

Fellows Newsletter

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Children's Defense Fund

Teamwork 101:

6 Steps to Becoming a Better Team Player

by Khadija Fetuga ('04/'05 Fellow)

1 Accept that conflict is normal and can occur within groups.

Believe it or not, disagreements can help shape the group's norms and identity. Conflict will be easier to deal with if each group member understands that disagreements play a normal and fundamental role in group formation.

2 Be willing to acknowledge good ideas even in the face of competition.

In the face of competition, a team player is willing to admit when a fellow group member has a better or more practical idea than his or her own. Praising each other has a positive effect on the group by improving the probability of the project's success. Remember—when the group looks good, it makes you look good too.

3 Avoid backbiting and complaining about fellow group members.

One of the quickest ways to hurt your own reputation and to disturb group relations is to talk negatively about another group member,

particularly behind his or her back. Should a problem develop do your best to solve it with that group member, addressing the issue directly and tactfully, or, if absolutely necessary, consult your supervisor.

4 Use your resources.

When a group is put together for the purpose of completing a particular project, the members may not have all of the expertise needed to perform their tasks sufficiently. Do not be afraid to ask questions and seek advice from those within your organization who can provide the information needed to increase the group's knowledge and effectiveness.

5 Delegate according to your strengths.

It would be a waste to ask the most talented researcher to do the organizing and the most talented organizer to do the researching. By first assessing the strengths and weaknesses of each group member, you are able to delegate tasks to the members with the strongest skills in that area. Giving assignments according to the interests and strong points of your teammates will increase your chances of success and efficiency.

6 Go the extra mile.

Whether that means staying in the office after 5 p.m., or taking on more responsibility, your team relies on you doing your part and doing it well. Sometimes that means taking on more than you initially expected. Going the extra mile is not only one way to ensure the success of your project, but also an effective way to gain the respect of fellow co-workers.



On July 21, 2007 Scholastic closed off Mercer Street between Prince and Spring Streets in SoHo, New York to hold Harry Potter Place, a celebration open to the public in honor of the 12:01 a.m. release of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*.

The Magic Comes to Life: Fellows Volunteer at Harry Potter Place

by Gillian Levinson ('07 Fellow)

As anyone familiar with the Harry Potter pantheon knows, the dream world, with its Technicolor landscape and dramatic twists, can be as visceral as reality, and sometimes reality can be as mystical as a dream. This is particularly the case with regards to Harry Potter Place, Scholastic's public celebration in honor of the release of the seventh and final installment in the Harry Potter series. A swirl of vivid hues and fantastical creatures, the six-hour long street fair was truly like something out of a magnificent reverie. And

while detractors may harp on the banality of such a description, I can think of no other terminology which so aptly captures the magic of the Harry-centric festivities.

I was fortunate enough to volunteer for Harry Potter Place, along with other interns and full-time employees, and can say without reservation that the experience was not only one of the best of the summer, but quite possibly one of the best of my life. To be in the epicenter of a pop-culture phenomenon—one which I might add that I caught on to before words like "Quidditch," "Slytherin," and "muggle" became part of the popular lexicon—is a feeling unlike any which I have ever previously encountered.

Held on Mercer Street directly behind The Scholastic Store, Harry Potter Place was designed to suggest Diagon Alley, with

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its cobble-stoned streets and colorful street performers. Attractions included the Muggle Board, upon which fans could post messages to Harry and the other characters, and the Pensieve, a retrospective look at all seven Harry Potter books, as well as wand-making, face painting, and Moaning Myrtle portable bathrooms. Perhaps most impressive was the life-sized recreation of the Whomping Willow, complete with the Weasleys' ramshackle flying car.

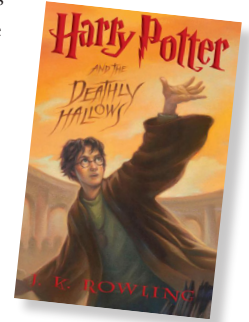
Yet from my perspective, the day was more memorable for its palpable excitement than for its accoutrements. Fans were dressed in an array of Harry Potter-related costumes, ranging from Lucius Malfoy to Professor Trelawney to Madame Rosmerta to Harry Potter himself. Attendees also spanned generations, and it was not uncommon to see parents with strollers or elderly couples walking hand-in-hand.

As one of the volunteers handing out bookmarks at the exit to Harry Potter Place, I found myself smiling from ear to ear as I watched

children and adults leave the fair with a real sense of enthusiasm and eager anticipation on their faces.

At one point, one of the other volunteers asked a young boy of about five to perform a spell with the wand he had made. He replied *Wingardium Leviosa*, and I jumped into the air to illustrate the spell. In so doing, I dropped a number of the bookmarks I was holding in a basket as giveaways—in some ways, I think I resemble Neville Longbottom come to life, minus the love of plants.

My point? Harry Potter Place was one of those events that blurs the line between adulthood and childhood. Just like each of the seven books, the Scholastic celebration yielded the same effect, the overpowering sensation that magic exists, and isn't it wonderful?



THEY'RE THE TOP

Scaling the Coliseum of the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards

by Angelica Crane ('07 Intern),

Gillian Levinson ('07 Fellow), & Raisa Reyes ('07 Fellow)

How do you get to Carnegie Hall? You practice, of course! On Friday, June 15th, recipients of the 2007 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards and their guests were invited to the illustrious hall to celebrate their incredible achievements. Sponsored by the Alliance for Young Artists & Writers, the Awards program has been a platform for students' creative expression since Scholastic founder, M.R. Robinson, started it in 1923.

