

# Atlantic Street Center's Summer Academy Program

## ATLANTIC STREET CENTER'S MISSION & COMMUNITY SERVED

Atlantic Street Center is a non-profit organization located in Seattle, Washington. We have been serving the community for 98 years. Our mission is to help families and communities raise healthy, successful children and youth. Atlantic Street Center directs its resources toward low-income families of color, most of whom reside in central and southeast Seattle.

## A DESCRIPTION OF THE SUMMER ACADEMY PROGRAM AND THE COMMUNITY NEEDS IT SERVES

Summer Academy is a full-day, five-week summer school for kindergarten through 7th grade students, all of whom are falling behind in school academically and/or socially.

### Summer Academy addresses the need for:

- A program to improve academic and social skills of at-risk youth
- A free summer educational program for low-income youth of color
- An opportunity for inner-city youth to participate in recreational and cultural enrichment activities they might otherwise not have access to

### How Summer Academy differs from other summer programs:

There are numerous summer school programs offered in the greater Seattle area. Summer Academy differs from those other programs in three critical ways:

- All services and activities are provided at no cost to students and their families.
- The program is specifically designed to serve low-income children of color who are at-risk of failing academically or socially.
- Academics are combined with multi-cultural enrichment activities.

Program services include:

**Academic Instruction:** Academic instruction emphasizes basic skills development in the areas of reading, writing, math, and study skills. The curriculum focuses on individualized instruction using a creative hands-on interactive approach proven to be successful with youth who often resist more traditional models of instruction. Certified teachers, most of whom are employed during the school year by Seattle Public Schools, teach Summer Academy classes.

**Afternoon recreational and multi-cultural enrichment activities:** Afternoon activities are designed to nurture creativity, increase positive self-image, and improve social skills. Activities include three components: 1). Recreational (e.g., arts, crafts, music, dance, photography, science, zoology). 2). Guest speakers from a variety of professions, vocations, and backgrounds. 3). Field trips to places of interest in the Seattle area such as the Seattle Aquarium, Woodland Park Zoo, Seattle Art Museum, ferry rides, and Seattle Tilth Garden.

**Counseling Services:** Mental health therapists and case managers from Atlantic Street Center's Counseling Service's program work with youth experiencing major difficulties with anger, self-esteem, and inappropriate behavior. Counseling staff work with youth one-on-one or in groups when appropriate. Counseling staff are on site every day during the five-week program and accompany youth on field trips when appropriate.

**Community Collaboration:** Summer Academy coordinates and collaborates with other resources and programs such as Washington Reading Corps, Youth Volunteer Corps, Seattle Tilth Gardens, Teens In Public Service, Interns, Volunteer Youth Groups, Community Volunteers and many others.

#### **PROJECTED GOALS, OBJECTIVES, TIMELINE, ANTICIPATED IMPACT**

For more than 30 years, Atlantic Street Center's Summer Academy Program has addressed the need for a free, academically and culturally relevant summer school program for low-income children. Over the years, thousands of students have attended the program and many have gone on to excel academically.

Summer Academy begins in early July 2008 and concludes in early August 2008. The goals of the program are to:

1. Assist youth in retaining and improving academic abilities learned during the just concluded school year.
2. Provide an environment in which youth can learn academically and socially.
3. Help youth to develop healthy social bonds in a supportive and consistently nurturing environment.
4. Assist students to improve interpersonal skills (self-confidence, follow through with assignments, and comfort level with asking questions and receiving constructive criticism)
5. Increase positive social behaviors of youth and promote positive peer and adult relationships.

The long-term positive impact of Summer Academy on our community is enormous. For example:

#### **Improved academic skills**

Prior to beginning the program, students enrolled in Summer Academy are falling behind academically and/or socially and many are uncertain of their academic potential and future. Happily, post evaluations have consistently shown that students improve in critical academic and behavioral areas. The program can and does motivate students to excel in school, and to conceive of future academic success and advancement.

#### **Enhanced quality of life**

Academically successful children enhance the quality of life within their family, their school and their community. On a larger scale, children are our future and an academically successful and well-educated citizenry enhances the quality of life for all of us.

#### **Complement the efforts of the traditional educational system**

Quality education is a major concern for many adults. All of the students who participate in Summer Academy are struggling in school and are falling behind their peers socially, and a significant number are not receiving the attention they need to succeed academically. The limitations of our traditional educational system can negatively impact these students. The chance to catch up in school through Summer Academy can have a considerable influence on these students' educational futures.

#### **Involve students in meaningful summer activities**

Each summer, many parents are challenged to find ways to involve their children in meaningful activities. For a great number of these parents, the high expense of summer camps and traditional educational programs make these options impossible. Summer Academy is a free program that provides a safe, supportive and stimulating learning environment for low-income children.

## **ROLE OF VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are critical to the success of Summer Academy. Volunteers serve as:

- **Tutors:** Volunteers provide individual academic assistance to students enrolled in Summer Academy.
- **Afternoon Group Leaders** Volunteers lead a group of 15-18 students during afternoon enrichment activities.
- **Teaching Assistants** Volunteers assist an elementary classroom teacher with various aspects of classroom management and student learning, working in collaboration with teacher and providing direct student support.
- **Youth Workshop Instructors:** Volunteers with special skills in the areas of art, dance, music, poetry, writing or other subjects teach workshops.

## **NUMBER AND TYPES OF STUDENTS WHO BENEFIT FROM SUMMER ACADEMY**

In 2008, Summer Academy will serve 250 students in grades K-7. All students are at risk of failing academically and/or socially.

## **HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS OR EFFECTIVENESS**

An independent evaluation is conducted at the close of each Summer Academy. The methodology used includes conducting onsite impromptu interviews with students; reviewing student demographic, attendance, and residency data; analyzing student attendance; summarizing the results of file reviews for all students; reviewing parent and student surveys; reviewing Summer Academy Progress Reports; and reviewing student pre/post academic progress in math and reading.

Past evaluations have consistently shown that the majority of students make measurable improvements in math, language arts, and social skills (e.g., relationship, self-management, and communication skills).

## **BUDGET**

The cost of the 2008 program is \$178,000. The cost per student is \$712.00 for the entire five week program.

