



Summer 2006: Off the Charts!

Andy Crane, Summer Program Director

More than 3,600 students from the City of Boston attended our **Summer Tennis & Reading Program** at 28 sites all over the city. In addition to the nearly 2,100 youth who signed up directly with Tenacity, we served more than 1,500 kids from 50 partner organizations, from Community Centers, to YMCA and YWCA groups, to specialized programs like Courageous Sailing! New sites were established at Dorchester Park (with great support from the Dorchester Park Association) and at the newly reconstructed courts at Madison Park in Roxbury. These students were served by an amazing staff of over 180 people, including over 50 volunteers and 50 Boston teenagers who worked for Tenacity as part of the Boston Youth Fund's summer jobs program.



*Students at Ringer Playground shake hands after a match.
Photo by James Zhen*

Perhaps the most exciting fact is that no less than 45 students who were formerly part of our After-School Excellence Program worked as paid staff for Tenacity this summer! They ranged in age from 14 (eight recent Tenacity ASEP grads who were part of our Summer Intern Program) to 20 (Samora Valcimond, currently a college sophomore and one of Tenacity's original ASEP students in 1999). Several ASEP grads acted as Site or Deputy Site Leaders, and clearly many more will do so in the future. Tenacity provided opportunities for leadership this summer, and Tenacity alumni are accepting the challenge!

But these numbers tell only a small part of the story. In 2006, there were non-stop opportunities for Boston kids involved with Tenacity:

- § Close to 250 kids from all over the city took part in Tenacity's USTA Team Tennis program. League Commissioner and long-time Tenacity summer staff member Frank Cohen organized three divisions and 23 teams, 20 from Tenacity and three from our partners at **Sportsmen's Tennis Club** and the **Stillman Tennis Center**. With a big boost from the **MBTA's Roll-On T Pass Program**, the players were able to travel at no cost around the city to play their matches. Congratulations to the teams from Sportsmen's, Billings Field, and Carter Playground, which won the Gold, Silver and Bronze Medals, respectively, in the playoffs held during Mayor's Cup Week. Tenacity also sponsored two advanced teams which competed successfully in a USTA Eastern Mass league.
- § Approximately 200 trophy seekers competed in singles and doubles competition at this year's **Mayor's Cup**, held from August 12th to August 18th at Sportsmen's Tennis Club. Tournament Director Andy Crane, ably assisted by Tenacity Tennis Coordinator Kara Guzman and summer staffers Lacey Rose and Ashley Lipton, completed 19 separate draws in boy's and girl's singles and doubles. Most of the draws involved round robin play, so that each competitor played at least three matches, win or lose. For many it was their first tournament ever.
- § Close to two dozen summer students entered the annual **Tenacity-Harvard Championships**, a USTA New England State Level Tournament, held at Harvard University on Saturday, July 29th. Another group of players from Tenacity's Advanced Site at the Roxbury Latin School participated in the **Bay State Games** at UMass Boston in the middle of July. Tenacity student Patrick Gibbons won the Bay State Games 14 and Under Championship.

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Identity, Life, and Literature in Mexico

Kaytie Dowcett, Assistant Program Director

When Tenacity made the decision to expand its programming to the Umana/Barnes Middle School in East Boston, I knew it was time to start taking those Spanish classes I had long contemplated but not yet pursued. I enrolled in my first class last summer, and immediately had ample opportunity to practice my tediously inefficient, comically incorrect Spanish with our East Boston students and their families. I continued taking classes throughout the fall and in December booked a trip to Mexico for the beginning of what I now hope will be a lifetime of travel throughout Spanish-speaking America.

My first trip to Mexico was the stuff of romance novels. I spent my mornings learning Spanish one-on-one with a local teacher in Cuernavaca and enjoyed leisurely afternoons reading about Frida Kahlo, writing in my journal, and becoming intimately familiar with the political yet deeply personal murals of Diego Rivera. My nights were spent dancing under the stars, whispering to new friends in broken Spanish while a Mariachi band played nearby. No joke.

