

***Proceedings of the Harlem Children Society Internship Program
2009 Guardian Orientation Ceremony
Salem United Methodist Church, Harlem New York, June 26, 2009***

***Discovering & Developing Talented Youth in Science & Technology
Restoring & Revitalizing Struggling Families & Communities***

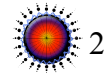
HCS 2009 Internship Program Organizes Orientation Ceremony for 400 students and their Guardians, in hands-on Research in Science fields at Salem United Methodist Church in Harlem, NY

Recognizing the importance that parents, guardians, and communities play in the education and growth of the child, Harlem Children Society (HCS) continued its second ‘HCS Guardian Orientation Ceremony’ for parents/guardians of 400 students from over 100 schools and their guardians for its program in Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics & Allied Sciences. The venue - the spacious gym and adjacent downstairs area at the Salem Methodist Church in the heart of Harlem- the home of its annual International Street Fairs and Festivals at 129th Street and Adam Clayton Powell Boulevard, formed the perfect setting for the so many students and family members setting to embark upon a new beginning of the 2009-2010 programs. The event furnishes a forum in which HCS conveys the importance of parental/guardian involvement and support, accurately portraying the scope of the program, and the organization’s expectations of the students through their summer and afterschool programs. The students, primarily from high schools, are all from extremely impoverished and under-served backgrounds; 96% of whom are minorities (38% African American; 22% Hispanic, and 46% other minorities). Over 58% are young women.

Leading up to the event, the primary challenge during the preparations had been that of arranging an appropriate venue that would adequately house the event. Since the number of students was expected to be close to 400, the venue chosen had to theoretically accommodate twice that number. The date was set for June 26th, and students were contacted to be congratulated on their acceptance into the program and to confirm that their parents would be attending the orientation. Handout materials were reviewed, printed and assembled into individual packets. The materials, while largely devoted to administrative details and surveys, also included documents addressing other specifics such as a recommended approach and etiquette in connection with students’ initial contact with their mentors, as well as an HCS student code of ethics.

As preparation for the 2009 Student Internship Program, Harlem Children Society (HCS) once again held its Guardian Orientation Ceremony on the afternoon of June 26th, 2009. Having had such success in the past with the event in years past, HCS knew the value of holding this meeting designed primarily for parents to complete and sign documents, as well as learn what to expect over the coming months of the summer internship. The parents were also to be given the opportunity to personally meet Dr. Sat Bhattacharya, the Founder, President and CEO of HCS, and the HCS staff. The event furnished a forum in which HCS could convey the importance of parental involvement





and support; accurately portray the scope of the program, and the organization's expectations of the students through their summer internships.

When the time came on June 26th, parents and students began filing into the gym. There they found HCS staff busily preparing reception tables for processing documents and paperwork. The gym was set up such that a stage area, with screen and sound equipment was at one end of the space, a refreshment table was set alongside an interior wall midway between either end of the space, and the registration desk was at the opposite end of the gym near the entrance. Seating for parents and students was being set up in the central portion of the space, and took up quite a bit of the area, owing to the size of the crowd.

While parents and students collected and began completing paperwork, ice-cold bottled water was offered to them as refreshment. Purple bougainvillea flower arrangements adorned the refreshment table and the stage area, lending a cheerful summer ambiance to the venue.

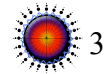
By 4 pm, the meeting had officially begun. HCS staff member, Ms. Ana Catalina Santos, welcomed the audience and introduced a short documentary film presentation about Harlem Children Society. The film featured student and mentor interviews in hands-on research settings, as well as footage of one of the annual HCS Global Street Fair and Festivals.

By the time the film ended, the refreshment table had been laden with trays of tasty Italian cookies from Rocco's Pastry Shop. HCS staff members made sure that the table was well tended so that all could enjoy the delights from Bleecker Street's famous bakery.

