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Meet the New CP and PSS

Team Members

Keyana “Key” Michel will be working with

College Prep (CP) students in grades 9-11

as a Student and Family Support Coordinator.

Key comes to Tenacity with an amazing zeal

and strong experience with BPS students,

having served as a City Year Corps member

at the English High School. Most recently,

she worked as a Therapist with ABA Behav-

ioral Counseling. Key is a long time Boston resident and graduate of both

UMass Amherst and Brookline High School.

Carlos Lopes, an alumnus of the Tenacity

Pathway Program, joins Tenacity as our new

Post-Secondary Support Coordinator. Carlos

brings valuable insight into the post-secondary

student experience. As a graduate of

Beacon Academy, Tabor Academy, and Tufts

University he has been engaged with Tenacity

for many years. Lastly, as a tennis player and

former Longwood Summer Scholar, Carlos brings a wonderful enthusiasm

for the sport to the CP and Post-Secondary Services (PSS) program. Car-

los has done and done well all that we dream our Tenacity students will

accomplish. No doubt, he will be invaluable as a teacher, advisor, mentor,

and support to the Pathway.

FALL 2016 POST-SECONDARY ENROLLMENT

Tenacity high school seniors who graduated last spring have matriculated into an

exciting array of colleges and post-secondary programs.

American University*

The Boston Conservatory*

Bunker Hill Community College

College of the Holy Cross*

Eastern Nazarene College*

Empire Beauty School

Framingham State University*

Hillsborough Community College

Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts*

Mount Holyoke College*

New England Conservatory of Music*

Newbury College*

Princeton University*

Suffolk University*

UMass Boston*

UMass Dartmouth—College Now Program

University of Notre Dame*

U.S. Marine Corps

 Wentworth Institute Technology*

Year Up

*Four-Year College or University
You mentioned that you played a little tennis before starting the program. Did Tenacity help spark a much larger interest in tennis?

It definitely did. Tenacity helped me in terms of my skills. I would go there after school and hit with the coaches. The summer sites definitely helped with my game as well. I was playing with a lot of good kids and improving my strokes. I learned to keep a consistent rally and started to enjoy the game more. I love competing with friends and coaches. I feel like that’s where the fun part is. Competing. It makes you always want to get better.

Where did you go to high school?

I went to Saint Sebastian’s School, which is a private school in Needham. Before Saint Sebastian’s, Tenacity was helping me with looking at high schools and the program they introduced me to was Beacon Academy. So I actually went to Beacon Academy for a year and Beacon Academy helped get me into Saint Sebastian’s.

What was it about Beacon Academy that you felt was so helpful?

Well, the premise of Beacon Academy is to strengthen your math and English skills to better prepare you for high school. At that point I didn’t feel like I was as well prepared as I possibly could be, so taking the extra year at Beacon helped me develop important learning skills. For example, they taught me how to annotate effectively and better manage my time. In addition to that, their intense English program made me a closer reader and a better writer.

Were you involved in the Tenacity Summer Tennis & Reading Program?

I consistently worked at the summer sites over the past few years. This summer, like last year, I worked three weeks, and the year before that I worked the full summer.

Overall, what did you find most beneficial about participating in the Tenacity program?

I would say definitely the new opportunities and academic support that Tenacity offered to me. For example, Tenacity got me scholarships to Windridge Tennis & Sports Camps for two summers, which was really fun. Tenacity also got me scholarships to play at Longwood Cricket Club for many summers. There, I was able to improve my tennis skills and meet a lot of new people. Then during senior year, Tenacity helped me a lot with my college applications.

Were there specific staff at Tenacity who you found particularly helpful?

Well in the middle school program I remember the program director Brian Tuttle, who definitely had a big influence on me in terms of helping me out with my tennis and literacy. He was very friendly and supported me a lot. Once I got to high school, even though I couldn’t attend the monthly meetings, I feel like staff-wise I maintained a close relationship with Andrew. I’ve known him since middle school. He helped me with high school selection and my high school essays.

So now you’re heading to Princeton. Any idea what major you’ll pursue?

I want to major in Economics, and probably minor in math.

Will tennis factor into life at Princeton?

Probably club tennis. Tennis has always been one of my big passions so I definitely want to continue that.

Are there any other things that you want to share about your Tenacity experience?

I want to emphasize the opportunities that Tenacity offered me. If it weren’t for Tenacity, I don’t think I would be where I am. It opened a lot of doors for me both academically and socially.