Clearly, after such an amazing experience, I had to go back as soon as possible. I returned to Mexico, with Tenacity's blessing, this past July to spend four weeks in the volcanic state of Michoacan. This time around, improving my Spanish was only one of several objectives. Since the majority of the families with whom I work are immigrants, I wanted to learn more about the conditions that compel millions to part from their families and embark on a dangerous journey north across the border into U.S. territory. I wanted to spend time thinking and talking about how to improve those conditions so more families can stay intact and so that Mexico doesn't risk having its unique, rich, and vibrant cultural identity co-opted by the pursuit of money, material wealth, and "progress" – a word that implies forward movement toward an often unidentified end.

I joined an international volunteer work-camp and lived in a tiny rural village called Calaboza. I was generously hosted by a local family which consisted of a mother and her two young children. Their father, like 95 percent of the men from this community, was living and working in the States. The children were named Kevin and Kelly, prophetically U.S.-sounding names from a parent who wants for her children's future what she believes is best for them: a life up north with work, money, house, and car. The four of us shared a bedroom in a house that had no more than two rooms, no hot water, and no indoor toilet.

As volunteers, we performed a handful of tasks that were concrete and satisfying: we painted the outside of a print shop, planted 2,000 trees, and brought the women and the children of the community together on several occasions for games, classes, and meetings. In return, we learned a great deal about life in rural Mexico from our hosts: we learned about the myriad flowers and herbs and what ailments they remedy; we took the cows to pasture, milked them, and made cheese from the milk; we picked various fruits and sautéed the leaves of cactus plants; and made tortillas by hand after milling the corn. We learned to conserve and reuse water to try to keep our weekly supply from running out (which it occasionally did). We learned that the community was warm and hospitable and that some members, more than others, were healthily skeptical of strangers imposing their values and lifestyle.



Kaytie Dowcett (2nd from right) with other volunteers and one of her students



Kaytie performs in a skit about reducing consumption and reusing plastic

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Tenacity's Board of Directors

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Reading on Summer Vacation? Naturally.

Sara DeMedeiros, Academic Coordinator

At one site, a group of children race to a piece of paper to write down words about animals in alphabetical order. At another, they draw treasure maps. At a third, they sit quietly under a tree and listen to the story of Walter, the Farting Dog. What do these three scenes all have in common? They are all features of Tenacity's summer reading program.

Numerous studies have shown that taking a break from reading during the summer can lead to a loss of students' reading skills. For the last several years, Tenacity has faced this challenge head-on by incorporating reading into our summer participants' daily routine. During each of two daily sessions, children take a break from the courts for thirty minutes of literacy activities. Students read independently, as well as listen to read-alouds by their Reading Coordinators and other summer site staff. Reading time is followed by extension activities, all designed to help participants deepen their thinking about books. (See inset for a student book review.)

The success of Tenacity's reading program stems in part from the variety of books and reading strategies we offer to

The Skin I'm In Book Review

Deje Scott

Hi, my name is Deje Scott. I am 15 years old and am going to the tennis program at Hunt-Almont.

The book I just finished reading is called *The Skin I'm In*. It is a novel written by Sharon G. Flake. This book is about a girl named Maleeka Madison. Maleeka is one of the darkest kids in her school and gets made fun of. In the beginning of the school year Maleeka meets Miss Saunders and Miss Saunders tells her that she has beautiful, soft, dark skin and should be proud of it! But Maleeka doesn't think so, she thinks her skin is the most worrying thing in the world just because the other kids say so.

Miss Saunders got it like that. I mean, she has money and designer clothing. Her skin on the other hand is black and white and Maleeka is not the only one being teased. Miss Saunders is too, but she doesn't care.

My impression of this book would be that it is really good. I would recommend this to anyone who likes to read novels and has an interest in books with a conflict in it.

The book is text-to-self which means it relates to me in some way. I get made fun of because I'm very dark, but I really don't care. I know my skin is dark, but it is also beautiful.



Deje Scott (2nd row, far left) and other Hunt/Almont participants



Students read together at Ringer Playground in Allston

the children. At the beginning of the summer, each site's Reading Coordinator fills a bin of books to the brim, clearing out Tenacity's library. Throughout the summer, they trade books with each other to make sure they are keeping things interesting for their many students. Once the children have found a book to enjoy, they then have a choice of reading on their own or having it read to them. It's not uncommon to see a 12-year-old listening to a picture book alongside a 7-year-old, and it's just as likely that the same middle-schooler will be found reading aloud to his or her younger counterparts!

