



# Summer Advantage USA

Hello,

We hope this note finds you well. Summer Advantage USA has made great progress over the past few months and we wanted to share some exciting updates with you!

## **The Results Are In: Summer Advantage Scholars Reach New Academic Heights**

Most students lose 3 months of academic knowledge during the summer; Summer Advantage USA scholars gain 3 months and have a lot of fun doing it.

"The scholars do not want it to end," one 2009 Summer Advantage USA administrator exclaimed about the program's success at the end of last summer. For five weeks, scholars participated in the full-day summer program, including math, reading, physical fitness, music, drama, guest speakers, field trips and community service projects. A Summer Advantage parent explained, "I have 4 children in the program, K-3, and they ALL loved it! It was a great way for them to stay involved in learning over the summer and have a lot of fun at the same time. I'm not sure why any parent wouldn't want their child in this summer program."

The results have been terrific, showing a cumulative six months of academic gains in reading, writing and math. Evaluations show that Summer Advantage USA scholars progress further in mathematics and literacy than the national average and improved 9% points in comparison to peers nationwide, moving from the 42nd to the 51st national percentile rank. The end-of-program surveys showed that 97% of parents would "strongly recommend" the program to other parents and 98% of teachers felt that working with Summer Advantage USA provided valuable professional development.

With the support of partners, fellows and friends, Summer Advantage USA will be able to provide this academically and socially enriching experience to 5,000 scholars in 2010.

[Click here for the Evaluation Executive Summary](#)

## **Partnership Spotlight: Ashoka Changemaker Campus**

Summer Advantage USA has partnered with Ashoka's newest initiative - the Changemaker Campus - to transform top undergraduate and graduate institutions into centers for social entrepreneurship education. In early October, Summer Advantage Founder, Earl Martin Phalen, spoke to an eager audience of students and faculty at Babson College (Wellesley, MA) about his journey to becoming a successful social entrepreneur. Babson College was selected as an Ashoka Changemaker Campus this fall, answering the call from Babson President Leonard Schlesinger's vision to harness Babson's expertise in entrepreneurship education for the social sector. The Babson community will advise the franchisee training program, guide students to the fellowship program and connect graduates with opportunities at Summer Advantage programs.

The partnership with Ashoka will broaden this winter, as Summer Advantage and the Changemaker Campuses team up to present the Winter Intensive: Ashoka ChangeMaker Challenge. Fifteen teams of budding student social entrepreneurs from across all sectors and across the country will lend their talent and experience to a variety of mission-critical projects for Summer Advantage. Competing teams will work with experts in the field to complete the projects and will convene at the Ashoka Changemaker Summit in February to share their hard work.

[Find out more about the Changemaker Challenge!](#)

## 15 Young Social Entrepreneurs Join Summer Advantage Team

Summer Advantage USA's Inaugural Fellowship Program is off to an outstanding start! We have added 15 exceptional undergraduate students, graduate students and recent grads to our team, each dedicating 10-20 hours per week to ensure the delivery of high quality summer learning programs for scholars. Working closely with the Summer Advantage leadership team, individuals or groups accepted as Summer Advantage USA Fellows take ownership of mission critical projects from all aspects of the organization, such as teacher recruitment, brand building and development. Fellows participate in weekly team brainstorming sessions, develop productive mentor relationships and receive systemized feedback to help them reach their personal learning objectives and contribute to the Summer Advantage mission.

Fellows, who live everywhere from California to Boston, are budding experts in a variety of fields from policy to graphic design, education to business. With diverse academic, professional and personal backgrounds, the fellows rally around their passion for children and their belief in the power of summer learning to affect children's lives. "The fellowship program has grown from an idea to an indispensable resource in just a few months. Based on what I have seen so far, I know that current and future fellows will not only help Summer Advantage flourish, but will surely become powerful leaders in the social and education sectors for decades to come," said Mary Bruce, Vice President of Strategic Growth.

Applications are being accepted through November 30th for the winter intensive, as well as the spring and summer fellowship cohorts, and are available at [www.summeradvantage.org](http://www.summeradvantage.org).

[Apply to be a Spring Fellow.](#)

### Show Your Support for Summer Learning

Talking about summer learning loss in a recent interview, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan remarked, "We don't need more research, we need to do something about it." Duncan's call to action comes at a critical juncture as students in low-income communities are disproportionately underrepresented in quality summer learning programs and consequently fall further and further behind their more affluent peers. Summer Advantage USA seeks to help all children excel and is calling on you for support. This October, we launched a signature campaign to raise awareness on Capital Hill about Summer Advantage's impact on scholars. "We have a phenomenal program," says Earl Martin Phalen, founder of Summer Advantage USA. "Now we need to raise awareness about our impact and expand to serve as many scholars as possible."

We believe we've come upon "the perfect storm" for advancing Summer Advantage's mission: a combination of unprecedented funds available from the U.S. Dept. of Education through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act; a common sense of urgency to improve the nation's place in the global economy; and a citizenry filled with hope and idealistic fervor for innovative reform in education. Summer Advantage USA's Signature Campaign is a critical first step for investing key stakeholders in expanding the project. Signatures support continued and increased philanthropic and federal funding streams for Summer Advantage USA and other high quality summer learning programs. To answer Secretary Duncan's call to action, please visit the following link and show your support for Summer Advantage USA.

[Click here to show your support for Summer Advantage USA!](#)

Thank you for being a loyal friend to Summer Advantage USA. Most significantly, thank you for using your power to ensure all children have the support, encouragement and rigor that they need to be their best.

Sincerely,  
--The Team at Summer Advantage USA

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