

Beena Ramachadran teaches her Y.E.S., I Can 2005 Students the Language of Math

There is no better way for students to understand that they can solve math problems they don't recognize than to teach them the language of mathematics. "If students see a problem on the SAT that they don't remember the formula for, they can still try to solve the problem if they understand what all the symbols mean," said Ramachadran during an interview last Thursday. "Of-course, when you're taking a timed test, the best way to solve the problem is the fastest way, but if students finish and they want to try to tackle some of the more difficult problems, the only way they can do that is to understand what the problem is asking for and to remember that there is



more than one way to solve it," explains Ramachadran. She then turned back to her class and asked, "Does anyone have another strategy for solving this problem?"

Later, "Dr. Beena" as she likes to be called, explained that by showing students that problems can be solved in several ways, they are more likely to take risks, think creatively, and see how much fun math can be. "This approach is a big confidence booster. And often times, the students take risks, and they get the right answers. They seem to really enjoy it!"

And enjoy it, they do! The Tuesday before students were asked to focus on math the entire day. But with Dr. Beena, this was a breeze. Jack explained, "we worked in the morning on problems..."

"And that was hard," interjected Courtney.

"...But then in the afternoon," continued Jack, "we played a game and that was really fun."

Dr. Beena explained that the format for class was quite purposeful. In the morning she reviewed homework, taught a new time-saving technique, and explored different strategies for solving the same problem. "In the afternoon we play a game. It helps to break up the day and I think the students really enjoy it," she said.

"On Tuesday they wanted to keep going even though the day was over! I couldn't believe it!"

So much thought and planning has gone into Dr. Beena's math SAT prep class. As in previous years, students were given a pretest and a posttest, but she—and the students—found this

frustrating because some of the students hadn't even learned certain math concepts yet. So she asked students on the first day of the program which classes they had taken thus far and then customized each test based upon what they should know. This way, at the end of the program they can see if the strategies have helped them do better and it's not clouded by their previous knowledge—or lack thereof!

Naturally, this approach require lots of record keeping (a task that comes naturally to a mathematician) and individualized attention. And, according to her students, Ramachadran excels at both! Isn't that what the Y.E.S., I Can Program is all about?!

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Pfizer needs Lawyers too!

By Diana Arciniegas

What started off as a difficult morning, actually turned out to be a great day. For our second trip, we went to Pfizer Co. The trip was highly enjoyable and I learned a lot from it.

After two hours on the bus, we finally arrived to our destination. Pfizer, unlike the American Express Tower was huge. It had acres of land for the company.

Through the opening presentation, I learned that Pfizer was one of the leading companies in the world and they make some of the most popular medicines (example, Zoloft, Lipitor, Viagra, etc). There was something else within the presentation that intrigued me. It was the fact the excruciating process that medicines undergo to get FDA approved. One average medication takes a minimum of about 8 years to reach Phase 3. Out all of the phases, this one is the hardest to get to because of all the demanding procedures it endures to be released into the market. Thousands of compounds are rejected after Phase 1. And then most of those do not make it beyond Phase 2.

After the presentation, we went on a tour of Pfizer and it was brilliantly built architectural-wise. There were glass domes, glass corridors and marble floors. The atmosphere was state-of-the-art fashion, but also comfortable enough for all the scientists.

Another interesting thing that I learned from our tour guide, Carol, were the many benefits of the company, such as dry-cleaning, an optician, a gym, clubs/sports activities, photo pick-up, a daycare, a store, Starbucks, and a dining area all on Pfizer property! It really reflected Pfizer's efforts to value their employees.

The last thing that caught my attention was that Pfizer had private lawyers within the company because one day I wish to be a lawyer and work for a big company.

The Pfizer trip was very fun. During lunch I even saw a Stamford High graduate! The company as a whole was very welcoming as well as informative. I enjoyed learning about the science-based fields and that within it all even lawyers can be a part of it all. It's also great how Pfizer's motto is "Life is our life's work," and I hope they continue to be the best they can at it.

My reflection

By Carl Soares

I have enjoyed myself throughout the second week of Y.E.S., I Can Program. It has been a great experience and with one week left a great preparation for school. I have already learned many things and so far I have to admit it has helped me greatly.

