UPCOMING EVENTS

- CSC Spring Information Fair (January 20-21, GSU Link)
- Alternative Spring Breaks Online Registration (January 31, 8 am)
- Idealist Non-profit Career Fair (February 23)
- Alternative Spring Breaks (March 6-14)
- Food for Food fundraiser (April)
- Global Day of Service (April 17) [www.bu.edu/dayofservice]
- Making Music Recital (April)
- Senior Prom (April 13)

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Thanks to everyone who contributed to this newsletter:
- The CSC Photography & Public Relations Teams
- Peter Hughes, Design
- Andrea Little, Editor
- Sara Randall, Photography
- The CSC Program Managers & Staff
Have any comments or questions about what’s in this newsletter? Email bucsc@bu.edu
Multicultural is not a word that people use in everyday language, and for most of us it conjures up the synonym of “international.” While MAPP (Multicultural Advance-ment Partnership Program) has worked off this definition for some time, this year we have opened up our eyes to create a working definition of what “culture” entails.

MAPP has really turned into something we’re extremely proud of this semester. We have worked hard to let MAPP expand beyond its initial mission and redefine what we feel it means to be “multicultural”.

Specifically, we’re proud of our new partnerships with organizations such as Inquilinos Boricuas en Accion, and Centro Presente. MAPP had a very successful semester; more than 100 volunteers visited 12 sites. To us, MAPP is more than learning a new language, or rethinking ESL. It is about human rights, and how culture exceeds international borders and different tongues. It is about the importance of cultural literacy, understanding where we as different people come from. In a seemingly more interconnected world, we need to learn to solve our problems by understanding the people who surround us!

Three orange and blue cardboard fish play hide and seek: “one sea cucumber, two sea cucumber...” they call.

A boy doesn’t want to do his homework or go to bed early: “I wish I had new parents,” he writes in his diary.

These characters join a slew of others – a silver span-dex-clad shooting star, “Helga the Healthy Helper” and school children with southern drawls, among others in the CSC’s Children’s Theatre. In five skits, they teach valuable lessons to children across Boston, before bursting into choreographed dance routines.

“The plays are supposed to be funny, but we want the kids to get something from them as well,” says Matt Donnelly, Children’s Theatre Program Manager.

Divided into five troupes, 47 student volunteers spent the semester writing sketches for young children.

“The volunteers perform for kids in places that wouldn’t have an opportunity like this otherwise,” says Donnelly, a senior in the College of Communication.

The troupes travel to hospitals, after-school programs and domestic abuse shelters to perform. Volunteers do not need theatre experience to participate. They don’t join the program for an artistic outlet; they do instead to bond with the kids.

“We teach kids in a fun way,” says senior Barbara Moreno, a Children’s Theatre volunteer. “Our plays are about issues that kids deal with but have no forum to talk about. These are things teachers just lecture.”

In Moreno’s play, kids travel to a fantasized vegetable land where they learn how to eat healthy. In another, children go on a space adventure and use their imagina-tion instead of sitting in front of the TV. All the plays have a moral value.

Each troupe performed three times at the end of the semester, at three differ-ent locations. The space adventure group visited a subsidized day care center, a house for abused women, and an elementary school.

In early November before heading out on location, the volunteers gathered for a dress rehearsal.

“It’s kind of tradition to make it a little more risqué, maybe use some jokes that you wouldn’t necessarily use on site,” says Donnelly.

At the dress rehearsal, performers stifled giggles mid-line as they showed fellow troupes and friends their final products.

“I remind the volunteers when they get stressed out that the kids will laugh at anything,” says Donnelly. “Just enjoy it with a good attitude and they’ll be happy you came.”
VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHTS
by lissette martinez

We’re thanking some of this semester’s best volunteers, who have been chosen by a Program Manager as extremely reliable, committed and a pleasure to work with. Thank you to all of this semester’s volunteers!

“Watching the students get more comfortable in front of their peers and having fun performing is incredible.”
Alec Nicholson
Voices from the Middle Volunteer
CAS ‘12

“The most rewarding aspect of volunteering is expanding the children’s interests by cultivating creativity. It really does develop over time.”
Brian Lepre
Student Studio Volunteer
CGS ‘12

“On my last day, I got hugs from every kid and staff member. I love BU but it’s so nice to belong to another community as well.”
Divya Reddy
Student Studio Volunteer
CAS ‘12
“Everyone said [ASB] was life changing, and it was beyond fun. Turns out, everyone was completely right; it is life changing and I am now addicted to ASB.”

