



CSTEP Spotlight



Diversity Enables Discovery

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Fall 2007 Volume 2

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NEXT CSTEP MEETINGS:

"Rx for Success"
Pharmacy Panel

Wednesday, November 28th
3:00—5:00 pm
Location: TBA

"End of the Semester Reception"

Monday, December 3rd
3:00—5:00 pm
209 Norton

COLLEGIATE SCIENCE &
TECHNOLOGY ENTRY
PROGRAM
(CSTEP)
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JOURNEYS BEYOND EXCELLENCE

Guaranteed 4.0 Seminar

On September 26th, at least 200 students crammed into Filmore 170 with one question in mind: How can I attain a 4.0 this semester? CSTEP sponsored the "Guaranteed 4.0 Seminar" which was presented by Donna O. Johnson of Dallas, Texas. Years of educational research on the learning patterns of students inspired Johnson and Y.C. Chen to co-author 'The Guaranteed 4.0'. They have presented this workshop at various institutions across the country, including: Cornell, Stanford, UCLA, University of Michigan, U.C Berkeley, and Howard University.

Students were reminded that academic achievement is contingent on a number of factors that can affect their performance. They listened attentively as the "3 Step Plan" emphasized stress management, time management and strategic classroom preparation are critical to making the grade. Johnson actively engaged students with the "3 Step Plan."

By the end of the workshop, students were repeating Johnson's Bullet Point Method: Bullet Point Reading (BPR); Bullet Point Notes (BPN); Bullet Point Concepts (BPC); and Professor Office Hours (POH). Students left the seminar with a renewed sense of determination in incorporating the 4.0 Plan into their schedule. Our office has received positive feedback from many of the students who plan to make the grade. Thanks to Johnson, it's no longer about simply receiving a 4.0, but rather about sticking to the "3 Step Plan."



Letters From the New Graduate Coordinators

Mary Akuamoah-Boateng

“We must reach back at least twice in life, once outward for help and then backwards to help those behind us.”

Author Unknown



Dear CSTEP Students,

I hope that you are as excited as I am about all the possibilities that this year will bring! We have so much to learn and discover, and it all starts when we take action. I am a new Graduate Assistant here at CSTEP. I look forward to meeting you all to discuss any issue that you might be facing.

I have a BS in Chemistry from the University at Buffalo. Currently, I am a first year graduate student in the School of Pharmacology & Toxicology. During my undergraduate years, I was very involved with various CSTEP programs, including the 15th Annual CSTEP Statewide Student Conference entitled, Journeys Beyond Academic Excellence; CSTEP Day of Service; the CSTEP 20th Anniversary Banquet; CSTEP Research Internship; and the Academic Day of Excellence where I presented my research. I tried to take advantage of everything that was accessible to me. The CSTEP program has taught me to be who I am now. I hope to share these experiences with you and help you all become successful.

Please stop by the office to see me if you encounter any academic or social problems. I hope I can be of great help to you.

Best regards,

Mary Akuamoah-Boateng

Sandy A. Curtis

“You were born to win, but to be a winner you must plan to win, prepare to win, and expect to win.”

Zig Ziglar



Dear CSTEP students,

I am a new Graduate Assistant here at CSTEP and a second year law student. I am grateful for the opportunity to work with CSTEP in advising a group of talented and ambitious UB students. As an alumna of the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) at SUNY at Stony Brook, I am committed to the mission of the CSTEP program. It was my involvement in EOP and other programs at my undergraduate institution that sparked my interest in attending law school. Thus, I cannot stress the importance of utilizing all the resources available to you here at the University.

I am a fellow for the Council on Legal Education Opportunity (CLEO), and participated in various CLEO programs including, the six week summer institute in San Diego, California; pre-law preparation programs (ASAP and AIE) in Atlanta, Georgia; CLEO Job Fair and Career Development in Detroit, Michigan; and the Thurgood Marshall Leadership Institute. I am interested in different areas of the law including entertainment, employment and products liability. I am here as a resource to help you make an informed decision as you complete your undergraduate studies and pursue graduate school. Like many of you who are applying to graduate school, I found the application process daunting and at times overwhelming. However, I have joined the CSTEP family to help you make a steady transition. I encourage you to stop by the office to meet if we have not already met. I optimistically look forward to meeting you in the upcoming weeks.

Best regards,

Sandy Curtis

CSTEP Summer Research Program

This past summer, ten talented students participated in the CSTEP Summer Research Program. They conducted research with distinguished UB faculty, attended a research methods course, lectures, workshops, and fieldtrips. The CSTEP Summer Research Program is designed to offer undergraduate students the tools to prepare for graduate study by engaging in research projects. The program provided an intensive research experience to enhance the competitiveness of students pursuing the allied health professions. Participants are better equipped to gain admission into graduate programs. To top it off, students were awarded a stipend of \$3,000. Students worked with both faculty members and lab mentors on their research projects. The lab environment provided students with several challenges: including exposure to research techniques, as well as presenting their findings at the CSTEP/AMP Research Symposium. The symposium is a forum for students to present their research posters in front of faculty, lab mentors, peers, and University staff.



