



**Women In Natural Sciences (WINS)** is an innovative and successful science enrichment program conducted by the Academy of Natural Sciences in collaboration with the School District of Philadelphia. Since its founding in 1982, WINS has been providing female public school students with hands-on science classes, scientific literacy and skill-building activities, and opportunities for personal growth in a uniquely nurturing setting.

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# WINS Newsletter

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## Coming full circle...

WINS participants and family, please join me in welcoming our new WINS Coordinator, Dannyelle Combs. In our last issue, I mentioned that opportunity is what the WINS program is all about, and Dannyelle is the perfect example.

Dannyelle has been a part of the WINS family since she began as a WINS I in July 2000. She graduated from the Philadelphia High School for Girls in 2004 and went on to Franklin & Marshall College on a full scholarship where she graduated with a degree on Environmental Studies and Sociology in 2008.

Though Dannyelle obviously has the credentials for being a WINS Coordinator, her enthusiasm and love for the program is what makes her a perfect fit. In the article below, you can read her personal thoughts on joining (or in her case "re-joining" the program). As an alumni, Dannyelle's experiences are a very "real" role model for the WINS to follow.

And speaking of role models...we recently had a visit by another WINS alumni (2001) Ieva Sayles. Ms. Sayles kindly accepted to come to one of our meetings to talk to the girls, and

it was a real treat. The current WINS were impressed to meet someone who had started in the program 10 years earlier, who graduated from the American Center for the Technical Arts and Sciences, and who is now a cardiographic technician.

To see what an impression her visit made, turn the page to read what one of our current WINS has to say about Ms. Sayles' visit. I think you will agree with me that WINS alumnae can really make a difference to the current program.

Betsy Payne  
WINS Manager

## ...back to WINS.

Everyone wishes for the new year to be a welcoming door for new things. My New Year's Eve wish was for new things but to take me back to old places.

I first walked into the doors of The Academy when I was just thirteen years old. I started off as the typical WINS girl who absolutely despised science because it was so darn boring. I was so confident in my interview that I was going to graduate from Spelman College and be a lawyer.

Throughout my WINS II experience, I always worked with the WINS I class. In the eleventh grade, I realized how much fun I was having helping prepare lesson plans and working with the girls. While they were getting excited about science, I guess I was too!

WINS not only turned me on to the world of science, but on one of the college tours, I was overwhelmed by Franklin & Marshall College, an institution I had never even heard of. The school was a perfect fit.

I went from the WINS girl who hated science, to the WINS girl who spoke at the Academy's annual meeting and said I want to work for WINS one day. Well, the opportunity presented itself, not even a year after graduation and needless to say, applying was a no brainer.

I think I am one of the luckiest young ladies ever. I get to work with a program I truly love, be around girls who light up my life, take a daily exploration into the world of science, and most

importantly show a group of talented young women how I began to love science. A decade later, I am walking into the Academy of Natural Sciences everyday and working as the WINS Coordinator.

With Love,  
Dannyelle Combs



Dannyelle kept coming back to WINS; here she is shown between Marquette Richardson and Lataeya Carr at the WINS Holiday Party.

# My First College Tour Trip



Zakia Elliot sharing with Yasmin Ahmed during the College Tour.

*"Not only was my unrealistic image of college proved incorrect, I now have an idea of the type of college or university I would like to attend."*  
-Zakia Elliot

When I first heard that we were going to go on a WINS II trip to New York and New Jersey for college tours, my first instinct was to be excited; I had no idea where I wanted to go to for college and I was relieved to know that now I have the opportunity to learn about some colleges not too far away from home. But after the initial excitement wore off I started to think about what I was actually getting myself into. I could imagine it; cold, early mornings with long walks across an endless campus with a boring, monotone tour guide. Or worse: my hands cramping from taking notes from a lightening-speed talking guide. Frankly, I worried that this trip would be a chore.

I should have put two-and-two together to realize that since none of our WINS trips were ever a real chore, this trip shouldn't be one either. Nevertheless, I was surprised

by the outcome of the college tours. In three days we visited five colleges- Fordham University, Hofstra University, Sarah Lawrence College, Columbia University, and Stockton College. I was pleasantly surprised to find that most of the tours didn't prove to be a pain; instead of long-winding speeches on how wonderful So-And-So College was, I received interesting tours and useful information about their colleges.

Thankfully, I was relieved of my perception of colleges; no more did I think of large, gray buildings that were flooded with frantic, stressed scholars, scurrying across mile-long campuses to their next class. Instead, we were greeted with diversity - the colleges ranged from classic, large stone buildings that housed serious students in the middle of the city, to large, bright buildings flooded with more casual and diverse students with tons of

different majors.

All in all, I am eternally grateful for having the opportunity to attend those college tours. Not only was my unrealistic image of college proved incorrect, I now have an idea of the type of college or university I would like to attend. Even now, the college tours are still making an impact on my life; everyday, I'm receiving information on other colleges across our country. I am so glad that the college tours have opened so many doors for me to find more information about college.

Now, when I think about my future, I feel a little less wary about it. And the best part? I didn't suffer from acute hand-cramping! If that doesn't prove a successful college tour trip, I'm not sure what does.

Zakia Elliot  
WINS '11

## Alumni found - more are still sought!

Sometimes, something you wish for just happens. As I was trying to figure out ways to involve our WINS alumni last fall, I had a serendipitous experience - I got a call from Ieva Sayles - a WINS alumni!

I invited her to come over so that she could share some of her memories with me. Wow - she really had some great stories to share! Talking to her was like talking to a WINS spokesperson!