HCS staff member, Prof. D. Jeanne Ross then stepped to the podium and addressed the audience about Harlem Children Society and the journey upon which the students were about to embark. She explained to parents, "Your involvement is not of a passive variety. We need you to help us support your children as they work through this program... You will see them develop in a number of ways...". She set out the sequence and highlights of the program, going into detail about the nature of students' research as being hands-on work in labs, universities and research facilities. She also discussed the weekly Tuesday lecture series, and HCS's requirements and expectations of students to submit written accounts of those lectures. She further elaborated on how the students would be expected to prepare PowerPoint presentations as the summer progressed, as well as write papers at the end of the summer on their research.

She went beyond the temporal boundaries of the summer program and discussed the **'Seventh HCS 2009 Global Science Street Fairs and Festivals'** and the **'First Harlem Science Parade'** to be held on **September 26, 2009**. She further elaborated on the ***Sigma Xi Scientific Research Society Conference to take place in November 2009***, and how students would be selected based upon their performance during the summer program to attend under the sponsorship of HCS. *Dr. Sat Bhattacharya is the president of the Rockefeller University chapter of the prestigious society - one of the oldest honor societies with over 200 Nobel Laureates.* She then asked for a student show of hands that





had attended the Sigma Xi Conference previously, and underscored that HCS students had garnered five first-place awards at the 2008 Sigma Xi Conference in Washington, DC. She ended by discussing how students would be able to continue with their mentors as part of the HCS After-School Program during the coming school year.

HCS student Abayomi Mariam Arè, HCS Class of 2008, then stepped up to the podium to speak about her experiences in HCS, and particularly, about the 2008 Sigma Xi Conference in Washington. “Abby’s” enthusiasm was evident, and she lit up when she talked about how, among other things, she had encountered people from around the world who had been at the conference.

Ms. Santos then introduced returning HCS Class of 2005 student, Littin Kandoth, a sophomore at Penn State University in Engineering. Littin began by stating that this would be his 5th summer in the HCS program. He went into what a great the opportunity being a part of HCS is, since it gives students the opportunity to work with professionals in science and industry. He briefly recounted his prior internships, including his work at Columbia University, and University of Central Florida in conjunction with NASA. Littin also discussed his Sigma Xi experiences over past years, and moreover, how he had formed a number of strong friendships with students in the program.

Ms. Santos returned to the podium, and took the opportunity to speak about HCS’s programs abroad, including in Mexico, Tanzania, India, Ethiopia, Honduras and Kenya. She invited returning HCS Class of 2007, Nixon Arauz, who had just graduated from Manhattan Hunter High School, to the podium. Ms. Santos mentioned that Nixon had last summer worked in his home country of Honduras, where he had helped establish a Harlem Children Society satellite program. Preparing to leave for South Africa this summer, Nixon was aiming to accomplish the same goal while there.

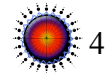
Nixon began his speech by discussing his work in Honduras the previous summer, and how he had met important politicians in country in order to facilitate the establishment of HCS programs there. The student then touched on how he was looking forward to his work in South Africa, and his long-term plan to pursue a course of study to become a doctor.

HCS student Ivan Schoop, HCS Class of 2007, then relayed his experience to the audience. Ivan discussed how he had also worked in Florida, the nature of his work in computers there. Though, he underscored he had worked very hard, Ivan had also had a wonderful experience. He further elaborated on the Sigma Xi experience, and the HCS International Science Street Fairs and Festivals of previous years. Ivan closed, saying that the HCS program is “...fun, and you will learn a lot...”.

Between all of the speech sequences and announcements for groups to report to the registration desk, the audience had been enjoying ambient music courtesy of another HCS student, Scott White, HCS Class of 2008. The sounds were cool and comfortable even while Mother Nature fired up her thunderstorm sound effects, the echoes of which could be heard inside the gym.

During the course of the event, HCS staffer, Brandon Burton, was also roaming





the room interviewing both students and parents. Among them was Monique Honeyghan, a returning HCS Class of 2008 student from Bronx Health Sciences High School. Monique spoke about how she was very excited about returning to the HCS program this year. Angela Palma and Dave Ramsammy, both HCS Class of 2008 students, spoke about how they, too, had joined the program last year and what that experience had meant to them. Katharine Chan, also HCS Class of 2008, spoke about how she plans to pursue forensics in the future as a result of her work in HCS.

