

2008 PIC Achievers

PIC Annual Meeting, May 7, 2008

Byron Beaman

Special Education Specialist
Boston Public Schools

Byron has been a champion for students and their families inside the school system and in the community. He is a consistent supporter of the dropout outreach and recovery efforts. During last summer's Project Reconnect effort, Byron took a lead role in identifying and placing re-enrolled dropouts who had special education needs, working intensively with these students, their families, and the school system to find the right placements. When the project began to support these students after they re-enrolled, Byron co-led a training session for mentors. He has also been a very active member of the Youth Transitions Task Force, volunteering to help in whatever ways he can. For example, he organized colleagues from the Boston Public Schools to attend a "Train the Trainer" session for the *Think Again* DVD.

Ruby L. Blake

Human Resources Coordinator
Harvard Business School

For 10 years, Ruby Blake has been providing jobs and advocating for students from Brighton High School, among others. She develops internships in a variety of departments, such as MBA services, executive education, dining services, engineering, and operations. She is an active participant in the PIC's mock interview week. In addition, HBS hosted Brighton High School's super bowl celebration. Ruby's dedication to her student-employees has paid off – several students have worked at Harvard through their college graduation.

Camila Brito

Career Advisor
Boston Career Link

Camila's commitment to quality, solutions, and results for Boston's job seekers makes her a valuable asset to Career Link and has helped her advance from a customer services specialist to a career advisor, facilitating workshop, testing, and assessment services. She understands how to speak with job seekers at their level – from under-skilled entry-level workers, to executives with advanced degrees. She makes job seekers feel comfortable enough to ask any kind of question, and makes each person in a group feel like they are getting individual attention. Job seekers leave her workshops with valuable information and, more importantly, the confidence to go into the community as competitive job seekers. Camila is one of BCL's "silent soldiers" and a role model for professionalism, teamwork, integrity, and flexibility. She earns high marks from customers and co-workers, and demonstrates all the qualities of a workforce professional.

Leo Carey

Teacher

Boston Latin Academy

Leo is a technology teacher at Boston Latin Academy, and has also taught math for Classroom at the Workplace for the past four summers. Students in his classes have continually referred to Leo's ability to engage students with mathematics, his encouragement, and the strength of his teaching as "the best part of the summer experience." All six of Leo's math students completed their summer job at Bank of New York Mellon with a 90% average attendance rate, and all six students passed the math MCAS retest in November.

Kennary Choung

East Boston graduate

PS Health Care

Since graduating from East Boston High School in 2004, Kennary has worked for Massachusetts General Hospital, where she started as an operations assistant before advancing to a personal care assistant. Kennary also has been taking pre-nursing classes at UMass-Boston with the support of a Taylor Scholarship. Her goal was to gain admission into a Boston-based Bachelor's of Science in Nursing program. Kennary's persistence was rewarded, as she was recently accepted into the accelerated BSN program at Mass College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences. This is her first semester there.

Michele McAfee and Virginia Donnelly

Nursing Assistant Instructors

Madison Park Technical Vocational High School

Michele prepares juniors for clinical rotations at the Veteran's Affairs Hospital. Ginny prepares sophomores for rotations with school nurses at various BPS elementary schools. When their students reach senior year, Michele and Ginny guide them through more clinical rotations at Hebrew Rehabilitation Center, where they prepare for the Certified Nursing Assistant test and, on achieved, a co-op at Hebrew Rehabilitation Center. This year, every single senior passed the CNA test, thanks to the support of Michele and Ginny, who are tireless in making phone calls, providing extra tutoring to students still working to pass the MCAS, celebrating student achievement, and making every student an extended part of their own families.

Gillian Edomwonyi

Student, Boston Adult Technical Academy
Classroom at the Workplace participant

Gillian Edomwonyi embodies the PIC mantra: “if you don’t give up, we won’t give up on you.” Gillian did not graduate in 2005 with her fellow classmates, in part, because she did not pass the math MCAS. She continued to build her academic skills over three summer and school year cycles of Classroom at the Workplace, while employed at Sovereign bank and a local community-based organization, as well as through Bunker Hill Community College’s MCAS classes. After simultaneously working, taking night classes, and preparing for the MCAS, Gillian has now passed the test and is poised to receive her diploma this June. She is interested in becoming a pediatrician and plans to attend UMass-Boston.