This year's award recipients were honored with musical performances by Nuttin' But Stringz and Kiley Dean, readings by Broadway actors Blair Brown, Jason Butler Harner, and Amy Ryan, and an exhilarating speech by acclaimed author Chuck Palahniuk. Scholastic President and CEO Dick Robinson, Alliance for Young Artists & Writers Executive Director B.J. Adler, and Alliance Board Chairman Dwight Lee also offered words of encouragement and praise for the Award recipients and the parents and teachers who have supported them. Dick Robinson commended the teachers and parents for supporting "the best of the best," and encouraged the honorees to "try for the difficult life of the artist."

The audience was a sea of smiles as Robinson explained the personal significance of this award. "My siblings and I owe our lives to these awards," he said, explaining that his mother, having received the award in her youth, decided to pursue a career at Scholastic — where she met, fell in love with, and married M.R. Robinson. "Who knows, then, where this award will lead you," Robinson joked, "and we entrust to you a promising future."

The evening began with an astonishing performance by a truly unique duo, Nuttin' But Stringz. Showcasing their violins, hip-hop style, and vibrant energy, Tourie and Damien Escobar welcomed the young honorees, who strutted across the stage to their seats. As the award recipients took center stage, Carnegie Hall echoed with the thunderous applause of proud families and teachers.

The celebratory spirit continued with featured guest speaker and actor Jason Butler Harner, most recently appearing in the award-winning *The Coast of Utopia*. Jason expressed how incredibly "inspired" and "humbled" he was in the presence of such promising youth. "There is something terrific waiting for you," he warmly encouraged, and rightly so. With this ceremony, the 2007 Scholastic Art & Writing Award recipients joined some of our nation's most influential artists and writers, with past recipients including renowned artists and writers such as Sylvia Plath, Joyce Carol Oates, and Andy Warhol.

B.J. Adler praised the teachers and judges who recognized a diversity of voices, with awardees hailing from all kinds of backgrounds and many fighting to overcome substantial obstacles along the way. Adler's words captured the spirit of the evening as she noted that she was "blinded by the light of this aggregation of talent and potential" and assured the talented teenagers that "we are committed to you and to those who follow in your footsteps."

Dwight Lee acknowledged the youth's personal journeys and the unique "artistic vision that brought you to this moment." Lee introduced slides of the nuanced and accomplished works of the Art Portfolio Gold Award recipients—museum-quality artwork in diverse media. Dramatic readings of the works of the Writing Portfolio Gold Award recipients followed, with seasoned Broadway veterans Blair Brown, Jason Butler Harner, and Amy Ryan bringing the young writers' words to life. Topics ranging from anorexia, to prayers for personal strength and peace during war, to teen angst manifested through a deep loathing of biology class and the Beatles, struck a chord with audience members, evoking laughter, pain, and an overwhelming sense of admiration for the young writers.

Chuck Palahniuk, the bestselling author of *Fight Club* and *Rant* and a mentor to one of the past Award recipients, entertained the audience with a humorously candid speech on the trials of professional life. Laughter resounded throughout Carnegie Hall at the fascinating amalgamation of inanity and profundity present in Palahniuk's words. "To the winners," he advised, "please use whatever you do... as your excuse to keep exploring your work and stay a student for the rest of your lives."

The ceremony concluded with young recording artist Kiley Dean singing an original work, "Convince Me." No one needed convincing about the passion and dedication of the young artists and writers recognized, or their promising futures.



Fellows Visit CDF Headquarters

The 2007 Scholastic CDF Fellows visited the Children's Defense Fund (CDF) headquarters in Washington, DC. While there, the Fellows met Marian Wright Edelman, an accomplished civil rights leader and the founder of CDF. Mrs. Edelman inspired the Fellows with her commitment to child advocacy work.

Fellows are pictured here with Mrs. Edelman; Karen Proctor, Scholastic Vice President of Community Affairs and Government Relations; Angelica Crane, Scholastic Community Affairs Intern; and Lin Lan, Scholastic Fellowship Program Coordinator.

Reflections from Former Fellows

Shaun Stallworth

(03 Fellow)

"If I could do anything differently as a Fellow, I would make a stronger effort to meet more people inside of Scholastic. Our time there is so short, and I did not interact with as many people as I would have liked... Don't be afraid to ask questions. Talk to people. The people at Scholastic really want to see you succeed."

Donald Washington

(02/03 Fellow)

"My previous experiences living in homeless shelters seemed like a curse in the past; today, I now view these past challenges as immense blessings... If I could give any advice to former, current, or future Fellows, I would recommend that every day you practice being mindful of the blessings that come from seemingly adverse circumstances. This simple change in perception can have a far-reaching impact upon your career and your life."



CHECK OUT HOTLANTA!

The Duke Twins, Sydney and Lauren, live the life: they attend the fanciest school in Atlanta, they live in the most exclusive neighborhood, and they only date the hottest guys. And their secrets are the darkest around.

Be sure to check out the hot *Hotlanta* in bookstores, scheduled to be released later this year.

1. Fields Fellows Enter and/or are Interested In:

- Business
- Consulting
- Education
- Film
- Journalism
- Law
- Medicine
- Public Affairs
- Public Health
- Publishing
- Undecided

* Source: 2007 Scholastic CDF Fellows Alumni Survey

2. Fellowship Statistics

30% of past Fellows repeated the program.

94% of current and past Fellows believe they will use the Network to stay in contact.

* Source: 2007 Scholastic CDF Fellows Alumni Survey

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