

Create your life.

# Dynamy

FALL 2010

## New Strategic Direction Leads to Internship Year Enhancements



The first Internship Year class to experience our renewed curriculum currently inhabits our apartments as we move into our second year as a part of the Y.O.U. Inc. organization. The merger is a clear success, both for our students, who benefit from expanded programming like the days spent on the ropes course with the Adventure Challenge Experience staff, as well as for staff, who benefit from greatly expanded professional development opportunities and learning from a larger number of colleagues. Both our renewed curriculum and the merger enable us to enhance successful traditions built over these past decades.

To best support Internship Year students in acquiring the skills and confidence necessary to transition successfully to higher education and their lives beyond, here are some new or enhanced curriculum features:

**A weekly 4/1 schedule:** 4 days of Internship and 1 Program Day, which includes Workshops, Community Service, Higher Education planning, and time for students to focus on their personal educational goals (for example, building their art school portfolio or taking a class in graphics).

**Expanded Weekly Workshops:** interactive, progressive workshops on topics like Time Management, Budgeting, and Personal Leadership, just to name a few.

**A Personal Plan:** students and advisors outline each personal educational goal, steps and strategies to reach it, and the progress and success on it. Categories are the usual ones (i.e., internships) plus others like personal management (i.e. to procrastinate less), health and wellness, etc. The plan is a guide meant to change

over time and serve as the rudder for decision-making for each student.

**Broadened Staff Support:** residential life expands with new roles for resident coordinators and more evenings and weekend activities. We also added a Director of Student Support who is an LMHC and certified guidance counselor to aid students further in making the most of their year and to bring a new expertise to the design of effective workshops and other programming.

All of our students are college-able young people who want to learn differently by being outside of the classroom and in the real world. The changes above, and other smaller ones, enable us to better support each on his/her individual educational path.

## Dynamy Launches New Website and Brand



To go along with our new strategic direction, Dynamy engaged Smith&Jones, an advertising firm in Sturbridge, to redesign our logo and update our website. The website ([www.dynamy.org](http://www.dynamy.org)) now reflects our commitment to working with students with different learning styles, and who might have a need for support services for common issues such as learning disabilities (LD), ADHD, mild anxiety, etc. As you read in our cover story, we will be providing our students such support, while also making sure that any learning difference does not itself define them here, but is treated as one piece of life's complex puzzle.



## Dynamy Evolves to Meet Changing Community Needs

In the Carriage House students debate the nature of their psychological contracts with Dynamy and the new internships they have just leapt into. As an advisor and student talk, Albanian bounces down the stairwell, while upstairs Spanish flows over the phone. Fall 2010 sports a vibrant, new face here, yet fall 2010 also mirrors the many others that have come before. We have a new website, logo, and renewed curriculum, and yet our core approach is completely recognizable to alumni from the organization's first years.

When I first came to Dynamy just over thirteen years ago, I was just twenty-two myself (yes, I realize that it means that I could also now be described as a "tradition" needing a bit of renewal!). And while I didn't fully grasp exactly what Dynamy and its experiential approach was, I responded to the culture of the building, the energy that buzzed in it from the students and the staff alike, and the poster in use at the time that used poet Mary Oliver to ask, "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"

I am proud that Dynamy today is asking that question and still teaching young people to ask that of themselves and to pursue their own answers. If you have not recently been in touch with Dynamy, I encourage you to take a look again, whether on our new website ([dynamy.org](http://dynamy.org)) or Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/dynamy](http://www.facebook.com/dynamy)), and also to give us your email address as we transition to electronic newsletters in the future. And we love to hear about what you are currently doing with your own wild and precious life.

Regards,

Fred Kaelin  
Executive Director

# Youth Academy Freshman Wins Scholarship

It's not that often that, as a freshman in high school, Harvard University comes courting. But that is exactly what happened to Mary Baker, North High School and Youth Academy class of 2013. Mary was chosen by the North High School principal and Harvard Medical School to be the only student in the entire Worcester Public School District to receive a \$2,500 Incentive Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded by the Harvard Medical School Biomedical Science Careers Program.

The Biomedical Science Careers Program established this scholarship to assist and encourage underrepresented minority students who are interested in pursuing a career in biomedical, biotechnology and science-related fields, such as medicine, chemistry, physics, biology, pharmacy, and public health. The scholarship is to be used toward college education and is restricted to education-related purposes.



Mary, with her Youth Academy advisor, Jesse Leidel

Mary has dreamed of becoming a pediatrician since she was a little girl. She wants to help children through her love of science, and is undeterred by the thought of 11 more years of school after high school! Her favorite subjects in school are biology, physiology, and health. Mary lives with her (very proud) mother, older sister and niece in the Belmont Hill section of Worcester.

Please join us in congratulating Mary on this outstanding achievement.

