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America Reads/Counts tutors pictured on the front cover are (from left to right, top to bottom): Michelle Estevez, Edgar Salas, Melange Ramirez, John Fagan, Adesola Adefolu, Gabriella Sevilla, Vanessa Perez, Iris Lopez, Ruben Funes, Kathleen Penaflorida, Efrain Mercado, and Deylan Jenkins.
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Rutgers-Newark

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Newark Public Library  
Adelaide L. Sanford  
Charter School

American History High School  
Ann Street School  
Burnet Street School

Discovery Charter School  
Dr. E. Alma Flagg School  
YouthBuild Newark, Inc.

Marion P. Thomas Charter School  
Newton Street School  
St. Philip’s Academy
AMERICA READS/COUNTS PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Administered by Office of University-Community Partnerships, the Rutgers-Newark America Reads/Counts Program serves youth and adults by providing tutoring in Newark area schools and in other education-related institutions and organizations. In partnership with the Newark Literacy Campaign and Rutgers-Newark’s Office of Financial Aid/Student Employment, the America Reads/Counts Program has become a positive addition to the Newark community. The program enriches tutee's lives by providing academic tutorial support in the areas of math and reading.

Selection

Rutgers-Newark students are eligible to become an America Reads/Counts tutor based on the following criteria:

- Must be enrolled currently at Rutgers-Newark.
- Must be eligible for federal work-study.
- Must indicate interest in doing community service on their work-study application.
- Must be interested in and dedicated to tutoring in the areas of reading and math.

OUCP receives work-study paperwork for prospective America Reads/Counts tutors from the Rutgers-Newark Office of Financial Aid. While previous tutoring experience is not necessary, OUCP does require prospective tutors to complete an application, to provide a resume, and to be interviewed. During the interview process, prospective tutors learn about the program and the important educational support service that it provides to the surrounding community. Professionalism, dependability, time management, and personal responsibility are impressed upon prospective tutors as ideal attributes of an America Reads/Counts tutor. Prospective tutors are told explicitly that as America Reads/Counts tutors, they are representing not only themselves and OUCP in the community but also Rutgers University. In addition, prospective tutors are asked explicitly if they have an interest in tutoring, education, and/or working with youth. After OUCP determines that a prospective tutor is a good fit for the program, the tutor is set up for training and placement.

Training and placement

OUCP works with the Newark Literacy Campaign (NLC) to train and place America Reads/Counts tutors. NLC offers two to three Saturday orientation/training sessions for new tutors at the beginning of the fall semester (i.e., September through October), as well as a renewal training for returning tutors.

OUCP and NLC work collaboratively to place tutors in sites in the Newark community. Sites have included public schools, private schools, charter schools, and community-based educational support agencies.
Administration and monitoring

OUCP remains in contact with America Reads/Counts tutors throughout the academic year. OUCP processes payroll paperwork for the tutors and submits time sheets so that they may receive timely work-study payments. OUCP holds monthly student staff meetings where tutors may meet other student employees in the department and receive necessary information. OUCP traditionally hosts a mid-year meeting at the beginning of the spring semester to receive written (via survey) and verbal feedback on tutors’ experiences. During the 2011-12, in addition to a mid-year meeting being held in early February 2012, an end of year meeting was held in April 2012 where tutors provided information for the completion of the annual report as well as received information about summer employment opportunities.

Work-study assignment procedure

As stated previously, Rutgers-Newark students are assigned to the America Reads/Counts program through the Rutgers-Newark Office of Financial Aid. New and returning students who indicate on their work-study applications that they are interested in working with community service programs generally are assigned to America Reads/Counts by the Rutgers-Newark Office of Financial Aid. Herein, OUCP is not involved in creating the initial pool of students who have been assigned to the program. Once a student receives his/her America Reads/Counts assignment from the Rutgers-Newark Office of Financial Aid, it is the student’s responsibility to bring his/her paperwork to the OUCP administrative office for processing and for interview scheduling. Thus, OUCP only processes and interviews new and returning students who decide to accept their America Reads/Counts work-study assignments. Students who decide not to accept their assignments are never processed by OUCP.

Student agency: enrollment and other employment

In some cases, new and returning tutors decide on their own to take a semester off or to leave the institution altogether. Also, some new tutors decide within the first semester of their placement that their schedule does not allow them to work enough hours at their site(s). In such cases, they are encouraged to switch to OUCP’s Campus Information unit so that they may maintain their federal work-study placement with the department. In other cases, such students find employment elsewhere, either on campus or outside the institution. This is a contributing factor with regard to total service hours, as well as average service hours per tutor.