One of the highlights of our reading program this summer was our third year of participation with ReadBoston's Storymobile program. Professional storytellers fan out to sites around the city, including Tenacity's sites at Moakley Park and Carter Playground, and entertain children of all ages with their engaging stories. Scary stories, in particular, abound, and the screeches of the youngsters at their spooky conclusions attest to the success of this partnership.

While reading time may look different from site to site, and even day to day, one thing is for sure: Tenacity's summer reading component is growing stronger each year, and helps to strengthen our children's experience and skills across the city. To read more about our reading activities from the perspective of one of our summer Reading Coordinators, turn to page Seven.

Tenacity Thrives on Lobsters Partnership

Melissa Morse, Development Coordinator

In July, the **Boston Lobsters** professional tennis team returned to Harvard University's Bright Arena for some inspiring play and star appearances by Anna Kournikova and Martina Navratilova. The matches were well attended and a great opportunity for Tenacity to present itself to the tennis community (2,100 fans turned out for Anna Kournikova's appearance). Through the generosity of Lobsters management, Tenacity was offered the use of an indoors information table, operated nightly by a team of one staff member and one ASEP graduate. Sherraine Rodney and Richard Wilson were our two cheerful and very informative ASEP representatives, ready to explain to visitors what ASEP really means to a young person in need. Great work, Sherraine and Richard!



ASEP graduates Yves Singletary and Ruth Le staff the Tenacity Info Table during a Lobsters match

Special thanks to Rachel Honig, Boston

Lobsters Director of Sponsor Services, and her team for their assistance with logistics at every event.

"Tenacity" could be seen everywhere! Sixteen of our ASEP and Summer Program students were holding paid positions as Ball Kids, and could be easily spotted in their bold Tenacity T-Shirts as they worked the court with speed and accuracy. Most of our ball kids had already spent the day outdoors as junior instructors working with our summer program students, but came to their night jobs full of energy and enthusiasm, staying until the matches were over, sometimes late into the night. Thanks go out to: Adrienne McGillicuddy, Alicia Cauteruccio, Alicia Williams, Claire Donlan, Ruth Le, Sumbo Akinfolarin, Abbai Zimbabwe, Carlos Lopes, Charles Lai, Jimmy Guevara, Jonathan Li, Luis Sanchez, Patrick Lewis, Steve Flores, and Vatana Phy for their good work courtside! Yves Singletary, budding cinematographer and ASEP grad, put his camera skills to work both for Tenacity *and* the Boston Lobsters, shooting stills and live film all around the court.

On a giving note, Tenacity was chosen to join a select group of deserving non-profits as an Official Charity of the Boston Lobsters. In addition to a table near all the action, we were given live mentions by the Lobsters

announcer at every game, and we will receive a portion of proceeds from the sales of a soundtrack sold at every match, featuring a song about the Boston Lobsters performed by British pop idol and 2006 Opening Night performer Tom Lowe. Our great appreciation goes to Bahar Uttam, gracious host and owner of The Boston Lobsters, and Peter Mandeau, General Manager, for their support of our programs.

We've Moved!

Please make a note that Tenacity has moved to an expanded office space located at

**367 Western Avenue
Brighton, MA 02135**

All of our other contact information including phone numbers, fax numbers, and emails will remain the same.

The Tenacity organization would like to send a special thanks to the amazing vendors who helped with our office move to 367 Western Avenue in Brighton, MA. The dedication, professionalism and generosity of the vendors with their time and talents made our transition a much less stressful one. Thank you in particular to: **Darryl Whittemore** (Harvard Commercial Real Estate Services), **Peter Griffin** (Advanced Storage & Transportation Solutions), **Bob & Dina Teneriello** (Starcom Communications Corp), **Brian Sabato & Crew** (Advanced Installations & Moving, Inc.) and **George McKinnon** (A.W. Chesterton Co.) for his generous donation of used office furniture.