Taking On the Ivy League

We caught up with recent high school graduate Sonny Huang to dish about his Tenacity experience and his plans for Princeton, where he is a freshman this year.

How did you get connected to Tenacity?

I started in the middle school program when I was in the 6th grade at Edison K-8 School. My first experience with Tenacity was when one of the staff came to my school, the Edison, during lunch time. He was asking if people were interested in playing tennis and sharing that there was a cool afterschool program called Tenacity. Before Tenacity I played a little tennis with my mom, so at that point I was pretty interested, and I asked them to sign me up.

In the middle school years, what did you find most helpful about the Tenacity program?

Well, definitely the literacy part, because for me, English is my second language. I came to America in 2007 when I was in 5th grade. Picking up a new language was really hard and adapting to the new culture was a tough thing to do. But once I was at Tenacity, we read books every day. There were new vocabularies that we had to learn, which helped fortify my English.

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“I want to emphasize the opportunities that Tenacity offered me. If it weren’t for Tenacity, I don’t think I would be where I am.”
Meet the New Middle School Academy Team Members

We are excited to welcome four new full-time staff members to the Middle School Academy (MSA) team.

Cathy AuGuste joins Tenacity as the new Site Director/Academic Coordinator at Curley K-8 School. Most recently, Cathy worked with middle school students in the Steps to Success program in Brookline Public Schools. Cathy has a M.A. in Teaching from Simmons and extensive experience working with both middle school students and AmeriCorps Fellows.

Curtis Blyden has joined the team at McCormack Middle School as the Family Engagement Coordinator. For the last three years, Curtis worked with middle school students at Match Charter Public Middle School in Jamaica Plain. Prior to that, he worked at Bird Street Community Center in Dorchester as a youth leadership coordinator. That role followed several years of international experience, both in Romania and also as a Peace Corps volunteer in Mongolia.

Zack Goodstein, who spent the 2015-2016 school year as a Tenacity AmeriCorps Fellow at the Jackson Mann K-8 School, has joined the team there as the Tennis & Fitness Coordinator/Family Engagement Coordinator. Zack established a wonderful rapport with students and families last year and is eager to build on that momentum. Zack holds a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology, with a minor in Philosophy, from Clark University.

Mike Szkolka has joined the team at McCormack Middle School as the Academic Coordinator. Mike is a native Bostonian, grew up in the Boston Public School system, graduated from UMass Boston, and completed a stretch of teaching at the Edwards Middle School. Mike has spent the last few years in the New York City Department of Education as a New York City Teaching Fellow and teaching in the Manhattan Alternate Learning Centers.

NEW MSA LITERACY CURRICULUM

The Middle School Academy (MSA) program re-calibrated the literacy curriculum into three distinct year-long strands – Identity, Social Justice and Civic Responsibility, and High School and Future Goals. The purpose for this recalibration was to standardize thematic content across all sites and to provide our highly talented staff of youth educators a robust compilation of developmentally appropriate resources that more effectively meet the needs of our middle school students. Creating year-long strands will also allow for deeper integration and discussion, increasing student engagement and elevating and expanding student achievement. These deep dives into focused curricula will help students better analyze, evaluate, and synthesize complex ideas and consider multiple perspectives. To highlight this, each student will be completing a year end culminating project that reflects the content taught across the year.

RE-ALIGNMENT OF OST SITE STAFFING STRUCTURES

In order to streamline collaboration across our three Out-of-School-Time (OST) sites and improve the efficiency of the MSA staffing structure, OST sites went through a re-align ment. The simplified structure now establishes combined roles of Site Director/Academic Coordinator and Tennis & Fitness/Family Engagement Coordinator, more tightly infusing the student support component of the Family Engagement role into the tennis domain.

(continued on next page)

NEW TECHNOLOGY TWIST IN LITERACY LEAGUE

This year, in a new twist to our Literacy League tradition, podcasts will be included among the types of literature students meet quarterly to discuss. The most recent Literacy League event on October 21st featured four podcasts produced and developed by WNYC through their “Radio Rookies” collaboration. Tenacity students participating in this event created their own podcast in the model of the high school students whose stories were featured in Radio Rookies.