This week we had a full day of English class on Monday and then on Tuesday and Wednesday, two full days of Math. The English class in particular has been really helpful and I think it has given me a great preparation for the SAT's. So far we have practiced for these



PFIZER PHARMACEUTICALS

By Paloma Ferreira

The trip to Pfizer was an interesting trip. I learned a lot about the biology and chemistry fields. Since I have never been exposed to the science field, I found the trip to be very informative. I learned the many positions that Pfizer offers.

There are so many "branches" within biology and chemistry that I was amazed by how many fields you can enter with one degree in either chemistry or biology.

I thought the nicest thing about the facility in Groton was how much they cared about their employees. A lot of the facility is dedicated to its employees. For example, they have their own convenience store, their own photo developing center. The DMV comes once a week, and there is even a fitness center for their employees. The employees can go to the fitness center and relax after work or during their break. I hope that someday I can for a company like that!

After lunch, employees from the various parts within the company gathered in front of the room to answer ques-

tions for us. This panel discussion was the part that I thought was most informative. All of the students got to see that the company doesn't just hire people with a degree in biology or technology. At the panel discussion there were people with a degree in finance, marketing, arts, and even psychology. I thought it was very inter-

esting how people with different educational backgrounds come together and how they learn to depend on one another.

I was exposed to new positions that I might consider pursuing too. I thought that Pfizer was all about the field of science, but I found out that there are many people who don't have a degree in science who work there. I enjoyed the trip very much.

sections of the SAT: Sentence Completion, Essay Writing, and (my greatest need) Short and Long Reading Comprehension.

The math has also been really helpful. On Tuesday, we had a review of previous things and Thursday I learned about Geometry.

Then, on Wednesday, we went to Pfizer and this was a decent trip. I liked their facility and liked the benefits they offered their employees. Overall I think it was a worthwhile trip even though it was a long drive to Groton. On Friday we are going to Pepsi Co. and that should be a good experience too.

The English and math classes have prepared me for a better education and I am pretty sure that these classes will help me during the school year too, which starts in the next week and a half.

I am sure that the final week of this program should be good also with the last days of classes and a trip to Praxair. This leads me right into my school year and will help me keep my mind focused on school and pursuing a better career. I would like to thank the sponsors for the trip and I would also like to thank Mr. and Mrs. Johnson.

Our Students had a lot of Wonderful Questions for Pfizer Employees, Here are just a Few of Them!

Paige

1. It is expected that Pfizer must test their potential products on humans and animals before putting them on the market. However, it is also expected that many things can go wrong during these preliminary experimentations. What are the safety measures taken to prevent such problematic events? Are the animals treated well? To what extent is their welfare considered and protected? Do the same regulations and precautions apply to both humans and animals?



2. Generic medications often cost much less to consumers because money is not spent in research and development, while much is invested in the latter field in a company like Pfizer. How does Pfizer keep up in this competitive, almost unjust, market? Are there any copyright laws that would allow Pfizer to protect its research and contain its medications?

Chris Rotante

1) What is your process for testing the safety of the medication you produce for consumers?

2) What is the difference between generic and brand name products? Why do the prices vary so much??

Christian

1. How does Pfizer go about conducting business worldwide? That is, do prices and quantities need to fluctuate and meld themselves according to the region's economy and health issues?

2. Does Pfizer have any plans on moving to other areas of health, such as medical supplies?



Chris S

1) What are the different majors that would enable someone graduating college or grad school to get a job at Pfizer?

2) Are there any new departments or areas that have been developing or are expected to begin developing over the next few years and what are they?

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Reflection on Pfizer By Lenora Jackson



The anticipation of driving down the highway in the big yellow bus to the Pfizer Company was energizing and exciting. The bus pulled up to the gates and all the students were excited because we didn't know what was in store for us today.

We were all escorted into an office to pick up our nametags. After collecting our nametags, we boarded a Pfizer bus that took us to the center of main buildings. Upon our arrival we saw an enormous green statue that needed a little cleaning. We all exited the bus and went through the cafeteria to a small room where there was a presentation about the company. The room had a table filled with a wide variety of snacks to choose from.

We were then divided into groups of six or seven to tour the company's facilities. During the tour we saw where the first cafeteria was located and where the scientist work. We were all walking down a hallway of the building and I noticed the scientist working in labs on different projects. Unfortunately we didn't get the opportunity to go into any of the labs due to biohazard materials.