Elaina Elias

Career Counselor
Bridge Over Troubled Waters

Elaina has worked with the PIC on a number of initiatives to improve outcomes for out-of-school youth. She has been a consistent supporter of dropout outreach and recovery and the Year 13 MCAS Pathways program. She is a leader in referring her GED students to employment and educational opportunities, such as the P-21 sponsored GED dual enrollment program. She took a lead role in identifying youth to participate in the making of *Think Again*, a dropout prevention and recovery film for youth. She organized focus groups and filming sessions at Bridge for the project. Elaina is also an MCAS preparation instructor at Bunker Hill Community College’s MCAS Pathways program, where she prepares older youth for the MCAS. She is an exemplary teacher who has provided extra tutoring beyond the program’s hours—and has convinced the students to spend the extra time too.

Ed Esposito

Vice President, Information Technology
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

Ed has been the driving force behind the success of the Tech Apprentice program. Not only does he lead by example in hiring students for a variety of challenging internships at Blue Cross, but he also hosts Tech Apprentice’s annual recruiting breakfast, program kick-off, and end-of-summer celebration. This year, Ed hosted over 40 IT and HR professionals from 30 different companies at the recruiting breakfast. It is reasonable to say that many of this summer’s placements are due to Ed’s support and example.

Ego Ezedi, Jr.

Executive Director

Roxbury YMCA

Ego is a member of what we call the “Greater PIC.” He is a former Career Specialist and Pro-Tech Coordinator at Charlestown and Madison Park High Schools. Last summer, Ego provided a safe haven for families in the Roxbury neighborhood by expanding the Y’s hours. Despite challenges with space this past summer, he found room to host a MCAS remediation class for students who were employed at the Y and participated in the Classroom at the Workplace program. His “how can we make this happen” attitude is an example for us all.

Jorge Jaysen Goncalves

Student

Boston Latin School

A senior at Boston Latin School, Jorge participated in the Youth Design Boston program where he excelled as an intern in the summer of 2007. He was engaged in all tasks presented to him, and he did not hesitate to ask questions. Always with an upbeat attitude and a sense of humor, Jorge impressed his supervisors at MetLife on numerous occasions, including feeling comfortable enough to give suggestions to senior design executives. Jorge conducts himself in a professional manner and has taken the initiative at his school’s PIC office to assist new students with mock interviews and to provide them with valuable tips for improvement. His graphic design creativity and entrepreneurial spirit are impressive, and his hard work and motivation to succeed in the field of architecture will undoubtedly bring him success at UMass Amherst and beyond.

Icarra Hoskins

Student

Charlestown High School

Icarra is a senior now, but she dropped out of high school during her freshman year, which was a particularly difficult time for her both at school and at home. However, Icarra reenrolled in high school the following year because she wanted to be a good role model for her younger cousins, who she describes as “the loves of her life.” Icarra is now on track to be the first person in her family to both graduate from high school and attend college. During her junior year, she was the vice president of student government, active in peer mentoring, and she is currently in the National Honor Society and a leader among her peers. Icarra has a strong interest in pursuing a career in law, and last summer she interned at DLA Piper, a result of the partnership between the PIC and Boston Bar Association. In this internship, Icarra was awarded citations from both the Massachusetts House of Representatives and the Senate. She is currently working in another law firm after school as an administrative assistant and wants to study law in college.

Beth Kelly

WORC and Transitional Work participant
Office Assistant

Beth enrolled in the Women Offender Reentry Collaborative (WORC) program in September of 2007 after she met with program staff at the Office of Community Corrections, where, at the time, she was mandated by probation five days a week. When Beth began working with WORC, she displayed ambition and motivation. She was accepted to the Transitional Work program, which allowed her the opportunity to seek employment while receiving an income. Shortly before her Transitional Work assignment ended, she was offered a position as an office assistant. She has also enrolled at UMass-Boston for her certification as an alcohol drug addiction counselor. On April 10, 2008 Beth reached her one month retention at her job and in March of 2008, she celebrated her one year of sobriety and, once again, has a relationship with her children and her family.

Linda McIntyre

Headmaster
Community Academy

Linda's school serves at-risk students. In her tenure at Community Academy, she has gone above and beyond the call of duty when it comes to making a difference in the lives of her students—academically, socially, and emotionally. Her ability to extend herself and tap into her personal resources for the benefit of her students is unmatched. Linda reaches out to students and their families, giving them hope and a reason to believe that they can achieve their dreams. Linda's high expectations for her staff and students have propelled Community Academy to new heights. Her staff describes her as a fierce leader, who is very passionate and nurturing when it comes to working with at-risk students. She understands the value of dealing with the whole student, both in school and out, and not just focusing on academics.

