

SUMMER
REPORT
2014



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

#sblstaff



Hyper-Local with a System Focus

Throughout these pages you will get a strong sense of what the Success Beyond Limits at York University experience is all about. You will see Jane and Finch together (Brookview, Oakdale, and Westview), and you will see the gap between York University and the community shrunk. The remarkable experience that is provided to our students is possible because so many leaders within the Toronto District School Board (from the school level, to Continuing Education and the Focus on Youth program) come together under one umbrella with our funders and partners to make more possible than could ever been done by any of us in isolation.

If you were to look back at past reports, you would see the familiar faces of students popping up in the role of Mentor. You might also notice faces missing from the Mentor photo in the role of Recreation Staff. You will see warm, familiar smiles of our returning teachers, with a couple of new additions.

As you look over the events, activities and experiences that we were able to provide, you will come across a long list of partners and funders that have made possible much more than we could ever do in isolation.

Inside of Osgoode Hall Law School at York University grade 9 students were supported through their transition into secondary school through a supportive environment equipping them with the academic and social skills they

need for this next phase of their education, relationships with Mentors, SBL staff and our teachers will continue with them as they journey to graduation (and beyond), and gained exposure to the finest facilities in Canada's greatest post-secondary institutions (which happens to be in their own backyard).

Simultaneously, former Mentees gained valuable experience in their movement through our graduation model their roles as Mentor-in-Training (Volunteers).

Then there is the backbone of all that we do: our Mentors. They partnered with teachers in the delivery of literacy, numeracy and life skills. They provided students with one-on-one support, tutoring, encouragement and insight. They gained valuable employment experience that is designed to better prepare them for success in their individual career paths. Many of them also earned coop credits, turning their employment and leadership position into a deeper learning experience.

Currently, our model only exists in the Jane and Finch community. We are hyper-local in our programming, but we are doing our work with a system-focus. The work ahead of us is sharing elements of our model that can have meaning for young people in their education in different parts of Toronto (and across the province). Another major piece of our next steps is sharing opportunities to improve student success through thoughtful changes in our education institutions and ways to increase impact in a way that is meaningful to young people through tweaks and changes to policy.

For now, we invite you to share in our reflection of the journey that was Success Beyond Limits Summer 2014.

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OUR SBL TEAM



Teachers

Left to right (top image):

Mauricio Araya, Nastassia Subban, Sam Tecle, Nigel Hunter, Tesfai Mengesha, Charu Khurana, Rownak Chowdhury, Saraya Elwin.



Staff

Left to right (bottom image):

Christopher Penrose, Kaneka Watkins, Tesfai Mengesha, Shanaz Ali, Mohamed Ahmed, Toota Hassanien, Saraya Elwin.

OUR SBL TEAM

Mentors

Back row (left to right):

Peter Bunkuna, Ose Okonofua, Jermi Fernandez, Saifullah Khan, Steven Chatterpaul, Shaquille Antoine, Jahmal Predergast.

Third row (left to right):

Akifa Forde, Ishti Paul, Muna Ali, Tysha Tomlinson, Sabrina Gajadhar, Shukri Abdullahi, Lorretta Oppong.

Second row (left to right):

Olando Blair, Noah Osman, Tommy Nguyen, Kareem Bennett, Princess Hoddinott.

First row (left to right):

Kadiatu Barrie, Abdulkadir Nur, Vanessa Ashmead, Deshane Minott.



Rec. Staff

Left to right:

Tyrone Manners, Sofia Mohamed, Shyanne Witter, Delano Grant.

#teamwork



EVALUA TION

This past summer was full of inspiration, achievement, impact and perseverance, and much of that is found in the stories we have shared in our summer report. Narratives and images tell powerful stories, and so can numbers.

On Average students **Strongly Agreed** that the SBL summer program exposed them to various career options. Following the SBL summer program **87%** of students indicated that they could see themselves attending post secondary education (University/ College/ Apprenticeship/Trade).

94% of parents Strongly Agreed that they would recommend the SBL summer program to other families.

100% of parents indicated that they believe their child benefited both socially and academically from the SBL summer program.

92% of mentors stated that they feel more comfortable working in a group environment following the summer program.

On average, mentors **Strongly Agreed** that the SBL summer program built their leadership skills, while 100% of mentors stated that they felt their employment with SBL helped build valuable skills for future employment. A few of the skills listed by the mentors include: communication, teamwork, social skills, relationship building skills, responsibility and humility.

94% of the students enrolled in the 2014 SBL summer program received their first high school credit.

86% of students indicated that their SBL classroom experience was positive. While 77% of students indicated that they **were interested in what they were learning** in class during the SBL summer program.

67% of students felt generally supported in middle school by their teachers, while **91%** of students felt supported by the SBL staff. In regards to academic support, a mere **48%** of students stated that they felt supported academically in middle school, while **92%** of students stated that they felt supported academically by the teachers and mentors in SBL.

A strong positive correlation was found **between students feeling supported academically by mentors and being able to complete their assignments** with ease.

90% of students enrolled in the SBL 2014 summer program stated that they developed **strong friendships** during the summer program, and on average students **Agreed** that they would continue these **meaningful relationships** into high school.

EVALUA TION

Statistics

of Students registered on July 2nd, 2014



of Students registered at the midpoint of the program



of Students registered at the end of the program



of Students that received the credit



of Dual-Coop Credits Attempted by Mentors



of Dual-Coop Credits Achieved by Mentors



of Hours of Mentor Training per Young Person



of Transfer students that started the program



of Transfer students that finished the program



of Transfer students that received the credit



of Westview students that started the program



of Westview students that finished the program



of Westview students that received the credit



Average Daily Attendance

93%



Average Mentor Attendance

96%



Parent Night Attendance

14



Approx. Graduation Attendance

320



of Total Training Hours for Mentors



of Volunteers /Mentors-in-Training



of Volunteers Hours Contributed (Combined)

EVALUA TION

#teachers



Teachers

A phenomenal team of teachers and an exceptional SBL staff team makes dreams come true for students.

