Undergraduate Spotlight

Arielle Cohen has always loved working with children and is so happy to be working with the wonderful group of children at the Children’s School! She writes, “I love seeing them grow and learn through all their different experiences. I particularly enjoy seeing their creativity. It’s always an adventure, whether it’s watching them come up with imaginative games on the playground, hearing them tell stories, or marveling at their artistic creations in the classroom. Even though I’ve only been here a couple months, I can already see their ability to express themselves growing.”

Arielle is an art loving, pre-med, psychology major who is not exactly sure what she’ll end up doing. “Right now, I love the idea of working in developmental pediatrics. I am fascinated by development and education through childhood and early adulthood, and I have experienced it in a few different ways. I am a co-director of Carnegie Mellon’s Strive for College, which is a local chapter of a national non-profit that aims to help disadvantaged high school students through the college application process by providing mentors who are current college students. I also study the history of the Juvenile Court with Dr. Steven Schlossman. I feel very lucky that I’ve been able to learn from a wide variety of ages and populations, and the Children’s School is an integral part of that!”

Student Teacher Reflections

• Brittany Bauer (AM Young 3’s with Mrs. Tomer)

This field placement has been one of the best educational experiences I have had over the last 4 years at the University of Pittsburgh. Seeing all of the hard work and planning done by the teachers at the school inspired me throughout the semester, not only in my work with the children here, but also in my coursework and gym class. I have learned so many skills that I am able to translate into other facets of my life. No words can truly express how meaningful this experience has been. Working with Mrs. Tomer has been wonderful; she is a wealth of knowledge and is an exceptional mentor teacher. All of the teachers in the school are welcoming and great examples of what I aspire to be in the future.

Everyone has a unique background, so there are many enriching experiences that developed, and I was happy to be a part of the process. Working with the children has been so much fun! Each one has grown over the semester, and I have been fortunate to see this growth and development; it is so enriching interacting with the children everyday! All of the extra work I put into different activities for the Children’s School has prepared me for the future and proved beneficial, propelling my studies even further. Thank you to the families, teachers and especially Mrs. Tomer and Dr. Carver for allowing me to have this experience and learning opportunity.
Student Teacher Reflections, continued …

• **Caitlin Florek** (AM Middle 4’s with Mrs. Opferman)

I cannot believe my time at the Children’s School is coming to a close. I have had so many great experiences and memories of my time here. Every morning, I was able to start my day with the smiles of all the students arriving at the school. They knew that the day was planned full of fun learning activities. The staff has been so welcoming and caring to all the students, parents, and three student teachers. I could not ask for a better place to have my first real teaching experience. I was so lucky to have a team that worked together so well and allowed me to join in with my ideas. I will miss the staff and every one of those children who have changed my life as a future teacher and a person. This was one of my best experiences and I’m always in awe on how well everyone gets along and collaborates. I know I can take everything I learned from this school and apply it to a future classroom.

• **Brianna Amoscato** (Kindergarten with Mrs. Blizman)

It is hard to believe that my valuable teaching experience in the Kindergarten is coming to a close. The last 16 weeks have been filled with hours of hard work, creating lesson plans, completing student evaluations, learning classroom management techniques and successfully differentiating instruction. I must admit that I was somewhat overwhelmed upon first entering the Kindergarten classroom with a group of 22 intelligent and creative students. However, my mentor teacher Mrs. Blizman and the other Kindergarten teachers, Mrs. Perovich and Mrs. Armbruster, welcomed me into the team with open arms and encouraged me to explore new teaching techniques and instructional strategies. In addition, they helped me implement new lessons and look at teaching from a different perspective. Mrs. Blizman gave me valuable advice and suggestions that I will take with me as I begin a new journey in a new classroom next semester. I feel incredibly fortunate to have had the opportunity to experience a warm, innovative, supportive and caring environment such as the Children’s School as a pre-professional teacher. I will miss the Kindergarten students immensely as they have taught me that *Childhood is a journey not a race*. Their joy and the smiles will remain with me forever.