

Urban Scholars Updates



A Newsletter from the Urban Scholars Program at UMass Boston

Fall 2014

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Celebrating 30 Years of Success!

Our 30th Anniversary

Our 7-week summer program concluded with a joyous celebration of our first 30 years and excitement for what the next 30 will entail. Founders Dr. Joan Becker and Dr. Charles Desmond were recognized for their hard work, dedication, and lasting efforts in expanding college access for urban youth across Boston.

Our Scholars conducted a "Q & A" with the founders, inquiring about the origins of the program, challenges and success, and where they envision Urban Scholars in the future. They shared wonderful stories about their experiences and left our students inspired to continue the hard work that success demands. They concluded by encouraging everyone to see through life's obstacles and follow one's convictions.



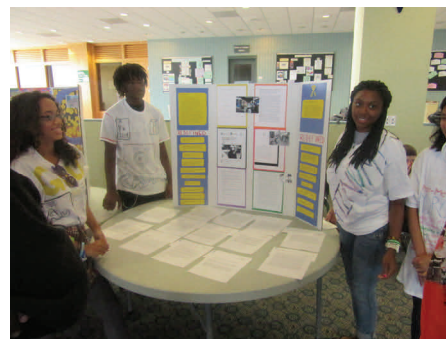
First graduating class with Dr. Desmond (centered in top row) and Dr. Becker (centered in bottom row).

Today, Dr. Desmond is the chair of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education and Dr. Becker is the vice provost for academic support services at the University of Massachusetts—Boston.

Summer Academics

Urban Scholars offered 13 unique courses this summer from "Research Psychology" and "Ancient Geometry" to "Own Your Voice!" - a writing and public speaking course - as well as the second iteration of our popular sociology and citizenship course, "Boston Strong" (see our "Teacher's Corner"). We employed a number of talented and passionate educators including 2 recent graduates of UMB's "Teach Next Year" program and many returners. Students tackled a number of real-world problem through our project-based courses that stressed collaboration, critical thinking, perseverance, and communication, culminating in our end-of-summer Project Showcase where students engaged their guests with demonstrations of their work and cel-

brated their efforts. We also focused on "Academic Conversations" through our use of *Socratic Seminars* to help students develop the skills to lead sustained class discussions reflective of the college classroom experience and the workplace.



(cont'd on page 2)

Summer Academics (cont.)

While over 40 students earned academic awards, our Scholars of the Summer were:

Grade 9: Lyfranson Alitne (Tech Boston); Michael Thatcher (Dearborn)

Grade 10: Yarenis Sanchez (Tech Boston); Alfredo Mercado (Jeremiah Burke)

Grade 11: Rosellen Feliz (Jeremiah Burke); Godson Derosena (Tech Boston)

Grade 12: Thomas Harley (Excel HS)

Thank you to all who made this an outstanding summer!



Institute of Contemporary Art—Art Our Way!

The Urban Scholars – ICA partnership is designed to enhance the artistic and digital literacy skills of scholars as they uncover hidden talents, engage with contemporary artists, and develop self-expression. On site at the ICA’s Teen New Media Center, scholars use advanced computer technology to create art inspired by the ICA’s permanent collection and current exhibition. Better yet, our work received a national audience at the ICA’s annual “Teen Convening” event! This summer we focused on

- **Music Video Production** - collaborating with a teen recording artist to bring their ideas to the big screen
- **Digital Photography** - creating a stunning portfolio
- **Fashion Design** - designing wearable art
- **DJ’ing** - beat matching, cutting, and scratching with high technology

We are excited to continue our partnership during the academic year!



Class of 2014

Urban Scholars’ 2014 graduates will be attending a variety of MA colleges and earned a total of \$33,000 in private scholarships, including the competitive Christian Herter Scholars, Boston Teachers Union, and Boston Scholars Athlete Scholarship. Other scholarships awarded include the Abbott Scholarship Program, Jorge Fidalgo Memorial, Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial, and the Trang Ho Scholarship.