The other components of the program included a research methods seminar, graduate school panel discussions, the UB Graduate School Diversity Day, and taking the Kaplan GRE diagnostic test. The research was taught by UB doctoral student and CSTEP alumnus, Shola Olabisi. The seminar expanded the students' knowledge of research methods and gave them an insight into what graduate research entails.

It was not all work and no play. The program was supplemented by enrichment activities, allowing students to contribute to the Buffalo community. Interns participated in civic activities such as, painting a house for Brush Up Buffalo (see below) and visited Medical Research Corridor. Students also enjoyed local recreational activities by visiting Darien Lake, Juneteenth, Taste of Buffalo, and a Buffalo Bisons baseball game.

GIVING BACK: THE CSTEP WAY

This summer, the CSTEP Summer Research Interns participated in Brush Up Buffalo. Brush Up Buffalo is a not-for-profit organization whose primary mission is the revitalization of neighborhoods in Buffalo. Brush Up Buffalo organizes an annual, one-day event that brings together sponsors, donors, and teams of community-minded volunteers to paint the exteriors of homes owned by low income Buffalonians.

Each year, Brush Up Buffalo selects a Buffalo neighborhood for the one-day event. Teams of volunteers were formed from local businesses, unions, community groups, city and county government. This year there were an estimated 1,000 participants. Each team worked side-by-side with members of the Painter's District Council #4 to paint nearly 20 homes, all in one day at NO COST to the homeowner. The CSTEP Summer Research Team worked alongside a team from the Greater Buffalo Savings Bank to spruce up a home on the city's Westside. The weather was beautiful, the paint was plentiful, and the house at 253 Whitney Avenue turned out great! All who participated left the experience inspired to continue in the spirit of giving.

Participating in Brush Up Buffalo allowed students to appreciate the benefits of civic engagement by seeing the permanent difference that people can make in just a matter of hours. Likewise, our responsibility here at CSTEP is to show students that by committing to small changes in their lives, the results can be long-lasting.



CSTEP Research Intern Profiles

BRIANNA CLARK

“The most radical, powerful act ever undertaken by any human being remains the act of committing oneself, beyond reservation, to a worthy personal mission.”

Christopher Childs

Brianna Clark is a sophomore majoring in Electrical Engineering. She was born and raised in Buffalo, NY and is one of the Energy Systems interns working on signal processes. She has worked in the Energy System Institute with Dr. Jennifer Zirnheld, Deputy Director for the Department since her freshman year at the University at Buffalo. In the lab, Brianna focuses her research on signal processing.

Signal processing is important because it is used in many electrical devices today. She uses a mathematical program called Matlab to process signals. After having mastered the program, Brianna is also responsible for teaching Matlab to other lab assistants.

She enjoys working in the lab because her experience has had a positive effect on her grades and has also improved her understanding of electrical engineering. She plans to attend graduate school to obtain her masters in electrical engineering. She believes that conducting research widens your understanding of the areas of your field. Her advice to you is to start now because it is never too late.



MOSES VAUGHAN



Moses is part of a team working on a pedagogical software design. He is a native of Brooklyn, NY, currently in his senior year majoring in Computer Science. Initially, his plans when he started UB were to become a medical doctor or a lawyer but after his freshman year, he chose to do something that was interesting to him, Computer Science. In this field, he enjoys the coursework classes and his grades have really reflected his interest. He is currently working with Dr. Carl Alphonse in the department of Computer Science. In the lab, his responsibilities include working on software tools called screen which helps beginning students learn about software design.

His contribution initially is to build documentation for the tool and become familiar with the tool developed, he will be resolving bugs in the system and contributing functionality. His future goals include obtaining his Ph.D. in the field of Computer Science. He believes that performing research as an undergraduate is very important especially if you aspire to attend graduate school. It will give you a competitive edge as opposed to students who apply to graduate school without research experience. He advises students “If you have no experience in research try your best to get some, whether it is the summer or 5 or 10 hours a week during the academic year. It is also a great stress reliever.

ERICA MYRTIL

“If you ever need a helping hand, you’ll find one at the end of your arm.”

Yiddish Proverb

Erica is a senior majoring in Political Science with a concentration in International Relations and plans to attend law school. Currently, she is continuing her research internship with Dr. Claude E. Welch on his next book, “Protecting Human Rights Globally”. Her responsibilities are to find and summarize data pertaining to human rights Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) as documentation for a chapter in her mentor’s new book. She enjoys her responsibilities because they include discovering information about human rights problems internationally and attempting to alleviate human rights violations. Her future goal is to work around the world addressing human rights issues.



