



Student Highlights

PA STATE SUCCESS STORY

- ◇ One of our students, Jose Marrero (pictured to the right), was named a 2008 Success Story by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. He is the seventh CLC student to be so honored in our 22-year history. CLC is proud of Jose's achievements, and we continually strive to guide all of our students toward reaching their goals and their full potential. **(See inside for more about Jose.)**

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

- ◇ 100% of eligible students were accepted into training (e.g. culinary arts programs) or will be attending Community College of Philadelphia.
- ◇ 86% of eligible students gained employment, and 93% of students with jobs retained their employment while at CLC.

GED*

- ◇ 100% of students who set a goal of earning a GED this year succeeded.
- ◇ 43 other students have taken at least one part of the GED exam, and we expect these students to complete their GED exams in 09-10 program year.

LEARNING GAINS

- ◇ 65% of pre- and post-tested ABE and GED students advanced at least one Educational Functioning Level (EFL) in reading and/or math. *There are six EFLs, ranging from pre-literacy to high adult secondary education. One EFL is significantly greater than one grade level. We are extremely proud of our students who are able to make such considerable gains.*

PERSONAL GOALS

- ◇ Over half of our students achieved at least one goal in their Action Plans. *With CLC's guidance, all students create Action Plans that set out smaller goals that lead toward the achievement of larger, long-term goals. Some goals that students have set for themselves include getting a driver's license, being able to add fractions, or writing a five-paragraph essay.*

Let's congratulate all of our students on the achievements they have made this year! We hope to see and hear about their continued success in the future.



* Getting a GED is not an easy task!

The General Educational Development (or GED) exam is a group of five tests. When a person passes all five tests, s/he is certified as possessing high school academic skills. The five tests are Language Arts/Writing, Language Arts/Reading, Math, Social Studies, and Science and range in length from 65 minutes to 120 minutes. The scores range from 200 to 800. In order to qualify as passing, individuals must earn at least 410 on each of the five tests, have an average score of 450 or above, and have a total score of at least 2250.

Community Learning Center's mission is to help adults develop literacy, math, and life skills using a supportive and holistic approach so that they can realize their fullest potential at home, in the workplace, and in the community.

Student Trips

Each year, CLC makes it a priority to take students on field trips in order to enliven the curriculum and expand our students' worlds. The trips CLC arranged this year included the Philadelphia Orchestra, the Free Library of Philadelphia, and the Constitution Center.

FIVE TANGOS

Students were able to experience a performance by the Pennsylvania Ballet. It was the first time watching ballet for most!

ADVENTURE AQUARIUM

Four busloads of CLC students and families participated in the annual trip to the aquarium.

For student Eileen Torres and her four grandchildren, it was "a day to remember."



ONCE UPON A NATION

Taking advantage of Philadelphia's rich history, CLC students and families participated in the "Once Upon a Nation" tour. During this tour, they heard history come alive from costumed storytellers at sites throughout Philadelphia's historical district.

Jose's Story

CLC's 2009 PA Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education Success Story Winner was Jose Marrero. When Jose was just four years old, his father passed away. For the rest of his childhood, his family had to rely on public assistance to survive. Jose eventually quit high school in eleventh grade, after which he worked in construction and auto mechanics and even opened up his own car dealership. In spite of these successes, he still wanted to achieve more. Jose had long dreamed of becoming a police officer to follow in the footsteps of his father and brother, but without a high school diploma, he could not attend the police academy. In the winter of 2007, Jose began attending classes at CLC. By January 2008, Jose had passed all GED tests and is now heading off to attend a Border Patrol Academy in Texas.

Jose has also passed on his love of learning to his wife, who studied for and passed the GED tests, and his children, who aspire to enter the fields of medicine and law. He has even offered to pay the costs of the GED tests for the CLC student who scores highest on the official practice test each year.



Student Projects



NO TIME TO PREPARE DINNER? GET "DINNER IN A BAG"

This year, one CLC class simulated a business by creating "Dinner in a Bag" kits and selling them via email to CLC's Board of Directors. This

project combined literacy and math lessons with lessons about nutrition, food safety/hygiene, and email use. The sale was a success, and all proceeds went toward supporting CLC!