ASEP 2006-2007: A Year of Exciting Changes

Anne Greenbaum, School Year Program Director

This school year brings new partnerships, new faces, and new structures to the **After School Excellence Program** (ASEP). It's going to be an exciting year! We are very pleased to have a new school year partnership with Sportsmen's Tennis Club, where we are beginning a new ASEP site with students from the Washington Irving Middle School in Roslindale. ASEP is now serving 180 students at 5 partner sites: Harvard University, the Reggie Lewis Center, the Boston Athletic Club, the Umana/Barnes School/Harborside Community Center, and Sportsmen's Tennis Club. These students attend seven Boston middle schools: the Gavin and the McCormack in South Boston, the Frederick in Dorchester, the Curley in Jamaica Plain, the Edison in Brighton, the Irving in Roslindale, and the Umana/Barnes in East Boston.

Our academic team has been working hard on our three-year literacy and life skills curriculum, **Perspectives**. The core focus this year will be exploring what skills and values we each need to thrive in the world. Every student will begin the year reading *Sahara Special*, a wonderful book by Esmé Raji Codell. *Sahara Special* is the story of Sahara Jones' journey through a school year, her struggles, successes, and relationships with her classmates and her teacher Miss Pointy. The academic teams will use this book as a basis for discussions and activities to set a Tenacity-wide tone and structure for the school year. Read *Sahara Special* yourself to find out how Miss Pointy gets Sahara to start writing in her journal.

Major changes are occurring in East Boston. The Umana/Barnes School is one of three middle schools in Boston participating in the Extended Learning Time Initiative. Umana/Barnes students will be in school from 7:20 AM - 4:30 PM Monday through Thursday and until 11 AM on Fridays. This extended learning time is designed to increase both the time students spend in academics and their opportunities to explore other areas of interest. Tenacity will be working with two teams of twenty students each across the traditional school day and the extended learning time.

We are sad to see several of our Tenacity Tennis Coordinators leave, but are excited about their futures. Drew Hendrickson is heading to Africa, Josh Katzman is staying in Boston as a new dad and teaching in the Boston Public Schools, and Rob Willison returns to the Big Apple. We thank them all for their contributions to our students and to Tenacity as an organization. Already hard at work is Xandy Brown, a Mass Promise Fellow based at our East Boston site. Mass Promise is an AmeriCorps program and this is our first year participating in this program. We have many other new faces on the program team and will introduce them to you in the next edition of the newsletter.

We are always looking for volunteers to help on both the tennis and literacy sides of the program. Please contact Anne Greenbaum (annegreenbaum@tenacity.org) for more information.

Through My Eyes: Working at the Advanced Site

Ashley Lipton, Summer Tennis Instructor

As a college tennis player, I have found that the love and passion for the sport is often lost in the many hours of practice and matches. But at the Roxbury Latin Advanced site where I worked this summer, each student, without exception, truly loves the game. From the training period when students arrived hours early to hit on the courts, to the hottest day of July when they stayed during lunch to set up extra matches, they showed an incredible amount of dedication and desire to improve.

Students would show up in the morning eager to find out what the theme for the day would be. We would dedicate the entire first half of the day to themes such as match preparation or defense. We would take a break for reading and lunch, then get together in the afternoon to play some incredibly intense singles and doubles matches. With just twelve students and six courts, we were able to make sure that everybody played a few challenge sets each day.

More important than the tennis, I also saw friendships – both those that were just beginning, and those that have blossomed over years in the program. We shared so much – going to lunch at West Naps, finding shelter at one of the site leaders' houses during a flash thunderstorm, and playing "The Game" for hours. I can see why this program is raved about: it's about more than just the tennis – it's about life.



Amanda Gonzalez, Sara Gonzalez, Megan Mulrooney, Alex Hamad, and Eric Wolfink read at the Advanced site

A Recipe For Success

Alex Wright, Summer Site Leader

Having recently graduated from college, I find myself being asked with increasing frequency about my plans. My answer has become rehearsed and standardized, almost automatic: I'm working for a non-profit organization called Tenacity for the summer and will be looking for more a permanent situation thereafter. Invariably the inquiry follows about Tenacity itself—"what is Tenacity and what do they do?" To this question, also, my response has become routine: it's a free program in Boston for kids between the ages of seven and fifteen that incorporates tennis and reading.