—CHARU

SBL is a program that gives our students the opportunity to improve their academic achievement while increasing their level of confidence prior to their journey into high school. I am very proud to be a part of this amazing program.

—MAURICIO

In every aspect of the program SBL instills in its mentors and students that true success is developing and empowering the whole person.

—NIGEL

SBL is an amazing program, which truly exemplifies the "it takes a village to raise a child" philosophy. Staff, educators, community groups, parents all rally together in this program to ensure that students are truly engaged in their learning and are given the opportunity to develop socially and emotionally which in turn truly prepares them for high school. —TAZ

SBL IS ONE OF THE BEST SUMMER PROGRAMS WHERE STAFF AND STUDENTS ARE ENGAGED IN LEARNING.

—SARAYA

SBL is an education program where innovative teaching ideas and approaches are shared and put into practice as a team. —TES

SBL BRINGS TOGETHER ALL THE CRUCIAL ELEMENTS REQUIRED FOR CHILDREN TO NOT ONLY LEARN BUT ACHIEVE GREAT SUCCESSES. IT IS A PROGRAM THAT ALL CHILDREN WOULD BENEFIT FROM. IT SHOULD BE REPLICATED THROUGHOUT THE CITY. —RONA

SBL is a holistic social and education program that prepares students for high school. It implements a full day of classroom instruction and social activities during the summer giving students an opportunity to continue their learning while preparing for the next, very important, stage of their education. —SAM

EVALUA TION

#mentors



I am absolutely loving the experience of being able to interact with the youth from all parts of Jane and Finch and being able to give them different life skills to not only survive these streets we call home, but to also strive for the long term. —NOAH OSMAN

I think that in the future we should continue to have more programs like this because it helps to improve our youths' education and it also keeps some of them off the streets before they do something that they will regret later on in life. —KADIATU BARRIE

SBL HAS HELPED ME TO REALIZE HOW MUCH I ACTUALLY ENJOY WORKING WITH KIDS AND BEING ABLE TO BE LOOKED UP AT AS A MENTOR/ROLE MODEL FOR THE STUDENTS. —SHAQUILLE ANTOINE

Mentors

SBL HAS HELPED ME TO REALIZE THAT IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO START POST-SECONDARY AND EVEN THOUGH I TOOK A YEAR OFF FROM SCHOOL, I STILL HAVE MORE OF A CHANCE THAN EVER TO GO TO UNIVERSITY. SBL HAS HELPED ME TO REALIZE HOW TO ALSO SET GOALS AND TRY MY HARDEST TO ACHIEVE THEM. —ABDULKADIR NUR

In SBL I started as a volunteer, the volunteer position helped me to gain more experience. For example, one skill that I gained was responsibility. It helped me throughout the years and it made me a better person overall. The mentor position helped to open opportunities like jobs, scholarships, and meeting new organizations. I'm very grateful for everything that SBL has offered me.

—DESHANE MINOTT

EVALUA TION

#parents



Parents

THIS PROGRAM WAS RECOMMENDED TO ME FROM A TEACHER AND I FELT IT WOULD BETTER HIM.....WHICH IT DID. I THOUGHT THE PROGRAM WOULD BE VERY BENEFICIAL TO HIM SINCE SBL HAS A LOT TO PROVIDE.

—SBL PARENT

SBL is a wonderful program that provides kids with the tools that they need for success and introduces them to a world beyond their own.

—GEORGINA ANING (MOTHER OF DARREN ANING)

I LOVE THIS PROGRAM FOR MY SON. KNOWING THAT HE IS DOING SOMETHING PRODUCTIVE DURING THE SUMMER MEANS SO MUCH TO ME.

—SBL PARENT

OUR PROGRAM



Hip Hop Literacy in the classroom

Last summer SBL piloted an exciting and innovative Hip Hop Curriculum that has since been published into a book called *Rhymes to Re-Education*. Building on the success of last year's pilot, this summer, teachers implemented a wider range of lessons – putting Hip Hop front and centre as themes of class, gender, race, and community were broached and examined in an engaging manner. The curriculum recognizes, values and makes use of cultural practices taken up by students that frequent our classrooms. As the curriculum continues to further gain momentum and traction, SBL will continue exploring the utility of Hip Hop in our after-school program (while supporting the curriculum at conferences etc.).

Mornings in the classroom

With the SBL summer program spending its second year at Osgoode Hall Law School, the morning classrooms featured state of the art technology, affording teachers the tools to be creative and teach a curriculum focused on literacy, numeracy and life skills. This year's dynamic teaching team utilized physical activity, art, and technology to make lessons engaging and inspiring. With class sizes capped at fifteen students, each classroom featured three to four mentors and a volunteer as well as the teacher all playing an important role in student success.



OUR PROGRAM



Space at Osgoode

The SBL summer program being held at Osgoode Hall Law School in York University was an invaluable type of atmosphere for our youth. Mentees, who will soon be entering high school, and our volunteers and mentors shortly trading their high school experience for post-secondary dreams, makes the University setting ideal for our youth who are climbing the various steps of their educational life. Our mornings spent in Osgoode classrooms equipped with technology allowed for an amazing classroom experience. SBL participants enjoyed spending their recess breaks at the front of Osgoode playing various activities or sitting on the steps continuing to build relationships with their peers. Being in the same space with Osgoode law students has opened the door to random engaging conversation with our youth during the walk from class to our lounge area. Having access to Osgoode's junior common room and Goodmans's Bistro for lunch created a comfortable lounge space for eating, playing cards, and the students' favourite...dominoes!

