Henry & Edith Cerullo Learning Assistance Center

Tutoring Center ~ Math Walk-In Center ~ Writing Center
English Language Resource Center ~ Tutoring Center at the Meadowlands

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BCC Student and Tutor Receives Fellowship, Speaks on Capitol Hill

On December 4th, 2013, Fatima Villanueva, a BCC student and Peer Tutor at the Cerullo Learning Assistance Center, gave a presentation to policymakers in Washington, DC as part of her receiving a Fellowship from the Entertainment Software Association (ESA) and Hispanic Heritage Foundation’s (HHF) Leaders on the Fast Track Innovation.

20 Fellows were brought to the White House and Capitol Hill to meet with members of Congress and Cabinet Secretaries. Each fellow also received a $1,000 grant for creating video games that try to provide solutions to specific problems that they find in their own communities.

Fatima’s videogame “Domus” seeks to address the indifference associated with homelessness, so the well-off members of society can better comprehend what homeless individuals experience. She currently has a prototype of the videogame built with Kodu, and it currently functions for the Xbox 360 and PC. Her prototype is currently available for play and its content is suitable for all ages. However, the didactic moral behind the game is targeted for teens and up, because they can better engage and interact with the purpose of the videogame, which is intentionally composed for audiences who are not homeless and have access to gaming devices.

From BCC to The Ivy League: Daunting but Doable

By Carolina Montes

Taking the leap from a Community College to an Ivy League University was something I never thought I would do; a leap I highly recommend to all who deem education a priceless jewel. Bergen Community College paves the way for unbelievable opportunities of which all willing students should make swift use, because very rarely do we get a second chance. After a yearlong break from my education, Columbia University loomed over the horizon. A brief winter break flew by and I finally stepped foot into this revered institution with the gleaming eyes of a novice wizard at the gates Hogwarts. I believe the aesthetic appeal of the school is a cushion, placed strategically so that the inexperienced pupil is anesthetized from the impending wave coming his/her way. Really the only words I can think of to describe an Ivy League education are: a tsunami.

Remember that research paper assigned to you in your Comp class due about halfway through the semester? Or your reading and problem sets for math covering material for a test? You could pull it off a few days before, maybe a day before with a diligent mind (aka an all-nighter and caffeine). All those cozy memories will be simply that: memories. The key to success at a four year institution, let alone one such as Columbia, is to throw your bad habits out the window as soon as humanly possible. Once you find yourself in such a place, you must be the one who sets rules and expectations for yourself, not your professor or another authority figure, and this realization becomes apparent around the second week there. There is room for building a relationship with professors, but it will not come as easily as it did at BCC since classes are usually not as small or closely knit.

Along with the responsibility overload comes a sense of incredible satisfaction once one begins to ride the wave rather than hold it back. If your heart is fueled by the acquisition of knowledge...
A popular internet meme recently has been to offer a list of 10 books “that have stayed with you.” They don’t necessarily have to be your favorite, or even any good, but have had a lasting effect on you anyway. These are the books that have “stayed with” our writing tutors and staff over the years.

- 1984 - George Orwell
- 1Q84 - Haruki Murakami
- A Clockwork Orange - Anthony Burgess
- A Handmaid’s Tale - Margaret Atwood
- A Pilgrim at Tinker’s Creek – Annie Dillard
- A Supposedly Fun Thing I’ll Never Do Again - David Foster Wallace
- A Wind Named Amnesia - Hideyuki Kikuchi
- A Wrinkle in Time - Madeleine L’Engle
- Animal Farm - George Orwell
- Apologia pro Vita Sua - John Henry Newman
- Barn Burning - William Faulkner
- Biko – Donald James Woods
- Brave New World - Aldous Huxley
- Catcher in the Rye - J. D. Salinger
- Cat's Cradle - Kurt Vonnegut
- Cloud Atlas – David Mitchell
- Collected Fictions- Jorge Luis Borges
- Collected Poems of Federico Garcia Lorca
- Dracula - Bram Stoker
- Flow My Tears the Police man
- Flowers for Algernon - Daniel Keyes
- Goosebumps - R.L. Stine
- Gorgias - Plato
- The Great Gatsby - F. Scott Fitzgerald
- Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism – Erwin Panofsky
- Great Expectations - Charles Dickens
- Hamlet - William Shakespeare
- Hard Boiled Wonderland and the End of the World - Haruki Murakami
- Harry Potter Series - J.K. Rowling
- Holes - Louis Sachar
- Immortal Poems of the English Language - ed. Oscar Williams
- Insomnia - Stephen King
- Letters to a Young Poet – Rainer Maria Rilke
- Lord of the Flies - William Golding
- Lysistrata - Aristophanes
- Mastering the Art of French Cooking – Julia Child, Louisette Bertholle & Simonne Beck
- Metropolitan Life - Fran Lebowitz
- Nine Who Survived Hiroshima & Nagasaki - Robert Trumbull
- No Exit - Jean Paul Sartre
- Of Love and Other Demons - Gabriel Garcia Marquez
- Of Mice and Men - John Steinbeck
- Old Yeller - Fred Gipson
- On the Road - Jack Kerouac
- Paradise Lost - John Milton
- Personhood: The Art of Being Fully Human - Leo Buscaglia
- Poetry, Language, Thought – Martin Heidegger
- Teaching a Stone to Talk – Annie Dillard
- The Stand - Stephen King
- The Awakening - Kate Chopin
- The Bell Jar - Sylvia Plath
- The Bluest Eye - Toni Morrison
- The Collected Poems – Sylvia Plath
- The Collected Poems of e.e. cummings - e.e. cummings
- The Complete Poems and Selected Letters of John Keats
- The Complete Poetry of Edgar Allan Poe - arranged by John H Ingram
- The Death of Ivan Ilych – Leo Tolstoy
- The Divine Comedy - Dante
- The End of an Affair - Graham Greene
- The Great Fires - Jack Gilbert
- The Help - Kathryn Stockett
- The Hobbit - J.R.R. Tolkien
- The Last Question- Isaac Asimov
- The Little Prince - Saint-Exupéry
- The Magician’s Nephew - C. S. Lewis
- The Master and Margarita - Mikhail Bulgakov
- The Metamorphosis - Franz Kafka
- The Nine Tailors – Dorothy Sayers
- The Nun's Story - Kathlyn Hulme
- The Odyssey - Homer
- The Phantom Toll Booth - Norton Juster
- The Picture of Dorian Gray- Oscar Wilde
- The Republic – Plato
- The Road – Cormac McCarthy
- The Savage Detectives - Roberto Bolano
- The Sirens of Titan - Kurt Vonnegut
- The Very Hungry Caterpillar - Eric Carle
- The Wind-Up Bird Chronicles – Haruki Murakami
- The Writing Life – Annie Dillard
- To Kill a Mocking Bird – Harper Lee
- Unbroken – Lauren Hillenbrand

