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for the Summer Academy 2022

Slide Show

DDC Summer Academy Comes Roaring Back

On July 5th, for the first time since the COVID pandemic, DDC welcomed dozens of high-schoolers to its free, five-week residential program at Columbia University. This extraordinary program offers local youth the Columbia on-campus living experience and integrates learning and social development for the best preparation to life in college and beyond.

Courses and activities focused on core skills such as writing/reading and addressed current social issues – *Social Justice and the City*, *Ecology Restoration* and *Reteaching 400+ Years of Black History*. The curriculum included creativity and self-expression programs like the ballet and the theater classes and introduced students to a foreign language, Mandarin.

Summer Academy offered DDC students a stimulating learning environment where they were free to explore their academic interests and community issues, in classes and activities culturally relevant to their experiences. They are now fully prepared for the back-to-school season! says Rabiyya Smith, DDC Pedagogical Specialist.

Two popular classes made a return this summer: *Financial Literacy Series*, made possible by a generous corporate grant from the Macquarie Group, and *Culturally Relevant Cooking and Nutrition Education*, led by Yadira Garcia, DDC '98, Natural Foods Chef, Educator and Certified Integrative Health Coach.

The Financial Literacy course showed students the effective money strategies to pay for college, including scholarships, and build wealth post-college for economic security. Jasmine H., DDC'24 added: *This was such a valuable and interesting class,*

it should be taught in public schools. Students need to understand the basics of taxes, budgeting, savings, and investing.

As for the Culturally Relevant Cooking and Nutrition Education, Armando M., DDC'25 had this to say: *I had never cooked before this class, I did not know cooking could be so much fun! Now I know I can prepare delicious dishes that are also good for my health.*

*NYC public schools do not address nutrition, says Yadira, and yet, it is one of the most important factors in individual "health wealth." Each week this class prepared flavorful, vibrant and delicious dishes that are both culturally and health conscious. [Click here](#) to read the DDC Summer Academy Cookbook, *Eat the Rainbow*, by Chef Yadira.*

Though Summer Academy 2022 has ended, the experience will remain in the hearts and minds of our students, staff, and dedicated undergraduates who all came together to make it a "roaring" success.

Zainab J. DDC'24

Summer Academy has changed my life. I came to realize how crucial it is to maintain an open mind both in high school and during college. You can learn about yourself and develop new interests by exploring various professions and career options. For high-school students, living independently in their own dorm and getting a taste of self-care is a crucial experience. Overall, I truly enjoyed spending my summer at Columbia with DDC and I would definitely recommend this program.

DDC College Prep Boot Camp

From Choose Your Colleges to Brag about Yourself!

About 50 students from neighboring public schools attended the DDC Summer 2022 College Prep Boot Camp from August 8 to August 12. The week of intensive workshops for 10th to 12th graders culminated in each student drafting personal statement, brag sheet, resume, and financial aid materials for the college application.

Led by the DDC Team and the Columbia University Offices of Financial Aid, Admissions, Career Services, and Student Advising, the College Prep Boot Camp was designed to help high school students with college planning, time-management, self-awareness, and team-building.

Summer is a critical time for high school students to prepare for college and financial aid applications, says Sarah Marie Bowen, DDC Assistant Director and 12th Grade Counselor, Talent Search. With this free program, each student had the opportunity to learn the intricacies of the process directly from Columbia University experts.

In addition, the program hosted a career panel with Citi volunteers who discussed with students the career pathways in finance and the different aspects of their professional life.

The reviews are in!

Magnus J., DDC'23

Everything was super helpful and fun to attend and listen to.

Amelia M., DDC'23

The program was a lot of fun, very informative and very flexible, which is good. I learned how to start researching colleges and what is the best fit for me.

Jubaida M., DDC'23

I learned a lot about financial aid, everything went by so fast!

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