Ms. Sayles kindly accepted to come to one of our meetings to talk to the girls, and it was terrific. The current

WINS were impressed to meet someone who had started in the program 10 years earlier and who graduated from the American Center for the Technical Arts and Sciences, and is now a cardiographic technician.

Recently, I asked Alisa Randolph, a current WINS participant what she thought of Ms. Sayles visit. To this she wrote:

*"I really loved her. She gave me the passion to strive for what I want. It's amazing how someone who used to be in the same program as me, did*

*so much and went so far. It just shows me that I can do the same things that she did. All I have to do is just believe and go for it.*

*I know it must have been hard for her because it was so many of us, and only one of her. But, she made so many strong points that I'm now trying to accomplish in my own future. It's something that I needed to hear. It was that this program can help me get dreams I never even thought about getting before. It just made me have*

*more faith in this program and believe that I can do more than what I want to believe.*

*And for that, I am very thankful."*

Alisa Randolph WINS '11 and Betsy Payne



WINS alumni Ieva Sayles (fourth from right with headscarf) surrounded by some of the current WINS II.

## WINS Forever, *WIN Forever*

WINS will forever be in my heart, which is why I take the time to give back to the organization any way I can. The latest event I was privileged to assist in was the college tour in December. It was a unique experience, as all WINS events are, and one of many opportunities for the ladies to learn how to WIN Forever! WIN at Preparation; WIN at Character building; WIN at Life.

Many urban young adults in Philadelphia who one day aspire to attend college are either first generation college students, barely have access to resources, or once in attendance, don't have the foun-

dation to see them through to complete their studies. As a previous WINS student, I can attest to the support I received from my affiliation/participation in WINS and whole heartedly believe I would not be where I am today. For me, it all started with a WINS college tour at PITT.

As a chaperone for the latest college tour, I saw myself in many of the girls. Eager to attend college, yet baffled by the steps needed to achieve that dream. The questions the girls had before the tour and sessions, I believe were answered; and as of today the girls are one step closer to attending the college



Ebony Gardner directing a session in the December 2008 College tour.

of their choice. Their confidence was boosted along with being given tools to make the choices they are destined to make. Choosing the right college is no easy task when

compounded with maintaining grades, working, and maneuvering through the labyrinth of college applications, essays, scholarship applications, financial aid and visits to schools.

Being able to assist the WINS girls in the same way I was, under the tutelage of Najwa Smith, is the least I can do given how much I have been able to attain. WINS gave me vital tools needed to WIN forever in life, which is why I choose to keep WINS forever in my heart and aid the organization in any way I can.

Ebony D. Gardner  
WINS Alumna "03"



## Who's that mascot with the WINS?

Hey Ladies! Here your chance to win a prize! The first current WINS who contacts me with the correct information on the mascot in the picture will be the winner of a \$5.00 Dunkin Donut gift card. To win, you must let me know the name of the mascot, what specific bird it represents, and what school it belongs to. Contest ends on April 1st. Good luck! Betsy

## Dates to Remember...

### WINS I

Saturday, March 14th: **Field Trip!**

Adventure Aquarium, NJ

9:00am to 4:00pm

April 6th to 9th: **Trip to Delaware Area Environmental Center**

Meet at Academy at 9:00am

Saturday, May 2nd: **Field Trip!**

Living Classroom Sailing Trip, MD

8:00am to 7:00pm

May 30th to 31st: **Overnight camping trip "Cape to Cape"**

Meet at Academy at 9:00am

### WINS II

Thursday, March 12th: **Women Through the Lens of Time**, Moore College 4:30pm

Saturday, March 21st: **Cancelled**

Saturday, April 18th: **UPenn College Tour**

Meet at Locust Walk (34th & Locust)

at 1:00pm

Saturday, May 16th: **Field Trip!**

Smithsonian Inst. Museum of Nat. History  
7:00am to 7:00pm

Wednesday, June 3rd: **End-of-year activity and Seniors farewell**

4:30pm to 6:00pm

### WINS Newsletter

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## Evolution

Being in WINS I is a wonderful experience because you are presented with new information in every class. Many of our classes have focused on the subject of "evolution." This was a very popular topic in WINS I because nobody really understood the concept of evolution.

Miss Betsy decided that she was going to take us on field trips to the American Museum of Natural History in New York and to the University Of Pennsylvania to

educate us on this controversial topic. These trips were informative and fun. A lot of questions were answered. My favorite was "who mated with a monkey to create a human? We learned that nobody mated with a monkey to make a human – it was evolution at work.

Many interesting questions followed but nobody knew the answers. After these field trips we still wondered who came first, "The Chicken or The Egg."

For that lesson, we had another class at the Academy with Jason Poole, who taught us that many animals and other living creatures had to evolve from somewhere, just like humans evolved from primates.

Breanna Smith  
WINS '12

Who came first? seems to be in Breanna Smith's mind during one of the WINS lessons.



## Birthday Wishes to....



Shana Bell - Mar. 3 (17)  
Onyenma Enwereji -  
Mar. 13 (15)

Adjua Stinson-Murphy - Mar. 16 (16)  
Nancy Koam - Mar. 20 (15)  
Courtney Godbolt - Mar. 26 (16)  
Michelle McCracken - Mar. 30 (16)  
Qwaya Robinson - Mar. 30 (15)



Kerienne Huggins - Apr. 4 (16)  
Jasmine Henderson - Apr. 13 (15)  
Ebony Dyson - Apr. 16 (16)  
Olicia Stephen - Apr. 27 (16)



Dyamond Logan - May 26 (16)

**Happy Birthday to all!**