regardless of the type, Columbia University will feed it until it wants to burst. I say this because there is just no end to the learning experiences and opportunities available there. From the free tango and swing dance lessons advertised on flyers all over campus, to research studies, study sessions, workshops and guest speakers beyond your wildest dreams, Columbia provides a rich and truly exhilarating educational environment. Bergen Community College provides a safe and steady route to universities most of us would rarely consider within grasp. So if the idea of an Ivy League education is floating about in your mind, take the initiative because applying is not a binding contract. If you get the green light, prepare to be the commander of an introspective journey the magnitude of an Olympic workout, with failures and rewards of the same degree.
Tutor Scores Big at AMATYC Student Mathematics League Competition

At the latest American Mathematical Association of Two Year Colleges Student Mathematics League competition, the team from Bergen Community College placed second among New Jersey Colleges and fourth out of the 19 teams in the Middle Atlantic States Region. The BCC team placed 40th in the United States out of 189 teams.

Cerullo Learning Assistance Center Peer Tutor and BCC Student Kyeong Kim finished 11th out of the 131 students competing in the Middle Atlantic States Region, and was the highest scoring female in the region.

The Student Mathematics League was founded in 1970 by Nassau Community College in New York. In 1981 the American Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges assumed sponsorship. The League has grown to more than 165 colleges in more than thirty-five states as well as Bermuda involving over eight thousand community college math students.

Prof. Nelda Latham serves as BCC’s Mathematics Club Advisor.
Fatima Villanueva, ESA Fellow

Cont. from pg. 1

President and CEO of the HHF, Jose Antonio Tijerino, stated, “At the core of the ESA LOFT Video Game Innovation Fellowship is the belief that using technology for social change or career paths is essential to not only the advancement of minority communities, but America as a nation [...] Through this creative partnership with the ESA, we are engaging youth on their terms, through video games. The link from playing a video game to developing one to computer coding, cybersecurity and other skills gap areas is evident and that’s also what we are trying to leverage through this program [...] The ESA LOFT Video Game Innovation Fellowship shows how games are more than a means of entertainment, but also a valuable tool for change in our society,” said Rich Taylor, senior vice president of communications and industry affairs at the ESA. “We are proud to offer this opportunity that will help create real change in minority communities through the unique platform only video games can provide.”

STEM Tutorial Supervisor Luis DeAbreu chaperoned a number of BCC math students to the 2014 Joint Mathematics Meetings, the largest mathematics meeting in the world, in Baltimore, Maryland, from January 15th to the 17th.

The BCC group attended lectures from some of the most important leaders in modern mathematics today, participated in contributed paper sessions and panel discussions, and had the opportunity to speak with mathematicians from around the world, including one of Popular Science magazines “Brilliant Ten Scientists,” Eitan Grinspun, Associate Professor and Co-Director of Columbia Computer Graphics Group at Columbia University.

All of the students greatly enjoyed the opportunity, and they also were able to share some of their thoughts and observations:

"Seeing the various types of presentations made me realize that math could be incorporated into almost everything in our everyday lives. I always believed math was a field of its own, but the conference allowed me to see that math was the root of almost every field. Math wasn’t just incorporated in engineering or science, but it was also used in fields completely opposite of math, such as English. I went to one presentation where the speaker talked about how math was used in poetry and I was just amazed how math could be used in literature.”

-Young Hwi Park

"At JMM, I was also able to talk to people that worked in mathematics or mathematics-based fields. In the exhibit hall, you could talk to members of the American Mathematical Society (AMS), the Mathematical Association of America (MAA), the Society of Actuaries (SoA), and the American Statistical Association (ASA). By having these conversations, I learned about several opportunities that a math-based education provided. I found myself to be particularly interested in the field of statistics after having an excellent talk with a representative at the ASA booth.”

-Gregory Maniago

Tutor Accepted to ONE Summit

BCC Peer Tutor Stefani Kocevska was accepted into the 2014 ONE Summit, being held in Washington, D.C. from February 22nd to the 25th. Co-founded by Bono, ONE raises public awareness and works with political leaders to combat AIDS and other preventable diseases. With ONE’s support, malaria has been cut by 75% in eight African countries since 2000, and 51 million more children across sub-Saharan Africa are now going to primary school.

A Trip to the Joint Mathematics Meetings

STEM Tutor Accepted to ONE Summit

Fatima Villanueva, ESA Fellow

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