Afternoon Activities

While the morning classrooms explicitly focused on the social and academic development of students, the afternoon was an opportunity for students to excel through a variety of activities. Afternoon activities included the use of the gym, swimming, visual arts, dance, drama, mock trials, tennis, Nat Taylor Cinema and samba. Furthermore, mentors led their own creative and original activities providing students a dynamic and rich experience.



OUR PROGRAM



On Time & Ready to Learn

Whether SBL mentees, volunteers, and mentors live in many parts 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 have become places of community meet-ups as large numbers of youth are bused to and from York University. Getting our SBL youth to York University is definitely a priority, but having a form of access to the various Friday trip locations is important, especially to the students! Travelling downtown to go to watch a film at TIFF, Richmond Hill for Bowling and movies, Etobicoke for go-carting, North York to rollerskate, and Brampton for a day of fun at Wild Water Kingdom would not be possible without a chartered bus service for all participants. It is an amazing opportunity to gain a greater love and appreciation for the city we live in, as SBL tours the Tdot!

Nutrition & Success

Providing students with a nutritious breakfast and lunch has always been and will continue to be an integral part of the SBL summer program. A nutritious start provides the students with the necessary nutrition to reach their full potential throughout the day. Ensuring each student receives a proper breakfast and lunch leaves more time to focus on student achievement and eliminates a potential barrier to youth success.

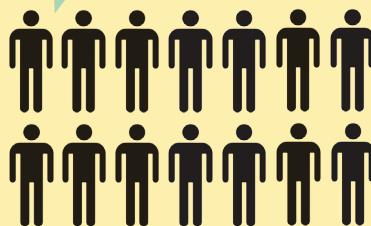
Halal and vegetarian options are provided each day to accommodate various religious and dietary needs of students. The breakfast and lunch hours give youth the time to bond with their mentors and peers and build the relationships that will last long after the six weeks of the summer program have ended.



OUR PROGRAM



STUDENTS



TDSB
TEACHER



YOUTH
MENTORS



SBL
VOLUNTEER



Class Sizes: Academic Impact & Relationship Building

The dialogue around class sizes is a core issue in education, and it comes up constantly in reports, research and in media coverage.

For our summer model, class size is vital, and the 1 teacher for 15 students, with an addition of 3 Mentors to provide youth-to-youth support. Summer school is actually funded by the Ministry of Education at 1 teacher for every 25 students, and this makes sense when a student in the summer is looking to pass a course they got 35-49% in or are looking to pick up another course that they are eligible to take.



The intent of our summer program is multi-faceted. We are prioritizing students that have been "transferred" into grade 9 or "promoted at-risk". We are exposing students to key literacy, numeracy and life skills that they will need to be successful in secondary school. We are identifying where students are in their learning journey and aim to support them in seeing progress over the summer. We are building relationships with a network of supports that include our teachers, our staff team, and our Mentors; our time together in the summer provides the foundation for this network of support to be there with them for their whole secondary education. We are bringing together Brookview and Oakdale Park Middle School students before they begin Secondary School.

OUR PROGRAM



Graduation: Celebrating Success is a Good Place to Start

This year was a return to our roots, as we brought our graduation back to the Moot Court inside of Osgoode at York U. With nearly every seat from the front row to the balcony filled with parents, siblings, friends, neighbours, program alumni, partners, funders, and supporters of SBL, the mood was jovial.

The event stroke a balance between words of congratulations from Mya Bulwa representing Osgoode Dean Lorne Sossin and Associate Dean Diane Woody representing Dean Martin Singer from the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies, a spoken word piece from Moose (SBL Mentor), and a dance performance from 2014 Mentees.

We celebrated the grade 9 students that completed the program, the Mentors that grew as leaders, our

volunteers who helped it all run smoothly, and our teachers who surpassed all you could expect to be accomplished in (and out of) a classroom.

Throughout the night of handing out awards and recognition of student accomplishments, the SBL staff was completely caught off-guard when the Recreation Staff (who are Mentor Alumni) presented certificates to our team for, "fighting everyday to keep our program going".

As has become tradition, we finished the night with a reception that was highlighted by former SBL Mentor, Winston's Sweetie La Belle cupcakes.



SUMMARY OFEVENTS



Career Day

On July 24th, Success Beyond Limits students, volunteers and mentors engaged in our Career Day. From 9:30am to 12:00pm presenters representing various career paths such as: accounting, child and youth work, educational entrepreneurship, publicist, information technology, acting, aviation, hair dressing, and musical arts shared their educational journeys with our youth. With such a wide variety of careers, SBL participants were able to solidify existing careers of passion, and found new paths of interests. Many students were able to intimately discuss with Career Day presenters important information pertaining to; required high school courses, length of study, value of volunteering, how to stay motivated and finances. All seven SBL classrooms were filled with the exchanges of dialogues between professionals, new grade nine students, volunteers, and high school mentors.

Zero Gun Violence Movement Workshops

Success Beyond Limits had the pleasure of partnering with Zero Gun Violence Movement (ZGVM) to deliver thought provoking workshops for our students. ZGVM is committed to collaborating with various community organizations across the city of Toronto engaging in discourse about the concerning levels of gun violence in Toronto. This initiative was formed to engage in programs and activities that will assist in saving lives. SBL students and mentors formed groups that allowed them to reflect on and identify the various aspects of a healthy community from their perspectives. Each group focused on one of the following topics: family, education, justice, employment and social services. All groups had the opportunity to share and present their ideas, and realized their own capacities to help create the healthy communities they would like to see.



SUMMARY OFEVENTS



Play Day

On August 8th, SBL held its annual Play Day event. On this beautiful summer day, mentors led and participated in games they created. Stations ranged from food competitions to obstacle courses with one constant factor, water. It is hard for anyone to remain dry on this day, which is fraught with laughter, joy and fun. Play Day reminds us all of the beauty and possibilities that Toronto summers offer.

