermediate Band in high school.

Hirut N., entered the Tutoring Program as a 6<sup>th</sup> grader and studied with IY as she went to high school at Loyola Academy in Wilmette. She went to St. Joseph College in Indiana, and she is now teaching at Passages Charter School. One of her students is Uriel M., a 1<sup>st</sup> gr., in the Tutoring Program. This had been the vision of the Tutoring Program, that tutoring grads would serve the community.

Jasmine T., is working at the Museum of Science and Industry as a tour guide.

### **PROBLEMS**

One of our families is very worried about their many relatives in Puerto Rico. In September, after the winds of Hurricane Marie, the rain, and the tidal wave, the family had not heard from their relatives for several days.

On a Saturday evening in early October, a 9<sup>th</sup> grader, E. was arrested. E. had been in the Tutoring Program 1<sup>st</sup> gr through 8<sup>th</sup> gr. On Oct. 9, several friends were in the Goudy School playground, and some gang members blocked the sidewalk

with wooden horses. Police came at 8:45pm and told everyone to go home. A sign said the playground closed at 9:30pm. F. took his time collecting all his belongings. The police told him he had to go. He swore at the police. There was a scuffle, and F was arrested. F.'s friend videoed this, although it was hard to see because it was at night. F was at the police station for 4-5 hours. The next day we could see scars on F's face, and his arm was in a sling.

Three weeks later F. went to appear in Juvenile court at 9am. His family went with him. A pro bono lawyer, who is a tutor, went to represent F. The result of F's case: The state's attorney decided not to prosecute. This had the same result as the charges being dropped. Now the tutor/attorney will try to get the case expunged from F.s record. We hope F. learns about the power of the police.

In another family there are serious difficulties. The family has been part of Inspired Youth for 11 years, but recently the 5<sup>th</sup> gr. boy's father got an order of protection against the boy's mother, so the boy can't live with his mother or be in her apartment for two years. In addition, the mother's brother, 15 years old, was recently killed.

A 9<sup>th</sup> grader who was in the Tutoring Program in grades 4-6 will be having a baby in March.

Cameron Williams, stepfather of tutoring student Larry S., gr. 5, died suddenly of a heart attack in mid-August 2017, days before his 31<sup>st</sup> birthday. Cameron left behind Sandra W. (a tutoring grad from the late 1990's), whom he had married in 2016. He also left behind their daughter Sanaya W. Over 200 people came to Cameron's funeral: his relatives and friends, Sandra's relatives and friends, and people from Epworth Church where they had become members. The funeral was a sad occasion. Cameron was important to many people.

### **INSPIRED YOUTH PERFORM AT EDGEWATER ARTS FESTIVAL**

On a hot Sunday morning in late September, six students from Inspired Youth played keyboard selections, on a stage in the street, with several Inspired Youth singing along on microphones. It was the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Children's Music Talent Showcase at the Edgewater Arts Festival on Chicago's Granville Ave. The keyboard soloists were Leonela C., 7<sup>th</sup> gr., Gregorio F., 6<sup>th</sup> gr., Phyllis R., 5<sup>th</sup> gr., and Ria K., 5<sup>th</sup> gr. Sister and brother Itzel V., 5<sup>th</sup> gr. and Raul V., 2<sup>nd</sup> gr., played a duet. Leading the singing were Dayveana B., 5<sup>th</sup> gr. and Bianca V., kind. The other students also sang when they weren't playing. Everyone played and sang beautifully. Everyone was proud of all the Inspired Youth.

### **PERFORMING AT THE EDGEWATER COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING SERVICE**

16 children and 1 father performed "I Believe" at North Shore Baptist Church at the 2017 Edgewater community Thanksgiving Service. The children looked beautiful, and they behaved beautifully. Many other groups also performed. After the service were refreshments: a meal of delicious food prepared by the Baptist church members from Mexico, Burma, Japan, and the US. It was a day to give thanks.

### **PERFORMING AT FRIEDMAN PLACE, HOME FOR THE BLIND**

On the day before Thanksgiving, 16 children, and 1 father sang at Friedman Place, a Home for the Visually Impaired in Rogers Park. The room was not large, and all the children sang out! Four students played the piano accompaniment for three of the songs. The audience sang along on several of the songs. The concert was gorgeous.

### **CROP WALK FOR CHURCH WORLD SERVICE**

On a windy, cloudy day in October 2017, 2 high school students, 1 preschooler, 8 elementary school students, and 9 adults from Inspired Youth and Epworth UMC took the bus to the historic 2<sup>nd</sup> Presbyterian Church in Chicago's South Loop to walk in the 35<sup>th</sup> annual CROP Walk. Hundreds of people from many churches and schools joined in the walk. Some people did the 6-mile walk. The group from IY and EUMC took the 1-mile walk, passing by many new sections of Chicago along with historic old sections. Most of the people from IY and EUMC wished the route were longer. Everyone had a good time.

### **TRICK OR TREATING AT "THE BREAKERS"**

10 children, 1 infant, 3 parents, and 1 tutor were invited to go to the Breakers to Trick or Treat. After school, the group went to McDonald's for a quick bite to eat. Then they walked 2 blocks to The Breakers. The residents welcomed the children and loved to see them. There were candy stations, and the children were very polite (shy). The children talked with some of the residents and looked at a large wooden, painted horse, from a special Chicago event a few years ago. The children and the residents had a good time. Thank you, Breakers.