She believes that participating in research is especially critical for underrepresented minorities because it provides a competitive advantage that is much needed in the job market. Beyond that, research is an ideal way to explore a field and determine whether it is an interest for a future career. Research trains undergraduates in crucial areas that are helpful in graduate programs such as obtaining information, analyzing data, and possibly composing a thesis. Her advice for upperclassmen is to consider research within a subject matter that they are interested in and find a professor who will supervise the work. You can look in the university faculty directory to search for a professor who is doing research on a topic of your interest. Students can benefit greatly from helping professors research a topic and assisting in the final compilation of the project.

CSTEP Students Study Abroad

Each summer, many UB students study abroad in different countries to learn about new cultures, people and places that interest them. UB students have studied abroad on nearly every continent in the world, including countries in Africa, Europe, Australia, and South America! They study with other students from all over the world which makes it interesting. On November 2nd, CSTEP presented a workshop, "Studying Abroad on a Shoestring" which allowed study abroad students to share their experience with fellow students. During the workshop students received information about the different study abroad opportunities. Below are two CSTEP students who recently studied abroad.

ASHLEY LEE



Ashley Lee, a native of Guyana, is a senior pre-law student majoring in Legal Studies and History. This summer, Ashley spent six weeks studying abroad in Nice, France taking 9 credits. She found this to be an once in a life experience and encourages everyone who has an opportunity to travel abroad. Although, some study abroad programs may require intermediate or advanced language skills, she found that is not always the case. Ashley participated through SUNY Oswego's study abroad program, for students with basic comprehension of French. She spent nearly 5 hours each day in a classroom taking intensive French 101. After class she was able to put her language skills to practice.

"The financial cost cannot compare to the rewarding experience you will gain," says Ashley. She had no qualms about the financial sacrifice she made to travel. She fondly recalls the city of Nice, France and the never-ending pebble-free beaches along the Mediterranean sea. Once there, she traveled to Spain and Italy and was warmly embraced and welcomed by every culture.

Ashley's advice to students: *If you have to take out loans to study abroad, once you finish school you will have years to pay it back. However, once you are finished with college, work or graduate school obligations may not allow you to have a similar six week experience. Traveling abroad killed my ignorance!"*

RESHONA CELESTE GEORGE



This summer, Reshona Celeste George, a Pre-law student majoring in Political Science and English at UB visited Italy with other UB students to study the Italian language for one month in Rome. The classes were organized for students to visit historical sites, experience the culture, enjoy local food, and learn survival skills necessary to travel in a foreign country. She says the experience was amazing and recommends the study abroad program to every student. In Rome, she visited many historical places such as the Colosseum (originally the Flavin Amphitheatre), the Pantheon (Temple of all Gods), Mount Vesuvius (a dangerous volcano) and Florence, the capital city of Italy.

Of all Reshona's Italian experiences, her visit to the Colosseum thrilled her the most. It was here that condemned prisoners fought off hungry lions and brave gladiators died in combat. This great symbol of eternal Rome still excites visitors' imaginations as evident from the hordes of tourists waiting to get in. Reshona made many friends in Italy and hopes to study abroad again.



Distinguished CSTEP Alumni

JOEL URENA



Joel Urena, a native of Jackson Heights, Queens is a first year student at UB Medical School. As an undergraduate he majored in biochemical pharmacology and medicinal chemistry. His decision to become a medical doctor began when he was twelve years old. At the time, he was unaware of the difficult journey ahead. However, when he eventually faced several personal obstacles, his determination to become a medical doctor only grew stronger. Before transferring to UB, Joel attended CUNY Manhattan Community College and majored in Engineering Science. As a full time student he worked full time at the City University of New York Law School, and developed relationships with faculty members, who encouraged him to pursue his dream.

Did you participate in programs that helped to solidify your interest in medicine?

"First, while a student at CUNY Manhattan Community College I volunteered in the child and psychiatric unit at Elmhurst hospital and tutored and mentored patients. Then I volunteered in the Emergency Room at New York Queens Hospital, and it was reinforced there. I participated in 4 summer research programs, including research in the pediatric unit at the University of Iowa and engineering department at Penn State University. While at UB, I participated in research through the CSTEP program."

How did you learn of these research fellowships?

"The LSAMP program at CUNY Manhattan was instrumental in this process. They provided a list of research programs for minority students."

What advice do you have for students who are interested in pursuing medicine?

"Students should utilize the resources CSTEP and LSAMP provide. Also, it is important to develop relationships with the faculty members who are willing to mentor you."

