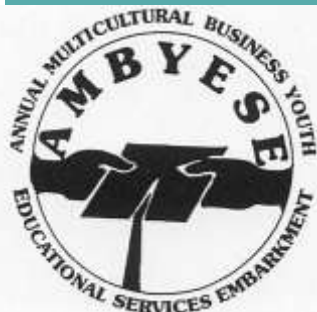


# 2008 Newsletter



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## 25<sup>th</sup> AMBYESE Conference

The 25<sup>th</sup> AMBYESE Conference was held this year on November 8, 2008 hosted by University of Connecticut, Stamford for the 8<sup>th</sup> year in a row. The conference was a success as always, hosting 200 students. Students and role models began to arrive at 10 am and the conference lasted until 2:30pm. The conference was dedicated to the Honorable

Christopher Shays., U.S Representative of the 4<sup>th</sup> Congressional District. Congressman Shays has been a strong advocate of the AMBYESE mission throughout his career. This year's sponsors were: Praxair, PepsiCo, People's United Community Foundation, Disney, ABC 7, Wachovia Foundation, Xerox Foundation and University of Connecticut.

AMBYESE represents a unique opportunity for students to become acquainted with how "big business" works. At the conference, students learn how to apply their present-day school knowledge and work experiences towards developing near-term careers. Students interfaced with our team of highly successful mentors who are employed by our corporate partners.

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## Letter From Our President

Hello,

2008 marks the Annual Multicultural Business Youth Educational Services Embankment's -- AMBYESE silver anniversary. Although the nations economic meltdown has created unparalleled financial challenges, in the final analysis 2008 has proved to be another substantially successful year for all AMBYESE programs, particularly: 1) AMBYESE Conference, 2) S.T.A.F.F. - Student Tracking & Academic Fulfillment Force 3) Y.E.S., I Can -Youth Endeavoring to Succeed, I Can. As it has been since our inception, our programs are offered free of charge to all students, as a result of funding made possible by AMBYESE's corporate partners. Some of our successes include:

-As in previous years the 25<sup>th</sup> AMBYESE conference was absolutely successful with more than 200 college-bound students participating from high schools across Connecticut, Westchester County and New York City.

-The three -week YES I Can college-prep program was smashing victorious, whereby 25 raising sophomores, juniors and seniors from a total eight high schools studied language arts, mathematics, work ethics, etc. Via field trips they interfaced on a one on one bases with health care, television, research & development, marketing and operations professionals, at Stamford Hospital, ABC7 TV and PepsiCo's Technical Center, respectively.

-The Student Tracking & Academic Fulfillment Force

-- STAFF has provided to be a unique challenge for our participating students. They have selected grade - level or advanced placement courses, projected their anticipated grades in each course and STAFF is monitoring their progress. Meanwhile, if necessary STAFF provides mentoring throughout the academic year. The mission is accomplished by working in concert with students, their parents and the school's faculty members. STAFF encourages its participating students to maintain an overall GPA of 3.0 or above. The bottom-line: Our students are meeting the challenges triumphantly!

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**25<sup>th</sup> AMBYESE Conference (cont)**



2008 Conference

*“It was one of the most fulfilling days of my year, to be able to sit with such enthusiastic, motivated students and speak about always reaching for your goals.”*

*Role model: Olivia Skiffington*



*Congressman Christopher Shays, 2008 Conference*

Pitney Bowes' Lela Connor, a member of the AMBYESE Board of Directors, served as the conference's role model coordinator.

At our conference the students are exposed to careers in banking, accounting/finance, communications, human resources, engineering, research/development, marketing/sales and information technology and law.

Students arrived at 10am and sat for opening remarks from John Howell, CPA, who is a charter member of the AMBYESE Board of Directors. Phil Yieh, Director of Revenue

Services For Pepsi International as well as a member of the AMBYESE Board of Directors, John Narcum, VP Bottler Operations, Pepsi-Cola North America and Ira Noble, Senior Manager Supply Chain Strategy PepsiCo made a PowerPoint presentation to the entire audience regarding PepsiCo's marketing, manufacturing and distribution of its products.

A very valuable part of the day is for the students to receive information on applying and getting into college, therefore, UConn had a representative speak to the students about these

processes. President and CEO Wendell Johnson spoke and introduced Congressman Christopher Shays whom gave a motivating speech. Vanessa Abrahams-John, Senior Legal Counsel, Praxair, also spoke to the students about her career path and a career in law. After lunch students went to the rooms that they had selected to meet and speak with their Role Models. This was the interactive part of the day, and the part of the day where the students got to hear real life experiences about going to college, getting into college and about different profession options.