180 *Change Street* Workshops

A few days a week during the afternoon you could witness our students and mentors stepping up their workout game! 180 Change Street delivered engaging workshops that emphasized the importance and value of being physically healthy. A strong aspect of being successful is ensuring that one's body is receiving the proper workouts to generate the necessary energy to positively go through the day. 180 Change Street also utilized upbeat hip hop music to further engage students to be hype and enjoy doing pushups, sit-ups, running, squats, and much more!



SUMMARY OFEVENTS



Field Trips

During our 6 week summer program, Friday afternoons have been dedicated to field trips. Each trip provided an opportunity for 150 people to explore different areas of their own city. Many students and staff have commented on the benefits of building relationships with others in multiple environments whether it be in the classrooms of Osgoode Law School, the Arts building across campus at York University, or downtown at the TIFF Bell Lightbox. The field trips have been a great way for everyone to connect and engage with each other after sharing a full week of SBL programming. The trips included: Roller blading at the Rinx; Bowling at one of the largest bowling alleys; Go-karting at an extremely large track; Wave pool, and Wild Water Kingdom.

SUMMARY OFEVENTS

L.a.w.s.

Exposure to new experiences and ideas is ultimately one of the core elements that adds to the success and value of the SBL program. Each year the students are exposed to legal education through the LAWS program. Students have the opportunity to experience the intricacies of our judicial system first hand through mock trials and workshops pertaining to legal issues, the justice system, and legal professions.

The LAWS program provides the tools and skills to help youth think critically and build the confidence that is necessary to make educated, thoughtful decisions. This opportunity provides experiential learning that engages students in academic material and prepares them for the kind of work they can expect in high school. It is truly inspirational to see students express their ideas and manifest their passions as they vigorously debate real life situations.



WORKING WITH SUCCESS BEYOND LIMITS YOUTH WAS A FUN AND REWARDING WAY TO ENGAGE STUDENTS IN THE LAW AND GET THEM TO THINK ABOUT AND DISCUSS LEADING ISSUES SURROUNDING SOCIAL JUSTICE AND ADVOCACY. THE STUDENTS WERE ENERGETIC, BRIGHT AND EAGER TO LEARN AND A PLEASURE TO WORK WITH. THE WORK WE DID WITH SBL WAS A MEANINGFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS TO GET MORE INVOLVED WITH YOUTH FROM THE JANE-FINCH COMMUNITY AND TRY TO MAKE A POSITIVE IMPACT IN THEIR LIVES."

—ELENORA DIMITROVA (LAWS)

SUMMARY OFEVENTS



Movie Days

With a large camp consisting of 150 people, opportunities to spend time as a whole group in one space is rare but important. Thursday afternoons has been dedicated to film screenings. Our large summer camp is very noticeable as we walk through the York University campus towards Nat Taylor Cinema. The films watched ranges from Hollywood blockbusters to small time production films. For example, we got the opportunity to head downtown to the tiff bell light box to watch a screening of an amazing film that the youth really felt connected to. This has inspired some youth to really get involved with the Toronto International Film Festival this year.

Q-Mack

QMack and Scott Jackson (aka J-BOX) came in for our first day of programming to help leave a good lasting first impression. 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 while keeping it entertaining with his basketball acrobatics along side J-Box who can make over 1000 sounds without moving his lips. Students and staff were able to walk away with key strategies towards reaching their own full potential.



SUMMARY OFEVENTS



Ramadan

During the summer months, many students and staff were observing the holy month of Ramadan. For the first 3 weeks of programming, we made it a priority to provide accommodations as students and staff were fasting. These accommodations include, but are not limited to the following: Providing designated and equipped space to do activities for those who are not eating during breakfast and lunch periods; providing a prayer space throughout the day; and alternative activities were available during the afternoon.

Documentation

We were able to highlight the different aspects of the program with photo and video documentation. The process of this form of documentation was done through the eyes of Tasia Briscoe and Sariena Luy who are our film/video students for the summer. By documenting our experience, we were able to create weekly slideshows that summarize the past week. It was great to have the opportunity for youth to create a slideshow for the graduation ceremony to capture the memorable moments throughout the 6 weeks and share it with the rest of the SBL community.



SUMMARY OFEVENTS

Wonderland Trip

At the end of every educational, fun and successful summer, staff, mentors and volunteers fill a school bus and head to Canada's Wonderland. As tradition goes, the day starts with everyone filling a train on the Leviathan with the hopes of getting rid of nerves on future rides. As the day goes on everyone is pushing the boundaries of their own comfort, leading to staff taking the plunge on the Xtreme Skyflyer, while mentors repeatedly rode the Drop Tower leaving some speechless while others shed tears of joy.



SUMMARY OFEVENTS



DeBrief Week

At the end of each summer, the mentors and staff spend an additional week discussing and debriefing about the program. Mentors share perspectives, experiences, and insights as a way to reflect and provide a deeper understanding of the impact, reach, and implication of the program, in this way it comes directly from youth mentors. The knowledge and perspectives shared are invaluable given the deep-rooted relationships mentors form with mentees over the six-week program. Debrief Week also included a screening of the documentary *Crisis of Distrust: Police and Community in Toronto*. Following the film, a discussion was facilitated by Zakaria Abdulle from the Police Literacy Initiative, which provided mentors a space to share their myriad of experiences and encounters with law enforcement. Later in the week, Karen Smith from Hive Toronto facilitated a “hacking” workshop

where conventional ideas were remixed. For example, mentors had to hack a game of Monopoly by adding a social justice twist, creating rules that made the game more equitable.