SHAHAR AZOULAY



Shahar is a first year student at Yale Law School. As an undergraduate at UB, he worked full time while completing a double major in African American Studies and American History in May 2007. He transferred from SUNY Binghamton, where he was active in the Binghamton Prisoner Support Network and the Off Campus Student Association. His involvement in the Prisoner Support Network first exposed him to the criminal justice system. He completed his honors thesis on the prison system as an industrial complex, while juxtaposing it to the war on drugs and terrorism. As the first in his family to graduate from college and attend law school, he encourages everyone to know it is possible to attain your goals.

What advice would you share with students interested in attending law school?

"It is never too early to start preparing. Try to have a competitive grade point average, and LSAT score. However, your scores are not determinative: strong letters of recommendation and a compelling personal statement are also important. Students should also take advantage of the CSTEP programs including the CSTEP Kaplan scholarship and the personal statement review services."

How can a student build a strong relationship with a faculty member?

"Getting good grades in your professor's class can help you to establish a relationship. Here at UB, professors are friendly and want to help mentor students. If you take the initiative they will respond and you can learn a lot from them. I went to lunch with my professors to discuss topics from class. It helps to take different classes with some of the same professors; you will gain a mentor and a friend. This will make your professor more willing to write a strong letter of recommendation when you apply to graduate school."

Any final advice: "It is important to not be selfish. I remind myself that my success also means a lot to my family, friends, and community which makes it easier to remain motivated to do the work."

"The only thing that stands between a man and what he wants from life is often merely the will to try it and the faith to believe that it is possible."

Richard M. Devos

"Our attitudes control our lives. Attitudes are a secret power working 24 hours a day, for good or bad. It is of paramount importance that we know how to harness and control this great force."

Tom Blandi

CSTEP Excellence Scholarship

CSTEP is proud to offer two new scholarships for talented CSTEP students, who exemplify a commitment to excellence in their academics, and their community. This competitive scholarship is supported by donations given largely by alumni, staff, and supporters of the CSTEP program. **This scholarship is exclusively for CSTEP students.** The First Annual CSTEP Excellence Scholarship will be awarded to two CSTEP students: one undergraduate and one graduate CSTEP alumnus. CSTEP students are encouraged to apply for this scholarship by submitting a strong personal statement which reflects your dedication to academic excellence, demonstrating civic participation, and involvement in the CSTEP program and UB or Buffalo community. Recipients of the scholarship will be notified at the beginning of the Spring semester, and will be featured in the Spring 2008 CSTEP Spotlight Newsletter.



In addition to completing a brief application, the requirements for the CSTEP Undergraduate Scholarship are as follows:

- Must be a current CSTEP student
- Must have an excellent academic record of 3.0 or better
- Must demonstrate a commitment towards community service
- Must submit two (2) letters of recommendation
- Must submit a two-page essay on why they deserve to be the first CSTEP scholarship recipient

In addition to completing a brief application, the requirements for the CSTEP Graduate Alumnus Scholarship are as follows:

- Must be an alumnus of the University at Buffalo CSTEP Program
- Must be a current graduate student at UB
- Must have a minimum 3.0 GPA
- Must show a commitment towards community service
- Must submit two (2) letters of recommendation
- Must submit a two-page essay on why they deserve to be the first CSTEP scholarship recipient

The deadline for completed applications is Friday December 14, 2007.
GOOD LUCK!

“Rx for Success/Pharmacy Panel”

Wednesday, November 28th, 2007

3:00 pm

Location: TBA

“Rx for Success” is a panel consisting of current UB pharmacy students. Undergraduates are encouraged to attend this panel discussion to hear first-hand recommendations on how to prepare for pharmacy school. This will be an interactive forum for all undergraduate students to gain valuable information on the graduate pharmacy program.

“CSTEP End of the Semester Reception”

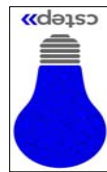
Monday, December 3rd

3:00 pm

209 Norton Hall



Diversity Enables Discovery



CSTEP OFFICE
222 NORTON HALL
BUFFALO, NY 14260

CSTEP Mission Statement: *The Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP) provides services and activities to enhance and increase underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students' entry into CSTEP targeted professions. CSTEP will meet these objectives by continuing to provide the following services and programs: a structured multi-year program with academic and career counseling components and an array of services, consisting of the following: academic advisement, individualized tutoring, cooperative study groups to supplement lectures, paid research/internship opportunities in CSTEP targeted professions, academic and career development workshops to provide information and maintain interest in CSTEP targeted professions, Kaplan scholarships and workshops to prepare for graduate and professional school, mentoring opportunities, monthly student meetings, bi-monthly newsletters, attendance to local and regional conferences, and other enrichment activities.*