Daniel Chizzoniti
Alternative Spring Breaks Committee Chair Volunteer
CAS ‘10

“The most rewarding aspect of volunteering is seeing the children’s faces light up when they do an experiment.”

Caitlin Delaney
Wizards Volunteer
SED ‘11

“Volunteering only once a week may not feel like a lot, but really can make a difference.”

Sandra Iorio
Afterschool Volunteer
SED ‘10
Invisible Children is an organization that is not so invisible anymore thanks to the efforts of the CSC. In the spring of 2003, three moviemakers traveled to Africa in search of a story. What they found grew into something much greater. These men saw the plight of the children in Northern Uganda as the children walked for miles every night to find a safe place to sleep.

The three friends were shocked that they had never heard about this situation, which was a result of the longest running war in Africa. Because of what they saw, these men returned to America determined to spread the word about what was happening in Uganda. Thus, Invisible Children was created and the Schools for Schools Program came into existence.

One of the biggest problems for the children of Northern Uganda is the way the war has destroyed their families and made schooling a luxury. Because Invisible Children believes that education is the only way to rebuild the war torn country and solve the problems that exist there, they have focused their efforts both on ending the war and increasing educational opportunities for the children of Uganda.

The Schools for Schools program pairs American schools with schools in Uganda. The American schools raise money to help support and develop their partner school in Uganda.

Last semester, the CSC participated in this program, and will participate again in the spring. In addition to having a partner school this past semester, the MAPP program sponsored an Invisible Children night, a book drive was held, dollars were collected for the partner school, and petitions in support of ending the war in Africa were signed.

Are you interested in helping the cause or learning more about the situation? You can continue to bring in books and money for the partner school. (Any book with an ISBN number is accepted and will be sold through Better World Books to raise money for the partner school.)

To learn more about the organization check out their website: www.invisiblechildren.com. If you missed our Invisible Children night in the fall, have no fears. The CSC will help to host another Invisible Children night in the Spring.

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Project Hope had a very successful semester and World AIDS Week. The program tested over 50 people with the help of the Sidney Borum Jr. Center and Project Trust at Boston Medical Center.

Many thanks to the 60 volunteers who helped make the week possible. With a new semester already here, Project Hope has many new plans in action, including a 5K Run/Walk to support HIV/AIDS prevention and awareness. We’re extremely excited to begin planning the event with the help of volunteers!
From left: Program Manager Matt Donnelly, Graduate Intern Catherine Crider and Director of Orientation Shiney James (second from right) mingle with alums during the CSC and Office of Orientation’s Alumni Reception.

Colleen Huysman bravely walks the high ropes at the Fall Program Manager Retreat at Camp High Rock in Western Massachusetts.

Student Food Rescue Program Managers and volunteers did a bakery crawl to support the shops who donate food to the program.

Middle school students get into improv with the help of Voices from the Middle volunteers.
Spring marks an exciting new partnership with the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO)! The BSO has started a music program within the Thomas A. Edison School, and has asked Making Music volunteers to help teach the core curriculum. Not only will volunteers teach lessons, but they have been invited to see the events that the BSO will hold at the Edison school on Friday afternoons. This new partnership is helping Making Music bring music to even more children by building a music program within a school.

This fall, Making Music continued with the JP Manning Elementary School and the Farragut School. There are about 50 children learning a musical instrument at the Farragut School with the help of Making Music volunteers!

The program is also in its second year of teaching dance. There are a handful of female students who teach dance lessons, and each teacher has about 5-10 dancers. The program was also asked to join the Boston Preparatory Charter School’s Guitar Club. Three volunteers dedicate their Saturday mornings to teaching guitar at the school.

Thank you to all of Making Music’s volunteers, who helped to recruit even more teachers into the program. Their passion for music is greatly appreciated. We hope to see you all at our spring recital.

In the spring of 2008, Kat McKim traveled to Natchez, Mississippi on an Alternative Spring Breaks trip to work with orphaned and abused children.

The experience changed her: her ambitions and her future.

“It was such an intense experience,” says McKim, a College of Communication junior at the time. “It made me realize that working with kids, and in some form of social justice, had to be a part of my life in some way.”

McKim graduated from BU last spring and now lives her aspirations daily as a teacher for Teach For America (TFA). Ironically, the program placed her in the same region where she realized her ambitions a year and a half ago. Just outside of the Mississippi Delta, she teaches English to seventh graders at public school J.Z. George.

“During the week I eat, sleep, breathe lesson plans and teaching, trying to figure out what I can do to help these kids grow in their writing,” says McKim. “I have kids who are reading on a third-grade level, who can’t write sentences. It’s a number of failings in the system.”