2011-12 Program Highlights

- The total number of America Reads/Counts tutors was 32, the largest cohort documented in the program’s history. Collectively, these tutors logged a total of 4,689 service hours to the Newark community.
- Tutor service hours during the 2011-12 program year represents a 60% increase over service hours completed during the 2010-11 program year.
- 100% of America Reads/Counts tutors surveyed during the annual mid-year meeting held in February 2012 said that they would recommend the program to their friends as a positive work-study employment opportunity.
# AMERICA READS/COUNTS 2011-12 TUTOR ROSTER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Site Placement</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ashley Abbott</td>
<td>Power Lunch Program at Burnet Street School; I Have a Dream Program at North Star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adesola Adefolu</td>
<td>Marion P. Thomas Charter School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ralph Angeles</td>
<td>St. Phillips Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rinata Azizbayeva</td>
<td>St. Phillips Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talisa Butler (R)</td>
<td>I Have a Dream Program at North Star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michelle Estevez</td>
<td>Adelaide Sanford School; Saturday Program at Newark Public Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Takeisha Brown- Everett</td>
<td>America Reads/Counts Student Coordinator (OUCP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Fagan</td>
<td>St. Phillips Academy; Burnet Street School and Power Lunch Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ruben Funes</td>
<td>American History High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiana Gleaves (R)</td>
<td>Newton Street School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sheina Gonzalez</td>
<td>Saturday Program at Newark Public Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Samira Grant</td>
<td>Burnet Street School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kent Hughes (R)</td>
<td>Discovery Charter School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ive Jefferies</td>
<td>Burnet Street School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deylan Jenkins</td>
<td>Marion P. Thomas Charter School; Saturday Program at Newark Public Library; YouthBuild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harsimran Kaur</td>
<td>Ann Street School; Saturday Program at Newark Public Library; YouthBuild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dixie Korley</td>
<td>Marion P. Thomas Charter School; Saturday Program at Newark Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derek Lewis (R)</td>
<td>YouthBuild; America Reads/Counts Student Coordinator (OUCP)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Iris Lopez</td>
<td>Dr. E. Alma Flagg School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Site Placement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Efrain Mercado</td>
<td>Burnet Street School; Saturday Program at Newark Public Library; YouthBuild</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sherene Murray</td>
<td>America Reads Student Coordinator; YouthBuild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kathleen Penaflorida</td>
<td>Saturday Program at Newark Public Library; I Have a Dream Program at North Star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanessa Perez</td>
<td>Saturday Program at Newark Public Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mélange Ramirez</td>
<td>Adelaide L. Sanford Charter School; Saturday Program at Newark Public Library; YouthBuild</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deshonda Renfro</td>
<td>Newton Street School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kiasia Roman (R)</td>
<td>St. Philip’s Academy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Edgar Salas</td>
<td>Ann Street School; Newark Program Public Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>Itzel Santana-Miranda</td>
<td>Burnet Street School; Newark Program Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gabriela Sevilla</td>
<td>Burnet Street School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ty’ Jahnae Stoddard</td>
<td>Burnet Street School; YouthBuild</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sienna Scott (R)</td>
<td>Burnet Street School</td>
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<tr>
<td>WengKing Cheng</td>
<td>American History High School</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL STUDENTS ASSIGNED TO AMERICA READS/COUNTS: 32

NUMBER OF TUTORS RETURNING FROM 2010-2011: 6
(R) Indicates returning tutor from 2011-12

TOTAL SERVICE HOURS LOGGED: 4,689

AVERAGE SERVICE HOURS PER TUTOR: 146.5
AMERICA READS/COUNTS CONGRATULATES ITS HONORS COLLEGE AND DEAN’S LIST TUTORS!

ASHLEY ABBOTT

TALISA BUTLER

JOHN FAGAN

SHEINA GONZALEZ

HARSIMRAN KAUR

DEREK LEWIS

IRIS LOPEZ

KATHLEEN PENAFLORIDA

VANESSA PEREZ

SIENNA SCOTT
AMERICA READS/COUNTS SITE DESCRIPTIONS

Adelaide L. Sanford Charter School
53 Lincoln Park
Newark, NJ 07102
(973) 297-1275
http://www.alscs.org/charter/

Photo source: ALS Charter School website

According to the school’s website, “The mission of the Adelaide L. Sanford Charter School is to ensure that young people in Newark reach their highest educational potential through a standards based curriculum; a school culture of achievement and a continuous improvement; and a nurturing environment - all of which will enable our students to become Newark’s future leaders and core professionals.” The staff collaborates with families and community members to maximize student learning and resources and provide cultural opportunities to enrich the lives of our students. They strive to equip their children with tools that will enable them to pursue the American Dream while being rooted in a strong sense of self and self-worth.