Alumni	College Attending
Carlos Andrade	Bridgewater State University
Dane Bien Ame	Wheelock College
May-Lissa Faustin	Bunker Hill Community College
Roberte Francois	Stonehill College
Robertha Jacques	Bunker Hill Community College
Roberson Jacques	Wentworth Institute of Technology
Medgine Joseph	Bunker Hill Community College
Heroldy Limage	Wentworth Institute of Technology
Rousler Milfort	UMass Boston
Jenny Noel	UMass Boston
Ritcharnie Noel	Regis College
Olivier Pamphile	Bunker Hill Community College
Frantzer Tondereau	UMass Boston
Jeffrey Valbrun	UMass Boston

Seizing Opportunities

Besides over **250** hours of academics and enrichment, scholars also participated in

- A 3-day/night college preparation program with Camp College New England at the University of New Haven
- The 4-day/3 night Sea Science and Leadership Program at Massachusetts Maritime Academy
- The Moakley Public Speaking Institute at the John F. Kennedy Library
- Internships at Vertex, Brigham and Women's Hospital, South End Technology Center, Project Reach, and more!

Summer Cup

Throughout the seven weeks of the summer program, urban scholars students were separated into four teams: Red Wolves, Green Gators, Orange Hurricanes, and Blue Devils. The teams were comprised of students from all grades who attended the summer program and were led by two team captains who also served as teacher's assistants. While in their teams, they worked on team building skills, giving the middle school students an opportunity to work with and learn from the high schools students.

Captains and scholars came together to work on several tasks. Teams chose their name, created a logo, t-shirts, and a banner to represent their mascot. Together they also created a song and several cheers that kept everyone motivated.

As a team, urban scholars also competed in a variety of tournaments, ranging from academics to sports. These competitions occurred twice a week with inclusion of all students as the main theme. During the games, teams earned points that were accumulated throughout the seven weeks and calculated on the last day of the program. The team with the highest score was crowned the victor of the summer cup.

Though all four teams collaborated very well and worked hard, the Red Wolves earned the cup for the 2014 summer institute.



Teacher's Corner

"For the second straight summer, a number of Urban Scholars took part in a class entitled 'Boston Strong.' The course was originally developed to explore local issues raised by the Marathon Bombings. Our goal was to define the Boston experience for people from all walks of life and to critically appraise the term "Boston Strong." The majority of students had a poor outlook on the city and many did not feel safe walking home from school. I wanted students to understand their experiences and those of others while understanding how citizenship is a force for change. After creating a working definition of "Boston Strong," we hit the streets to conduct over 300 interviews! From there the students analyzed the data and explored Boston's history and current state through reading, writing, and a variety of media. For the final project, students chose an issue important to themselves and their neighborhood and wrote a research-supported letter to an influential figure advocating for change and improvement. The end goal was for students to take an honest look at the city, to gauge it's "strength," understand its history, and envision their place in its future. I wanted students to know that they are not helpless but are developing the tools to make a lasting impact. With that, they have started to look at the city and media with a critical yet hopeful eye while strengthening their leadership skills." *Chris Kelly— "Boston Strong"*

Upcoming Events

- Saturday SAT Prep Course—9/20, 9/27, 10/4, 10/27, 11/1, 11/5
- Scholar Council Meetings—9/24/2014; 10/8/2014; 10/22/2014; 11/5/2014; 12/3/2014
- Gaining Ground Farm Community Service —10/4/2014
- Halloween Party—10/29/2014
- SAT Exam 11/8/2014
- Thanksgiving Potluck—11/19/2014
- Holiday Party—12/11/2014
- Honor Roll Celebration—12/17/2014
- UMB Basketball and Hockey Games—TBD
- College Tours—TBD

Urban Scholars News



Urban Scholars Program at UMass Boston

Spring 2014

Success begins with US!

Keeping Busy

We had an extremely busy February break at Urban Scholars!

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On Tuesday and Wednesday, two groups of 17 students travelled to Stony Brook to donate 4 hours of their time to ensuring the less fortunate have warm and nutritious meals during this cold winter. The group visited Community Servings and helped prepare meals for over 800 individuals with serious illnesses while learning about food preparation, kitchen safety, and having plenty of fun.



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Also on Tuesday and Wednesday, our college counselor and recruiter Akunna Rosser took 2 large groups of students to Boston College and Lesley University. Students toured the campuses, visited classes and academic buildings, experienced residential life, and enjoyed lunch in the dining halls.

On Friday, a group of 15 students visited the MIT Museum and participated in the "DNA Learning Lab: Protein Synthesis" workshop. They enjoyed the new museum exhibits and explored molecular biology using LEGO kits to understand the importance of the genetic code and how scientists discovered it.



