The Tutoring Tribune
A DC Reads Publication

1st Issue of the 2004-2005 CUA

This newsletter is intended to provide you, the DC Reads tutor, with the most updated DC Reads information available. It also features tutoring resources, workshop dates, articles from each site, star tutors, and team leader information. You will find this resource very helpful, and I encourage you to not only read it, but also keep it close at hand. You never know when a workshop on dyslexia or poverty may be useful!

If you would like to include a story, article, or educational lesson in the next issue, please contact me at 07Waldock@cua.edu. I am excited to hear about the wonderful events happening at each of your blessed sites.

-Andrea Waldock

Over 250 Students Tutored!

DC Reads is back for another record-breaking semester at Catholic University of America with 133 energetic tutors and 9 exceptional tutoring sites! Our three news sites this year are Mary House, Our Children, and For Love of Children (FLOC). After a 38% increase in tutors last semester, Emmjolee Men-

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La Salle Elementary

For two years now I have heard nothing but great things about DC Reads and all the people involved in it. So, I decided to check it out for myself this year. Since the end of September I have been tutoring at Jessie LaSalle Elementary school in Northeast DC. A group of sixteen loyal CUA students travel daily to the site for about two hours mid-day to interact and teach some of the most amazing and grateful group of kids I’ve ever seen stretching from grades one to three.

From the minute I entered the building I felt right at home! Each child is genuinely happy and excited to spend an hour with us going over the alphabet, reading, writing, and math, it is a great opportunity for them to get away from the classroom and get a little one on one attention. This individual attention makes each child feel special, whether we are coloring, drawing, or doing math problems; never once does the smile fade from their tiny faces.

Our Children

My mother read to my siblings and I every night when we were young. My first word was ”book”, and the older I grew, the more I came to love the written word. Reading has always seemed natural to me, almost as natural, even, as remembering to breathe and to eat. I was blown away, then, when I arrived at Hart Middle School in Southeast D.C. for my first day of DC Reads. I am not sure what I expected, but what I found was a truly inspiring and wonderful group of kids, all but one comprised of middle school students who could not read. The first student I tested was a fifteen-year-old girl, as sweet as she was beautiful, who, it turned out, read on a first-grade level. She struggled through the passages, attempting to not only sound out the words but understand what they meant. Even though it was incredibly difficult for her, she never gave up. And when I told her, when the test was over, that she did well, and that I could tell she had tried her best, her eyes sparkled. She beamed at me, so full of joy and gratitude, that I smiled back at her with a smile that did not leave my face for the rest of the week. Now, every time I tell a student that he passed, or that he did well, I see that same smile, one of elation at unexpected achievement. Those smiles are what keep me going back every week, despite the long drive in DC, and the everyday frustrations that come with the job. Those smiles let me know that I am doing good work at Hart, and that my time at DC Reads is worth every ounce of effort, and much, much more. -Julia Eichstedt

Plummer Elementary

Sit down! Quiet in the hallways! Keep your hands to yourself! These are all things you will probably hear upon entering Plummer Elementary School between the hours of 3pm and 6pm on any given day Monday thru Friday, and there is a good chance I will be the one you hear saying them. The children at Plummer may bring day to day struggles, but at the same time they bring minute to minute smiles full of inspiration. To be honest, the only reason I got involved with DC Reads was because my first friend as a freshman told me to, and the pay being higher was also very persuasive. I had no idea what I was in for. How I ended up at Plummer is something I also don’t know. It was just the table calling my name at the DC Reads fair one could say. I was hooked from the first day I walked in there. Now a year and a half later, I am still grateful everyday that these kids were put into my life.

