

## Opening Minds, Creating Opportunity: The BBA's Summer Jobs Program

Last year, Christine Hughes, Vice President and General Counsel of Emerson College, hired Massiel De Los Santos, a student at Boston's John D. O'Bryant High School, through the Boston Bar Association's Summer Jobs Program. When she learned Massiel is bi-lingual, Christine



*Christine Hughes, Vice President and General Counsel of Emerson College, with Massiel De Los Santos*

put her to work translating some of Emerson's policies into Spanish. "I had been expecting just to get a summer intern through the program, so was happily surprised to meet someone I so enjoyed and admired and with whom I wanted to continue my relationship after the program," says Christine. "I really tried to encourage Massiel to lift her sights and hopes as to where she might go to college."

John Chu, of Chu, Ring & Hazel, hired Devon Cornelius, a student at Urban Science Academy. "Devon spearheaded the implementation of our document retention/destruction policy by drafting spreadsheets to assist the firm in tracking closed client files, scanning and cataloging various firm and client documents, and assisting the firm with general administrative functions," says John.



*John Chu of Chu Ring & Hazel*

"Devon was a pleasure to have in the office; during his time here, he expressed an interest in pursuing a career in criminal justice and handled all the work assigned to him in a professional manner."

Since 1993, private law firms, corporations and public agencies have been participating in the Summer Jobs Program. A collaboration of the BBA, the City of Boston, the Boston Public Schools, and the Boston Private Industry Council, the program provides its participants with an opportunity to invest in Boston's future leaders. Drawing from an ethnically and racially diverse group of 15- to 18-year-old

students from Boston's public high schools, the program provides these teenagers with the chance to come away with an insider's view of many of the city's most prestigious and visible companies, institutions, and law firms, an opportunity not often readily available to urban youth. Last summer, 33 legal employers in Boston hired 39 students through the program.

Depending on the office's needs and the student's abilities, tasks can include filing, photocopying, data entry, running errands, reception and library duties. The BBA encourages employers to identify a mentor within the office who can provide the student not only with practical advice about the daily work, but with career and educational guidance.

The program has an important educational component as well. Each Thursday morning during the two-month program, students attend enrichment seminars at the BBA, run by volunteer lawyers and judges. Last summer, students learned about using credit properly, the consequences of unwise uses of credit, and ADR. The students also went to Boston City Hall for a seminar on local city government. The financial literacy workshops were held as a part of the M. Ellen Carpenter Financial Literacy Program.



*Summer Jobs Program participant Miguel Medina speaks to his peers at the graduation ceremony*

"I really enjoyed the Thursday morning sessions, as well as getting to meet people who are standouts in the legal community," said Miguel Medina, a student at TechBoston Academy. "We learned how to manage our money, how local government works, and how to work out conflicts in a peaceful way."

In order to be selected as participants, students are pre-screened by teachers or guidance counselors and submit a written application, essay and recommendations. Participants are selected based on their academic motivation, achievement and interest, and their school attendance record. The standard pay rate is \$9.00/hour, and the employer determines the student's schedule.

To learn how you can hire a student for the summer of 2008, contact Paul Dullea at [pdullea@bostonbar.org](mailto:pdullea@bostonbar.org). ■