2011-12 tutor assigned
Michelle Estevez
Melange Ramirez

Tutor Profile: Mélange Ramirez

Mélange Ramirez is a Rutgers-Newark student with a business focus. Mélange recalls her experience with the America Reads program as both enjoyable and effective. She feels that she made an impact on the students and teachers that she assisted at the Adelaide L. Sanford Charter School (ALSCS).

During the 2011-12 academic year, Mélange worked with 6th graders, ALSCS’s oldest class. Mélange believes all 40 of the students she interacted with are very intelligent, but like most children around their age, they are distracted easily. To help eliminate distractions in their learning environment, she decided to focus her tutee’s with aspirations. The children were curious about college life and her experiences there. Of course, Mélange was happy to tell them a few good college experiences and how none of it could have been possible unless she remained academically focused while in middle school and high school. Those words helped the students to remain focused and to utilize the tutoring sessions to put them on a path of academic success.
American History High School
74 Montgomery Street, Newark, NJ 07103
(973) 733-6903
www.nps.k12.nj.us/his/

2011-12 tutors assigned
King Chen
Ruben Funes

American History High School is a magnet secondary school serving ninth to twelfth grade students from the city of Newark. Since opening in 2006, students attending the school have scored consistently higher on standardized assessments than their peers throughout the city. The school prides itself on its academic achievements as well as its diversity. According to its mission statement, “American History High School is an Institute of Social Justice and Democracy committed to ensuring all students gain the social and academic skills needed to attend and graduate from an institution of higher learning. The shared efforts of students, parents, and staff will result in development of lifelong learners and productive citizens in the global community.”

Tutor Profile: Ruben Funes

Ruben Funes is a Rutgers-Newark student in his junior year studying Criminal Justice. Ruben recalls being somewhat intimidated by the thought of working in the Newark community as it was completely unknown to him. After his work-study experience this year, however, Ruben describes the America Reads Program as “a great opportunity to work with the young Newark community.” Ruben explained that the America Reads Program at American History High School is more than a tutoring program; it is more like a club where students were able to expand their curious minds regarding law.

Under the supervision of Ms. Elizabeth Crespo, American History High School Humanities Department Chairperson, the Legal Eagles Club was formed, its name inspired by the high school’s mascot. Ruben hosted numerous discussions ranging from euthanasia to the death penalty in the United States. Students voluntarily attended the club and participated in debates and mock trials. In the mock trials, each student will play an important role as the judge, prosecutor, defense lawyer, suspect, victim, witness or jury member. Ruben explained that students always get really into their perspective roles, especially the attorneys! Additionally, since Ruben works with high school students, he has had discussions regarding college life, financial aid, admissions, and other opportunities. It is clear from conversations with Ruben that he shares a strong interest in law and has a passion for fostering a fun environment for learning with the high school students at American History High School.

Ruben Funes with honors student Martina Harris, one of ten Legal Eagles Club members who attended All Juniors Day, an annual program sponsored by the Office of University-Community Partnerships at Rutgers-Newark. Last year, Martina worked with Danny Balaban, another America Reads/Counts tutor, who helped her to edit an essay that earned her second place in the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History national essay contest.
Ann Street School
30 Ann Street, Newark, NJ 07105
(973) 465-4890
http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/ann/

2011-12 tutors assigned
Harsimran Kaur
Edgar Salas

According to the official website, Ann Street School is a Newark public school consisting of 1300 students from prekindergarten to 8th grade. The school’s motto is “Be respectful, be responsible and get a good education.” Ann Street School promotes high academic standards, personal development and respect for everyone regardless of race, nationality, economic status or ability. Tutors focus on kids who are identified as “at-risk” and help them with their homework so that they don’t slack behind and also assist them with any other areas of subject where the kid is facing problems.

Tutor Profile: Harsimran Kaur

Harsimran Kaur is a Rutgers-Newark student studying chemical engineering. America Reads/Counts was not Harsimran’s first time tutoring children, but it was the first time she got so attached to them. Not only were the kids excited to see her, but Harsimran was excited to see them as well. Her connection with the students was special, because she got to know them academically, personally.