The children I deal with have a soul that shines on others in a way they will never know. They drive me to keep trying everyday in whatever I do. It’s impossible to put into words the feeling I get when Sean writes his E’s the correct way and feels good about himself because of it, or the way I feel when “tough” Octavius shows his true innocents through laughter. These moments give me hope for both them and I. They prove to me that what we do as a community here at Catholic is worth every minute, and I wouldn’t trade my experiences with them for anything. -Cabrina Cacioppo
**Higher Achievement**

Coming into my first freshman semester here at Catholic this past August, I had no idea what to expect. I suppose I expected to have a good time, prioritize my activities, make lots of friends, and be very involved. All of these have most definitely happened, however, most of them have not occurred in the way in which I envisioned them doing so. One of those things is my experience with the Higher Achievement Program (HAP) through DC Reads. I thought it would be a simple "sit-down-and-teach-the-kid-to-read" program, as the name seems to imply. What I found at HAP, however, was a program aimed at helping students from all walks of life excel in a way that wouldn’t necessarily attain in their normal, everyday classes. So for three nights a week now, since the beginning of October, I have observed three basic things at HAP.

First, that it is a program which truly cares about the students attaining heights, it has a much broader goal than simply teaching children to read, and despite the long term commitment, the stress, and the frustration of trying to show 6th graders that no, 9 cannot go into 3, 3 goes into 9, it is most definitely worth it. The best thing about HAP, however, I would have to say, is the fact that Mr. Edsson and Ms. Aishah try to teach the kids life lessons as well as book lessons. The scholars are told to stand up straight and project their voice when addressing the group, they are to speak without the use of vernacular, and they are to go into each session as a meeting rather than as a class. They and they alone are responsible for their success, but this is not told to them without knowing the mentors and staff are also there as well. HAP is a program which truly begins to prepare children for the real world at an early age, by teaching them the little things about life. These little things about HAP are what have made me appreciate the time I have spent there, and despite the fact that it, like many other things here at CUA, has not been as I expected, it is still another quality experience that I will look back on the rest of my life.

**Centro Nia**

My name is Bernadette Snyder and I am a sophomore French for Secondary Education Major. I am a DC reads tutor at Centro Nia (formally Calvary Bilingual Multicultural Learning Center) on Saturday mornings. So far I have tutored two young girls: Raisa, a first grader, and Paula, a third grader. Both girls are so eager to learn!

My most recent tutoring session was with Paula. This was my first time with her, but I felt like I knew her well through one of her former tutors. When I came in, I learned that it was time for her to get tested in reading before we could move on with her lessons. She and I reviewed together by reading a book appropriate to her reading level. She felt very confident with her ability, even saying "This is easy!" (which is always so great to hear when you’re tutoring someone!), so we were done in no time. I was in the room when Paula was being tested, hoping that she was doing well. I know from her previous tutor that she can get nervous when it comes to being tested. Before I knew it, Paula was running up to me, saying, "I won! I WON!" She had gotten 100%! It was so wonderful seeing her so proud of herself. She has made great progress in her development. I am told that she has special needs that until recently were not reconciled with so in the past she has struggled with schoolwork and paying attention. It is great to see her progress and how it reflects in her academic performance and passing tests almost effortlessly! It certainly brings a smile to my face to see a child succeed!

**Casa de Mary**

At approximately 3:30pm everyday, the kids at Mary house walk in a long, excited line, their legs can hardly wait to run up the stairs to their snacks. I sit in that room, waiting with my co-worker, I can hear the rambunctious patter of 28 feet. And no matter what kind of day I’ve been having—if I slept through that dreadful 8:10 class, I forgot to study for a test, or I’m feeling fat, etc… everything seems to fade as soon as they run over to me and nearly knock me over. And although that sounds cliché, I find that things are cliché because they are most often true.

