

YLC 2011 SUMMER DISCOVERY ACADEMY RESULTS BRIEF

In YLC's 2011 Summer Discovery Academy, students were impacted in meaningful ways academically and beyond. Research based tools were used to gather information on the summer program's effectiveness in retention of students' math and communication arts knowledge and in positive youth development outcomes for our children. Student, parent, and staff perceptions were also assessed.

The majority of YLC students did not experience "Summer Slide"(summer learning loss):

- 1) Of the 78 students who completed pre and posttests in math, only 8 (10%) experienced summer slide. Of the 80 students who completed pre and posttests in communication arts, 19 (24%) experienced summer slide scores.
- 2) In math, 54 (69%) scored higher on the posttest than on the pretest. In communication arts, 50 (63%) scored higher on the posttest than on the pretest.
- 3) In the Video Game Design, Animation, and Engineering Discovery Groups, the majority of tested students showed significant gains in content knowledge by the end of the summer program.

Students in the summer program attained core positive youth development indicators and increased their interest in science, technology and engineering a result of participating in the program:

- 1) Almost 100% of surveyed students reported that they learned new things and that activities were fun.
- 2) The majority of students reported increased interest in computer based programs such as webpage design (85%) and computer animation (81%), and in engineering (63%).
- 3) The majority (80%) of students reported that they learned how to work better on teams (Life Skills).
- 4) Over 80% of students reported improvement in goal setting abilities (Life Skills).
- 5) 95% of student respondents believed that the Academy helped them stay out of trouble during the summer (Positive Life Choices).
- 6) 87% of students expressed that they learned things they did not think they could do before participating in the summer program (Sense of Self).

Students, parents, and staff value the summer program

and agree that participation has been beneficial:

- 1) 100% of YLC parents surveyed informed that they were satisfied with the program and that it was sensitive to their family budget. Parents cite the approachability of the staff and fun yet academic activities and field trips among the highlights of the summer program.
- 2) Parents expressed interest in more opportunities to become involved in volunteerism and in programming, as well as interest in taking classes at YLC (e.g. Intro to Computers course).
- 3) Over 80% of surveyed staff members reported that they enjoyed working during the summer and mentioned good staff support, diversity in programming, and witnessing the academic growth of students among the highlights.
- 4) While staff survey responses were primarily positive, a recurring theme and area to address in the future is training/procedures surrounding student misbehavior, which impacts the learning environment for other students.

CONCLUSION

YLC met its overarching goal to keep students in the Summer Discovery Academy from losing knowledge in math and in communication arts, and students reported gains beyond academics. There is an association between participation in YLC programming and increased interest in science, technology, and engineering, as well as increased attainment of positive youth development outcomes like "sense of self" and "life skills".

Assessment results from the 2011 summer program show that YLC staff members are doing well in exposing students to experiences that will help them grow to be successful adults.