HIGH SCHOOL SELECTION

As part of the process of helping students find the right fit high school, Tenacity Middle School Academy (MSA) and College Prep (CP) staff work closely with 8th grade students and their families to explore in-district public (Boston Public Schools), out-of-district public, charter, and private school options. Factors like a student’s interests, strengths, and areas of growth, along with school location and specialty programs offered are some of the items that are considered in the matching process. One-on-one interviews with students have wrapped up and staff-led group visits to area high schools have begun.

In November, MSA and CP staff will jointly host a “Packet Night” where students and their families meet quarterly to discuss. The most recent Literacy League event on October 21st featured four podcasts produced and developed by WNYC through their “Radio Rookies” collaboration. Tenacity students participating in this event created their own podcast in the model of the high school students whose stories were featured in Radio Rookies.

Students from all six Tenacity sites diving deeper into the RadioRookies podcasts during Literacy League held at the Irving Middle School.
The 2016 Summer Tennis & Reading Program spanned across 23 sites in Boston and 5 sites in Worcester, providing over 5,000 kids with a fun, free educational program while also providing Tenacity Pathway students with jobs and leadership development opportunities.

A daily reading curriculum provides age-appropriate, engaging reading activities that help stem summer learning loss for students participating in the Summer Tennis & Reading Program. Tennis and fitness activities not only keep kids active and teach new skills, they also serve as a catalyst for building self-confidence and positive social behaviors.

The Importance of Summer Learning

During summer vacation, many students lose knowledge and skills. By the end of summer, students perform, on average, one month behind where they left off in the spring. When students attend a summer learning program like Tenacity’s Summer Tennis & Reading Program (STRP), they interact with positive role models, learn how to work with others, take responsibility, build meaningful relationships, accept guidance and develop decision-making skills. All of these life skills nurture independence and confidence, creating a foundation that will serve them the rest of their lives.

Summer Tennis & Reading Program Quick Facts

• In Boston, 23 sites ran for six weeks. Six sites added an additional 7th week. There was also an advanced tennis site in West Roxbury for 18-20 players. Boston STRP served 4,200 kids.

• In Worcester, five STRP sites ran for six weeks, serving 800 kids.

• Boston STRP hosted an intern program with 10 interns. The interns were students graduating from 8th grade into 9th grade and moving from Middle School Academy into College Prep. The internships provided the students an opportunity to assist with leading and running the summer sites, providing valuable leadership experience.

• 41 Tenacity Pathway students worked at summer sites this year. Hiring Pathway students to help run the summer program is a win-win. Students gain valuable job experience and the program gains staff who are passionate and invested.

Longitudinal studies indicate that the positive effects of participating in a summer learning program endure for at least two years after participation.
A Summer Well Spent

Three of our amazing junior staff members from this year’s Summer Tennis & Reading Program share their thoughts on the program’s impact, both personally and for the students and families they served.

What did you find most enjoyable about working for the Summer Tennis & Reading Program?

Nevon: I liked how everyone worked as a team, the drivers, the workers, the Reading Coordinator (RC) and Tennis Coordinator (TC). The first day we decided what each person would feel comfortable doing, like whether they would prefer reading, tennis or either one, and we just set rules on the first day, that’s what I liked.

Omar: Basically the whole summer, meeting different kids and working with different groups. At my site we only had a morning program since we didn’t have any students and working with different organizations and teaching different kids how to play. Also the RC and the TC both did a good job. I never felt like I was at a loss or didn’t know what I was doing. They always made sure I felt comfortable and they also gave us a chance to lead the games sometimes. Also, the RC this year gave us the opportunity to read books to the kids. So they gave us a chance to develop leadership.

Felix: It was a chance to be a good role model for a younger generation of students. I liked how all the kids, if you are enjoying it, they’ll enjoy it too. They go based off your attitude towards the game and your energy. If you’re into it, they’re into it too.

Nevon: I liked that too. The kids were energetic and you’d give them piggyback rides and they would be like you can’t do a cartwheel, so I would do a cartwheel. It was fun to challenge each other.

What do you feel like you learned?

Nevon: I learned how to lead games and activities and stuff like that. I learned different ways to moderate activities, like there is more than one way to play a game.

Omar: How to deal with little kids. The job I had before was working with just middle school kids. Most of the kids in the Tenacity program were between the ages of eight and twelve, so I wasn’t used to working with kids that young.

Felix: Problem solving and how there are different ways to play a game and how you can change things up for different ages and for the weather.

Tell us about the community building visits made by Boston Police officers.