Jean Nazaire

Community Academy of Science and Health graduate
CityLab Academy graduate

Jean graduated from CityLab Academy in 2007. Originally from Haiti, he is currently working as an animal care technician at the Laboratory for Animal Science Center at the Boston University medical campus. In addition to his full time job, he's taking classes at BU for his undergraduate degree in Biomedical Laboratory & Clinical Sciences. Jean's English skills were somewhat limited when he started at CityLab Academy, and he has improved those skills and developed into a mature young man. He is a fine example of a BPS student who has overcome a language barrier and persisted to success.

Ricardo Neal

Executive Director
Freedom House

Under Ricardo's leadership, Freedom House has become an innovative center for community engagement with Boston's public schools. Freedom House partnerships with the Jeremiah E. Burke High School and the Academy of Public Service are models for engaging students as well as parents in the school improvement process. Two years ago, Ricardo stepped up to bring the community perspective to the high school renewal process. More recently, he organized community leaders, students, and parents to host Superintendent Carol Johnson upon her arrival at a pivotal community meeting on September 29, which focused on dropout prevention and recovery. He channeled the enthusiasm from that meeting into organizing MDOC (the new Multicultural Dropout Outreach Coalition), which is recruiting mentors for those students who are returning to school after dropping out.

Lory Newmyer

Executive Director
Hull Lifesaving Museum

Lory has worked in collaboration with the PIC and other partners over many years to improve outcomes for DYS youth in Boston. The Maritime Apprenticeship Program is a WIA-funded program that offers intensive, full-time, year-round training for older youth in the custody of DYS and prepares them for careers in the maritime industry. Lory's passion for the young people she works with is evident. As a result, the program recently received recognition for its success working with this population. This work embodies the PIC mission and assures youth access to opportunity. Lory is an active member of the Youth Council, providing leadership and guidance to this body. In addition, Lory is a leader within the Boston Youth Service Network.

Brian Osborne

Director of Rehabilitation for MetroBoston
MA Department of Mental Health

Over the past four years, Brian has advocated for employment as part of the "therapeutic process" for the clinically homeless, and has worked with DMH staff to promote the inclusion of employment goals into service plans. Brian has contributed to team-building across agencies and service systems by providing resources training on employment strategies, on the Department of Mental Health's case management system, and on the DMH's services and programs. Brian is a major reason why the HomeWork program has been successful in integrating employment services and housing for the chronically homeless.

Jamila Patrick

Project Reconnect participant
Charlestown High School graduate

Jamila dropped out of high school two years ago, but then met the PIC's dropout recovery team through a referral from her career specialist at Charlestown High. Jamila's father had been laid off and, consequently, she left school to work and help pay her family's bills. In time, her family situation began to stabilize, but Jamila worried that it might be too late to get her high school diploma. After several conversations with PIC staff, she re-enrolled in Charlestown High School, where she graduated in the summer of 2007. Jamila is now working two jobs to save money for college in the fall. Jamila wants to major in journalism and/or forensic science.

Peterson Pierre

Student
Community Academy

Before enrolling at Community Academy, Peterson dropped out of the Jeremiah E. Burke High School as a freshman. It was during a conversation with his aunt that he realized the importance of education and decided to re-enroll in school. During this process, Peterson was connected to the PIC's dropout recovery team at the BPS Family Resource Center. Since re-enrolling in school, Peterson has made remarkable progress, improving academically, maturing as a young man, and growing as a professional. He now works at Alleyne's Property Management Company and is a participant in the Diamond Educators mentoring program, giving back to his community by mentoring younger students. He is also enhancing his skills by telling his story at various events and trainings. Peterson exemplifies perseverance and resiliency in overcoming challenging personal, emotional, and academic obstacles, while attending work and school on a daily basis.

Christophe Teulet-Cote

Assistant Headmaster
English High School

Christophe's work ethic, passion, and enthusiasm for the students are admirable. He is a strong, reliable, and enthusiastic supporter of the PIC, and always has a smile on his face. The students and staff look up to Mr. Teulet-Cote and, as a result, they respect him and work hard under his guidance. He is one of the first people to arrive to the school building and one of the last to leave; he can be found at the school on weekends, too. Talk to Mr. T-C just once, and his passion for his work is obvious.