**Meet our role models:**

Vanessa Abrahams-John  
Senior Legal Counsel  
Praxair

Ira Noble  
Senior Manager Supply  
Chain Strategy  
Pepsi-Cola

Esperanza Teasdale  
Senior Brand manager  
Pepsi-Cola Company

Gil Addo Jr.  
Analyst, Investor Relations  
Xerox Corporation

Julianna E. Prieto  
Financial Analyst, Corporate  
Financial Planning and  
Analysis  
Xerox Corporation

Michelle J. Wheeler  
Demand Planning Manager  
for the Professional Open  
Line Organization (POLO)  
P &G / Clairol, Stamford,  
Connecticut

Charles J. Alpuche  
Senior Vice President,  
supply Chain Operations  
Pepsi-cola Company

Dee Raffington  
Financial Center Manager  
/Assistant Vice President  
Wachovia Bank

Phil Yieh  
Director of Revenue  
Management  
PepsiCo International  
Member of AMBYESE  
Board of Directors

Whitney A. Bragg  
General Manager  
Ralph Lauren Rugby

Benna Ramachandran, Ph.D.  
Computer Sciences &  
Engineering Expert  
University of Connecticut

Karen B. Lyew-Dias  
HR Specialist  
John Narcum,  
VP Bottler Operations,  
Pepsi-Cola North America

Philip L. Dukes, J.D.,  
M.B.A.  
Senior Advisor to Governor  
Rell for Energy and Chief-  
of-Staff to the Connecticut  
Department of Public Utility  
Control.

Samuel J Roberts  
Lead Analyst, Enterprise  
Finance  
Pitney Bowes Inc.  
Olivia Skiffington  
Marketing Specialist  
Pitney Bowes Inc.

Lena Jimenez  
Corporate Financial Planning  
& Analysis, Analyst  
Xerox Corporation

## Role Model's Experiences

This is my second year being a role model at the AMBYESE conference. It was very exciting to see the large amount of engaged and motivated students that we had this year. My professional field is marketing; however, I really enjoy hearing the broad range of occupations the students are interested in. Everyone has a unique story to tell on how they got where they are and chose where they are going. What ever their story is, many have similar road blocks in life and the key is to work hard, never give up, and use amazing programs like AMBYESE to help get ahead in life. We all have a common thread of determination to reach our goals. It is inspiring to hear the student's aspirations and I feel privileged that I am able to share my life and education with the students. I hope that my adventures and achievements can help some students in their path to success. I have since been offered to join the AMBYESE steering committee which I have accepted with honor.

- Olivia Skiffington, Pitney Bowes

It was great sharing my experiences and time with the ambitious young adults at this year's conference. Many of the students came from a similar background as me, and I hope I was able to encourage and motivate them to pursue their passions and career goals. It was a very satisfying experience and great event to encourage the next generation of leaders. I hope to remain very involved with AMBYESE and to continue being a role model and mentor to many.

- Julianna Prieto, Xerox Corporation

The AMBYESE conference offered us a very unique opportunity as role models to give back. The students were excited and engaged and formed a truly captive audience. Similarly, the small classrooms were the perfect setting for speaking directly with the students about our experiences. Having been at that stage before, I found myself answering many of the same questions I recall that I had while preparing for college. Being able to offer the same guidance and mentorship others provided me in such a constructive environment was a wonderfully rewarding experience. For me it was both gratifying and inspiring to talk to so many bright and driven young people from the area. I am already looking forward to next year's conference.

- Gil Addo Jr., Xerox Corporation

Throughout my life, I have been fortunate to have the guidance of several people who emphasized the importance of attaining a college education. Starting with my mom and extending to the College Reach Out Program (CROP), these mentors opened my eyes to the opportunities available around me and prepared me for college. Just like I've been positively impacted by my mentors, AMBYESE gives me an opportunity to make a difference in a young adult's life and share my experiences. Being a role model at the 25<sup>th</sup> AMBYESE Conference was not only fulfilling but inspiring. It was fantastic to see so many young adults full of aspirations and interested in getting ahead in life.

- Lena Jimenez, Xerox Corporation

## Our Student's Experiences

My name is Evan Bailey and I am a junior at Bethel High School. My extra-curricular activities include roles in: the drama club, the e-commerce program, the Mock Trial Team, Renaissance, and a coach of the Bethel Middle School Mock Trial team. This summer, I attended the AMBYESE/Y.E.S. I Can 2008 summer program. For three weeks, I attended two classes, Language Arts and Mathematics, which were designed for the SAT test, as well as for improvement at school. On Wednesdays the class would take a field trip.

