



BRIDGE

WELCOME TO
GRADUATION

Bible study throughout this month has been very memorable.

It's so amazing to see most of the students recall what took place in previous Bible studies. The first week started off with the Genealogy of Jesus and our ability to "reverse the curse" that has existed throughout many generations in our family. The next week, we learned about the process of "reversing the curse" by developing an intimate relationship with God. Our third Bible study was about realizing God's acceptance of us through the story of the Prodigal Son. I believe everyone has received something very special this month for their walk with Christ.

- Todd C.

The one thing that I always looked forward to during the week was mentoring nights on Wednesdays.

My mentor is Sydney and I love having her as a mentor because she acts like a Mom while I am away from my Mom. I know I can talk to her about anything and I know she'll be there to give me great advice. In my mentoring group, there is Vanessa, Prisca, Diana, and Miranda. I have become so close to all of them in many ways. I think I have the greatest bunch of girls because they are all so openhearted and we all treat one another like sisters. I'm really going to miss mentoring nights when I leave and I know that I'll never forget them.

One of the greatest things about mentoring night is the fun activities we do. I remember our first mentoring night we all went to Adam's Park and did a photo shoot and it really made us all bond. After that we also made caramel apples. Even though we all had fun times it wasn't always just that. We had serious talks about how we were feeling about our experiences at BRIDGE. That was a special time for me because opening up to the girls was comforting to me and I knew I could trust them to be there for me and support me. We all really made a huge impact on each other and we created a sisterhood that will never be forgotten. My experience at BRIDGE would have not been the same without my mentoring group. I love them so much.

- Sarai L.



- Hannah L., 2nd Year TA

Although teaching isn't necessarily my favorite thing to do,

I have loved working as a TA for BRIDGE this year. It is amazing to see how much the students grow and learn academically over a few short weeks. Most of them live in Chicago, so taking the Chicago class has been somewhat of an eye-opener for them as they learn about the history of their city and why social problems exist today. I have learned so much from them because, as

a white girl from the suburbs, I don't have the life experiences that many of them have. These students are some of the brightest that I know and I love seeing them come together as a community. I am truly blessed to have been a part of this program.

My favorite part of being a TA is being able to hear the stories the students share and share my story with them. It is clear that God has moved in this community and it is an encouragement to be a part of it.

Growing up on the west side of Chicago, I thought I knew everything there was to know about Chicago. That was until I started taking Urban Studies with Dr. Toly. On the first day of class he told us that we would be talking about Chicago and about how the more time goes by, the more things stay the same. I did not understand what Dr. Toly meant by this until the real work began. I realized that history truly does repeat itself and how important it is to learn about that history so you can help change it. I feel like I see Chicago in a whole new way now because I know how certain neighborhoods and places came to be and it's not by accident. Now I feel confident to tell people that I know the whole history of Chicago dating back to the Yankees and up until the new Chicago. This is all because of taking Urban Studies with Dr. Toly.

- Marquetta M.

BRIDGE 2011 has been amazing, exciting and off the chain. We do lots of work but that doesn't stop us from having fun. We have been doing many activities this summer. One activity we did

during our first week was the Coffee Shop night. That night is indescribable. People danced, sung, played instruments, clapped, stomped, jumped, laughed and just had an awesome time. The next day the first year students went to the Ropes Course here in Wheaton and had many challenges we had to pass. We started with tossing a ball and seeing how many times we could keep it in the air. We had it up in the air more than two hundred counts. Then we did other little challenges and finally we got to the Ropes Course. At first it looked easy but getting up there was not that easy. But then some of us got used to it and just wanted to keep on going. What I learned that day is that many of us are brave but we are just scared to try new things.

We also had dinner at Dr. Howell's house and it was amazing. We ate some Mexican food and it was delicious. After eating we played 'Big Booty' and it was really funny. Everybody was having a good time. There was laughter, smiles, rapping and it was just amazing.

- Efrain R.

Theology class is very, very interesting. When Dr. Bacote teaches, he likes to joke around. I love that he does that because his humor keeps us laughing throughout the class. He knows how to explain the things that are confusing. He's a great professor and the class is awesome because we get to see new things about God and Christianity that were hidden from us.

One interesting topic that we learned about was the Trinity, which can be hard to understand. I've learned that the Trinity is God in three; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. But the way it's misunderstood sometimes is that it is three different people that appear at different times. It's also confused as one God the Father that does it all without distinguishing each person. The Trinity means that all three make up God and they work with each other all dependent of the others. Being able to learn that is awesome because I never knew about it. Now I can help other people understand this concept a little better.

- Ana Q.