Afterwards we were taken to an area of the building that had a pond. The pond had a lot of fish with different colors. The tour guide also told us about the many ways in which they protect all the fish—one of which is using lines to protect the fish from seagulls. After the tour we went to lunch; the chips were delicious.

Fifteen representatives gathered in the presentation room to answer any questions the students had at the end of lunch. I keenly listened to each discussion, and learned that leadership was a key role to having a successful career. Overall I had a wonderful time on this trip and learned a lot of interesting things.

Reflection: Y.E.S., I Can Week Two

By Christian Florez

This week was very interesting. There were new people who entered the program, and I got to know one of them pretty well already. Besides this encounter, we also had a trip to Pfizer on Wednesday. I personally like this trip, as everything about the company had a somewhat bright aspect to it. As an employee, you were helping people, you had a nice environment, and you had great benefits, and so on. It seems like a great company and I would be very interested in working there, were it not for my choice to go into a career in music.

We had many volunteer speakers talk to us about their responsibilities and duties at Pfizer. There were many speakers, all coming from diverse backgrounds and fields of work. I *(con't on page 4)*

Catherine Trieu
August 18, 2005

The trip to Pfizer was interesting. The premises itself were beautiful. They're located close to the river in Groton, and the buildings had many windows overlooking that vista as well as the gardens planted around the buildings. The buildings were very artsy and innovative – I didn't expect a pharmaceutical facility to contain so much beautiful art-work. I thought it would be very ordinary.

At first we were led into a small room for an introduction to, and history about, Pfizer. When he finished, we were split into groups for a tour of the building. Our tour guide, Carolyn, is a biologist who is currently working on diabetes drugs. She was very helpful and honest when answering our questions. She showed us the con-



venient bank and a store that Pfizer had for its employees, along with the labs and the different lounge areas.

As the tour came to a close, we headed into another room for lunch, where they served us sandwiches. I thought it was a little odd that they had grape jelly turkey sandwiches, but otherwise eve-

rything was okay. When finished, we went back into the presentation room where about fifteen Pfizer employees volunteered to talk to us and answer our questions. I found this portion very informative – it helped me to gain more insight into careers that are available at this large pharmaceutical company. And since I have not yet found a field that is particularly interesting to me, I found this really helpful.

I think the panel of Pfizer employees offered some good advice to us about college and our future. There were chemists, biologists, an engineer, a communications representative, an intern, and many others who all offered their advice and success stories of how they came to work at Pfizer.

I was very surprised when the Pfizer employees were describing the process of making a new drug, and how indifferent they were about the thousands of drugs they had had to test out before one actually made it to the market. I would have thought they would be frustrated if some drugs they had worked on and developed didn't make it all the way, but they seemed relaxed about it. I enjoyed and appreciated what they had to say and thought it was a good trip.

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learned a riddling amount of information just from hearing other people ask questions, and watching the presentations and hearing all the speakers talk about how they managed to work. I learned about a skill quality that is very important to employers: loyalty

Another thing that I really liked about Pfizer is just the very company itself. It seems like a highly reputable company with benefits that many people could use, such as a fitness center and a daycare center. There is health care provided, among other things, and all the employees seem to be treated with respect. All in all, it was a very successful and informative trip.

Our Trip to Pfizer Pharmaceuticals

Kyle Avendano
8-18-2005

Our second trip was to Pfizer and the bus ride wasn't so bad. We all arrived at the cafeteria where a man told us a bit about the company. After that presentation, we were split into three groups. Within those three groups there was a tour guide who was also an employee at Pfizer. Each group had a chance to ask their tour guides questions about their contributions to the company. Our tour guides took us to see biologists in action. We got to see them in their suits working in the lab.



I found that this trip was very interesting because I love chemistry. I thought I would have trouble getting through chemistry class but I did really well and enjoyed it. What interested me the most was the fact that the people who work at Pfizer have many benefits that are really useful. For example, there is a drycleaners, daycare, and fitness gym as well as other benefits that employees can take advantage of.

After the tour we all went back to the cafeteria and had an opportunity to speak to other employees who were from different areas of the company. For example, there were chemists, biologists, a person from finance, and engineering, as well as a biochemist intern. The floor was open to discussion. Personally my questions were asked without me having to ask them.