In addition to discussions and a film screening, mentors had the opportunity to explore the city of Toronto through our first-ever City-Wide Scavenger Hunt. Mentors formed four teams and were given tasks and locations to visit across the city. The scavenger hunt brought out the creativity and ingenuity of mentors as they completed tasks with little resources and shared a summer of hard work, achievement and accomplishment.



SUMMARY OFEVENTS



Head Start Day

On Thursday August 28th, hundreds of grade nine students entered the front doors of Westview Centennial Secondary School to experience a glimpse of their new high school.

SBL staff, mentors and volunteers greeted the students with warm smiles, and helped them to familiarize themselves with this new environment. Senior Westview students and SBL mentors acted as tour guides, helping the newcomers locate their classes, understand their timetables and navigate their way through the halls.

For the SBL mentors and staff this day naturally became a moment to reminisce about exciting memories and highlights from the summer program and also to anticipate the new experiences that lay ahead. While many students arrived that day with butterflies and anxiety, the warm welcome from SBL staff and school faculty left students with a sense of confidence and excitement. Students, faculty and community partners collaborated on this day to convey the importance of student success and also that we would all be there to make that happen.

Mentor Training

We took on 20 mentors this year for our 2014 summer program. It was highly important for mentors to develop and work on key skills to help them engage with 110 mentees during the summer in an effective way. Mentor training started on April 9th and continued on a weekly basis until June 25th. As a team they were able to understand what they each brought to the table and how vital it is to know the strengths and weaknesses of those they will be working closely with. From a total of 11 sessions, they were able to cover topics that included the following: classroom management, being an effective mentor, conflict mediation, health and safety, summer role and responsibilities, mentor and teacher orientation, and program planning. The mentors were also given decision-making power in program areas such as deciding which afternoon activities we will have; what trips will we go on; the lunch menu; and providing ideas for classroom strategies for teachers to get students engaged. The value of this training series has been for mentors to carry these sets of skills in other areas of their life.

SUMMARY OFEVENTS



Kids Up Front Access = Fun

There is no shortage of things to do in the GTA, and this is especially true in the summer. For youth and families outside of the core of the city, accessing these events can sometimes be a challenge.

Our partnership with Kids Up Front is a huge strength to our program around the year, but in the summer generous donations also allow us to provide tickets to our students and their families. Some of the highlights this summer included: Blue Jays, Men's National Soccer Friendly: Canada VS Jamaica, Women's U20 World Cup, Shriners Circus, Rogers Cup Tennis, Wiz Khalifa Concert, and the Art Gallery of Ontario.

Jays Care Community Care House

From day one, the Jays Care Foundation has been a committed partner to Success Beyond Limits, and has supported our mandate of improving educational outcomes for youth in the Jane and Finch community.

When the Jays Care Foundation remodeled one of their suites at the Rogers Centre into the Jays Care Community Club House, they began hosting children and youth every home game of the season to enjoy a Jays game in a space made just for them.

It has become a tradition to bring our newest group of Mentors out to enjoy the game and celebrate all that they are accomplishing as leaders and role models. On September 26th the tradition continued and we had an incredible time. Looking forward to next season!



SUMMARY OFEVENTS



Ycec Summer Institute 2014

Every year since it started in 2009, we have attended and brought youth voices to the York Centre for Education and Community (YCEC) Summer Institute.

This year, we were honoured to be a partner and to sit on the organizing committee. Our participation included moderating and participating on the Youth Panel and the delivery of a workshop on School/Community/University Partnerships.

The panel was moderated by our Program Manager Kaneka Watkins, who facilitated an engaging dialogue among young leaders from the Jane and Finch community about what school and community partnerships mean to them. The panel consisted of Winston Luc (a former SBL Mentor), Princess Hoddiit (a current SBL Mentor), Fawad Habib (a graduate from C.W. Jeffery's, Walk For Excellence) and Dymika Harte

(a graduate of Downsview, Walk for Excellence). They spoke powerfully, engaging the audience through humor, personal experiences, and thought provoking questions that got right to the heart of what school/community partnerships can really be.

The workshop was co-facilitated by Yvette Munro (York U + SBL Board Chair), Chris Penrose (SBL Executive Director) and Lorna Schwarzentuber (York U TD Community Engagement Centre). The conversation began with a framing through some history, theory and examples of school/community/university partnerships presented by Yvette. Chris then looked at SBL as an example, pulling out key ingredients that have worked, what the main challenges have been, and what success in such a partnership looks like for us. Lorna presented details about the York U TD CEC as an example of the role that York is currently playing in fostering and supporting these kinds of partnerships.



INTHECO MMUNIT Y

Social Media



Jermi @Young_Founder - Aug 5
The kids doing great art work @SuccessBL (my name is in it)



Freedom Friday @freedomfridayz
"Through these walls I put emphasis on my character" Kareem Bennett (Toronto spoken word Artist)



INTHECO MMUNIT Y

Social Media



SuccessBeyondLimits @SuccessBL

Congrats to Edel on being selected by our students as Valedictorian for SBL 2014 - can't wait to hear your speech!

REWEETS 4 FAVORITES 5

8:15 AM - 31 Jul 2014

YoungWomenEmpowered @swempowered Jul 31 @SuccessBL can't wait for the graduation

SuccessBeyondLimits @SuccessBL

Congrats to Edel on being selected by our students as Valedictorian for SBL 2014 - can't wait to hear your speech!

SuccessBeyondLimits

Last day of the program at Wild Water Kingdom. End of one chapter, the beginning of another.