The 3 field trips were to Stamford Hospital, ABC studios, and the PepsiCo Research and Development Center. These trips, along with the classes were designed to prepare the students of the AMBYESE/Y.E.S. I Can program for life after high school, and in the real world. With this goal in mind, a portion of the class was also spent on skills such as collage essay writing, completing collage applications, and resume writing. In addition, we also were given the opportunity

to talk to professionals in a variety of fields, such as law. Overall the program was a lot of fun. The classes were not boring, the field trips were interesting, and the professionals talked about what we, the students, wanted to hear about. I currently hope to become a lawyer, and to participate in the 2009 AMBYESE/Y.E.S. I Can summer program (as well as recommend this program to anyone who might be interested).

**Evan Bailey**



**Our Student's Experiences (continued)**

After completing the 2008 Y.E.S I Can program, I left with a greater understanding of available careers, as well as the tools to help me do well on the SATs. Prior to this camp I had completed minimal SAT preparation and lacked confidence. However, by reviewing problems at the Y.E.S. I Can program, I now feel more comfortable when taking standardized tests. I am still undecided on my exact career path, but the enlightening field trips demonstrated the unimaginable amount of available occupations. In particular, I found the field trip to the Research and Development portion of Pepsi Co. insightful, especially the forensics area.

This portion of the company demonstrated the wide range of careers available at Pepsi Co., and consequently, the abundance of interesting careers that are available for me to pursue.

I have narrowed down my career interests significantly to include science, medicine and a few other options, and I know that I will choose a career that interests and challenges me. As a junior at Bethel High School, I still have time before I must decide which career path to explore. Until then, I enjoy participating in my high school as much as possible. I am secretary for my class and one of the Student Council representatives for my grade.

I also participate in the Renaissance and U.N.I.T.E.D. clubs and play soccer and lacrosse for my school. Lastly, I enjoy doing community service activities and working at the Writing Center at my school. Overall, I am enjoying my high school experience, yet looking forward to the future.

**Morgan Bartz**

*"The enlightening field trips demonstrated the unimaginable amount of available occupations."  
Morgan Bartz*



*Y.E.S, I Can student's field trip to ABC 7 studio in NYC, August '08*



*Y.E.S., I Can Field trip*

I am Kevin Kendall and I am a junior at the Academy of Information Technology and Engineering. I currently am studying architecture and plan to continue to do so to, one day, be certified as an architect. I participate in Interact Club which is a community service club and volunteer on a regular basis in church sponsored events. I run indoor and outdoor track. This summer, I, for the second year, participated in the AMBYESE's Y.E.S I Can Program that was offered at the University of Connecticut.

Over the summer I learned various techniques that can prove vital when taking the SAT.

Over the course of three weeks, we covered the mathematics, critical reading and writing section in great depth. I also learned how to identify grammatical errors in a sentence and how to simplify complex equations. The Y.E.S. I Can program was a fun and social experience. In addition to me, there were 24 other attendees that I acquainted myself with. Since it is an inter-district/interscholastic program, I was able to meet people that I would not have an opportunity to meet, thus helping expand my network of friends and associates.

Overall, the Y.E.S. I Can Program has been a wonderful experience for me and I have benefited greatly from all aspects of the program. I would recommend anyone eager to learn or is simply interested in furthering his or her knowledge about the SAT and meeting new people look into the Y.E.S. I Can program. It is a very enriching experience and a well spent three weeks.

**Kevin Kendall**

## Letter From Our President (Continued)

We are eternally grateful to all who made this year possible. Our volunteers, steering committees, corporate partners, board members participating students, parents and schools have all contributed to helping AMBYESE continue its mission. With this combined assistance we are able to prepare and motivate our students to “Strive for Excellence” academically by exposing them to career options in the corporate sector, and to facilitate their anxieties concerning “big business” by instilling a high-level of self-esteem in them so they learn about embarking on careers through highly successful multicultural role models.

Indeed, it is noteworthy to mention that as a result of AMBYESE's continuing progress and commitment to our very deserving youth and leaders of tomorrow, I have been extended an invitation to the inauguration of the 44th President of the United States of America on January 20, 2009.

I look forward to 2009 and all the wonderful events and successes it will bring. Thank you again for all your help and have a happy and healthy New Year!