Though a journalism major while at BU, McKim considered transferring to the School of Education. She didn’t, but pursued her interest in helping children through the CSC. She volunteered in Children’s Theatre, Afterschool tutoring and coordinated an ASB trip her senior year.

“I was always doing community service and interested in social justice,” says McKim. “So I applied to TFA, and as I got more into the interview process I started reading about educational inequality and the achievement gap. I became really invested in this fundamental problem.”

McKim wants her students to become more confident in their academic abilities, despite the problems they face. Her school lacks the funding it needs to improve because of intense racial politics, says McKim.

“People here are blatantly and openly racist,” she says. “It’s nothing we know up North.”

After her two years are up with TFA, McKim plans to continue working in a non-profit area doing something that impacts educational inequality. For now she focuses on her students, and the region that they live in.

“I want to have an impact in the upcoming school board election,” McKim says. “I’m here because I need to change the way this works.”
Volunteers decorated over 200 pumpkins during Pumpkin Palooza.

The pumpkins were donated to five homeless shelters and food pantries in the greater Boston area.

The CSC collected over 300 cans this winter in the first annual Great GSU Can-Off!

Together with the Office of Orientation and Educational Resource Center, about 600 cans were donated to help out Boston families during the holidays.

Through Angel Tree, volunteers helped out 30 Boston families. Students donated over 250 toys, clothing items, and grocery store gift cards.
I’ll be honest, after five consecutive summers of FYSOP, my memories are a little muddled and it is difficult for me to distinguish one FYSOP from the next. It is probably from a combination of sleep deprivation, the BPA in the Nalgenes, and the surge of emotions that one person cannot process in the span of a week. Nevertheless, I remember quite vividly--I think--my first FYSOP, good ol’ FYSOP 16.

I was afraid. I did not like my Issue Area and my staff and coordinators were unexplainably and unabashedly enthusiastic about Elders. They scared me, both the elders and the staff. But before coming to college, I had vowed to try new things with an open mind; albeit, I never imagined that it would be in the context of working with senior citizens. I tried the cheers, went to site, and had a great time. After FYSOP 16, I found myself a passionate advocate for elders and I wanted to keep serving the elders in my community.

Through the Community Service Center’s Joining Hands program and Little Brothers Friends of the Elderly, I became a weekly volunteer visitor to Robert, an elderly man living in the North End. Every week, for nearly 3 years, I visited my new friend. He was lonely and badly in need of a friend and I was able to give him that. Most times, we would just grab coffee and play cards or watch a ball game. Our friendship grew through jokes, mine corny, his salty and offensive. As simple as these interactions were and despite the difference in our ages, we became very close friends. Without FYSOP, I would have never challenged myself to spend time with elders, nor would I have been able to make a difference in Robert’s life.

When I look back on FYSOP and think about how much it has grown (over 200 more first-year students last year alone!), I know that other students have similarly been inspired to continue serving and engaging with their community. The fact that the program continues to impact the city of Boston with empowered student leaders well after its closing ceremony, has been the most rewarding aspect of being a part of five fantastic FYSOPulous FYSOPs.

Call me crazy, but I decided four FYSOPs just wasn’t enough, so I signed up for my fifth this summer. As the Program Manager, I couldn’t be more excited for the service, craziness and energy that will be FYSOP 21. Lazy summer days may seem so far away while we cling to our Snuggies and reach for the hot cocoa, but the planning for FYSOP 21 has already begun.

FYSOP 21 will run August 23-27, offering first-year students the opportunity to do service, learn about a specific issue area, make new friends and become acquainted with Boston. Some may see FYSOP as just another volunteer program, but the spirit, cheers, and above all, passion, truly makes FYSOP unique!

Last year, FYSOP 20 broke records with 850 first-year student volunteers, 184 staff leaders and 20,552 service hours.

This year, FYSOP continues to expand adding a 10th issue area. For now, the 10th issue area is a MYSTERY. But, the lure and mystique of a new issue area makes it that much more exciting, right? I know I always liked the mystery-flavored Dum-Dum the best. And the white mystery Airhead? Always a favorite! With the addition of a brand-spanking new issue area, first year students will be placed in smaller groups with more one-on-one interaction with staff leaders.

The new issue area will give students the opportunity to reach out and serve a whole new population in the city-at-large. A new issue area means hiring two more FYSOP coordinators, bringing the number of FYCOs to 20.

FYSOP 21 promises the possibility of online registration for first-year students. Yay Environment! Stay tuned for more exciting news about FYSOP 21. In the mean time, if you are interested in applying to be a FYSOP coordinator, have a great idea for a FYSOP issue area or just have a question about what the FYSOP is FYSOP please feel free to email fysop@bu.edu.
FYSOP 20 Environment volunteers work hard on an organic farm.

