

Educator wants health science program expanded

By RON FANFAIR

Based on the overwhelming success of a 15-year program that provides Black and Aboriginal students in the Greater Toronto Area with early exposure to the health sciences, educator Harold Brathwaite is advocating for a similar initiative nationwide.

The University of Toronto's Faculty of Medicine and the Toronto District School Board collaborated with the Association for the Advancement of Blacks in the Health Sciences (AABHS) to start the pilot project in 1994 because of a deep concern about the lack of minorities in the health professions and other professional faculties at the U of T. First Nations students joined the program in 1997.

Almost 99 per cent of the participants have enrolled in colleges and universities, and many have gone on to become successful professionals in fields ranging from naturopathy and occupational therapy to optometry, law and financial consulting.

"This program can have a successful impact across the country," Brathwaite, Canada's first Black director of education,



This year's University of Toronto summer mentorship scholarship program winners.

Photo by Ron Fanfair

said in his keynote speech at last Saturday night's graduation ceremony for this year's participants. "Imagine if we can get schools across the province and universities to build on this initiative. What this confirms is that appropriate intervention, advo-

cacy and mentorship do work and it suggests that there are many young people out there who, if they can benefit from such a program, would obviously add to the number of students who have been successful in our community.

"We need to get some more schools participating and also universities that need to get the message that programs like the U of T summer mentorship program for minorities must be regarded as integrative programs

See GRADUATES Pg. 17

LAWYERS... LAWYERS... LAWYERS...

Graduates encouraged to become mentors

CONTINUED FROM Pg. 1

and not extra projects. These are part of what building communities is all about and part of the outreach program of the university. In fact, when we do this, we make our students feel that they belong. We are making young people citizens who are privately happy and publicly useful."

Brathwaite, a former director of education with the Peel District School Board and the executive director of the Retired Teachers of Ontario, congratulated this year's graduates and encouraged them to become mentors and advocates of the program.

"You are special," the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund (Canada) chair told the young people. "You give us your time in the summer when you could have been working for a few bucks at McDonalds or Tim Horton's. From those of you who have been blessed with this opportunity, much is expected... Nothing is more convincing than a young person going back to their school and talking about the experience. Make sure that your experience is known to others."

The month-long program in July provides students with a high-school co-op credit and the opportunity to reach maximum levels of academic achievement. Students from four school boards are assigned to hospitals and provided with opportunities to interact with graduates and students in health care programs.

"The summer mentorship program is designed to provide a focus for students with both an interest and aptitude for the sciences and particularly for those who otherwise would not have the mentorship opportunities available," explained summer mentorship program chair, Diana Alli, who is also the senior officer for Student Services, Community Partnerships and Student Life at the U of T.

"The intention is to establish mentoring relationships to keep the flames of inquiry and aspiration burning intensely, and to provide adequate counseling to ensure that all the milestones on the long road to medicine, in particular, and other fields in the health sciences are un-

derstood and met."

Toronto District School Board student, Wallis Edwards, said the program enabled her to develop an understanding of the university application process and the possibility of attending university has become more realistic.

"Five months ago, being a medical doctor seemed to be an unrealistic goal for me," she said. "Now it's a concrete goal. I have direction and I know how to set goals for myself. I know I am much more prepared for university."

Program participants are also exposed to Problem Based Learning and Anatomy Demonstrations and Self Directed Learning. Students were assigned a research project on a health science topic which they defended and on which they were judged. The top four were presented with prizes last Saturday. They were Marcella Cooper, Monique Francois, Amanda Mukwedeza and Melissa Patania.

The other graduates were Sandra Aifuwa, Oluwatobi Aina, Diya Basil, Sherane Bayne, Varun Bideshi, Kwaku Boahen, Victoria De Pencier, Wallis Edwards, Farhia Farah, Amanda Gonsalves, Sashney Gordon, Baliqis Hashiru, Sarah Kalombola, Jessa Letargo, Odane McKenzie, Danait Mehreteab, Cowther Musse, Effie Opoku, Valerie Osei, Deyvi Polo Grusso, Hana Qorwah and Tyler Ranville.

ANSER LAW OFFICE

Barrister & Solicitor

(905) 624-3805

24 Hr (416) 435-2963

www.anserlaw.com anser@anserlaw.com

FREE CONSULTATION
LEGAL AID ACCEPTED

Criminal Law
Immigration Law
Family Law
Litigation Law



LITIGATION: NO FEES UNTIL WE WIN • Car Accidents • Personal Injury
• Slip & Fall • Life Insurance
1325 Eglinton Ave. E. Suite 212, Mississauga, ON L4W 4L9

LAW OFFICE OF ELSIE PETERS (B.A. Hons., B.S.W., LL.B.)
Barrister - Solicitor & Notary Public



CIVIL LITIGATION

• Motor Vehicle

• Personal Injury

IMMIGRATION

• Deportation Appeals

• Refugee Claims

• All Sponsorships

• Humanitarian Applications

• Invitation Letter

Criminal • Wrongful

Dismissal

Landlord & Tenant

Breach of Contract

Human Rights

Family Law (child support,

separation agreements,

spousal support)

1111 Finch Ave. West, Suite 311, Toronto, ON M3J 2E5
T: 416.663.0874 C: 416.333.0874 F: 416.663.1909

DALE JEAN-PIERRE
BARRISTER SOLICITOR NOTARY PUBLIC