

Princeton Campus Is Hardly Quiet While Students Are on Summer Break

Anne Levin | July 15, 2015

Once Princeton University's spring term ended last month, the annual exodus of students left the dormitories, dining halls, and classroom buildings empty – but not for long. Starting in early June, a different crop of pupils began arriving for a slew of summer programs that have kept the campus humming with activity.

There are budding biologists, physicists, journalists, mathematicians, ballet dancers, pianists, athletes, and policy-makers learning and interacting on the campus this summer. They come from as close as Trenton and as far as Asia. Many are high-school age; some are younger and some are older. Programs are led by Princeton students, faculty, and staff as well as people from outside the University.

“Being on the Princeton campus allows our students to feel there is a possibility for them to attend a school of that caliber,” said Jacqueline Glass, executive director and CEO of At the Well Young Women's Leadership Academy, to be held at the University July 26-August 7. Now in its fifth year, the program helps minority high school-aged girls build leadership and problem-solving skills. “These are exceptional students, but they never imagined that a school like Princeton would consider them,” Ms. Glass continued. “Being there, experiencing living in the dorms, gives them the confidence and the idea that there are options to state schools.”

At the Well is one of several organizations helping underserved students reach their potential through programs held on the campus. Leadership Enterprise for a Diverse America (LEDA) has hosted an annual Summer Institute at Princeton for 10 years. High-achieving low-income high school juniors spend seven weeks learning how to gain admission to the most selective colleges and universities. Similarly, The Princeton University Preparatory Program (PUPP) brings 71 academically gifted, low-income high school students from partner schools in Mercer County to the campus over three summers, with a goal of making them viable candidates for top colleges.

“The opportunity for our scholars to study here and to experience what the college campus is like helps them imagine themselves attaining admission and ultimately attending some of the best schools in the country,” said Jason Klugman, who runs the program. “They don't live here on campus, so they have to bridge the two communities. We've had great results — our most recent class

includes students who will go to Colgate, Middlebury, Mount Holyoke, Princeton, Muhlenberg, and elsewhere. And we have two alumni of the program teaching with us this summer.”

The arts are also well represented on campus this summer. Some 60 aspiring dancers aged 14 and up, taking part in Princeton Ballet School’s Summer Intensive program, are boarding in Brown Hall while studying at the school in the Princeton Shopping Center. Younger dancers aged 9-11 don’t live on the campus, but they take their classes in the dance studio at the University’s Wilcox Hall. “Our studios here are full, so we rent Wilcox for our Summer Intensive Juniors,” said Carol Bellis, who coordinates the program for the ballet school. “It’s a lovely dance space, and the kids have such a great time there.”

Pianists return each July to the campus for the Golandsky Institute Summer Symposium and International Piano Festival, taking place through July 19. Performances for the public are part of this gathering for teachers and pianists who follow the Taubman Approach. So Percussion Summer Institute brings college-age percussionists and composers to Princeton for a two-week chamber music seminar. And a summer internship program at Princeton University Art Museum trains undergraduate and graduate students in different aspects of museum work.

Science is a focus of several programs being held on the campus this summer. Some 200 graduate students and researchers from 12 countries and 27 states spent a week last month at the Combustion Energy Frontier Research Center, now in its sixth year. Then there is the Center for Computational Intractability’s summer program in Theoretical Computer Science. An undergraduate research program in molecular biology is giving a select group of students from across the nation valuable research experience, while 26 undergraduates from Princeton and other institutions are making use of research opportunities at the Mid-Infrared Technologies for Health and the Environment.

Camp PALS Princeton, sponsored by the University’s Pace Center for Civic Engagement, just completed a week-long sleepaway camp for young adults with Down syndrome. Programs for teachers include QUEST, weeklong summer institutes in science and mathematics for K-12 teachers. The University’s Summer Journalism Program, founded by alumni, starts at the end of this month and brings 25 high school students from modest backgrounds to Princeton for a 10-day intensive seminar. The University’s athletics department also runs several sports camps on the campus.

“Being here on the campus really makes a difference,” said Ms. Glass of At the Well. “What a great experience for our students.”