Newsletter MARCH 2009

RECOGNIZED STUDENT ORGANIZATION STATUS

comm.UNITY has been officially recognized as a Syracuse University student organization by the Office of Student Life (OSL). We will still continue our beneficial partnership with the Soling Program, but now we have access to other University resources as well.

For the remainder of the semester, comm.UNITY is under a provisionary status; we must attend five Student Association meetings, participate in officer training and fiscal training, and demonstrate collaboration with other Recognized Student Organizations.

We are very excited about this wonderful opportunity for our organization. We look forward to working with our OSL advisor and collaborating with other student organizations.

Next time you see our members, look for our new comm.UNITY t-shirts! Thanks to the marketing team for designing them!

ON POINT FOR COLLEGE STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

By Joanna Hardy

Phyllip Martin grew up watching his single mother attend college at Syracuse University. He often attended classes with her and was able to get a great feel for the college experience as he saw his mom experience it.

"College was always a must for me," Martin says.

On Point For College helped Martin reach this goal. Now a freshman at Siena College, he says his largest draw to become involved in OnPoint was the support system it provided.

"OnPoint takes care of you, all the people involved take care of you," he says. They helped him with everything from the adjustment to college life to the specifics of financial aid.

Through his experiences with OnPoint, Martin says he was able to develop and maintain a relationship with Carol Bilstein, a volunteer driver. "The greatest thing I thank OnPoint for is their service getting me to and from college on breaks and college visits," Martin says.

Martin is majoring in physics and pursuing a 3/2 program with Siena College and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute where he will obtain his Bachelor's degree in engineering. He says the biggest hurdle he overcame was time management.

"My first semester, I didn't know the routine of college and how fast our professors expected us to acquire the knowledge," Martin says. However, now he has adjusted to college and and continues to work hard.

Martin doesn't feel intimidated by other students, either. He says he never felt that the other students around him were more privileged than him. "Being around my mother at SU, I always was exposed to these things, and it really was a norm seeing people that had more than you materialistically," Martin says. The different types of students were not something that he was phased by.

"Ultimately if you're surrounded by those people in an educational institution, they truly don't inhabit more than you," Martin says.

OnPoint has helped him to take something he always saw himself doing, and together, make it happen.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

As I look back to a year ago, I am pleasantly shocked with how much progress comm.UNITY has made. I remember mentioning this crazy idea I had to my good friend, Carissa, and asking her if she'd be interested in exploring it with me. I had no clue as to where this would lead us.

As we began work on our new organization, we started estimating numbers. How many students did we think would be interested? How many non-profits did we think we could work with? We thought maybe 20 students, including our Executive Board, and maybe one to two non-profits. Wow, were we wrong. We have over 80 active students in our organization, with over 270 students on our listserv. We were fortunate enough to work with nine non-profits at one point this year, and we are excited to be able to help more next year.

Whenever I speak of the organization, its members, its clients, and its Executive Board, I cannot believe this has all happened so quickly. It's been quite a whirl wind, but has been completely worth it. I feel extremely privileged to have worked with all of you in one capacity or another. And I'd like to thank all of you, for helping make this idea a reality. I have met some incredible people, learned more than I ever could have hoped, and I know we made a difference in the Syracuse community.

It has been a pleasure meeting and working with all of you. I cannot wait to hear about all of the amazing and incredible things comm.UNITY will surely do in the future.

Sincerely,

Tessa Kurman
Co-Founder and co-Executive Director of comm.UNITY

comm.UNITY
communications for the community