EXPLOSION OF HOPE

Another instance of project-based learning began with a class walking around the neighborhood, photographing abandoned houses and cars, graffiti, cracked sidewalks, and evidence of drug use. Then, using their new computer skills, they wrote about what they saw and proposed solutions. Vol-



unteer Natalie Dyen helped with the project, which resulted in a book, *Explosion of Hope: Our Ideas to Help North Philadelphia*.



CLC Staff Members

Susanne Czarnecki, Substitute Teacher
 Selma Erus, Substitute Teacher
 Stephanie Fahringer, Development Assistant
 Venita Forman, Program Assistant
 Patricia Haggerty, Teacher
 Anita Jones, Facilities Associate

Carol Miller, Associate Director/Teacher
 Sarah O'Doherty, Reading Specialist/Teacher
 Steven Schaller, Teacher
 Christy Stephens, Transition and Life Skills Counselor
 Rebecca Wagner, Executive Director

CLC Board Members

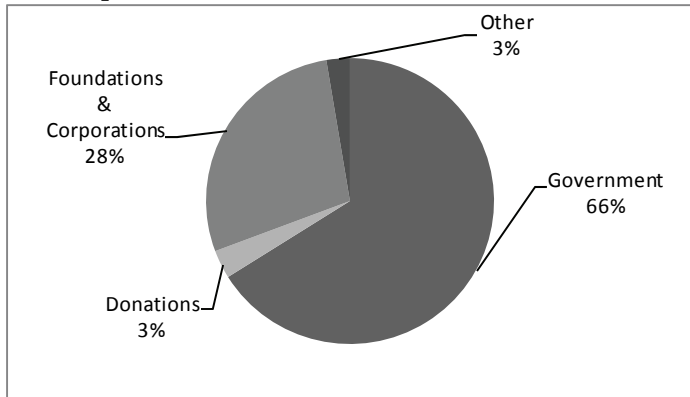
Branville G. Bard, Jr.
 Fred Baumert, Treasurer
 Jeffrey Daman, Secretary
 Vera DaVinci
 Mary Fournoy, President
 Joseph Hilton
 Irv H. Hurwitz
 Daniel V. Johns, Vice President

Ronald Kim
 Dale Mezzacappa
 Karen Michael
 Celinette Olmo
 Maria E. Mills-Torres
 Kerry Rowe
 Anita Scott
 Rebecca Wagner, *ex officio*

CLC Founder Jean L. Fleschute

CLC Funding, 2008-2009

Thank you to all our funders and donors for your generosity this year! **Only with your continued support** can CLC continue to make an impact in the lives of adults in North Philadelphia.



Writing Contests and *The Soloist*

Each year, CLC holds multiple contests to encourage students to write. The winners receive a journal to further encourage their writing. At the end of the year, we compile the writings and create our *Student Book of Writing*, a bound book we distribute to all our students. This year's contests and books were generously sponsored by the Beneficial Bank Foundation.

One contest's topics were inspired by themes presented in *The Soloist* by Steve Lopez, the 2009 *One Book, One Philadelphia* selection. Our students related intimately with the novel's themes of homelessness, mental illness, poverty, and friendship, and they were able to express their thoughts through the written word. CLC participates annually in *One Book, One Philadelphia*, a joint project of the Mayor's Office and the Free Library of Philadelphia.

(Please see the right column for selections from this year's *Student Book of Writing*.)

Technology Upgrades



Through a generous grant from the Verizon Foundation, CLC purchased six state-of-the-art computers with flat screen monitors. These new computers allow us to teach word processing, Internet search, and email skills to all students at our main

site using the most recent technology. This past year, CLC also received a grant through WorkABLE to improve our technology instruction for learners who are beginning readers. The new computers from Verizon Foundation also allowed us to put these methods right to work.

Student Book of Writing Excerpts

How can a person best help the homeless? They can do what someone did for me. My name is Stanley, and I was homeless. ... [In my recovery program] I was introduced to a woman I will call my angel. She became the best thing in my life. She would help me with everything. She showed me how to love myself again. She bought me clothes and invited me over her house. She even helped me get my identification because I had none. Now, because of my angel, I have not used drugs for 11 years. I have a job, my own apartment, and I am going to school to get my GED.

