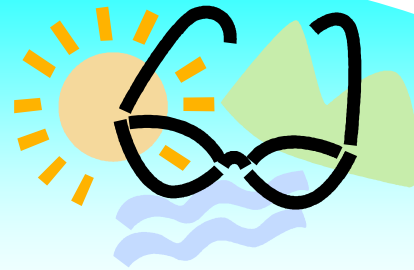


September 2008

# WINS Family Newsletter



*Summer afternoon - summer afternoon; to me those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language. ~Henry James*

Volume 5 Issue 1

Dear WINS Family,

We hope that you have enjoyed the summer as much as we did! Summer is a perfect time to read purely for pleasure. With the demands of school and work, sometimes we forget to read, or simply we just don't have the time. The WINS girls are definitely readers - most of them had a book in hand whenever I saw them. If you didn't get a chance to read at least one great beach book this summer, you still have time!

I would like to introduce myself as the new WINS Manager. As you might have heard, Najwa Smith accepted a position with the University of Pennsylvania as an Admissions Officer. As she has always encouraged the girls to do, she could not let pass a great opportunity to grow and better herself. We wish her well.

I started as WINS II Coordinator in May, so I had the opportunity to work and share with the girls during the summer. It's a great group, and I'm looking forward to working with them throughout their years in WINS and beyond.

May the new school year bring you good challenges and experiences!

WINS Manager

## Dates to Remember

### WINS I

First class of Fall session  
Wed. Sept. 10th 4:00 to 5:30pm  
Maize Maze  
Sat. Sept. 20th 9:00 to 5:30pm  
October 11th - Bronx Zoo  
Sat. Oct. 11 8:00 to 7:00pm

### WINS II

Maize Maze  
Sat. Sept. 20th 9:00 to 5:30pm  
An Inconvenient Truth -  
Tue. Sept. 30th 10:00 to 3:00pm  
Fossil hunt at Inversand, NJ  
Sat. October 4th 9:00 to 3:30pm  
Philadelphia Cares!  
Sat. October 18th 8:00 to 3:30pm

### We would love to hear from you....

If you have things that you want to share, or ideas about a topic, please drop it in the mail, send an email, or give us a call.

## Assets:

*What are assets?*

Assets are key building blocks that help kids succeed.

*Each newsletter will feature a different asset.*

THIS TIME:

Reading for Pleasure

Youth are more likely to grow up healthy when they read for pleasure three or more hours per week.

*\*Please note: all the information contained in these "asset" articles consists of general, simple, helpful ideas for navigating the teen years— not meant at all to be specific instructions for your family's dynamics. Please accept them as simple ideas for encouraging positive development, built around issues you have probably already considered.*

## WINS I Overview

The WINS program is entering its 27th year, and we at the Academy are very proud of it. One of our newest participant, Irene Patterson, has really grasped the meaning of the program when asked to write about her experiences she wrote *“WINS is truly a great program that helps girls that came from urban backgrounds encompass the wide variety of science and realize the significant role that science plays in our everyday lives”*.

Irene is one of the 21 WINS I girls who started this summer. On their first week of the programs, the girls

were able to get to know each other through ice-breakers and games, learned about women in sciences, and got to explore the museum.

They continued the summer focusing on 5 main environmental issues: water, food, energy, waste, and human and ecological considerations. They did this through a variety of hands-on lessons and field trips. The field trips, a focal point of the program, included a visit to a coal mine, a water treatment plant, and a trash-to-energy center, among others. Last, but not least, they spent a week at the Pocono Environmental Educa-



The WINS I visit an urban garden and share with one of the garden's founders as part of food week

tion Center! As Irene continued writing, *“...I think learning educational facts while having a fun time describes what WINS trips are all about”*.

## WINS II

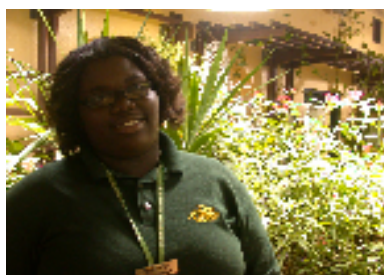
There are 19 new additions to WINS II this year, selected to the program based on grades, attitude and reliability, among others. These girls are definitely special!

The above mentioned factors will continue to matter as the girls go through their high school years. WINS II offers the girls the opportunity to participate in workshops focused not only on environmental issues, but also in other very useful topics such as preparing for SAT's and resume writing.

Field trips are also an essential component of WINS II. We started the summer by going to Silver Lake in Bristol, PA. We learned about “mile-a-minute weed”, an invasive

species that threatens the area, and then plunged into clearing an area of it. Being that the weed has curved spines on its stem, it was a tricky proposition.

