



CSTEP Spotlight

Diversity Enables Discovery



Spring 2008 Volume I

CSTEP Keys to Financial Success Workshop

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Upcoming CSTEP Event:

Student Recognition Dinner
Friday April 25, 2008
4:00pm Pistachios
Student Union

On Friday March 28, 2008 CSTEP sponsored the “Keys to Financial Success Workshop” to educate students on minimizing student debt and the importance of establishing a strong FICO score. The presentation was delivered by Olivia West, a UB alumna and former CSTEP student with a Bachelors of Science in Industrial Engineering. Ms. West began the workshop reminding students that they have already started on the road to making good financial investments: their education. However, while making this important investment students should be educated consumers. Students learned how to acquire their free credit report, how the FICO score is calculated, and utilizing scholarships and university resources to minimize college debt. For many students this was the first time they learned about the factors which can affect their FICO score. Many shared their experience of maxing out their credit cards and late payments. The majority of students mentioned they had no knowledge of the interest rates on their credit cards or their saving accounts. However, their responses were not surprising. Rather, it was an accurate reflection of many college students who unfortunately do not consider the results of their financial decisions.

Ms. West shared her personal experiences financing her college education, including working 2 jobs during one summer to purchase her first car. During the academic year she served as a Resident Assistant, a decision that significantly decreased her education debt. She urged students to develop good money management while in school, because the implications can have far reaching effects. For example, some employers conduct credit report checks on prospective employees, considering creditworthiness a reflection of character and integrity. Students left the workshop cognizant of one fact, when it comes to money matters “if they fail to prepare, then they are preparing to fail.”

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STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

“The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack in will.”

Vince Lombardi

As the summer approaches, consider maximizing your academic experience at UB. Study abroad programs are an excellent opportunity to combine your academic interest while learning another language. As an undergraduate, studying abroad can be a rich and rewarding experience that you will appreciate for a lifetime. It is an unique opportunity to immerse yourself in a different culture. For students who are interested in learning a second language, there is no greater teacher, than to live in a non-English speaking environment. UB offers study abroad programs in the summer, spring, and fall, semesters and in countries on almost every continent.

Students who are interested in graduate or professional education should not underestimate the value of studying abroad. Many graduate and professional school Admission committees look favorably on candidates who have capitalized on their academic experience through studying abroad. Furthermore, it provides a creative and engaging subject to write about in a personal statement. Ashley Lee and Reshona George, CSTEP students who studied abroad last summer consider their experience life-changing. Students can use financial aid and most campus-based scholarships to fund a study abroad program. Below is a list of some of the countries UB students can study in through the UB Study Abroad program. In addition to the following countries, there are more than 400 study abroad programs in the US available to UB students.

Austria	France	China	United Kingdom
Australia	Germany	Costa Rica	Japan
Belgium	Hungary	France	Italy
Brazil	Ireland	Denmark	Senegal

University at Buffalo Scholarships for Study Abroad

Fenton Scholarship: Annually awards a maximum of 4 scholarships to UB undergraduates with financial need who are participating in their first study abroad program.

Timothy J. Rutenber Memorial Scholarship: Awarded to students studying abroad in Africa.

John D. Gallatin International Honors Scholarship: Awarded to UB Honors Program enrolled Scholars.

Linda Rock Memorial Scholarship: For UB students with a major in French, Spanish, or Italian.

Maria Becker Memorial Scholarship: For UB students with a major in French.

Milton Plesur and Schoellkopf Awards for Study Abroad: For UB students with a major in History.

The Rachel and Jacob Bernstein Fund for Sociology: For UB students with a major in Sociology.

College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) Study Abroad Scholarship: Open to all UB students within CAS.

Carl Amrhein Scholarship: Students within the College of Arts & Sciences who take part in the exchange program at the University of Toronto.

Office of Intl. Ed/Study Abroad Programs Scholarship Program: Open to all UB students studying on a UB program for semester, academic year, or summer.