A group of English High participants enjoy themselves on the court

However, this second answer has always struck me as inadequate. I often find the conversation moves on without having established Tenacity's true nature. Yet I have not, until recently, attempted to address this frustration. Perhaps it is the prospect of my last Tenacity summer coming to a close that has provoked my efforts to finally clarify what exactly Tenacity is.

I do not for a minute mean to suggest that the description I give of Tenacity is false or even inaccurate. It is a factual summary of the main components of the program in one sentence. It is a recipe, describing each ingredient and the process of preparation. However, a recipe does not capture the experience of eating the meal its instructions mean to produce. Indeed, a good meal is more than a summary of its ingredients and, similarly, so is Tenacity. But how do I relate such an experience to an outsider?

I could start by explaining what it isn't. It isn't a place where troubled children are reformed. It isn't a place where the Andy Roddicks and Williams sisters of tomorrow are bred. It also isn't inattentive or out of touch. I could go on, but the list of what Tenacity isn't doesn't bring me much closer to defining what it is.

All that seems left to me is anecdotal evidence. Tenacity is a compilation of freeze-frames to me. It is an eight year-old sitting under a tree reading Dr. Seuss with the help of an adjacent sixteen year-old instructor. It is a game of Dungeons & Dragons on the court, and the ensuing arguments over whether a catch was fair, and the same sixteen year-old reading partner turned arbitrator who settles the feud with the skill of a veteran educator. Tenacity is these moments, and countless others, which come together to form a common ground for all its participants. And yet it is still more.

This common experience is one of success. What makes Tenacity remarkable, what makes it more than just a free program for kids between the ages of seven and fifteen that incorporates tennis and reading, is the atmosphere of success that exists for everyone involved. For the second-grader reading Dr. Seuss with a high school student next to them, it is the pride and confidence they derive from reading aloud and impressing an attentive role model. For the young instructor, it is developing the skills to solve problems, command respect, and take on responsibility. These lessons are the stuff of success not just at Tenacity, but in life.

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Sharing the Joy of Reading

Terry Sinclair, Summer Reading Coordinator

Tajan, Malasia, Keena, Shareef, Ervemarie, Malik, Deja; these are names I wondered if I would ever be able to pronounce, never mind spell. After four years working with children with names like Scott, Anna, Elizabeth, Doug, and Sarah, I wondered if working in the city would be all that different from the suburbs of the South Shore. Their names and neighborhoods might be different, their family and cultural backgrounds miles apart, but children are children. With all of them, my goal was to make reading an enjoyable and positive experience

Last spring, I applied for the Reading Coordinator position with Tenacity to work toward achieving this goal. Like many of the children I met over the summer, I was not a big reader at their age. I enjoyed being read to, but rarely picked up a book. I remember listening to my fourth grade teacher read *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *James and the Giant Peach*. The images created in my mind were so vivid. I wanted every child to experience that joy.

As the summer neared, I learned I would be working at Hunt/Almont Park in Mattapan and Dorchester Park in Dorchester. There were so many questions in my mind. Will the stories I read at the parks come alive for the children like they did for me? What books should I read? Will they like the stories? Have they ever heard of this author? Will they listen? To my delight, not only did the children listen, they asked: "Terry, is it reading time yet? What will we be reading?" What a wonderful feeling to hear so much enthusiasm.

Under the tree with a warm breeze drying the perspiration off their foreheads, the children settled in for a story. There are stories of families, homes, friends, unlikely friendships, spooky houses, folk tales, and mischief. Our reading time was always followed by an activity. Games, coloring, and sidewalk chalk drawings are a few favorites. These extension activities help the children make connections between the stories and their own lives. Their smiles, laughter and questions confirm that Tenacity's approach to literacy and tennis is definitely working. Through the summer literacy component, the children of Tenacity realize that reading is something that can be done to relax, escape, and educate.