Some of the girls also have the opportunity of working in the Academy. This summer we had girls working in the Dino Hall and Paleo Lab, the Butterfly Exhibit, Outside-In, LAC, the Mendel's



Shanaya Shoats showing her ready smile as an Explorer in Butterfly Hall.

Exhibit and Science Live. They were also able to occupy leadership positions as Sharice Grant and Evelyn Ogden were assistants during the Carver Camp, and Aminah Ford-Ellison was the WINS I assistant.

A new opportunity this year was an internship with the USDA.



Ishara Pinkey-Lee diluting a sample of unpasteurized apple cider under the watchful eye of ERRC lab technician Aisha Abdul-Wakeel

Six girls were pioneers by being the first to participate one day a week in an 8-week internship in the USDA Easter Region Research Center, working alongside some of the center's scientists. The girls were then able to present their experiences as part of the Federal Women's Program *Women's Equality Day* Celebration to a room full of scientists and support staff. Good job, ladies!

WINS II has a lot to offer - I hope you continues to take advantage of the possibilities!



Araya Sheperd, Chelsea Roque and Brittany Studeven “weeding” the invasive “mile-a-minute weed”.

## What Research Says About Reading

“**READING** is a basic skill,” says the report of the Commission on Reading in *Becoming a Nation of Readers*. “It is a cornerstone for a child’s success in school and, indeed, throughout life.”

While we understand the importance of literacy, why is it important for your people—in fact, all people—to read for pleasure?

The Commission on Reading contends that reading for fun teaches young people how to become strategic, skilled readers. When researchers D.L. Forrest and T.G. Wallace asked third and sixth graders to read two stories, one for fun and one as a preparation for a test, they found that skilled readers read the two stories differently than the unskilled readers. The

skilled readers remembered more of the story that was to be read for the test than the unskilled readers.

What was different? Skilled readers know there are different reasons for reading. They know they must change the way they read depending on the circumstances. For example, skilled readers know that reading for pleasure does not require an understanding of all the details, whereas reading for a test may.

Skilled readers also were more likely to ask questions when they didn’t understand some-

*Quick tip:  
Reading sparks the  
imagination.*



thing they read, go to a dictionary for words they didn’t know, and take notes on what they were reading. Skilled readers also were more apt to say that reading was fun.

According to Search Institute, those who have the reading asset in their lives read for pleasure three or more hours per week. That equals about 26 minutes a day. How can you encourage your child—and each family member—to take time to read for pleasure?

### Time Together

#### Three easy ways to help your child read for pleasure:

1. Visit the library together on a weekly basis. If your child doesn’t have a library card, help her apply for one.
2. Start a home library. If you don’t have room, encourage all family members to start a personal library in their bedroom.
3. Create a book-a-month club. Have everyone in the family read the same book. Then discuss it.

### Helpful Hints

#### Tips that encourage reading for pleasure:

- Encourage your child to read almost anything: comic books, the newspaper, magazines.
- Set aside a family reading time once a week. With younger children, read aloud together. With older children, read different books while hanging out together.
- Model reading. Talk about what you’re reading.
- Have books, magazines, newspapers, and other reading materials lying around your house.

## TALK TOGETHER

*Questions to discuss with your child:*

- What are you currently reading for fun? Why? What do you like best about it?
- What is your all-time favorite book? Why?
- What do you like best about reading?



“When I look back, I am so impressed again with the life-giving power of literature. If I were a young person today, trying to gain a sense of myself in the world, I would do that again by reading, just as I did when I was young.”  
~ Maya Angelou ~

Meanwhile, some of our friends have reason to celebrate!-  
Happy Birthday to You...



Christine Duncan - Aug. 1 (14)  
Demetra Davis - Aug. 7 (16)  
Donneice Brownlee-Robinson -  
Aug. 7 (15)  
Araya Shepherd - Aug. 20 (14)  
Tayara Moore - Aug. 23 (14)

Kenya Thompson - Sept. 5 (18)  
Somaya Anderson - Sept. 9 (16)  
Kemeka Hernandez - Sept. 11 (15)  
Saieda Bethea - Sept. 14 (16)  
Evelyn Ogden - Sept 17 (16)  
Sunnise Faust-Saunders - Sept. 30 (15)



Dominique Thomas - Oct. 6 (15)  
Chelsea Roque - Oct. 6 (15)  
Jonuka Warren - Oct 9 (17)  
Alyssa Brown - Oct. 12 (16)  
Jasmir Turner - Oct. 15 (15)



Michelle McCracken - Nov. 11 (16)  
Nadaysha Screven - Nov. 12 (17)  
Lieghann Rodriguez - Nov. 14 (16)  
Alisa Randolph - Nov. 20 (16)  
Rashana Clarke - Nov 26 (14)  
Yasmin Ahmed - Nov. 28 (16)