For more information: <http://inted.oie.buffalo.edu/studyabroad/sascholarship.asp>
UB Study Abroad Office: 210 Talbert Hall

“It is hard to fail, but it is worse never to have tried to succeed.”

Theodore
Roosevelt

THANK YOU ELIZABETH COLUCCI



As the academic year comes to an end, CSTEP recognizes the support the Alliance for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) has provided to numerous students pursuing graduate school education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) professions. Our office appreciates the dedication Elizabeth Colucci, AGEP Director, has shown in her commitment to increase the number of underrepresented minority students pursuing doctoral degrees and faculty careers in STEM. CSTEP students continue to benefit from the resources offered by AGEP, including the monthly research luncheons, and research internship funding opportunities. The research luncheons have served as a valuable forum for encouraging undergraduates to join the pipeline. The rich experience they encounter at the workshops is the impetus encouraging them to do research. "It serves as a unique venue for graduate students to share their research on complex, but important broad concepts of research" said Ms. Colucci.

A mutually beneficial relationship has emerged between the services AGEP and CSTEP provide to students. CSTEP students acquire early exposure to graduate school, a vivid reminder that admission to graduate programs is competitive but attainable. AGEP remains integrally connected with the University departments, including: Graduate Admissions; CSTEP; LS AMP; and the McNair Scholars Program. Ms. Colucci believes working with these programs is fundamentally important to raising awareness among undergraduates about pursuing graduate school. Ms. Colucci's continual work with various departments in the University is a testament that she envisions the success of AGEP as integrally tied to the mission of the UB community. In 2006, Ms. Colucci and Christine Wingo, former LS AMP coordinator, formed the Undergraduate Research Team to discuss how to leverage resources to provide more opportunities for undergraduates. AGEP continues to increase interest in graduate study and enhance recruitment of doctoral students through targeted activities to undergraduates. It has increased the retention of doctoral students through

2008 CSTEP & STEP SHADOW DAY

On Monday February 11, 2008 CSTEP students continued the CSTEP tradition of community service and civic involvement at the annual CSTEP/STEP Shadow Day. CSTEP undergraduates from each academic year volunteered to have a high school junior shadow them in class for a half day. High school students in the STEP program had the unique opportunity to sit in a college class at UB. Students also received a tour of the North Campus. "Lifting while climbing," reflects the action of the enthusiastic CSTEP undergraduates who volunteered on this day. Our goal was to inspire high school students interested in pursuing STEM and the licensed professions to have a early glimpse of the reality of college life. Particularly, the reality that STEM majors entail a rigorous coursework and require diligence and discipline. Undergraduates volunteered to show the high school juniors that one day they can also attend a major research university and pursue a STEM major.

CSTEP recognizes the STEP Director, Antwon Barlow, who consistently seeks to build bridges with CSTEP, and other departments at the University at Buffalo. His vision for the day was to ensure STEP students capitalized on the Shadow Day experience. The students were definitely prepared and asked thought provoking questions and demanded candid responses from their shadow day mentors. Our office hopes the insight shared on this day will be beneficial to students as they begin their college application process.



CSTEP RESEARCH INTERNS

KOFI ASENSO-MENSAH



Kofi Asenso-Mensah is a junior majoring in Biomedical Sciences. Before starting his undergraduate career, he knew he wanted to pursue a career in the health professions. However, he was uncertain whether it should be in pharmacy, nursing, dentistry, or medicine. Therefore, he chose Biomedical Sciences because it allowed him to consolidate all the pre-requisites for the different health professions, and by his second semester he was focused on becoming a medical doctor. Kofi was recently selected as a CSTEP Top Ten Scholar for exemplifying academic excellence by consistently maintaining a superior grade point average. He balances his rigorous course work while remaining an active student. In the summer of 2007, he conducted research in the Premedical Academic Enrichment Program Level II (SPAEP II) at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. He attributes his continued success to utilizing CSTEP resources including, programs such as, "Beyond the Bachelors" the 8th Bi-Annual Minority Graduate School Awareness Conference; Rx for Success; and the CSTEP Kaplan Scholarship. At the "Beyond the Bachelors" lecture Kofi was inspired by the keynote speaker Dr. Calvin Mackie who reminded him that persistence and motivation have made him who he is today.