SuccessBeyondLimits @SuccessBL

Play Day 2014 - Juve running some games



SuccessBeyondLimits @SuccessBL · Sep 1
Moe reppin SBL and Toronto on the Great Wall of China

SuccessBeyondLimits @SuccessBL

Winston and the fam brought it w 300 custom cupcakes for our graduation #tradition

7:54 PM - 7 Aug 2014

SuccessBeyondLimits @SuccessBL

Site Lead to our Teachers: "W/out ur continued perseverance + patience, some of our students would not have received their 1st high credit"

4:19 PM - 12 Aug 2014

SuccessBeyondLimits @SuccessBL

It has been amazing calling #Osgoode our home for the past six weeks at @yorkuniversity - thanks @DeanSossin



SuccessBeyondLimits @SuccessBL · Jul 24

Honouring our Career Day guests - such inspiring stories.



SuccessBeyondLimits @SuccessBL · Jul 31

Big day down at the #OVO Music Conference today - s/o @TheRemixProject @1LOVETO and SO many others that made the day



Zakaria Abdulle @ZakariAbdulle · Aug 13

A big thank you to our event working group at @PLitoronto and @SuccessBL for organizing this screening



View more photos and videos

SuccessBeyondLimits @SuccessBL · Aug 15

Mapping out the plan #SBLCityRace





Rec. Staff Profile: *Delano Grant*

Delano Grant was a mentor for three years and graduated from Westview in 2010. Continuing his interest in working with youth, Delano entered Ryerson University to obtain a degree in social work. Currently in his last year, Delano returned to the SBL summer program as a Recreation Staff using his experiences to provide the current mentors with guidance and support. "I believe that life is a continuous journey. The value of sharing creates a wealth of knowledge and being a part of the Success Beyond Limits family meant that I was able to grow and approach life situations from different perspectives". Reflecting on his five years of mentorship, he also mentions that, "learning and teaching goes hand in hand and as a recreational staff I was able to learn from my colleagues and mentees. My approach in meeting youth where they were was based on the realization that each situation requires a different approach. As a recreational staff I had to wear multiple hats being a big brother, a peer mediator and a teacher, while balancing that with being a learner, because that cycle for me never ends."

Staff Profile: *Shanaz Ali* Volunteer Coordinator

Shanaz Ali's journey to the Success Beyond Limits Education Program began through a conversation with her Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) instructor. OISE of the University of Toronto requires teacher candidates to do a placement that is self-directed and based on an individual's personal interests. Shanaz expressed a desire to do her placement in the Jane and Finch community because she was raised in Jane and Finch and was familiar with the external and internal barriers that are imposed onto students. Shanaz's placement with SBL was supposed to be for a month, but because she was captivated with the SBL program and the Westview students, she chose to stay until the end of the school year. Impressed with her strong work ethic and dedication towards the SBL program, the SBL staff soon hired Shanaz as a volunteer coordinator for the summer program. Shanaz expressed that, "as the Volunteer Coordinator, I was able to see not only how essential the SBL volunteers are in the functioning of the SBL summer program, but how the volunteers are mentors-in-training".



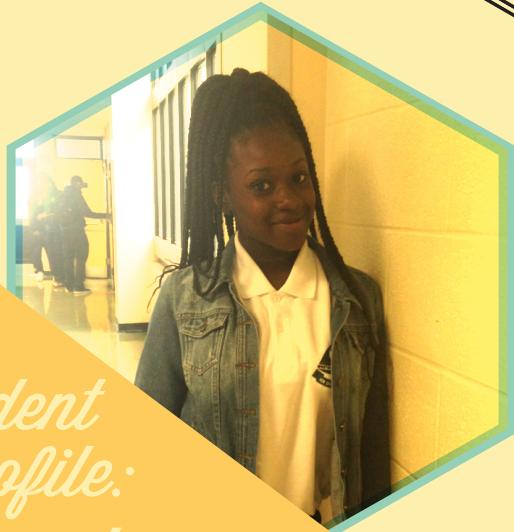
SUCCESS STORIES

Student Profile: Shaughnessy Barracks

Positive or negative experiences from middle school can often affect a student's perception of secondary education. Shaughnessy Barracks was a student in the Success Beyond Limits summer 2014 program. Being cared for in the classroom and having a voice is key in her eyes for a successful year. The SBL summer program is where Shaughnessy felt that her voice was heard and where she felt valued as an individual.

When asked to compare a middle school classroom environment to the SBL summer classroom she says, "It was different because SBL was not just about studying notes. The SBL teachers sit down with you and make you understand it right there and then". Shaughnessy also pointed out that the mentors made a huge difference in her success in the program.

Shaughnessy expressed that she would have felt "scared and unprepared" coming into high school without attending the SBL summer program because, "I don't know what I would be getting myself into". Thanks to the SBL program she was able to gain her first high school credit and felt that she is, "one step ahead". Shaughnessy's transition to Westview has become easier due to the SBL summer program where she continues to be a regular face in our youth space.



Student Profile: Anthony Mao

The Success Beyond Limits 2014 summer program was Anthony Mao's first glimpse into a high school course. When asked to describe his middle school experience in comparison to the SBL summer program, Anthony said his middle school experience was "a typical one", where, "You would show up for classes and barely have time to socialize. But SBL prepared me for the academic skills that I needed in order to survive high school with also having the intention for making it a fun experience".

Anthony expressed that during middle school he would, "sit in math class, memorize the equations and just write down what would be needed for the tests; but when I had math during the SBL summer program, the teacher broke it down so that we could understand it and then there would be the mentors that would help us with it since they are in high school". Anthony went on to say that, "the SBL classrooms are meant for learning, but it is also to help you build more friendships".

After gaining his first high school credit, Anthony now feels more confident and positive about entering high school in that he knows the mentors and the SBL program will continue to be a presence in Westview.