My summer at Hunt/Almont and Dorchester parks has confirmed that children can enjoy literacy no matter what their name is or where their neighborhood is located. When the children return to school in September, perhaps they will share some of the wonderful books and stories that they heard this summer. If even one previous non-reader has developed a love for reading, my summer at Tenacity was a success.



In an extension activity, children express themselves through chalk drawings

Students' thoughts on the Civil Rights Movement

At Tenacity's Grove Hall Community Center site, children and teenagers have practiced forehands, backhands, serves, and ... a discussion of the role of minorities in the history of the United States. At the beginning of the summer, Grove Hall participants expressed a need to learn more about history. To meet this need, we read a number of books including: *The Butterfly* by Patricia Polacco, *When Marian Sang: The True Recital of Marian Anderson* by Pam Munoz Ryan, and *Through My Eyes* by Ruby Bridges. Here are some of the children's thoughts:

Christian Sandoval, Age 13

"It wasn't easy for minorities during the Civil Rights. We still have a long way to go because people weren't treated well . . . I learned you can never judge somebody by their color."

Rondell Teesdale, Age 9

"After we read about when Marion [Anderson] sang in Washington, I had a dream about how she sang. When you said to visualize how she was on the Lincoln Memorial, I dreamed that the words were going through the air and people were singing."

Zachary Vaughn, Age 13

"When we read about history, we get to understand everybody else's perspectives. Like someone thinks something's meaningful but someone else doesn't, we understand their own perspective . . . Some schools might not focus on Black History, or only in February. We learned about what our ancestors have gone through. You want to learn more about what others have gone through."

Tenacity Notes

We would like to thank **Mayor Thomas M. Menino**, the **Boston Centers for Youth & Families**, and **Boston Parks & Recreation** for helping deliver this year's Summer Tennis & Reading Program to over **3,600** Boston youth at **28** neighborhood sites!

Staff Comings and Goings

Tenacity has been experiencing tremendous growth over the past six months and with this growth we have welcomed a number of amazing individuals to our Tenacity team.

Maura Smith, our new Development Director, is helping grow the grant and fundraising base at Tenacity. Maura has a Bachelor's degree from Wellesley College and a Masters in City and Regional Planning from the University of California at Berkeley. She has played a senior Development role at the Epiphany School in Dorchester, the Rodman Ride for Kids, the Women's Educational and Industrial Union and Buckingham Browne and Nichols School. In addition, Maura serves as a fundraising volunteer for Community Servings in Roxbury.

For the first time, Tenacity is hosting a **Massachusetts Promise Fellow**. Mass Promise is an AmeriCorps program and **Xandy Brown** has joined us as our first Fellow. Xandy is based in East Boston at the Tenacity site at the Umana/Barnes School. In addition to Xandy, we would like to welcome **Kara Guzman** (Tennis Coordinator), **Camilo Hernandez** (Tennis Coordinator), **Jelani Haynes** (Tennis Coordinator), **Troy Crichlow** (Tennis Coordinator), **Amy Valez** (Academic Assistant), **Benji Schirm** (Academic Liaison), and **Jennifer Meyburg** (Academic Liaison) to our program team.

We regretfully say goodbye to three of our esteemed Tennis Coordinators: **Josh Katzman**, **Drew Hendrickson**, and **Rob Willison**. They have provided many wonderful memories through their hard work, humor, and dedication to the Tenacity staff and children they served. Josh will be working in the Boston Public School system and start adjusting to his new role as a father to his first son, Cooper, born in July. Drew will be working for the Jesuit Refugee Services in Tanzania. He will be working with Somali refugees living close to the shared border and helping local reporters get information out to international human rights watchdog groups such as Human Rights Watch and the United Nations. Rob will be taking a philosophy course in Princeton's graduate program and working part time as an educational consultant at City Hall in New York City. We wish them all the best in their future endeavors!

Want to try a different racquet? The U.S. Open Squash Championships come to the Back Bay Events Center in Boston this November 13-16. Visit www.usopensquash.com for details.