"Whenever you have a goal in mind to pursue something productive, not only for yourself, but for the future service of mankind, someone will always help you along the way."

Kofi
Asenso-Mensah

How did your presence at the conference impact you?

"While at the conference I presented my research poster entitled, Biocompatibility Evaluation of Pediatric Ventricular Assist Devices in Ovines to spectators and judges. I enjoyed the keynote address given by Tavis Smiley, a radio and commentator. His message entitled "Enlighten, Encourage, and Empower," made me think deeper about why I want to enter the field of medicine. This was a poignant reminder of the true meaning of being a leader, which is based on how much you love people and are willing to serve them."

How has your research experience solidified your career aspirations?

"After my research experience in Pittsburgh I have decided to combine a career in research and medicine. However, I doubted that I would be a competitive candidate for the MD/PhD program, because I would compete against students who have 3 solid years of research as undergraduates. However, I learned many physicians are highly involved in research, and some medical schools allow MD candidates to transfer into MD/PhD programs. I came to the conclusion I will apply for the MD program and conduct research throughout my career."

JASMINE WORTHY

Jasmine Worthy, a native of Buffalo, is a senior majoring in Industrial & Systems Engineering. She chose engineering because of her interest in research and development and understanding how systems work efficiently and effectively. Her internship experience has positively impacted her academic pursuits. As an intern at the Universal Design Center she learned as an Industrial Engineer, she can combine the traditional roles of an engineer such as design, while focusing on human interaction with systems and machines. She is a member of the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), because it is instrumental in educating the community about what engineers do and their contributions to society.

Jasmine attributes her continued support to a strong support network of family and friends. She believes the relentless efforts of mentors including: Mr. Drexel Gidney, Engineering Advisor; Shanna Crump-Owens, CSTEP Director; and Dr. Letitia Thomas-Rogers, Acker Scholar Advisor, cannot be understated. "These mentors have guided me on my path to becoming the epitome of an Industrial Engineer." Jasmine's commitment to excelling academically has paid off well, as she begins her career as an Industrial Engineer at a Fortune 500 Company this upcoming August 2008.

"My family has always told me I can achieve anything as long as I stay focused."

Jasmine
Worthy

CSTEP ALUMNI UPDATES:

RICHARD AIZAGA

Richard Aizaga is a graduate student in the Education program and a Arthur Schomberg fellow. He received his Bachelor of Sciences in Exercise Science and Nutrition in May 2007. He chose this major because he wanted to become a Physical Therapist or Chiropractor. For 3 years as an undergraduate he was a CSTEP Research Intern, who volunteered at the VA Hospital and Kaleida Health Facility through the CSTEP internship program. He believes this experience helped him to get his foot in the door of the professional world. However, his internship experiences were life changing, and helped him to realize his true passion: teaching. After graduate school he hopes to return to a inner city public school in New York and teach science.

How did your internship experience help to solidify your career pursuit?

“After spending 3 years in the health setting, I honestly became tired of the same routine. Though injuries come in many different forms, the regimen for recovery is somewhat similar for each. Teaching is similar to health because you get to help people, so I feel that my energy and enthusiasm would be better suited for teaching. There is more latitude in education and I feel that the flexibility given to teachers, combined with the unique individuals in each classroom, make teaching a very rewarding, yet challenging profession.”

What advice would you share with undergraduates who are interested in pursuing a similar career path?