SUCCESS STORIES



Lights, Camera, Career Exposure Tasia Briscoe & Sariena Luu

This year we had the opportunity to take on 2 students to document our summer experience through film and video. Tasia came in as an optimistic co-op student looking for some exposure to the world of film. Tasia had very little experience and within the first week she showed a high level of comfort with the camera as she captured the highlights of each day. Some photographers can be a "fly on the wall" but Tasia was able to build relationships with those who she captured in her pictures in order to help her know when to catch the perfect shot. Sariena, being a former mentee in the program, showed interest in documenting our summer through film. She

came in with great experience and wanted an opportunity to build her portfolio while still being involved with the program as a returning student. Sariena was able to conduct interviews that asked participants of the program to share their experiences during the summer. She also showed a level of mentorship when working closely with Tasia in terms of providing some advice to help Tasia sharpen her skills.

Both Tasia and Sariena were volunteering their time and have shown great commitment to this role. At the end of each week, they were both responsible for creating weekly slideshows that showcased highlights of the week. They were also responsible for putting together the final graduation slideshow. Tasia and Sariena's confidence with their craft grew as students watched the products of their laborer on the big screen, and loved what they saw!





Mentor Profile: Ishti Paul

Ishti came into the school year program as a volunteer with a great sense of initiative. After securing a summer position as a mentor, she quickly made her name as the "go to girl" during the morning half of the program. Each mentor had something to bring to the table and Ishti came with her commitment towards the academic achievement of our students. She made sure that her mentees were on the right path to getting their first high school credit; she even helped her fellow mentors achieve their co-op credits during the summer. Ishti brings a bright, fresh character to the afternoon portion of the summer program as a first year mentor. Ishti received an award at our 2014 summer graduation ceremony for her leadership in the classroom. She is now entering her final year at Westview Centennial. Staff and students have been able to collectively agree that one thing Ishti is never short of... is a smile.

Mentor Profile: Olando Blair

Our graduation model has been demonstrated through the growth of Olando Blair. Olando started with the program as a mentee from Oakdale Park Middle School during his grade 8 summer. He quickly got involved in our school year program at Westview C.S.S as he showed interest in volunteering. Those interests grew into securing a mentor role with SBL's summer program. As a 3 time mentor, Olando has developed his leadership skills from once being that mentor who would take a backseat to now challenging himself to be in the driver seat. He has taken many strides and set great examples for new entering mentors to learn from, and for older mentors to be reminded of. For example, Olando is able to hold himself and those around him accountable to the task at hand and the responsibilities that come with the role. Being a leader in the classroom and outside the classroom is what sets him apart and it is also what allowed him to win an award during our summer graduation ceremony. Olando will be coming into the new school year as a mentor among mentors during his final year at Westview, while still committed to our after school program.





Mentor Among Mentors: Tommy Nguyen

Tommy Nguyen, a first year mentor who wowed the SBL staff, students and fellow mentors with his enthusiasm, dedication and generosity, has been an invaluable addition to the SBL family. Throughout the past four years that Tommy has been involved with the SBL program, he has grown from a young man who had difficulty expressing himself, to becoming a true leader.

"SBL HELPED ME FIND DIFFERENT WAYS TO EXPRESS MYSELF AND BE OPEN WITH MY THOUGHTS."

—TOMMY NGUYEN

"THE STUDENTS WERE MY FAVORITE PART OF THE PROGRAM... JUST BEING WITH THE STUDENTS... BECAUSE SOME OF THESE STUDENTS ARE GOING TO GROW UP TO BE FUTURE LEADERS IN WESTVIEW AND I WANTED TO ASSIST THEM!" —TOMMY NGUYEN

His dedication to student success, his hard working nature, and his infectious positive attitude were recognized within the classroom and during afternoon activities. Tommy spent countless hours working through Math and English questions, reflecting with students on current affairs, and constantly reminding the youth that they have what it takes to be successful in high school. In the afternoons you could find Tommy making a student laugh, teaching them a new sport, and ultimately ensuring everyone was having a great time. It came as no surprise that Tommy was the winner of the Mentor Among Mentors Award in his very first year. He has grown in so many ways during this year's summer program and we look forward to seeing more amazing accomplishments yet to come.



Volunteer Profile: Malik Mude

Malik's hard work, and love for assisting youth left quite the impression on the SBL staff and mentors during this year's summer program. Malik has always displayed great dedication to SBL through his involvement in the afterschool program, attending SBL events and trips and his willingness always to lend a helping hand. Malik continued to display his dedication through being one of the first students to sign up as a volunteer for this year's summer program.

"Volunteering with SBL was a great experience because I was able to earn my 40 hours of community service in a fun environment and was able to help students who were in the same position I was in last year." —MALIK MUDE

It was not long ago that Malik was a mentee, exploring the program and navigating his way through grade 9. However, within his first day of volunteering Malik took on a leadership role amongst his fellow volunteers, and impressed the staff with his work ethic and positive attitude. Malik's efforts did not go unnoticed and he was awarded both the Volunteer of the Week award and the Volunteer Excellence Award at the SBL graduation!



Teacher Profile: Sam Tecle

When did you start with our program and where were you as an educator at that time?

I started with SBL's education program immediately upon graduating from Teacher's College. In fact, I was not able to attend my graduation ceremony because it was my first day of work as a certified teacher in Ontario working with what was then called the Promoting Excellence education program. At the time I was just beginning my career in education.

What prompted you to apply?

What prompted me to apply was the fact that the program was taking place at York University and was servicing young people from my community. Living and growing up in Jane and Finch had always been an important part of my identity and upbringing and now the opportunity to work with and alongside dedicated community workers in my community was (and still is) very enticing.

What have you learned as an educator through being a part of the program?

I have learned that education itself is much more malleable and flexible than traditional schools sometimes allow. Being part of the program - working with transfer students - that is to say a student population who has not found success in their schooling perhaps, has forced me to creatively expand my teaching practice. How do you engage young people in learning who have not had positive experiences in school? Working with SBL has demonstrated to me the deep truth in the quote, "Never let schooling interfere with your education"

Can you share what you think the impact of the mentors is on you as a teacher?