- Wendell Johnson, President and CEO AMBYESE

## In the News...

- **Dr. Benna Ramachandran appointed Dean of the Yes I Can Institute**

Dr. Benna Ramachandran is currently teaching crediting courses for the computer science and engineering courses at the University of Connecticut and Norwalk Community College.

In the summer of 2003, she was the Computer Science Instructor for AMBYESE's Yes I Can summer college prep program and in addition to designing the course curriculum, brought real-life

experience to the classroom to enhance the students understanding of using computers in business life. Dr. Ramachandran holds several degrees, including a Ph.D. in Business Administration from the University of Bombay, Bombay India, a Masters in Management Studies from K.C. College of management, Bombay, and a Masters in Science

- **Attorney Vanessa Abrams-John has been extended an offer to become a member of the AMBYESE Steering Committee**

Vanessa currently provides legal counsel to Praxair Surface Technologies, Inc., Praxair Distribution, Inc. and Praxair Healthcare Services, Inc. She serves as Lead Counsel for negotiation and administration of Company's Government Contracts and Government Contracts compliance.

Vanessa received her Jurist Doctor from Howard University School of Law, Washington, D.C. in *May 1997* graduating *Cum Laude*.

She was also President, Caribbean Law Students Association from 1996-97. She received her BS in Psychology from University of Western Ontario, Ontario, Canada in *May 1990*

- **Carol Johnson as just joined the AMBYESE Board of Directors**

Carol served as a Steering Committee member for AMBYESE for approximately a year after being a role model at the annual conference held at UConn (Stamford) in November 2007. In this time she developed a student tracking data base and designed the 25<sup>th</sup> AMBYESE program journal.

Carol is currently employed in Norwalk at the World Headquarters of the Xerox

Corporation where she is the assistant to the Deputy Treasurer. A native of Virginia she graduated from Charlottesville High School in 1982, Housatonic Community College in 2007 with Honors in Business Administration, and is currently attending the University of Bridgeport where she is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology.

In July 2004 she joined Mt Aery Baptist Church in Bridgeport, CT and was recently licensed as a Minister.

Carol is the proud mother of three children Lovicia, Erica, and Earnest. She has also been blessed with two grandsons JaQuavion and Jayden.

# Y.E.S., I Can Program

“The overall goal of this program is to prepare students for life after high school. Many of our students will go on to prestigious colleges and universities, and others will begin their careers upon graduating high school. Whatever their passion is, our goal is to make sure we give them the tools they need to be productive and accountable students and citizens.

The students who have chosen to participate in the Y.E.S. I Can program are among those distinguished students. These young men and women have made a proactive choice in preparing themselves for what lies ahead.

These students have had the opportunity to explore the medical field through the trip to Stamford Hospital, the entertainment field through the trip to ABC Studios in NYC, and the business technology field through the trip to PepsiCo Technical Center. They were also privilege to an informative and detailed presentation given by Attorney Vanessa Abrahams-John, who is an esteemed corporate lawyer for Praxair. These are all opportunities students their age don't normally experience. Our students have worked hard in this program to build a solid foundation for their futures. Not only have they diligently prepared for the SAT, but they've also prepared for the more daunting: LIFE.”

**Jayne McGovern, Reading and Writing  
Yes I can Instructor**



*Y.E.S. I Can field trip to ABC 7. Sandra Thomas, VP of Community of Affairs hosted the event.*

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- People United, Community Foundation
- University of Connecticut School of Business Administration
- Pitney Bowes, Employee Involvement Fund

## AMBYESE Mission Statement

AMBYESE prepares multicultural secondary school students for the challenges of a more diverse workforce in the 21st Century. The objective is to motivate the students to “Strive For Excellence” academically by exposing them to career options in the corporate sector, and to facilitate their anxieties concerning “big business” by instilling a high-level of self-esteem in them so they learn about embarking on careers through highly successful multicultural role models. Today, over 12,000 regional students have earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in business, science, engineering, etc. as results of participating in AMBYESE programs.

## About the Conference...

AMBYESE originated in Danbury Western CT State University's Ancell School of Business hosted the 1st through 4th AMBYESE Conferences. Danbury High School hosted the 5th through 12th. Our student population grew from 100 at Western to 1,100 at Danbury High School. After spending the first dozen year's in Danbury, the venue was moved to Westchester County New York - The 13th and 14th AMBYESE Conferences were hosted by White Plains High School; the 15th and 16th were hosted by Mount Vernon High School; The 17th AMBYESE was hosted at Westhill High School, Stamford, CT and the 18th, 19th, 20th, 21<sup>st</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> were hosted at UConn's - Stamford campus.