Felix: The first police officer stopped by to talk with the kids and he actually played tennis with the kids for 10-15 minutes. The second one was an officer who came to the afternoon program and he gave out free ice cream to the kids. And a third officer let them play in the police car. All the kids got in and were taking pictures. The seats are really hard!

Omar: At my site they came once to give out ice cream but they would also come by to check in on us whenever they were cruising through the neighborhood.

How many years have you guys worked for the Tenacity summer program?

Omar: This is my first year.

Nevon: Third.

Felix: This is my third summer.

If you think back three years ago or two years ago, in your first couple years with Tenacity, how have you guys grown or become more mature or taken on different responsibilities?

Felix: I grew in taking the step of being more of a leader. Basically speaking about and leading things on the courts - like group games with the kids and different activities.

Omar: I’d say mine is basically the same thing. Like more leading and having more patience, basically. Problem solving with the little kids. Most of the time when they had a problem, like when they would argue about cutting in line and who was there first or they wanted the same racket or whatever, I would tell them to do rock, paper, scissors and that was how to get them to agree on the position or go wherever they were meant to go. It’s fair and even a little bit fun.

Nevon: Facilitating. Like whatever activity I am running on the court, if I feel like it isn’t working out, I change it to a different game that I feel the kids would like better. I can figure out what games they like and then switch it up to run smoother.

Do you guys have a sense of how your participation impacts the neighborhood that you’re working in or the city you live in, the bigger picture of what Tenacity does and what you helped do for families in Boston?

Felix: You can build trust with the families to come back to the Tenacity program. I mean they showed how much it meant because they asked if we were going to be back for next summer. Building relationships with the parents and families was important.

Omar: Some of the kids at my site didn’t even want to leave when program was over. They wanted to stay because they were having so much fun.

Nevon: One day, to show their appreciation, a group of the families came by and they gave the staff a $75 gift card to go get food for everybody. They also gave us a bunch of Gatorade and a bag of ice.

You guys are out there on the court providing a service to young people that we hope you are proud of, and that you understand the impact that it makes for families that might not be able to afford other types of programs. Instead of that kid being home watching TV or playing video games, he or she is out having fun, getting exercise, learning, reading, socializing, and making friends.

Omar: Definitely, and it also exposes them to different things. So like where I live, most of the kids either play basketball or football. If you tell them you play tennis, they look at you like something is wrong with you. It’s good to help them explore different things and make them realize that basketball and football aren’t the only sports you should be playing.
New Balance Launches SERVE Mentor Program and Increases Support to Tenacity Through SparkStart Initiative

Tenacity has been awarded a $225,000 SparkStart Grant by the New Balance Foundation. The award continues the New Balance Foundation’s longtime support of Tenacity’s programs with an increase of $50,000 over the previous year’s grant. The grant will be used to support Tenacity’s Pathway to Post-Secondary Success and Summer Tennis & Reading programs.

Tenacity partners with Boston Public Schools, Boston Parks & Recreation, and community organizations to provide school-based and out-of-school time academic and social support as well as tennis and fitness instruction. Since 2002, the New Balance Foundation has contributed over $1.1M to support Tenacity’s school-year and summer programs. In addition to the foundation grant, New Balance Athletics, Inc. is providing approximately $60,000 worth of athletic shoes and apparel for staff and kids.

Launched in fall 2016, the Tenacity/New Balance SERVE Mentor Program connects New Balance associates with students from the Jackson Mann School in Brighton. Over 20 associates will use their personal and professional skills in Tenacity’s weekly programs, helping students with homework, literacy, and tennis/fitness activities.

“We’re honored to receive such a substantial gift from the New Balance Foundation,” said Ned Eames, Tenacity Founder and CEO. “Tenacity’s programs help narrow the opportunity and achievement gaps for Boston students from under-resourced communities and support from partners like New Balance help move our mission forward.”

“Tenacity and the New Balance Foundation share a commitment to building successful futures through health, fitness and academics. We are pleased to support Tenacity’s growth and we are excited to add an employee volunteer program element to our relationship this year,” shared Molly Santry, Senior Manager, Global Philanthropy at the New Balance Foundation.

AmeriCorps Fellow Opportunities for 2017-2018

We are seeking great people to fill our Tenacity AmeriCorps Fellow roles for 2017-18. Do you have a loved one or neighbor who will graduate from college next spring or summer? Or is there someone you know who is considering a career change and thinks education mixed with tennis and fitness might be a great next step? If so, this could be the perfect opportunity.