# S p o n s o r s o f t h e Y e a r

## Audrey Hall, General Manager, WICN Public Radio



**A**lthough she has spent her entire career in radio and television, Audrey Hall is an educator at heart. When she arrived at WICN in January, 2009, one of her goals for the radio station was to start an internship program, working with local students. She knew that it would not only provide valuable extra hands for the station, but it would give her and her staff the opportunity to work with young people, mentoring and coaching them.



A first-time internship sponsor last year, Audrey hosted a Dynamy intern for two trimesters. “It was a great refresher course in what it’s like to be at that crossroads of life, looking at careers, trying to find your place in the world”, Audrey commented. Although it took the intern some time to acclimate to the WICN workplace culture, she said that her whole team came together in the process of mentoring Ben, which proved to be an unexpected benefit. One of the key teaching points that Audrey focused on with Ben was that this internship, or any internship, was more than a job—it was about the relationships created, about valuing his contributions, and learning that his accountability was to the people, not just to the organization.

Her experience, although not always easy, was extremely rewarding. Her personal values of wanting to help others made her eager and enthusiastic to be a first time sponsor. But it is her commitment to education, and the reward of watching Ben’s growth and accomplishments that are the reasons she is anxious to have another Dynamy intern in the coming year. “When you’re in an organization that cares about giving back to the community, this is one of the best ways to do it. Allowing a young person the opportunity of self-discovery is an enormous gift that I am happy to be a part of.”

WICN, with their focus on the American musical art forms of jazz and folk, is unique in the radio industry, playing a comprehensive presentation of jazz, blues, acoustic, and new age music. They also offer public affairs programming as well as independently produced concerts and live broadcasts featuring world-class performers.

We are so grateful to Audrey and WICN for the commitment to Dynamy and the work we do with young people, and are proud to honor her as a Sponsor of the Year.

# S p o n s o r s o f t h e Y e a r

**Kim Dawkins, Executive Director,  
Rape Crisis Center of Central Massachusetts  
Denise Roy, Director of Volunteer Services**



*an entry from the Rape Crisis Center T-shirt campaign*



**A**t the Rape Crisis Center of Central MA, they are in the business of changing lives; but usually it is the lives of their clients, not their interns! This past year, the organization took on four Dynamy interns, all of whom felt their lives and values were forever changed by their experience. They reported that, because their eyes were opened to the world of sexual violence, they matured and their attitudes about themselves and the world they live in now have evolved to contain more awareness of this critical issue.

Because they are such a small organization, the staff was able to engage the students in such meaningful projects as research on current statistics on sexual violence, organizing the annual spring walk-a-thon, and outreach and education in the Worcester schools. All four students felt that they became an integral part of the organization, and the staff agreed that the interns had an enormous positive impact on the agency.

Denise Roy summed up her experience: "My favorite part of my job is when I have the opportunity to be a mentor, a support and a guide to the students who come through the door. This past year, Dynamy provided us with one of the most rewarding intern experiences we have ever had."

One of only three such agencies in the state, the Rape Crisis Center's mission is to address the impact of sexual assault and abuse. They provide services to people whose lives have been affected by sexual violence, and they provide education geared toward the prevention of violence. In addition, they are also involved in influencing public policy and offering training on sexual harassment in the workplace.

We greatly appreciate the quality experience that Kim and Denise and the rest of the staff provided to our four interns last year, and are proud to honor them as a Sponsor of the Year.



*Denise Roy (l) and Kim Dawkins*

# Youth Academy Students Attend Immigration Rally



When Kirsch Donis, a Youth Academy graduate, Worcester State College admissions officer, and former member of Dynamy's board of directors, approached program staff about the possibility of reviving the local chapter of the Student Immigration Movement (SIM), things took off quickly. Lead by Lina Nguyen ('12), Joelina De La Cruz ('10), and Karen Rodriguez ('12), our students took the lead in organizing a local rally at the Worcester Public Library about immigration reform. Held last spring, the goal was to educate local students about the issue and to recruit students to attend the national immigration rally in Washington, D.C.

Lina, Joelina, and Karen raised the funds for the trip to D.C. and piled on a bus, joining some 200,000 people from across the nation for the rally. Although the purpose of the rally was to lobby for comprehensive immigration reform, our students were particularly interested in the DREAM Act. The DREAM Act (Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors) is federal legislation through which undocumented students who complete high school and two years of college could gain conditional legal status and eventual citizenship. Many schools, colleges, universities, and educational organizations have been active in the lobbying effort to pass this legislation.

For these three young women, this was yet another leadership experience on their path down the Youth Academy road. For Joelina, in particular, it was one of her last program activities before graduating from high school and matriculating at UMass Amherst, class of '14, this fall.



poster for the local chapter rally of the Student Immigration Movement



in Washington D.C.

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