Pfizer is a company that deals with not just with science but finance, business management, as well as legal positions. Over-



all, I think this trip was a great success. What I got out of this trip was that you may think you want to become a business major, but there are many opportunities out there and you might want to switch and try out something new. Pfizer made me realize there are a *google* of opportunities that await us!

PepsiCo

By Lenora Jackson

Last week we went on an exciting and educational field trip to PepsiCo. While we were on our way to PepsiCo we got to know each other a little bit better and tried to get everyone involved in our conversations on the bus. As we pulled up to the gates we saw a lot of interesting monuments on the facility.

We got off the bus and were instructed to go into a room. Inside the room there was an overhead projector and Mr. Walker made a presentation about manufacturing and delivery of goods. There were three guest speakers altogether. Each guest speaker presented the company in a respectful way and each of them was grateful for the opportunity to work for such a highly selective company.

In one of the presentations made by Cristina Avila, we had the opportunity to make our own soda. Everyone in the group made only one bottle of soda except me! The first one I made tasted bitter so I got to

make another one. After we made our sodas we went back inside to finish the presentations.

Then it was time to leave, but before we left we took a group photograph with every one outside of the building. All in all, the trip to PepsiCo was fascinating and exciting. I am looking forward to the next field trip and to the next few days.



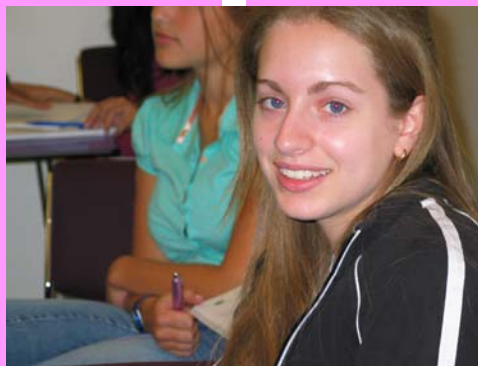
Reflection

By Courtney Mannino

Upon entering PepsiCo's sight-full grounds, I remembered previous occurrences when my school had organized field trips to this particular location in Purchase, New York. However, when one's in second grade, the teachers are solely concerned about taking the children on walks to show them the aesthetic sculptures surrounding the campus. On that particular Friday, I had come as a member of the Y.E.S. I Can Program, sponsored by AMBYESE. I was no longer there to observe art, but rather to observe professionals and to ask them engaging questions about their lives.

PepsiCo is an international corporation and the world leader in beverage and snack-food sales. With over 680 manufacturing plants worldwide, Pepsi has hired thousands of employees. Although we did not have the opportunity of exploring a plant, we were able to speak with some select people who participate in finance, marketing, and international relations.

Our group was greeted by breakfast and refreshments, all bearing relations to PepsiCo, for example Tropicana, Gatorade, and Dole juice. We were then introduced to a global communications executive who explained his job in the company. Mr. Yieh described how his position incorporated his interests and explained that he must keep in touch with Pepsi workers on an international level. He has traveled all around the world and has had the opportunity to study other cultures and see the company's products being sold on such an expansive level. Something I found very interesting was that the company has to modify its products to meet the needs and wants of people in different countries. Thus, the Pepsi we're accustomed to is probably dramatically different than one from China. Although



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Madiya

1. Does Pfizer manufacture all of its medicines?
2. Did Pfizer begin with having three business segments or did they derive over time, if so how?



Jack

Question 1: Where do you think the company will be in five years? What medicine will you be focusing on or disease you would like to cure?

Question 2: When it comes to over the counter drugs such as aspirins, I have seen a lot of things saying

there are a lot of long term affects, is this true? Has Pfizer done any of these tests?



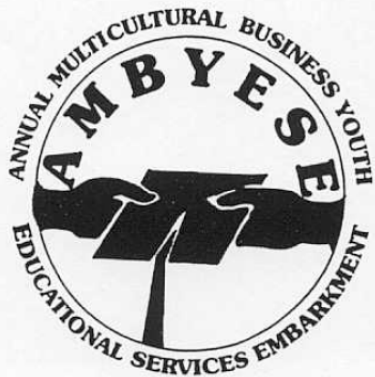
By week two of the Y.E.S., I Can Program, our students have developed enough confidence to take risks and ask bold questions. Some of their questions may even be a bit uncomfortable for our hosts, but they are always honest questions from curious young people. The beauty of this, in some ways, is that these young people will grow into adulthood asking those tough questions. Isn't that what we want!

away from one's family as an international business manager, Mr. Yieh said his job is very rewarding and thrilling, particularly for one interested in business and travel.