On February 20th, a group of 20 high school juniors attended the New England Educational Opportunity Association's TRiO Day, a two day event consisting of college tours, pre-college workshops, an alumni panel, and an extensive college fair. This year the event was hosted in Framingham, MA, giving the students an opportunity to tour Clark University in Worcester and Bentley University in Waltham.



The week ended with a ski trip to Jiminy Peak. Urban Scholars teamed up with Youth Enrichment Services to provide a day of skiing and snowboarding, lessons, and fun for 12 students and chaperons. Though we're very happy to see the cold weather go, we can't wait until next ski season practice and improve our slope skills!

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Student Highlights

Congratulations! to both Tarjanae Ancrum and William Higgins for their participation in recent public speaking events in Boston. Tarjanae was the ONLY 8th grade student to make it to the Boston semi-finals in the Poetry Out Loud competition. She recited works by Langston Hughes and did a fantastic job! Junior William Higgins performed in the National English Speaking Union's Shakespeare competition where he recited a sonnet and a monologue from *The Winter's Tale*. The Urban Scholars community is very proud – way to go!



The seniors have been working closely with Akunna Rosser on college applications. Their strong desire to acquire a higher education has paid off. We are excited to see the numerous acceptances into the following colleges and universities:

- Assumption College
- Bay State College
- Bridgewater State Univ.
- Clark Univ.
- Columbia College
- Fisher College
- Fitchburg State Univ.
- Florida Institute of Tech.
- Framingham State Univ.
- Johnson & Wales Univ.
- Lassell College
- MA College of Liberal Arts
- MA College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences
- Merrimack College
- Pace Univ.
- Providence College
- Regis College
- Quinnipiac Univ.
- Salem State Univ.
- St. Michael's College
- Stonehill College
- Suffolk Univ.
- Univ. of MA—Amherst
- Univ. of MA—Boston
- Univ. of MA—Lowell
- Univ. of New Hampshire
- Wentworth Institute of Tech.
- Wheelock College

Teacher's Corner

"This winter Urban Scholars offered a poetry reading series called the Dramatic Presentation Society. As their public speaking instructor, I wanted the students to feel the spirit of the poetry 'jump off the page.' We read poetry aloud with an assortment of props, lighting effects, and setting devices to bring the poetry to life. We used 3D glasses, scarves and battery-operated candles, for Whitman's, "O Me! O Life!" We slayed the Jabberwocky with headsets and plastic swords. At the end of the series, two scholars were selected to participate in national public speaking competitions: William Higgins presented in the English-Speaking Union's National Shakespeare Competition; Tarjanae Ancrum gave recitations at the national poetry competition, Poetry Out Loud. I am proud of these and the many other accomplishments of the students in the Dramatic Presentation Society. I hope the scholars continue to carry with the Society's elected moto: "That the powerful play goes on, and you may contribute a verse." - Michelle Mount—"Charles River Anthology"



Upcoming Events

Girls SET in the City is a city-wide event where young scientists, engineers, mathematicians, and doctors-to-be tour local colleges, participate in hands-on science experiments, and meet female college students in the Science, Engineering, and Technology majors at local colleges.

The Whitehead Institute and MIT will be hosting its High School College Lecture Series where students will meet young scientists and world-famous neuroscientists as they explore this year's theme – "Neuroimaging and the Brain."

Urban Scholars Sophomores and Juniors will be participating in the **JFK Library's Student Leadership Conference** on April 24th. This one-day event will help students develop the skills and connections to change the world and make it a better place for teens and all citizens.

Other upcoming events:

- Project Showcase (May 1st – all are invited!)
- Get Real Teen Council health workshops (May 8 and 15th)

Urban Scholars News



Urban Scholars Program at UMass Boston

Winter 2013/2014

Best of luck to our seniors applying to college!

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Fall Highlights

Gaining Ground: On October 19th, the Urban Scholars Program took a trip to the Gaining Ground farm, a non-profit organization that grows organic produce and donates them to meal programs and food pantries. During this community service trip, Urban Scholars learned how to work the land and grow food. Scholars also had fun trying some of the items from the farm such as stir fry kale, made by the Gaining Ground staff, popcorn with the farm's maple syrup, and lettuce tasting!



Honor Roll: Students who were on the honor roll for the first term were celebrated with a trip to Salvatore's Waterfront for delicious Italian cuisine. Afterwards, they went to the Institute of Contemporary Art's Teen Night, where they danced to an ICA Teen DJ Collective and participated in art making workshops and a citywide talent show.