FYSOP 20 HIV/AIDS volunteers sort medical supplies at IMEC, a non-profit organization that provides developing countries with medical equipment.
Alternative Spring Breaks (ASB) has grown as a program over the last few years. This year, under the Program Managers Ariana Sherman and Zhandra Ferreira-Cesar, the changes took flight.

·Since the program started in 1987, a van was the only form of transportation to the service sites. However, ASB has now gone bicoastal. The addition of trips to Seattle, Washington, San Francisco, California, and San Juan, Puerto Rico and the reinstatement of Killeen, Texas have taken the program to the skies. These four trips will fly to their destinations. The other 31 trips that span 29 different cities will take the traditional van.

·Many volunteers are used to waiting 24 hours in advance to choose an ASB trip. This year, it has changed. Registration is now online! Instead of camping out in Metcalf or the SAC Gymnasium, ASB volunteers will sleep in the comfort of their bed. Registration will occur at 8 am on Sunday, January 31, 2010. Volunteers must rank their trips beforehand because ASB registration will resemble class registration: first come, first serve.

·Some volunteers that cannot pay the total ASB fee upfront will have the option of a payment plan. If the volunteer qualifies, they can pay just a little at a time so they can have the life changing experience.

·In order to successfully implement the changes, Ariana and Zhandra hired five committee chairs. The committee chairs include Marshall Gillette (Transportation Chair), Alisha Cooper (Registration and Databases Chair), Quincy Wright (Fundraising and Donations Chair), Adam Khalid (Social Committee) and Dan Chizzoniti (Public Relations and Advertising Chair). They specialize in these areas and supervise a committee of coordinators to complete tasks.

·Finally, ASB has branched out to social media. ASB has a blog, and each trip has a blog; all to share up-to-date information with the public (buasb.wordpress.com). ASB also had a Twitter account (@buasb) and a Facebook fan page (Boston University Alternative Spring Breaks). Check it all out to learn about future updates!

Alternative Spring Breaks coordinators held an interactive block party in the GSU Link on December 2 to teach BU students about the issues ASB addresses.
The Jackson Mann Elementary School is the latest edition to the CSC’s Siblings Program. Jackson Mann may only be in its first year with the Siblings Program, but already 40 sibling matches have been made in the past four months. Amy Cluff, the Sibs site contact at Jackson Mann, said, “There is not a day that goes by where I don’t either get asked about the program, hand out an application, receive a completed application, or some combination of those three.”

The Siblings Program is a mentoring program that pairs Boston University volunteers with elementary school students in the Allston/Brighton area. Between the three schools in the program, approximately 130 Big and Little Sib matches have been made this year. Sibling volunteers spend three to five hours every other week with their Little Sib for the entire year. Siblings Program Managers Kate Burnham and Colleen Huysman saidSibling

pairs “do a variety of activities including playing in parks, eating in BU dining halls, [and] visiting the Children’s Museum and the Aquarium.”

At Jackson Mann, a Boston Public School in Allston, Cluff recalled a second grade boy who was excited to be matched with a Sibling so he could play games on his Xbox with someone. The boy was eager to get an older brother because he has two older sisters. As she explained the program to the boy, Cluff said, “He got all quiet and asked, ‘But wait, where’s he going to sleep?’ He thought I was literally going to give him a sibling!” The boy will be matched with a Sib in January.

“This mentoring program is making a big impact on the lives of a lot of students at Jackson Mann and we’re so grateful to be partnered with the BU Siblings Program,” said Cluff.

Public schools in under-resourced areas such as the Mississippi Delta often face a lack of funding and resources. Aiming to address these educational disparities, two BU seniors, Natasha Gacinski and Emily Hicks, started the Delta Initiative last September.

The Delta Initiative believes that giving school supplies is the most significant and immediate way to help students in need. The founders asked teachers in the Mississippi Delta public schools for their classroom wish lists. They then approached local businesses and college students to donate funds and school supplies.

In only six months, the Delta Initiative collected over 100 boxes of school supplies and $500 in donations, mostly from students. They were able to collect every single supply teachers asked for and even gathered extra supplies which they donated to the Natchez Children’s Home, a popular Alternative Spring Breaks site that works with neglected and abused children in Mississippi. Natasha and Emily hand-delivered the donations in early January.

This semester the Delta Initiative is looking for dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers to participate in their efforts. If you are interested in volunteering, please email bucsc@bu.edu for more details.