“Get an internship and spend as much time there as possible. If you stay at an internship long enough, you will be able to experience all the aspects of the profession, good and bad. Internships are crucial, it is better to find out that you don't like a certain career before committing to an expensive graduate or professional program.”

Do you have any mentors who advised you as an undergraduate?

“I received incredible support from my family and friends. They have been very supportive of my decision to teach and it would not have been an easy transition without them. I also owe a huge thanks to Shanna Crump-Owens, CSTEP staff, Dr. Radhika Suresh, Dr. Jennifer Lawrence and Dr. Xiufeng Liu for helping me in securing the Arthur A. Schomberg Fellowship.”

OLAYEMI OLA



Olayemi Ola graduated in 2006 with a Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences. Early in her undergraduate career she resolved she wanted to dedicate her life to helping others, as a Medical Doctor. Today, she is a first year medical student at the University of Antigua, School of Medicine. Olayemi has found the coursework rigorous requiring a firm commitment and passion to excel. She hopes to return to New York to complete her residency. She first learned she could attend a medical school abroad from her sister, who was studying there a year before she started.

What were your first impression of the University of Antigua, School of Medicine?

“My first impression about the school is its commitment to giving students who are interested in the medical field an opportunity to learn and practice medicine. It has diligent professors who are willing to help and teach the students everything they need to know to do well and succeed in their medical career.”

How is the education system abroad compared to education in the US?

“Education abroad is harder because you do not have all the resources to study, but it is also helpful because there are not as many distractions as in the US. The education styles, such as the hours of class time and course content are similar. Overall, it is a matter of pushing oneself to excelling in school whether close to home or away.”

Would you encourage any CSTEP student to apply to medical school abroad?

“I would encourage them to research the particular school even before applying to the school. Work hard but it makes it a lot easier when you have a passion for medicine.”

CONGRATULATIONS

CSTEP is pleased to recognize the following students as they approach the end of their career at the University at Buffalo. Our office wish them success in their future endeavors, as they continue they begin graduate and professional programs at competitive institutions throughout the United States.



- Jessica Isaac University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy
- Frank Acheampong Massachusetts College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences
- Sherry Adjapong New York University DPT Program
- Erica Myrtil University of Miami School of Law
- Moses Vaughan Columbia University School of Engineering
- Ngozi Agbasionwe University at Buffalo School of Pharmacy
- Wilberforce Osei Massachusetts College of Pharmacy & Health Sciences
- Aditi Bhardwaj University at Buffalo School of Law

“The quality of a man’s life is in direct proportion to his commitment to excellence, regardless of his chosen field of endeavor.”

Vince Lombardi

2008 CSTEP Excellence Scholarship Recipients

Kofi Asenso-Mensah is the undergraduate recipient and a junior Biomedical Sciences major. He was inspired by Dr. Benjamin Hays’ statement: “I have only just a minute, only sixty seconds in it. Forced upon me, can’t refuse it. Didn’t seek it, didn’t choose it, but it’s up to me to use it. I must suffer if I lose it; give account if I abuse it. Just a tiny little minute, but eternity is in it.” “Utilizing my minute has allowed me to break my ignorance and withstand all doubts and insecurities about my capability to succeed.”

Folarin Erogbogbo is the graduate recipient is a third year Ph.D. candidate in the Chemical and Biological Engineering Department. Folarin has served as a research mentor for over 7 CSTEP students, a Judge at the CSTEP Poster Competition, and on the graduate school panel. “CSTEP has introduced me to an environment that fosters academic excellence; in return I have created environments that foster academic excellence for CSTEP students.”

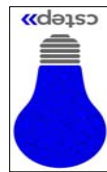
“If you wish success in life, make perseverance your bosom friend, experience your wise counselor, caution your elder brother, and hope your guardian genius.”

Joseph Addison

CSTEP DAY OF SERVICE

Applications also available online at: <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/kiap/scholarships/pos.htm>

Diversity Enables Discovery



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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.*