Advising: USP has recently completed our fall one-on-one advising sessions. This is a new initiative designed to enhance our ability to serve students by providing programming to meet scholars' needs and assist each scholar on their own unique path to college graduation.

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Fall Courses

Computer Science I	The goal of this course was to introduce the broad field of computing, basic programming concepts, and applications of computing. Students were introduced to makerspaces, entrepreneurship, and startup culture.
Physics, Calculus... Rollercoasters!	This class was an introduction to important scientific and mathematical concepts involved with riding and designing roller coasters. Students designed their very own rollercoasters, using many of the key ideas and work from the semester.
Forensics: Speech, Communication, and Performance	This course was designed to help students become skillful with public speaking, as well as to increase critical thinking in literary analysis while emphasizing the value of speech communication skills, both in content analysis as well as delivery.
Real World Math	Scholars learned to work with exponential functions, and applied algebra to their understanding and interaction with the real world through the study of finance, demographics, and the Fibonacci sequence.

Tutor Availability



Leanne Laventure

Tutors In:

Science & ELA

Availability:

Tuesdays 4:30-7PM; Wednesdays

4-7PM; Thursdays 3-5:30 PM;

Available by appointment only:

Fridays 3:30-5PM



Moi Le

Tutors In:

Math and Science

Availability:

Mondays & Tuesday 3-7PM



Paola Londoño

Tutors In:

ELA, Math & Spanish

Availability:

Mondays 3-5PM, 6-7PM; Tuesdays
& Thursdays 3:30-7PM;



Stephanie Valerio

Tutors In:

Math, Science & Spanish

Availability:

Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:30-7PM;

Wednesdays 3-6PM;

What's New?

11th Grade SAT Prep: During the fall, the Urban Scholars Program collaborated with the Admissions Guaranteed Program in partnering with the Summit Education Group to provide seniors with a 6-week SAT prep course. We are excited to continue our partnership to provide a 10-week SAT prep course to USP 11th graders. These classes will take place on Saturdays beginning in February and prepare students for the May 3 exam.

Scholar Council: USP's Scholar Council was recently formed to get more student input on decision-making and programming. This group meets about twice each month to discuss fundraising, enrichment activities, new initiatives, program policy and to vote on initiatives. If you're an Urban Scholar and looking to get involved, speak with Kevin or please join us at our next meeting!

Dramatic Presentation: This semester, Michelle Mount is teaching a "Dramatic Presentation Society" class designed to prepare 8 Urban Scholars students for two national public speaking and literature recitation contests: Poetry Out Loud and the English Speaking Union's National Shakespeare Competition. The students who were chosen to participate were invited based on their exceptional performances in previous dramatic arts courses. This is Urban Scholars' second annual Poetry Out Loud Competition and its first year in the English Speaking Union's National Shakespeare Competition. We are proud of all our participants and wish them the best of luck.

Upcoming Events

- 1/18/14—Frog Pond & Honor Roll Trip
- 1/20/14—Edu. Event at JFK Library
- 1/22/14—Poetry Out Loud Competition at UMass Boston
- 1/28/14—USP Winter Semester Begins
- 1/31/14—Blue Hills Ski Area Trip
- 2/17/14-2/21/14—February Break
- 2/17/14—MIT Museum Workshop: DNA Learning Lab: DNA and Proteins
- 2/18/14-2/20/14—Community Service Project
- 2/20/14-2/22/14—TRiO Day in Framingham, MA
- 2/23/14—Ski & Snowboard Trip in Waterville, NH

Featured Spring Classes

<p>Charles River Anthology</p>	<p>In this class, students will develop their reading, writing, and public speaking skills as they develop, write, and then perform an updated, Boston-style version of Edgar Lee Master's American classic "Spoon River Anthology."</p>
<p>Applied Physics: Robotics</p>	<p>Students will use Lego's NXT program to design, build, and program a variety of robots with a variety of functions from an M&M dispenser, to a flying dragon, and an automatic cake cutter. They will develop their understanding of Physics, Engineering, and Design while working individually and in teams.</p>
<p>Environmental Science: Sustainability</p>	<p>This course will focus on how humanity interacts with the natural world, from the microscopic to the atmospheric. Students will study modern trends in climate change and investigate a variety of solutions, culminating in a student-designed research project based at UMass Boston.</p>

Get Involved!

