



# CSAPP

# TIMES

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## CSAPP Celebrates and Promotes Educational Achievements in Boston

### Message from the Director



CSAPP Executive Director  
Bette Bohlke O'Gara

We are living in challenging times which will create many changes and opportunities for us all. Our youth – their lives and their resilience - fortifies CSAPP's desire to remain focused on our mission to promote responsible behavior and healthy decision making amongst all teens participating in our programs. May our articles about Diana, the success of our summer programs and the clear commitment of our staff to expand our networks, diversify our programming and expose our youth to new opportunity inspire you.

### Seniors Recognized for

#### 2008 Graduation Achievement

##### Charlestown High School:



- Catherine Arzu
- Maria Bonet
- Jessica Bruce
- Cherelle Da Rosa
- Zasharie Liriano
- Kayla Lopez
- Brynnner Ortiz

##### English High School:



- Shelly Liriano
- Jennifer Smith
- Chanelle Thomas
- Jasmine Thomas
- Rochelle Robinson

##### West Roxbury Education Complex:



- Bianca Brown
- Rosheda Browne
- Heather Leary

### Graduate Excels In Education

A vibrant first-year student at Bunker Hill Community College (BHCC), Diana Puerta had to overcome many challenges to get where she is today.

"The best thing is that I am getting an education and meeting others who have the same goals and dreams instead of just wanting to hang out smoking and drinking," Diana remarks.

Some would say that her primary motivation to stay on a path towards success is her 17-month-old son, David, and realizing that his future is dependent upon her decisions and actions today.

"I want to improve my education and life and to be a professional...I want to be there for my son and for him to be proud of me," Diana said.

When the Comprehensive School-Age Parenting Program (CSAPP) office opened at Boston International High School in the fall of 2006, Diana was a junior and became one of the agency's first clients at the school. Carmen Pineda, CSAPP counselor, has been Diana's counselor ever since.

Carmen remembers her initial meetings with the high-spirited youth. She recalls that Diana was a confident young woman with big dreams and goals but needed direction to get her started on a manageable plan of action.

"Diana's asset is that she is not afraid to ask questions. She has a lot of goals, but we had to get her focused and set smaller reachable goals," Carmen said.

Today, Carmen still views

Diana as confident but adds that she has also evolved into a strong advocate for herself. The female student once considered overstretched by personal circumstances is now focused and steadfast in confronting obstacles and forging pathways on her own.

"She took advantage of her resources. She used everything and accessed more things on her own. Diana had a lot of determination,"

Carmen added.

Reflecting on her time in high school, Diana credits CSAPP for getting her into a shelter when she needed a safe place to stay, improving her grade point average and continuing, complete her education while

she was expecting and having a difficult pregnancy.

She added that without Carmen's help and support during these difficult times, she would not have been able to move forward and go to college. With support, Diana applied and was accepted to BHCC and granted financial aid.

Diana's advice to other teens who are going through adversity in their lives is to keep moving forward and do not let things get them down or off track from their goals.

"Never give up and always do your best even if it is hard to finish school and keep your grades up. Everything is possible," Diana said.

Once Diana completes her courses at BHCC, she wants to attend Northeastern University or the University of Massachusetts where she will work towards a degree in Criminal Justice.

Her career ambition is to work for the Federal Bureau of Investigation.



# CSAPP Rekindles Old and Creates New Collaborations in the Community

## Workplace Experience:

CSAPP collaborated with the Action for Boston Community Development (ABCD) SummerWorks Program and Private Industry Council (PIC) to provide 17 of our youth with various employment opportunities throughout the summer.

One of ABCD's assigned job placement sites included Oiste - the first and only statewide Latino political organization in Massachusetts - where four CSAPP youth worked. Oiste encourages active participation and education in the civic and electoral processes at all three levels of government.

Ten CSAPP students from the Boston International High School were selected by PIC and assigned to Sovereign Bank's Summer Workplace Experience.

Sovereign Bank's summer jobs program involved on-site training and a weekly professional development workshop. The workshop provided

students with instruction needed to enhance general employment skills such as writing.

The summer of 2008 marked a successful collaborative effort between CSAPP, ABCD, and PIC. Working together, these agencies were able to incorporate Boston Public School (BPS) youth within community and private sector organizations to facilitate their personal, educational, and professional growth.

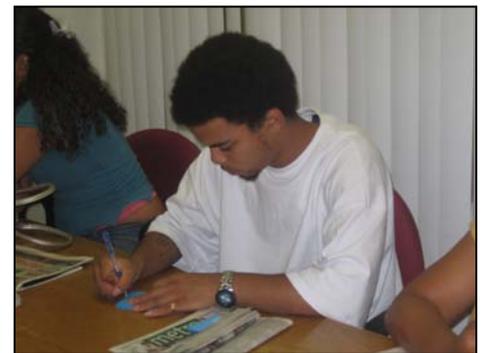
## Collegiate Life Experience:

Eight female CSAPP students were selected to attend an exclusive Simmons College educational retreat in August.

Students were granted a tour of the campus and privy to meet Simmons College faculty and students.

The two-day retreat exposed students to the collegiate lifestyle, but it gave them firsthand access by sleeping overnight in the same dorm rooms where Simmons students reside.

- 255 youth served by CSAPP from June to September 2008.
- 135 youth participated in summertime or employment programs.
- Most participants either graduated in June or returned to school in September.



Edwin Rivera works on an assignment as part of his summer work placement at Oiste.

## NEWS FLASH



(top to bottom) CSAPP Counselor Carmen Pineda moves to the agency's new site at Rogers Middle School; Paulette Johnson moves to our new location at Social Justice Academy; and Senior Counselor Coordinator Nancy Young relocates to English High School after 13 years at Grover Cleveland Middle School.

## *E*xperiential Learning Broadens Students Knowledge of Boston

CSAPP students have the opportunity to participate in several exhilarating activities during the summer months.

Each activity is Boston-based and provides students with an experiential, exploratory view of the city in which they live.

Some of the activities middle and high school students engaged in this summer that were sponsored by CSAPP included boating and hiking.

Collaborations with CSAPP, Boston International High School, and Youth Enrichment Services (YES) provided exhilarating outdoor recreation such as kayaking and camping for students attending the school's summer program.

In addition, the generosity of local vendors who provided discounted or free tickets allowed students to tour popular attractions like the aquarium.



CSAPP counselor, Jenny Dunne, kayaks along the Charles River with a BIHS student.



Student participants take a well-deserved break from hiking with CSAPP counselor Melpo Kalaitzidis.