As I sit, waiting to help with their math problems that I once had trouble with and the spelling words that I could not so easily spell, I am always amazed at these kids’ ability and want to constantly learn new things. And after homework, it’s their (and my) favorite time of the day: play time! In whatever we do—soccer, UNO, kickball, coloring—the energy and the excitement brought by such a simple thing as UNO or kickball makes me realize that they (and it seems all kids) have the perfect formula for life, and it makes me think that maybe we should all take a lesson from these kids and just enjoy life and be grateful for everything that comes to us. Working with the kids at Mary House, for a short four weeks, has been one of the most touching, enlightening and eye-opening things that has ever occurred in my life, and thank God I still have another semester—and-a-half (or even three more years!). And whenever I am having a bad day, I imagine the kids at Mary House and their laughs and smiles, everything becomes a little brighter, and I smile and think, “I wish I were playing some kickball.”

-Justin White

Being a DC Reads tutor is certainly a rewarding experience for both the tutor and the tutee. The child benefits by achieving academic success and by gaining skills to be grade-level and beyond. I believe that it is equally rewarding for the tutor. I admit that it can be frustrating at times, but it is certainly worth it when you see a child succeed. It gives you such a great feeling to know that you are an essential element in the student’s development and that you can help make a difference in the student’s life. —Bernadette Snyder

-Lindsay Fisher
### November 2004

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### Schedule of Events

#### Nov. 23rd–25th: *No Tutoring*

#### Dec. 10th: *Last Day at Site*

### December 2004

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Beacon House

This is my first semester at Beacon House and with the For Love of Children program (last semester I worked with Higher Achievement) and it has been a very positive experience. The first thing I noticed at this site was the staff and how welcoming and helpful they are. Although you are working one on one with a child, you have the chance to sit and eat dinner with all the children and get to know each of them. It makes for a warm and enjoyable environment for both the tutors and students to work in. –Arica B

St. Anthony’s

DC Reads is a program that fosters the education of children through tutors. If you want to help children who are in need of support, then this is your program!

Many of the children in these programs are apathetic and feel homework is cumbersome. Most of them are intelligent enough to do the homework and perform well in their classes, but, being children, they are easily distracted. As such, it is our responsibility to aid children not only in their academia, but also to keep them interested in their work. That is the real task of a tutor.

From my experiences with DC Reads this far, it has been overall pleasant and enjoyable to meet and tutor my two students Sam and Sade. They enjoy having fun, maybe a little too much, but by the time each session is over, the children are mostly finished with their homework.

At each beginning, we talk about our days and fill each other in on our lives since we last met. I can truly call these children my friends. Then we “buckle” down and do the homework.

If you feel that you are good with children and can be their friend and their tutor, and hope to gain a feeling of accomplishment for your service, then DC Reads is the program for you. –Joel Yablunsky

Education Corner

Children’s books promote learning and spark ideas. Visit the library and look around! My favorite books are:

- My Many Colored Days by Dr. Seuss (Feelings)
- Junie B. Jones Series by Barbara Park (Reading/Writing)
- The M&M Brand Counting Book by Barbara Barbieri McGrath (Math)
- Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, Very Bad Day by Judith Viorst (Reading)

-Andrea Waldock

STAR TUTORS

Higher Achievement: Laura Sullivan & Justin White

Beacon House: Melissa Plass

Our Children: Caitlyn Hassett

FLOC: Jillian Abecasis & Stephanie Lenhart

St. Anthony’s: Kara Doran

Casa de Mary: Michael Jacobeen

Plummer: Ericka Beneker

Centro Nia: Bernadette Snyder & Brandon Macadaeg

La Salle: Katie Hills
WORKSHOPS

*Educational Games* by Meghan Doyle and Melanie Baker  
Wednesday, November 17th 8:30-9:30pm: Pryz 321

*ADD/ADHD* by Jessica Peyton and Jamie Crockett  
Monday, Nov. 22nd: 8:30-9:30pm: Campus Ministry Lounge

*Arts Integrated Curriculum* by Diana Bryan  
Wednesday, Dec. 1st: 7:00-8:00pm: Pryz, Great Room C

These workshops are great resources for you as a tutor! Your attendance is appreciated by the team leaders and the children you tutor. **Work-study students receive one hour of pay per workshop!**