We are always seeking contributions to continue our mission and best serve our students. If you are able to donate or would like more information, please contact the Urban Scholars Program at urbanscholars@umb.edu or (617)-287-5830.

Urban Scholars News

Urban Scholars Program at UMass Boston

Summer/Fall 2013

After an exciting and successful Summer Institute, the Urban Scholars Program is thrilled to kick off a new school year!

Summer 2013 Courses

Our 120 students participated in a variety of academic and enrichment pursuits, making for a busy, challenging, and rewarding experience for students and staff. Our academic courses consisted of (all grades "rising")

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Grade 7/8 Robotics I – LEGO Mindstorms Theatre/Public Speaking – “12 Angry Jurors” Solar Car Engineering: Building and Design	Grade 9 Model United Nations Shakespeare’s “Macbeth” Documentary Filmmaking
Grade 10 Personal Ethics Robotics II – Programming and Design Documentary Filmmaking Literacy and Agency: Youth Participatory Action Research	
Grade 11 Visual Culture – Photography and Philosophy Shakespeare’s “Othello” Theatre/Public Speaking – “12 Angry Jurors”	Grade 12 Boston Strong College Preparation Workshops Sports Science – Anatomy and Physiology Sports and American Society – Intro to Sociology

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This summer served as the inaugural year for our summer partnership with the **Institute of Contemporary Art**. This program enabled 75 students to participate in 5 week-long workshops in Digital Photography, DJ’ing, and Audio Collage at the ICA’s nationally-recognized Teen New Media Center resulting in **1,200 hours of digital arts education**.



Guest Speakers

USP also hosted a number of guest speakers and visitors this summer:

- Red Sox Executive Vice President Charles Steinberg
- Boston mayoral candidate John Barros
- Red Sox nutritionist Tara Mardigan
- Microsoft Computer Engineers and Scientists
- Eastern Bank financial literacy workshops
- Boston Historian David Kruhe



Meet the Tutors



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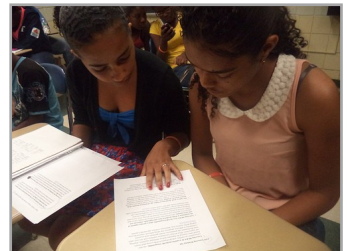
Tuesdays & Thursdays 3:30-7PM;
Wednesdays 3-6PM;

Fall 2013 Offerings

As we begin our 30th year, we plan on continuing our success in college preparation, admissions, and college completion. We will continue our after school courses, academic support, and enrichment offerings.

COURSES: Tuesdays and Thursdays 3:30-5:30	September 24 to December 12 January 28 to May 1
Tutoring, homework help, and study hall	Monday - Thursday 3:00-7:00 Friday 3:00-5:00

Our courses are designed to reinforce and expand students' academic skills while introducing them to potential college and career pathways. In addition, enrichment and experiential learning opportunities help students apply academic knowledge in real world settings. We host numerous events and celebrations throughout the year – we hope you'll join us for one or more!



School Year Focus 2013-2014

- *New - Urban Scholars High School Portfolio – reflection, goal setting, the road to college
- Efficient and productive communication with partner schools in serving students
- Working smarter, not just harder – AP, SAT I and II
- Meeting the Common Core – Focus on Literacy
- Leadership – local, national, global
- Habits of Mind and Growth Mindsets – Setting goals, staying focused, being consistent
- Communication and Self-Advocacy
- Real-World Applications: Internships grades 11 and 12
- Grade 9 – transitioning to high school and navigating the social world
- Digital Literacy and Social Media
- Community Service



Teachers, counselors, and administrators are encouraged to communicate with USP staff to ensure students are receiving the supports, structures, skills, and challenges they need to succeed.

Upcoming Events

We are currently planning several trips and gatherings for our students during the fall semester. Below are a some of the upcoming events.

- SAT prep course w/Summit Prep—**6 Saturdays: October 5, 12, 26 and November 2, 9, 30**
- MIT media lab and campus tour—**October 10**
- Gaining Ground Farm community service—**October 19**
- Clark University campus tour—**October 26**
- Halloween Party—**October 31**
- UMass Lowell campus tour—**November 16**
- Pre-collegiate Admissions Panel “SAT Optional Schools—**November 18**
- Thanksgiving Potluck—**November 25**
- Scholar Council student leadership team—**Biweekly on Thursdays**
- 3D-printing workshop—**TBD**