Summer Partnership Highlights

Sara DeMedeiros, Academic Coordinator

Every summer, Tenacity works closely with many other groups to make our program as strong as possible, and this year was no exception! Here are some of the highlights:

- An innovative partnership to integrate Tenacity literacy program with the arts was started at the Hunt/Almont site. Each week, Erica from the **Artists in Residence Craft Workshops** at Hunt/Almont Park worked with Tenacity students. After a read-a-loud, the children participated in a craft with Erica and her volunteers. The children made clothespin people during our family theme week and created kites and puppets as well.
- Children at the Grove Hall Community Center Site visited the **Grove Hall Library** as part of their Tenacity reading time, and all of them now have library cards.
- Some of our great relationships, believe it or not, start with sharing restroom facilities! At Carter Playground, Tenacity participants rely on the **Northeastern University** police station for restroom facilities. Tenacity at Hunt/Almont Park is always grateful to use the restrooms at the **Mattapan Community Health Center**. **McKenna's Restaurant**, on Savin Hill Avenue, makes its restrooms available to children from the Savin Hill site. And, Tenacity at Dorchester Park relies on the nearby **Caritas Carney Hospital**. Many sites also build relationships with families in the neighborhood who volunteer their homes for our children's use.
- The need for ice has been a great way to build relationships in the Savin Hill neighborhood. Both McKenna's Restaurant and the Corner Convenience store on Savin Hill Avenue donated bags of ice. Once, while staff were in the restaurant getting ice, a woman from the real estate office next door even lent them her cooler!



- Our participation with **ReadBoston's Storymobile** program has opened doors to even more partnerships. The **YMCA** brings a group of youngsters to hear the storyteller each week at Carter Playground.
- The Reading Coordinator at Hunt/Almont, Terry Sinclair, organized donations of new and gently used books which she in turn gave to the Health Center to fill their bookshelves and sent home with Tenacity participants each month.
- Neighbors of Savin Hill Playground volunteered their porch as shelter from a summer rain storm, and even helped the time pass with popsicles!
- Northeastern University has been very gracious to the program at Carter Playground, where the students visit the Northeastern food court every day for lunch.
- The **Dorchester Park Association** donated leftover books from their Family Fun Day to our reading program.
- On several occasions patrons at McKenna's have bought the kids lemonade and sports drinks, and even provided breakfast one morning!

We would sincerely like to thank all of the organizations, businesses, family, and friends who supported our program in these significant ways throughout the summer of 2006.

Newsletter Staff

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Contributors: *Andy Crane, Sara DeMedeiros, Kaytie Dowcett, Anne Greenbaum, Ashley Lipton, Melissa Morse, Terry Sinclair, Alex Wright, Tenacity students*

Photos: *James Zhen and Tenacity staff*

Mexico, Continued from page Two

It's this last point that was at times confusing and difficult for me to navigate; it forced me to question the broader purpose and implications of our work there. We were in this village as a result of a passionate Mexican visionary, a man who lives in the nearby city of Morelia and is working to improve the state of his country. He recruits volunteers to spend time exchanging ideas with the community, bringing a broad range of international perspectives to a new and, at times, emotionally charged conversation about how to create a different way of thinking and living, a way that includes more industry and commerce, even if it means modifying traditional practice to satisfy the consumer.

Some tensions emerged as it became clear that there was no consensus, neither among the volunteers nor among the local community, about exactly why we were there, whether or not the community needed to change in order to survive, and, if so, what those changes should look like. The project coordinator himself alternated between advocating cultural preservation and stressing the need to adopt more modern, international values, finding it difficult to strike a balance that satisfied both the practical and visceral senses.

In short, we found ourselves in the midst of globalization, wrestling with the essential questions of a phenomenon whose impact on international cultural identities is yet unknown, but which is up to us to navigate with conscientious and humanistic intentionality. Even as I pondered the future of our global society, I was keenly aware of the relevance of this experience to my work at Tenacity. The language and cultural exposure will undoubtedly allow me to connect more strongly with some of my students and their families. What's more, I was deeply affected and pleasantly surprised to find striking parallels between the questions we struggled to answer in Mexico and the themes we will be exploring with our students this year in our literacy curriculum: self-identity, surviving, and thriving. I anticipate that this revelation will serve to enrich my teaching, as it has reinforced my already strong belief that the themes explored in literature are not only relevant but essential to our daily lives at the individual, community, and global levels.