Light Amedzekor, HCS Class of 2005, and a student at Bronx Community College, also spoke about his work in summer of 2008, and his aspirations of becoming an optometrist. He said that in 10 years he envisions himself opening his own clinic and helping people just like Dr. Sat. About HCS, he continued, "...It's an opportunity.... And when opportunity comes, you have to take it. Dr. Sat has taken me like a son, and I feel that's what each and everyone should do for one another. He's an extraordinary individual."

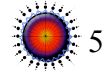
An hour into the event, Dr. Sat Bhattacharya was whisked into the room, and greeted at every turn by parents and students. After an introduction by Prof. Ross, he soon launched into his welcome address, describing how he had begun with three students, and how HCS had grown to almost 400 students in the US alone. Most recently, he continued, the program had expanded to include both New Orleans and Washington, DC. Dr. Sat further went on to stress how HCS is a global organization, how important it is for students to grow and get to know each other in other HCS satellite programs.

Dr. Sat went on to address how HCS had been affected by the current economic recession. He called upon parents to identify and contact their local and regional elected representatives/congressional members to speak out about the HCS program. In this way, parents would be able to contribute actively to sustaining HCS and becoming a vital part of the organization's efforts to weather the economic storm.

He then turned to discussing the ***HCS Global Science Street Fairs and Festivals, and this year's inaugural Science Parade***. He made mention that all the fairs would be connected via the web and broadcasting simultaneously. Further, Dr. Sat called upon students to understand that they are ambassadors of HCS, of and of Dr. Sat, personally, and that they should be mindful of this when reporting to mentors. "... You are professionals, and you must behave like professionals...".

The HCS Founder and President then went on to mention how HCS hoped to schedule its annual ***Harlem Science Cruise*** during the program to provide an opportunity for students, mentors, and parents an enjoyable outing for all. This led into his discussion of the *immensity of the HCS network, comparing it to a virtual university*. Dr. Sat elaborated on how important the relationships with students' mentors would be to them for the rest of their lives, and underscored student decorum with them and in the context of the weekly lecture series at Rockefeller University. Dr. Sat continued, saying how the HCS program would be an important asset to students' resumes, adding that many students had received scholarships as a result of their work. He cited HCS Class of 2004 student, Rami Abdelghafar, a POSSE scholarship winner and student at Brandeis University. Dr. Sat then summoned Rami to the podium to speak about HCS.





Rami who mentored under the direct supervision of Dr. Sat in his laboratory at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, spoke about how he had been one of Dr. Sat's first students, and how he had been referred to HCS by a fellow student when he had been a 10th grader. Rami then revisited his initial reaction to wearing a lab coat... "and how snazzy I looked in it... That lab coat was something else!" This remark drew a wave of audience laughter.

He went on to say how he had worked on isolating cancer cells and amplify genes in Dr. Sat's laboratory at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, and how NY1 television had come to film him and the other students. Rami then spoke about how he had received his four-year scholarship at Brandeis as a direct result of his HCS work, and closed saying he aspired to one day to be Surgeon General... and the future president of Harlem Children Society!

Dr. Sat then resumed, and highlighted further statistics with regard to HCS students who had been scholarship recipients. He then closed by advising students that though money would come their way as a natural progression, their involvement in HCS was not about that aspect, but the work itself. Following Dr. Sat's address, Prof. Ross added a few more comments about the upcoming 20o9 Student Induction, the wrapping up of final details in administrative matters, and made her closing remarks. Dr. Sat punctuated those remarks in his inimitable style and wished all a successful summer program.

As the ceremony officially culminated, students and parents lingered to chat with HCS staff, Dr. Sat, and one other. The event had been once again successful on many levels. HCS was able to both break the ice with new students and parents, and welcome back those students from prior years' programs. As for the parents and students, their smiles and laughter were the barometers of their excitement and enthusiasm about the upcoming summer program and the promise of a better and brighter future.

The Parent & Guardian Orientation once again laid an important groundwork leading to the 'Induction Ceremony of the HCS Students for the class of 2009' to be held in the beautiful venue of the Caspary auditorium of the prestigious Rockefeller University on June 30th 2009.

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