-Stanley Brown, "*Helping the Homeless*"

Whether you're humming a tune or banging to the radio
Or hopping in the booth or messing with your stereo
From country to rock, hip hop to jazz
The drum, guitar, snare, and the brass
All make music a part of your soul.

Without the Swiss Beats my life wouldn't be whole.
The meaning of music in my life is more than you think.
Music is a part of me and my life is distinct...

-Avis Speight, "*Music*"

Remember, just giving and giving will not let you help someone you love. At times you need someone to give you love, too. That's why you will need friends or family with you at all times. Keeping the faith is one of the best resources a human being can have. With faith and love anything can be done.

-Juana Peña, "*Coping with an Illness*"

A Volunteer's Story

By Natalie Dyen

The local news can give the impression that things are bad and no one seems to care. But volunteering at CLC presents a completely different picture. Here, adult learners of all ages show up week after week, working hard to master the basic skills that eluded them when they were younger.

It's both a challenge and a pleasure working with individual students and small groups on everything from phonics to computer skills to decimals to drivers license preparation. The students are great to work with, as is the staff.

The high point of the year for me was working with the class on a "photojournalism" project called *Explosion of Hope*. The students took photographs of the neighborhood; then each one wrote about a specific problem that could be addressed by federal stimulus money and described how he or she could take personal responsibility to make those changes permanent. The book we created will be presented to Mayor Nutter, and we sent copies to Governor Rendell and President Obama.

I am looking forward to continuing my tutoring assignment at CLC -- getting to know the students better, helping them meet their goals, and sharing their pride in their progress.

Want to Volunteer? Contact Carol to learn more.

cmiller@communitylearningcenter.org | 215 - 426 - 7940

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SWARTHMORE, PA
PERMIT No. 2
ZIP CODE 19180

What's Inside:

Jose's Story..... 2
 Student Projects..... 2
 Writing Contests and *The Soloist*..... 3
Book of Student Writing Excerpts.... 3
 A Volunteer's Story..... 3

and more!

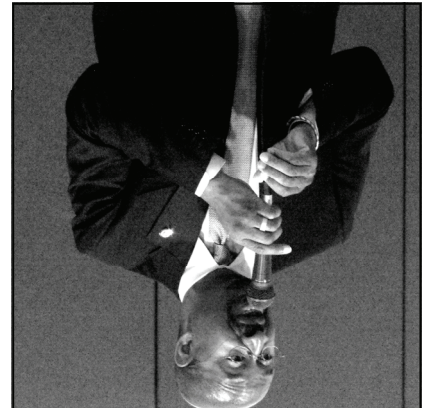
Save a Tree!
 Send your email address to
newsletter@communitylearningcenter.org to
 receive future newsletters via email.

Philadelphia's Mayor Speaks at CLC Awards and Graduation Ceremony

On June 10, 2009, CLC held its annual Awards and Graduation Ceremony. This year's keynote speaker was Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter. In his speech, Mayor Nutter acknowledged the long and difficult road this year's GED recipients had endured and congratulated them on their accomplishments, saying, "Life is not fair, but you overcame it. That's what Community Learning Center is about, about helping folks get to the next level."

As he congratulated the graduates, however, he challenged them to look ahead to next steps, emphasizing that "graduation is a moment of ends and beginnings," not just the end. He said, "It is time to set a new goal -- Community College, Temple, Drexel. You've attained a level of success that should give you the confidence to go to the next level...we need you to do more." He acknowledged that they had made noteworthy achievements so far, but reminded them, "You should not rest easy. We need you to do more." The economic future of the city depends on a better-educated workforce and citizenry.

As he closed, Mayor Nutter said he was excited to be with them for their big moment. "I get invited to a lot of graduations, some with hundreds of graduates, but I wanted to be here for you because you're special also." He concluded by reminding families to "keep pushing them, keep loving them, keep pushing them, keep loving them."



"Life is not fair, but you overcame it. That's what Community Learning Center is about, about helping folks get to the next level." (Mayor Michael Nutter)

