Cornerstone Academy

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helping students succeed in the city
Students traveled to Irons Oaks’ Adventure Center, an environmental learning center dedicated to educating and enhancing its community with its services and projects. The Adventure Center houses a High Ropes Course, a series of initiatives connected by strong cables and knots in their system of trees over 30 feet in the air. Students were harnessed in and belayed up to a platform to perform challenges like balancing on a cable stretched between two trees and moving through swinging planks. Student Jose Leanos said, “Walking across the cable while holding on to ropes above you was the most challenging obstacle; but I’m glad I did it.”
The Annual Benefit

Over 200 guests gathered on Thursday, November 14th to garner support for Cornerstone Academy at the Chicago Cultural Center. With their help, the school raised over $60,000. This income helps maintain our school’s operating budget and keeps tuition fees affordable for our students’ families.

To prepare for this event, Gwyneth Anderson (an interdisciplinary artist and ArtReach teacher through Lillstreet Art Center) worked with ten students in a self-portraiture art course. Students experimented with comics, collage, ceramics, painting and sculpture. Their work was displayed at the event.
Thanksgiving

Students and staff enjoyed a Thanksgiving feast last fall. Students brought their favorite homemade dishes, which included a Salvadorian-style turkey, baked macaroni and cheese, Mexican-style ceviche, and Jamaican jerk chicken. YoungLife Chicago Program Director, Kimberly Graves added to the celebration by facilitating two games to keep the students moving and laughing.
The partnerships we build with local businesses allow us to place students in entry-level positions within the company once a week. Income earned is used to subsidize tuition costs and other fees. Students gain valuable professional skills and businesses profit from having basic tasks accomplished by youth, all while enhancing the Academy’s ability to be financially sustainable.

We currently have students placed at Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, Warren Barr Gold Coast and West Suburban Hospital.

Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (left to right)

Tamara Nelson working on the computer

Emmanuel Starks using a machine to clean wheelchairs

Stephanie Anderson answering phones in the office

Burke Engineering (top, right)

Jose Leanos filing paperwork

Warren Barr Gold Coast

(2nd row, left to right)

Raven Robinson storing supplies

Brittany Evans with a nurse

Warren Barr

RIC
Students, their families, and alumni gathered on Thursday, December 19, 2013 to celebrate Cornerstone Academy's annual Medieval Banquet. This family night included our traditional roast pig, jesters juggling, and a fantastic Christmas play performance put on by our students.
Students enjoyed ice skating at the McCormick Tribune Ice Rink in Millennium Park on a chilly February day. For many of them, it was their first time navigating their way around the ice. Surprisingly enough, very few students fell. Principal Jim Wilkes, teacher Bill Seitz, Young Life staff, and Moody Bible Institute students also joined the students in the fun.

Winter in the Windy City
Spring Happenings

Urban Survival with Mrs. Ratliff

Mr. Seitz's economics program

Breakfast Club

Mosaics with Mr. Seitz

Students creating Chess boards for Mrs. Ratliff's class

Mock Trial with The Honorable William Seitz
Dickson Valley Camping Trip

The Academy traveled with students to Dickson Valley Retreat Center for an overnight camping trip before the end of the school year. Students balanced on a slack line, practiced their archery and climbing skills, and mastered the "Bridge of Death." After a hay ride, a bonfire, and a riveting game of Assassins, students (and staff) took their much needed rest until the morning. The trip ended with a hearty lunch at Mr. Seitz's house.
(first row) Jim Wilkes, Bill Seitz, Denise Ratliff
(second row) Charis Tuazon-Ayee, Kevin Erinton, Liana Zuniga