Having mentors in the classroom teaching alongside with me serve many important functions, two of the most important, as a check and as fulfillment. First, mentors can be important thermometers in your classroom, they can be a valuable resource to check in with the pulse of student engagement. Are students interested? Are they engaged? Mentors are able to provide feedback toward this end. Secondly, mentors in the classroom are often students who I have taught in the past. This is very empowering as a teacher because we see the continuity in the work that we do. SBL is very attuned to the importance of giving mentees and students progressively more responsibility, which are, most importantly, for young people opportunities for growth. Seeing a student that I taught a couple summers ago grow and develop into a young, mature adult is immensely rewarding.

And what is the impact of the mentors in the classroom on the mentees?

Mentees attend SBL's summer educational program with little to no idea of what high school is, or what

Teacher Profile: Sam Jecle (cont'd)

a high school student might look like and how they would approach these older students to ask about this next phase in their educational journey. Having mentors in the classroom puts "older" and "veteran" high school students in the same classroom space as mentees who have not attended one day of high school yet and this is incredibly rewarding for both student populations. Mentees build relationships with older students who become friends during the school year but also mentors assume the role of being a source of knowledge and leadership for an important part of the new incoming student population.

What impact does class size have on what you are able to do as a teacher and what students are able to get out of the program?

As an educator, part of the appeal of SBL's summer educational program is the small class size. Oversized classrooms really restrict the ability to deeply and intimately get to know each student's learning style, their interests, motivations and future desires. With SBL's educational philosophy and program structure, I find I am able to more deeply engage with each student (both mentees and mentors) and inevitably the relationships that are developed in SBL are longer lasting and more meaningful. In essence, education, at its core and when done most effectively, is about relationships.

What does being on the York campus for the summer program mean to you as a teacher?

Being on York campus during the summer program means that York University is part of the Jane and Finch community. Being on York campus means that the young people from the Jane and Finch community can see York as part of their community, as part of what's possible, as

a viable option among many viable options for future achievement and attainment. Being on York campus means for the young people in our community that we are here, and that we matter.

What do you think we could bring from the summer program model into the school year?

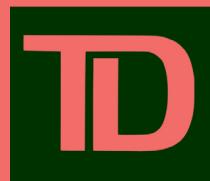
I think the holistic approach of SBL's summer program can be brought into the school year. Combining the educational and social development of students holistically in every class, every subject strand could develop not just students with high achievement but young people with high engagement in their school community and city. This can start simply, by instilling in every teacher's pedagogy a meaningful focus on relationship building. There is a sense of camaraderie, of spirit in SBL that I find resonates with me and with anyone who works with SBL regularly, how can we translate that into the school year? A school-community is at its most effective when the engagement, dedication and commitment to service is spread throughout its members, imagine the possibilities if a school had high investment from all of its members from September to June? We can learn from SBL on how to develop on this front.

What is the connection between your PhD work and your approach in the classroom?

My PhD has always been inspired by what the pursuit of knowledge can do in working toward a more ethical life and community. In part, my PhD is about thinking how we can create a world that is more livable. My approach in the classroom resonates exactly with those ideals and pursuits. My approach to education and learning inside the classroom is always about the possibility of change, and that learning and thinking together is always a first step.

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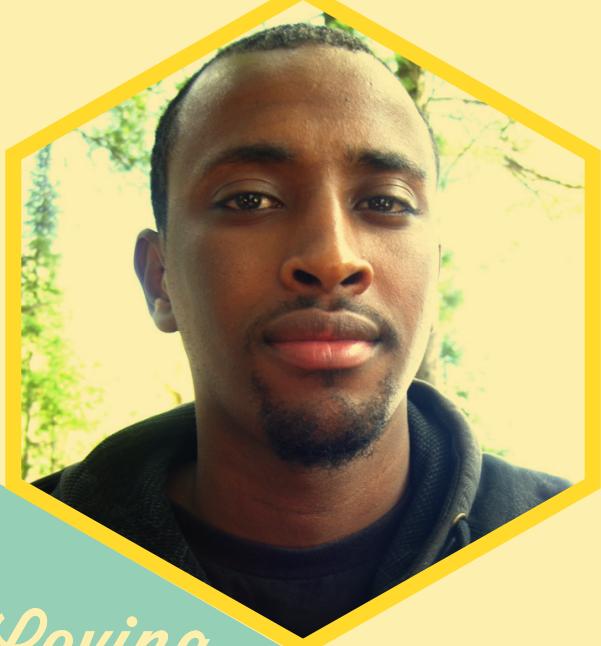
MANIFESTO

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Thank you!

SPECIAL DEDICATION



In Loving Memory: *Abshir Hassan*

Abshir is SBL family. His laughter, intelligence, heart, time, and all of the resources he had available to him were given generously to support our work of acknowledging and supporting the genius of youth in Jane and Finch.

He was a teacher of the highest quality, and had the love and respect of all of his students, because he loved and respected all of his students. His commitment in the classroom was rooted in his commitment to community.

Not content to only do the important work that comes through one to one connections in the classroom, his pursuit of post-graduate studies at York was focused on bringing forward the experiences of students whose voices and experiences are still under-represented.

Supporting the development of the Hip Hop Literacy curriculum, adding input and insight to the Somali Student Achievement Task Force, volunteering in after school programs, and going to Raptors games with our students are just some examples of how he lived and breathed his dedication to ensuring that youth have the opportunities and education experiences that he knew he and his peers should have received growing up.

At the core of it all, he was excellent. An excellent friend, brother, son, cousin, teacher, community worker, and academic.

As a family, we will carry our work with his heart for youth.

Our condolences to the family, friends, students, and colleagues that are devastated by the loss of this brilliant, loving man.

Rest in peace, Abshir.





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