Harsimran thinks very highly of one of her tutees named Sofia. Sofia she was a straight A student who was having difficulty with math. Her grade in math had dropped from an A to a C, because multiplication was very challenging for her. With a few tutoring sessions, some diligence and repetition, Sofia improved to the point that she raised her math grade to an A again. Even though she mastered multiplication, she continued to sharpen her skills and raise her confidence by playing math games and completing quizzes with Harsimran. This is a testament to the bond that can develop between America Reads/Counts tutors and their tutees.
Burnet Street School
28 Burnet Street, Newark, NJ 07102
(973) 733-7138
http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/bur/site/default.asp

2011-12 tutors assigned
Ashley Abbott
John Fagan
Samira Grant
Ive Jeffries
Efrain Mercado
Itzel Santana-Miranda
Gabriela Sevilla
Sienna Scott
Ty’Jahnae Stoddard

Burnet Street School is a Newark public school consisting of 250 students ranging from Pre-K to 8th grade. Tutors focus mainly on children in grades K-3 mostly on an individual basis Monday-Friday for 40-60 minutes.

Burnet Street School also supports an after school program that caters to the needs of approximately 50-60 children. This program gives tutors the opportunity to work in small groups to help students complete homework assignments.

Tutor Profile: Ashley Abbott

Ashley is a Rutgers- Newark student majoring in Biology. Based on previous experiences, Ashley was accustomed to tutoring Pre- K students and so she was reluctant to move to a higher-grade level because she wasn’t sure that she could handle it. Much to her surprise, the students at the I Have a Dream Program were “such delights.” She found that all of the kids were extremely bright and voiced openly how she enjoyed helping and supporting them. She stressed to me her persistence on trying to push them to their highest potential.

Ashley recalled one particular student who made her very proud. Tia came across, at first, a shy, withdrawn student. “I saw that with a little support she was able to boost her grades and she is even helping her peers with their homework now.” She made a point to say that sometimes all it really takes is having someone standing behind them and being there for them to put them back on track. It is clear that Ashley is truly excited to see her tutees improvement after each session she has with them.
I was first introduced to the America Reads/Counts program in my sophomore year, and now, as I prepare to graduate, it is still a very important part of my life. As a Newark native, it has always been a dream of mine to work to inspire the younger students of the city. I realized that the most effective way to make this dream a reality would be to become a middle school teacher in the district.

The America Reads/Counts program has been one of the greatest assets in my development as a future teacher. This program has allowed me to be in the classroom alongside teachers in both district and charter schools in Newark, and has given me insight that can only come from first-hand experience. Being a part of the America Reads program has helped me immensely with my personal development, but, more importantly, it has allowed me to realize my dream of inspiring the youth of this great city.

Through the America Reads/Counts program, I have been able to work with the I Have a Dream Foundation. The I Have a Dream Foundation has helped me to effect change in the lives of Newark’s youth by allowing me to work as a mentor. Through America Reads/Counts and the I Have a Dream Foundation, I have been able to help form a group called the Sassy Girls Club, which met once a week on the Rutgers-Newark campus. I helped to design a curriculum for this group that focused on improving the young girls’ self-image by using history and photography. Having the opportunity to be a mentor to impressionable young girls in Newark has truly changed my life for the better.

The America Reads/Counts Program has opened up so many opportunities for me. Whether your goal is to teach or to inspire, it is a great program that truly has the ability to take you as far as you are willing to go.
Discovery Charter School
303-309 Washington Street (United Way Building), Newark, NJ 07102
(973) 623-0222
www.discoverycs.org

2011-12 tutors assigned
Kent Hughes

Discovery Charter School’s student body consists of approximately 75 students who are selected for admission through a city wide lottery. In order to ensure that America Reads/Counts is as effective as possible in her facility, Dr. Hall assigns tutors to students who have been identified as “at-risk”. These students work one-on-one with an assigned tutor in two-hour sessions throughout the semester. The primary focus of the tutor is homework received by the student to bring them up to speed with the rest of the class. They also emphasize the importance of time spent on reading activities.

Tutor Profile: Kent Hughes

Kent Hughes is a Rutgers-Newark student studying engineering. Kent describes his America Reads/Counts experience as both fun and different, because the site is not set up like a normal school. The school is one big room sectioned off by boards and shelves into smaller class areas. Kent says that all the teachers and staff are very friendly and helpful and that the students are friendly and eager to learn.

