

## Yuletide cheer for Community Learning Center

On December 16, students from Community Learning Center (CLC), an adult literacy program serving Kensington and North Philadelphia neighborhoods, visited Winterthur Museum in Delaware to see the famous display of Yuletide decorations and to visit the galleries of decorative arts.

Upon arrival at Winterthur Museum, students were split into small groups of four, each with their own tour guide, and went to a classroom for a hands-on lessons about marketplaces of the past. Students became shopkeepers and customers in a general store. They learned how the barter system worked and about the relative value of items in the past.

Students were amazed to learn how much work went into creating soap, candles, and other regular household items before there were factories to mass-produce them. Students also had the opportunity to examine some of these objects from the past more carefully during another activity. They identified items using archeological clues to determine their origin. While examining a hair comb made from an animal horn, one student remarked, "I never thought about what they did before plastic."

After the marketplace lesson, the students went on a tour of Winterthur's beautiful display of past Yuletide decorations. They viewed the rooms in chronological order, seeing the evolution and changes in Christmas traditions from tabletop displays decorated with cookies to our more floor trees with glass ornaments. Student Dottie Snipes remarked, "I liked finding out about the customs and the changes over time." Another CLC student, Irma Soto, said, "I really liked the Christmas tree made from flowers. I will never forget that."

After the lesson, students explored the various galleries at the museum with their tour guides. Not all visitors have the privilege of such personal learning at the museum, and the experience was a hit with CLC. As the group waited to board the bus for the ride home, CLC student Stephanie Daido remarked that she wished, "we had more time here." All of the CLC students enjoyed the trip and agreed that there was still more to see.

Community Learning Center's mission is to provide adults with literacy skills to help them effect change in their lives and in their communities.

For more information, call 215-426-7940.★