After a brief break, we were introduced to a marketing manager and a food scientist. The marketing executive, Ms. Teasdale, explained what her job entails and gave a lively presentation about the different types of marketing that have to be accomplished, especially when one is dealing with a plethora of people from different countries.

The food scientist also illustrated her job expectations, which highly interested me because I had not thought of food science as a possible career choice. It sounded so intriguing, and it got even better when we had the opportunity to make soda. As I glared into my finished product, a lightly tinted purple soda tasting of marshmallow, vanilla, and melon, I began to understand how difficult it must be to provide new goods for consumers, particularly at such a demanding rate.

As we left PepsiCo, me wearing my black hat sporting the company's label, I realized how much fun I had had and how the opportunities in my future had been further expanded. The employees at PepsiCo were so cordial and welcoming. Every employee was satisfied in working for such a large corporation and I realized that business and science might be in my future, perhaps at PepsiCo.



**ANNUAL MULTICULTURAL
BUSINESS YOUTH EDUCATIONAL
SERVICES EMBARKMENT**

AMBYESE

Wendell Johnson, C.E.O.

P.O. Box 2281

Danbury, CT 06813-2281

e-mail:

wjohnson_06811@yahoo.com

***We've mentored over 11,000
culturally diverse high school
students throughout our 22
year history.***

AMBYESE is a four-phase program consisting of the following:

The 1st phase: One of the most important phases of our program is the **21st Annual AMBYESE Educational Conference**, which will be held on Veterans Day weekend, November 12 - 13, 2004. The awards program will be held Friday evening November 12 from 7 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. at Stamford's Holiday Inn Select and the educational conference will be held on Saturday, November 13 from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. at UConn-Stamford. There will be 200 college-bound students attending from various high schools in our region. The entire educational conference is free! We begin with all the students together and present general information concerning career development and college requirements, and then we break into smaller groups where the students have an opportunity to interface with and learn from corporate mentors. The mentors work for participating companies. As a result of interfacing with a number of students during the conference, the mentors connect with certain students who are then identified and become their mentees. This is a very important phase as this establishes a yearlong and sometimes a lifelong, relationship between mentor and mentee.

2nd phase: at this time a mentor/mentee relationship is established. We call this phase the **Student Tracking and Academic Fulfillment Force (STAFF)**. **STAFF's** role is to understand and coordinate the needs of its participating students. **STAFF** maintains year-round contact with the students, their parents, and the faculty members of the student's schools. We encourage communication via e-mail and telephone. If the mentor has the time, we encourage person to person contact, as long as the parents and the school approve of such arrangements.

The 3rd phase: is our **Y. E. S. I CAN Summer College Prep Program**. Y.E.S. I Can is a free two-week academic summer program held in August at UConn-Stamford. Students are identified by their respective schools and must be sponsored by participating corporations. During the two-week period classes are held from 10 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. Students learn IT skills, and improve their verbal and math SAT scores. They improve their non-fiction writing skills while making presentations that help develop their presentation skills and become confident public speakers. They take several field trips, meeting with corporate executives and government officials. This program is highly competitive and is limited to 20 students.

Our 4th phase: after twenty years of mentoring students, we have added the **AM-BYESE Scholarship Fund**. This fund will serve as both incentive to our students as well as providing financial support so that they can fulfill their dreams of attending college.

Meet Our Fabulous Y.E.S. I Can Instructors!

Beena Ramachandran, Ph.D is a Computer Science and Engineering expert currently on faculty at both the University Of Connecticut/Stamford and Norwalk Community College. She is also C.E.O. at Pepper Ridge Consulting, Stamford and the mother of two. AMBYESE students are extremely fortunate to have Dr. Ramachandran teaching our *Y.E.S. I Can* S.A.T. math-preparation course again this summer!



Irene Coussa Reynolds teaches at Wooster School in Danbury and is Director of Diversity for its Upper School. She has her Masters degree in TESOL and works primarily with non-native English speakers. She is delighted to be back with AMBYESE students teaching the Critical Reading and Writing components of the SAT prep course. She has 3 children and enjoys cooking.