Summer 2006, continued from page One

- Sixteen Tenacity students and junior staff served as Ballgirls and Ballboys at all the home matches of the **Boston Lobsters**, starring the legendary Martina Navratilova and coached by Grand Slam Champion Dr. Anne Smith. Although the Lobsters missed the playoffs this year, all the home matches were close and exciting, and the Tenacity kids handled their on-court responsibilities like old pros! (*See the article on page Four for more on Tenacity and the Lobsters.*)
- Sixteen girls and boys traveled to the **Eastern Yacht Club** in Marblehead for a day of tennis, swimming, and a Tenacity fundraiser (our thanks to Tenacity supporter Ralph James, David MacBurnie, and all the folks at EYC for a truly great day).
- We would also like to give our sincere thanks to **New Balance** and **Wilson Sporting Goods** for their generous donations of clothing and equipment for this year's Summer Tennis & Reading Program.
- Seven Tenacity students had the opportunity to attend the nationally renowned **Windridge Tennis Camp** in Teela-Wooket, Vermont. Our deep gratitude to Ted Hoehn and his terrific staff for hosting Tenacity kids free of charge for the 6th consecutive year!
- Approximately two dozen summer participants journeyed to the **Tsai Center at Boston University** to witness their first ever Opera performance, thanks to an invitation from the Boston Midsummer Opera and Tenacity Board Member Ernie Klein.
- A group of six Tenacity students participated in a four day expedition to the Cardigan Mountain in New Hampshire, sponsored by the **Appalachian Mountain Club**. Tenacity staff person Gabe Cohen led the group.
- And last, but by no means least, 11-year old **Carl Reid**, a Tenacity summer participant for the past several years, made it all the way to the Semi-Finals of the New England Open held in New Haven during the final week of our program. Carl, who started his Tenacity career at our George Wright site in Hyde Park and who for the past two years has been at our Advanced Site at the Roxbury Latin School in West Roxbury, upset three top seeds to make it to the semis. This was the best tournament result ever for a Tenacity student, and it catapulted young Carl into the top 25 in the 12 and under division for New England. Way to go, Carl!

None of this would have been possible without the great partnership Tenacity has with **Mayor Menino**, the **Boston Centers for Youth and Families**, and the **Boston Parks Department**. A particular thanks goes to Barbara Hamilton and Larelle Bryson of the Recreation Department, and to Christine Wainwright and her great staff at the **Boston Youth Fund**. We can't wait for the summer of 2007!

Student Work

Julie Liang, Age 11 (Ringer Playground)

Tenacity

Tenacity is the best
It will put you to the test
It will be fun
If you run in the sun

Tennis is fun to play
You like to stay
It will be fun
If you run in the sun



*An illustration of Where the Wild Things Are from
Carter Playground*



*Ryan from Ringer Playground
drew this excellent raquet*

Tenacity, by Keena

When it was my first day in tennis I was happy, and had new friends. There were a few rules I had to follow. I had to wear shorts, bring lunch, and a water bottle.

Then I had to learn new steps. I learned that I had to stay sideways everytime I play tennis. Since it was my first day in tennis my teacher Carl showed me how to hit a ball in the wall and make it go far.

All I knew was I was here to listen, be safe, and have fun. A few days later I was better in playing and I practiced a lot. New kids came and we had lots of fun.

I did a lot of reading with Terry my teacher. We made 3 puppets, and a jellyfish kite. She reads every day. We even play after.

I love playing tennis.

Recipe, continued from page Six

Tenacity, then, seems best described as success. While that success comes to each participant in a different way, it seems to come to them all. They are all bound, as a result, by that common experience of succeeding. It is knowing what it is to succeed, to be a success, and to be a part of that atmosphere, that is Tenacity. After four summers, it is only in the last days of my involvement with Tenacity that I came to this conclusion and yet I'm not sure I could have done so any earlier. I have experienced accomplishments each summer, both my own and those around me, but it has taken until now to recognize the overall triumph that is Tenacity. Finally I truly understand Tenacity's motto: *Game. Set. Life.*

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