Kent believes that all of his students were equally as fun to work with and have made great strides academically. As a result of the interesting set up of the school, Kent decided to use a small table at the back of the class in order to work one on one with the tutees. Kent took time to get to know the students. Kent would sit down with his tutees and, while helping them, he would ask them questions about their favorite subjects, their families, and their college and career goals. As time went on the students became more comfortable and, built a friendship. Kent believes that the bond formed between his students was the reason for their improvement because communication became fluid and relaxed.
Dr. E. Alma Flagg School
150 3rd Street
Newark, NJ 07107
(973) 268-5190
http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/flg/site/default.asp

2011-12 tutor assigned
Iris Lopez

This elementary school is named after the esteemed East Side High School graduate, E. Alma Flagg, who ultimately graduated with a Ph.D. from Columbia University. According to the school’s website, “Dr. E. Alma Flagg Elementary School is committed to creating a healthy environment conducive to the enhancement of academic success by identifying and maximizing the collective talents of its students, teachers, administrators, staff, parents, and community. We are committed to the creation of a learning environment, which will enable all students to achieve the skills to function in a democratic society by becoming productive and positive citizens.”

Tutor Profile: Iris Lopez

Iris Lopez is a Rutgers-Newark student studying Psychology. As a Newark native, Iris attended both Elliott Street School and Barringer High School. She is very pleased that the America Reads/Counts program allows her to assist students from the Newark Public School system.

Iris felt a bit nervous during the initial visit to her site because she did not know quite what to expect. She did not know how the students would respond to her. In time, she became more comfortable and developed a great relationship with her assigned teacher, Ms. Hall, who saw how responsible and effective Iris was and grew to trust her. Indeed, during times when Iris was away from the school, upon her return, Ms. Hall would approach her and say, "The students asked about you."

Because of the positive relationships that Iris managed to establish with her students, she found it challenging to focus on which one impressed her most. So, she chose two: Sharief Caesar and Anthony Mercader. Sharief came to sixth grade not really knowing anyone. During the fall semester, he was not chosen to participate in an activity due to his grades and behavior. Iris worked with him to improve his behavior and academic performance. At the end of the fall semester, he received one of the highest grades on his holiday packet assignment. Anthony is a student who was repeating the sixth grade. When Iris started working with him, she saw immediately how academically challenged he was. After working with him regularly, she saw him improve and his confidence grow to the point that when he had the right answer, he eagerly raised his hand in class.
Marion P. Thomas Charter School
370 South 7th Street
Newark, NJ 07103
(973) 621-0060
http://www.mptcs.org/

2011-12 assigned tutors
Adesola Adefolu
Deylan Jenkins
Dixie Korley

Marion P. Thomas Charter School is a Newark public school consisting of 630 students from grades kindergarten to 8th. Marion P. Thomas Charter School received its charter in 1998 and opened in 1999. The school has a diverse student population of students and has a strict policy of non-discrimination based upon gender, race or creed. Their smaller class sizes and technology integration in every subject ensures that kids receive one-on-one attention and a quality education. The students actively participate in co-curriculum activities such as basketball, Chorus and community service.

Photo source: Marion P. Thomas Charter School website
Newark Literacy Campaign
Saturday Literacy Program
5 Washington Street
Newark, NJ 07102
(973) 732-0236
http://newarkliteracy.blogspot.com/

Founded in 1984, the Newark Literacy Campaign (NLC), Inc., leads literacy programs for adults, children, and families and is the coordinating agency for literacy services in the City of Newark. In conjunction with America Reads/Counts, NLC works to train all new tutors to the program in an effort to prepare them for the sometimes challenging yet often rewarding experience of tutoring in inner city schools.

The Saturday Literacy Program was established in 1984. Its mission is to provide tutorial support in math and English to children in the Greater Newark community who are identified as at-risk. Tutoring is available most Saturdays between the hours of 9am to 1pm in the Newark Public Library. The program has a reputation for being very effective over the years.

2011-12 tutors assigned
Michelle Estevez
Sheina Gonzalez
Deylan Jenkins
Harsimran Kaur
Dixie Korley
Efrain Mercado
Kathleen Penaflorida
Vanessa Perez
Melange Ramirez
Edgar Salas
Itzel Santana-Miranda

Photo source: Newark Public Library website
**PROFILES: THE SATURDAY LITERACY PROGRAM AT NEWARK PUBLIC LIBRARY WITH NEWARK LITERACY CAMPAIGN**

**Efrain Mercado,** a psychology and social work major, enjoys the Saturday Literacy Program’s flexible one-on-one tutoring format, because it helps to build a rapport with the children. He helps the children academically and socially by being a role model. As a Newark native, the fact that he is being allowed to give back to his own community motivates him more than anything.