### **GIFTS TO INSPIRED YOUTH**

The Abigail Circle of the Glenview United Methodist Women gave Inspired Youth over 30 folders with notebook paper and pencils ready for the children to use. They also gave new boxes of crayons, markers, glue sticks, scissors, and notebooks, which we gave to the students. The Glenview UMW has helped the Tutoring Program for over 30 years. We are grateful for them working with us to help the children of Uptown and Edgewater do better in school and become contributing citizens.

### **FUND-RAISER AT BLAZE PIZZA NEAR LOYOLA UNIVERSITY**

Inspired Youth held a fund-raiser at Blaze Pizza across from Loyola University on a Thurs. evening. 20% of the pizza sales--by people who showed the IY flyer--were given to Inspired Youth. It was a worthwhile event.

### **TRIBUTE TO FORMER TUTOR, ELIZABETH CONNOR, by Beth Palmer**

Mrs. Connor was an amazing and wonderful person. She bopped into the dark basement of Epworth Church in the mid-1980's and said, "How can I help?" Most people who volunteer for the Tutoring Program call or email first, but Mrs. Connor, forthrightly, just walked in. She taught English to eighth graders at Walt Disney School, and

came to help in the Tutoring Program! I asked her to work with a first grader, Alicia, who needed special help. Mrs. Connor went right ahead.

After a while Mrs. Connor noticed that the Tutoring Program had a fair collection of basal readers, but she said, "There ought to be some picture books for the children to read. Picture books are more enticing." So we started a collection of multiple copies of picture books, which now numbers over 100 titles.

Then Mrs. Connor said, "The children should do a play. I'll direct it." I felt that was a little ambitious, but she wrote script based on a story from *Winnie-the-Pooh*. She cast the children. She directed the rehearsals for a few weeks in the last 45 minutes of the tutoring time. AND she sewed all the costumes: Winnie-the-Pooh, Tigger, Rabbit, Eeyore, and Christopher Robin. The production was held in Epworth's chapel, where the "stage" is 10x6 feet and 4-inches high. It was a fabulous production! The children still remember being in the play, 30 years later.

Speaking of sewing, for most people, a kitchen table is for preparing food and eating. For Mrs. Connor, the kitchen table was where her sewing machine was! That's how important sewing was for her.

At that time, two students in the Tutoring Program were second grade twins, Derrick and Erick. They came from a large family, and everyone liked them. Then the whole family moved to Chicago's South Side, around 3900 South, near the lake. Everyone missed them. It was around Halloween, and Mrs. Connor said, "Let's go visit Derrick and Erick and bring them some cupcakes." I called them, found their exact address, and said we'd like to visit them. They said, "Fine."

So Mrs. Connor and I set out on a dark, windy October night to the south side of Chicago to find the address and bring the family cupcakes, which Mrs. Connor had made (of course). The cupcakes were fancy, with frosting piled high and decorated for Halloween. Derrick and Erick's address was in a group of low rise buildings, now known as the projects. We had to park a little way from the building. Mrs. Connor led the way, resting the large tray of cupcakes (5 high on her shoulder. It was very dark. When we got closer to the buildings we noticed that there was a tall man standing in front of each building. (Quake.) We found the address, and the man in front said, "What do you want?" We told them the family we wanted to visit. They let us through. Inside we found Derrick and Erick's whole family and a warm and comfy apartment. We gave them the cupcakes, which they were excited to get. We stayed a few minutes and then left. (Quake.) Mrs. Connor was intrepid, and I followed. It was a true Halloween story--scary.

Another venture of Mrs. Connor was that she and her sister wrote and self-published three youth novels! The books were historical fiction, based on true stories of her relatives in Chicago's western suburbs around 1900. Mrs. Connor thought there should be pictures in the books, so she found and made clothes from the era, and took pictures of her young relatives who represented the characters in the stories. The three books are beautiful! This is what I wrote to Mrs. Connor in 2013:

“I just read all three Libby books. They are stunning. You and your sister put a huge amount of work and creativity into writing these historical novels. They are masterful. I marveled at the many pictures with the period-style clothes (which you sewed) and actual artifacts. I loved the plots, the flow of the stories, and the character portrayals. I also enjoyed finding out about the history and the times which the stories were embedded in, 1913-1918, and I appreciated that the stories centered on social aspects or extra features to learn about. I also glanced at the ‘Study Guide to Accompany *Libby Meets the Bully*.’ It is thorough and creative and will sharpen the students’ minds. Thank you for donating all these books to Inspired Youth, Inc.”

Mrs. Connor was always thinking of new things and doing new, extensive projects. She was a wonderful and amazing person.

### **HONOR FOR TUTORING DIRECTOR**

Beth Palmer was selected as one of the four Living Treasures of Edgewater for 2018. In 2013 there were 28, and in 2014-2018, there have been four selected each year. (Edgewater’s population was 55,000 as of 2012.) Someone nominated Ms. Beth, and the committee of 8 chose her and 3 others out of 25 nominees. The award ceremony will be in June 2018 at the Edgewater Library.

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

Inspired Youth has a wide range of donors. In the past year gifts have come from a foundation, church women’s group, service organization, and around 71 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 have ranged from \$25 to \$3,000. Inspired Youth appreciates all these donations.

Because of the many people who volunteer, Inspired Youth does a lot with minimal funds to enrich the lives of children and families in Uptown/Edgewater in Chicago. Inspired Youth Inc. is a 501(c)(3) corporation with the IRS, so donations are tax deductible.

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