Tenacity offers a one-year service opportunity leading to a rich experience in youth development, whole child education philosophy, and urban education in our Middle School Academy (MSA) program. Tenacity AmeriCorps Fellows lead middle school youth and teach a literacy and tennis/fitness curriculum in one of our six partner schools in Boston. Responsibilities include leading small groups of students in various academic and fitness activities in an after-school or school-day classroom setting during the school year. Fellows also help create lesson plans for literacy blocks as well as tennis and fitness blocks, recruit and manage volunteers, assist in data entry, and facilitate family engagement initiatives. In the summer, Fellows take leadership roles, running summer camp sites in Tenacity’s Summer Tennis and Reading Program. To apply or for more information, email: Apply2BFellow@tenacity.org.
Girls Got Game is a monthly event that brings together girls from all six Tenacity Middle School Academy sites to play tennis or pursue other fun fitness/athletic activities, team build, and talk about successful women in the media and sports. The goal of Girls Got Game is to create a space where the participants feel empowered and also to encourage a culture of competition, respect, and friendship among the girls.

The goal of the Tenacity Elementary Program is to build a recruitment pool of candidates for Tenacity’s Middle School Academy (MSA) while providing valuable lessons in self-control and sportsmanship. Elementary Program students who get hooked on the fun activities, camaraderie, and interaction with our staff are encouraged to join the MSA program when they reach 6th grade. Tennis isn’t just great exercise, it also helps kids develop valuable life skills. Playing tennis nurtures the development of work ethic, discipline, and responsibility while also enhancing mental strength and problem solving skills. Tennis also can improve social skills. Children learn the importance of teamwork when playing doubles or being on a team. By using smaller courts and foam balls, our students are able to achieve faster stroke progression and rallying success. After learning forehands, backhands, and volleys, they quickly progress to playing games like King of the Court.

Celebrate with Tenacity and more than 600 business and community leaders at our annual gala, honoring the power of education and celebrating the accomplishments of Tenacity Pathway students. The gala theme, Show Your Tenacity, highlights the many ways that our students, staff, board members, partners, volunteers, and supporters demonstrate our namesake quality. The evening will be filled with fun, friends, and fine dining to go along with exciting entertainment, inspiring stories, and exclusive auction items. Mark your calendars and come out to show your support for the tenacious students we serve. Together we can help ensure that Boston youth from under-resourced communities have an opportunity to grow, learn, and ultimately realize their full potential on their Pathway to Post-Secondary Success.

The 2017 Tenacity Gala
Thursday, April 6, 2017
Westin Boston Waterfront Hotel
425 Summer Street, Boston, MA 02210

For sponsorship or event information, please contact:
Lindsey Woods, Director, Annual Giving & Special Events
lindseywoods@tenacity.org
617-562-0900 x29

Help inspire tenacity in the lives of underserved Boston youth

ROGAN ROBBINS ADVERTISING PROVIDES 2017 GALA BRANDING SUPPORT

Michael Rogan, CEO and Chief Creative Officer, and Seth Robbins, EVP and Senior Art Director, of Rogan Robbins Advertising, are generously providing pro bono branding and design support for Tenacity’s 2017 Show Your Tenacity Gala. In previous years, Baldwin/Clancy/Rogan Advertising provided pro bono support.

We are thrilled to work with the dynamic duo of Rogan Robbins whose creativity will help shape the look and feel of this year’s event. Many thanks to Mike and Seth for their invaluable expertise.

Located in the suburbs of Boston, MA, Rogan Robbins Advertising is an independent agency that offers all the experience, talent, and capabilities of a big shop. Only on a smaller, more responsive, more personal scale. From billion-dollar multinationals to local main-street businesses, they’ve worked with companies—and budgets—big and small. They learn fast, work smart, and think big.

For the October Girls Got Game event, 15 girls participated, representing all six MSA sites! Students and staff alike enjoyed an icebreaker, a fitness activity, and a variety of tennis games.

Since 2013, Tenacity Marathon Team runners have raised over $560,000 to support our Pathway Programs. This year’s team is aiming to push that total past $700,000 by April 17, 2017.

To support a runner and help us reach our goal, visit the 2017 marathon team’s page at: www.crowdrise.com/tenacity-marathon-team
SAVE THE DATE
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April 6, 2017