★★★★

**Kathleen Penaflorida,** a freshman nursing major, likes working with children in general. She appreciates it when they learn and show improvement in their academic skills. She says she can relate with her tutees and with their problems mentally and academically, “Working with the children Newark Literacy Campaign’s Saturday Literacy Program has been an enriching and educational experience. The children are wonderful, and they never cease to amaze me with their learning skills and enthusiasm. The one-on-one interaction between the tutor and the tutee is very helpful in assisting him with his homework assignments. I am very appreciative of the program and how it promotes education in the community. I am happy to be a part of it!”

★★★★

**Vanessa Perez,** who is a Criminal Justice and Psychology major, feels honored to tutor the children of the Saturday Literacy Program, especially when they look forward to coming on a Saturday and can’t wait to see her and learn. She had the same tutee throughout the year. Her student showed a great deal of improvement over the course of tutoring. Her tutee’s parents told Vanessa that their daughter likes the Saturday program and Vanessa so much that she does a countdown until Saturday. They have a sisterly bond. Vanessa says “Words cannot describe how honored I am to be a part of such a program as the Newark Literacy Campaign’s Saturday Literacy Program. It is truly an amazing program for children of all ages. The program not only helps students with school materials, but also creates a friendship between both the tutor and their students. To see my student progress as well as improve in her grades, knowing that I was able to help, is such an accomplishment. I love being a tutor with America Reads/Counts!”

★★★★

**Harsimran Kaur,** who is a freshman, finds the Saturday Literacy Program inspiring and fun. The students not only ask academic questions but also raise questions about life and school in general. Harsimran admits that waking up early on a Saturday morning is always a challenge but the thought of her students smiling at her and hugging her when she arrives makes the trip all worthwhile. She worked with a child with attention deficit disorder. He did not like working on math problems. The child could never do more than five problems in one sitting. After Harsimran worked with him for a semester, she noticed that he was able to work on a full page of problems in one sitting.
Newton Street School
150 Newton Street
Newark, NJ 07103
Phone: (973) 733-6848
http://www.nps.k12.nj.us/new/site/default.asp

2011-12 tutors assigned
Quiana Gleaves
Deshonda Renfro

According to the school’s website, Newton Street School aims “to provide a quality education for all students” and the school’s administration strongly believes that “students will learn and succeed with the guidance of staff, parents, and the community.” Newton Street School has a shared vision that states, “Newton Street School will be a safe, loving and orderly environment with a collaborative staff focused on our community of learners acquiring the skills and knowledge necessary to become productive citizens in the global community.”

Tutor Profiles: Quiana Gleaves and Deshonda Renfro

Both Quiana Gleaves and Deshonda Renfro believe wholeheartedly in the work that they did at Newton Street School during the 2011-12 academic year, so much so that the two tutors collectively decided to host a Christmas party for their students. Quiana and Deshonda both believe that the students at Newton Street School are good kids that just need extra help and additional caring people to support them on a consistent basis. As America Reads/Counts tutors, they provided this kind of consistent support.

Deshonda Renfro (center) poses with her students and a colleague from Newton Street School.
Quiana acknowledged the assistance given to her by the staff at Newton Street School, as well as the America Reads/Counts staff at Rutgers-Newark and with the Newark Literacy Campaign. She also spoke very highly of the children at the school. In an interview, Deshonda observes that there is more than meets the eye with Newton Street School. One student, Erica Mato, would literally cry when she was asked to read out loud. Deshonda was up for the challenge and started with basics of sounding out syllables in a word to pronounce it. Her first thought was to build trust and confidence within their abilities. She was pleased to report that her hard work paid off, “Literature takes you to another place, and my goal was to show these children how literature takes you on a journey.”

As the 2011 Christmas party approached, Quiana and Deshonda really saw the difference that America Reads/Counts can make in children’s lives. It was apparent that the children were filled with content and appreciation. The Christmas Party represented the America Reads Program, but in an even bigger aspect, it represented Rutgers students giving back to the community through education and volunteerism.

Quiana and Deshonda’s work at the Newton Street School exemplifies what the America Reads/Counts program aims to achieve in the Newark community: service through education. As Deshonda stated, “This school represents triumph and resilience at its highest level. These children give us hope. America Reads/Counts not only helps individuals navigate through their educational adversities, but the program also represents Rutgers’ immeasurable ability to help the Essex County community unselfishly.”
St. Philip’s Academy
342 Central Avenue
Newark, NJ 07103
(973) 624-0644
http://www.stphilipsacademy.org/

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program year</th>
<th>Service hours</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>385.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>Ralph Angeles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>349</td>
<td>Rinata Azizbayeva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>John Fagan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Kiasia Roman</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2011-12</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

St. Philips Academy, a private school of the Episcopal tradition, strives to create within its students a love of learning, intellectual curiosity, and sense of duty to the community that will enable them to make thoughtful and morally informed decisions throughout their lives. According to the school’s website, St. Phillips Academy was founded in 1988 by Dillard Robinson and members of his congregation at the trinity and St. Phillips Episcopal Cathedral. Ever since, their mission has been to create a love of learning by preparing their kids for a lifetime of personal achievement and sense of duty to the community.

Photo source: St. Philips Academy’s website
YouthBuild Newark, Inc.  
31 Central Avenue  
Newark, NJ 07102  
(973) 624-4720  
www.youthbuildnewarknj.org

YouthBuild Newark (YBN) enables low income youth ages 16 to 24 to complete their secondary educational goals and to lead productive, self-sufficient lives. Through YBN’s intensive, year-long program, students are required to attend academic classes and to learn construction skills while re-building low-income housing, with a focus on green building techniques.

As an AmeriCorps program, service is a key value of YBN. Students are taught to be engaged citizens and leaders who understand the importance of giving back to their communities. As YBN graduates, they can inspire others, uplift neighborhoods and provide a stable home for their children. As young people, they are critical to the survival of their communities.

This is the first year that America Reads/Counts and YBN have collaborated. Ms. Wendy Cubano, Program Manager of YBN, reported that the newly established partnership with America Reads/Counts has been beneficial to YBN in various ways. Specifically, America Reads/Counts tutors are providing a much needed service to YBN participants. Indeed, several YBN participants who had been disengaged for a year or more became active in the program again once they learned that tutoring was being offered through America Reads/Counts.

**2011-12 assigned tutor**

Sherene Murray  
Derek Lewis  
Mélange Ramirez  
Ty'Jahnae Stoddard  
Efrain Mercado  
Harsimran Kaur  
Deylan Jenkins

Tutor Profile: Sherene Murray

Sherene Murray is a Rutgers- Newark student studying psychology. Her experiences tutoring with YouthBuild were extremely positive. Nelson Johnson was Sherene’s first tutee; he needed assistance on a missed assignment for his construction class. It was an exercise to build their sentence structures, vocabulary, and punctuation. Nelson wasn't confident in his work, specifically his sentence structure. Nelson and Sherene began to talk and found they had a lot in common. Nelson talked about his plan to finish school and what he wanted to accomplish academically. From that conversation, Sherene knew she was building a trusting relationship. Sherene took time to review Nelson’s assignment with him. He said to her, "You explained it better than my teacher!" Sherene responded, "You always understood it, you just needed the confidence to complete it." Before she left for the day, Nelson proclaimed proudly to Sherene, "You are officially my tutor and I am your student!"
2011-12 MID-YEAR SURVEY – TUTOR COMMENTS

As in previous years, OUCP convened a mid-year meeting for America Reads/Counts tutors on Monday, February 6, 2012. The 28 tutors who attended the meeting were encouraged to provide feedback on their experiences so far at their sites. Below are some selected tutor comments from the mid-year survey that was distributed at the meeting.

1. What motivates you as a tutor with America Reads/Counts?
   - Being both born and raised in Newark, I want to give back and help the disadvantaged youth succeed in school.
   - The wonderful students at Newton Street School keep me motivated. The children inspire me to continue being a good person. They keep me grounded and they keep me interested in helping.

2. Do you feel that you are making a difference in your students’ academic lives? Explain.
   - I believe that I am making a difference by setting a good example. I allow the students to see that African-Americans can go to college and accomplish something, because a lot of students I work with believe that after high school or even during high school, it is time for them to start a family and work to support them.
   - I like tutoring and being in the classroom with the students and teacher. They enjoy having me, and we have become close, like a family. I have a good relationship with the teacher. I also enjoy the freedom of the tutoring program. I’m not tied down to a particular hour for tutoring. I can work with the students on a variety of math related topics.
   - It is impossible for one to see the power of the America Reads program and the effect that it has on both the tutors and students respectively without actually seeing it for yourself. As an African-American male, I take pride in assisting the students both academically and socially. On an academic level, I am giving disadvantaged students the extra help that they need to succeed. On a social level, I pride myself on leading by example to the predominately African-American and Hispanic student demographic in the Newark Public Schools. My presence alone as a college student motivates the students to strive to attain a better life and for me that’s what it’s all about.
3. **What feature do you like best about the program?**

- What I like most about the program is the flexibility of being able to communicate with the school myself and working one on one with the students.
- The feature that I like best with this program is that I get to interact with people; I help them with their academic needs, and give me a wonderful experience.
- I love the flexibility of hours, sites, and opportunity.

4. **What features do you like least about the program?**

- Some of the teaching staff is not helpful
- Bi-weekly pay
- The cumbersome inefficient time sheet system. One sheet per week is too much to have to pick up at the office for students that also have full-time jobs.
- There isn’t really anything that I don’t like

5. **What type of issues would you like to see discussed more at OUCP student staff meetings? Please comment, as we would like you to get the most out of them.**

- Payroll responsibility for the tutors

6. **Would you recommend the America Reads/Counts program to your friends? If no, please explain why:**  **YES (100%)**  **NO**

7. **Please note in this space anything you would like to add that was not touched on in the previous questions.**

- Additional activities that I would like to see the America Reads programs do to help support the tutor process is more in-depth training. For example, first aid and child abuse workshops.
APPENDICES

I. America Reads/Counts Tutor Rosters: 2004-2011

II. America Reads/Counts Application and Checklist

III. America Reads/Counts Mid-Year Meeting Information Update and Survey
THE AMERICA READS/COUNTS PROGRAM

AT RUTGERS-NEWARK

What is America Reads/America Counts?

The Newark America Reads/Counts Program is a partnership between Rutgers-Newark Office of University-Community Partnership (OUCP) and the Newark Literacy Campaign, Inc. (NLC). The program addresses the serious issue of the ability of Newark’s schoolchildren to graduate from high school and prepare them, emotionally and academically, for college. The program provides children primarily in grades K-12, identified by their teachers as “at risk,” with one-on-one tutoring and help with their homework. Activities may include small group activities as assigned by the agency in charge. The cornerstone of the Newark America program is the Intensive Saturday Children’s Program, held from 9:30am-12:30pm at The Newark Public Library.

America Reads/America Counts at Rutgers-Newark

The America Reads/Counts tutoring program at Rutgers-Newark is funded through the Federal Work Study Program. The tutoring programs are administered by the Office of University-Community Partnership at Rutgers-Newark. Undergraduate and graduate students who are awarded work-study funds may choose to participate in one of several tutoring programs.
America Reads/Counts Tutor Job Responsibilities

- Attend the Newark Literacy Campaign’s (NCL), Rutgers Newark OUCP Tutor Orientation & Training Session. **The session is mandatory.** Tutors receive site assignments at the session.

- Meet or contact the designated Site Coordinator at the public school or Charter School when the semester begins.

- Work with the head teacher to provide help with homework, one-on-one or group help with reading, math or science, or shared reading activities as appropriate.

- Conduct the scheduled tutorial and study sessions with school students primarily in grades K-12.

- Notify your Site Coordinator when you cannot be at your designated site on time or if you must be absent.

- Adhere to policies of the NLC, Rutgers Newark OUCP and the agency site as to punctuality, behavior, etc.

**Supervision**

- Submit payroll timesheets to OUCP as scheduled.

- The Rutgers Newark OUCP will make site visits and liaise with Site Coordinators during the school year.

**Special notes**
Office of University-Community Partnerships
Application
America Reads/Counts Tutor

Please complete every part of this application. For answers that are not applicable please write N/A. Please be aware that this application is the first step in our getting to know you. Therefore, spend quality time on your answers. Please include your resume.

Date _________________________________

Name __________________________________________________

Last First MI

Local Address __________________________________________________________________

Permanent Address _____________________________________________________________

RUID # ___________ Birthdate________________

Email_______________________ Cell ____________________________

Local Phone (____) _______________ Permanent Phone (____) _________________

Are you a federal work-study recipient this year? Yes No

Do you plan to be away from campus any term during this academic year? Yes No

Do you live on campus? Yes No

Do you have transportation? Yes No

Major ________________________________

College or School________________________

Expected Date of Graduation________________________

Were you referred to this position by someone who currently works here? Yes No

If so, by whom? ________________________________

If not, how did you hear about this job opening? ________________________________
1. What about this position interests you most?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

2. What are your strengths and weaknesses?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

3. Please describe your past tutoring experiences, including the length of time you tutored, and the age(s) of them?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

4. What languages other than English do you speak?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

5. Please indicate any on or off campus activities in which you are or will be involved.

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

6. Would you agree to a police background check? Yes  No

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

STAFF MEMBER ____________________________________________________

DATE ____________________________

POSITION/PLACEMENT ________________________________________________

SPECIAL NOTES/COMMENTS ____________________________________________
### INTERVIEW ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

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