“Attending CTY’s summer programs helped me realize the horizons of learning are limitless.”  CTY scholarship student
Dear Students, Parents, and Friends of CTY:

Educating our nation’s brightest children is a responsibility we at CTY have long taken seriously, yet that commitment became even greater in the wake of the September 11 attacks and our country’s continuing recovery. We saw clearly that, for all the other things that CTYers are – our cherished children, grandchildren, students – they are also a precious and enduring national resource, one on whose shoulders it may truly be said our future rests. Their needs can never be taken for granted.

One wonders if, in the months and years to come, Americans will intensify efforts to ensure academic success in extremely bright young minds. Such a focus emerged in the aftermath of the 1957 launch of Sputnik, which was widely perceived as a threat to our technological leadership in the world. The Sputnik launch led the US to retool its public school math and science programs and, most relevant here, to identify and cultivate very bright math and science students. That investment in our nation’s academic talent is widely credited with helping the United States reach and maintain the technological eminence enjoyed today. It would be hard to argue that in today’s world we should do anything less.

In this year’s Annual Report we highlight our summer courses, which in 2001 saw over 9,200 enrollments. We hope the feature articles help to show how these courses enrich the education of our exceptional students. This report also describes CTY’s efforts to help develop a new gifted and talented academy in England that is modeled on our work in the US. Our report would not be complete without expressing thanks and gratitude to the many foundations, corporations, parents, and schools who share our belief that CTY’s programs allow children of great promise to explore fully their intellectual gifts and set them on paths toward future success and high achievement. Without this support, many qualified CTY students would not be able to participate.

Sincerely,

Lea Ybarra, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Charles Matteson, of Corvallis, Oregon, aims for the sky during CTY’s summer program at the University of California, Santa Cruz.

CTY Facts and Figures 2001

- Number of Talent Search participants: 92,035
- Number of student enrollments in all CTY Programs: 23,683
- Number of those that were Summer Programs enrollments: 9,267
- Number of those that were Distance Education enrollments: 4,533
- Number of states represented among Summer Programs students: 45
- Number of countries represented among Summer Programs students: 70
- Number of CTY summer sites: 19
- Number of Summer Programs staff: 1,452
- Number of CTY Academic Conferences offered: 56
- Number of students and parents attending CTY’s Academic Conferences: 9,883
- Number of one-course scholarships donated by colleges and universities to top-scoring CTY Talent Search students: 1,281
- Number of CTY awards ceremonies held to recognize and celebrate academic talent: 83
- Number of Talent Search participants scoring 700 or above on either the SAT Math or Verbal sections before age 13: 386
- Total number of students served by CTY’s Study of Exceptional Talent (service and research program for 700+ SAT scorers named above): 3,106
- Number of paid subscriptions to CTY’s periodical Imagine: 6,705
- Number of students served by CTY’s Diagnostic and Counseling Center: 364
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News from 2001

England’s new ‘national academy’ models CTY

“The Academy is a further step in the Government’s commitment to bring down barriers in education by stretching the most talented young people and encouraging excellence in learning, and I am particularly pleased that … we have been able to secure the expertise of the Center for Talented Youth at Johns Hopkins …” Stephen Timms, Minister of School Standards, Government of Great Britain

Following a February 2001 Green Paper, which announced plans to create the academy on the model of CTY, officials from the Department of Education and Skills began discussions with CTY to help them refine their plans. The model that emerged calls for a two-part approach. The first provides programs and services for the top five percent of students ages 11 through 18 within each school in England. The second will meet the academic needs of the top English students through rigorous summer residential programs, an approach very close to the CTY model.

In August, CTY collaborated with the University of Warwick, a top English university, to write a proposal that was ultimately successful and establishes the new academy on Warwick’s campus. CTY will serve as long-term consultants to Warwick.

The academy will be funded through a 20 million pound ($28.8 million) set-aside reserved for this and other education initiatives throughout the UK. CTY and Johns Hopkins University enjoyed unprecedented media attention when it became known that CTY was a model for the project. Profiles on CTY were heard on BBC radio and appeared in The Guardian, The Times of London, The Spectator, and The Financial Times, to name a few.

“The decision in England to identify and cultivate its talent in a centralized and coordinated manner is one that other nations will closely watch,” said Dr. Ybarra.

“It shows a seriousness at the highest levels to ensure that England’s brightest children do not fall through the cracks but instead receive sustained and effective academic challenges to meet their advanced and special needs.”

The summer residential program is set to open in July 2002 on the University of Warwick campus with 100 students, which will be expanded to 600 in its second year, to an eventual 3,600 students annually.

Imagine takes Parents’ Choice Award

Stimulating kids’ imaginations, while helping them grow intellectually and morally – this list may seem to many parents a holy grail of unattainable qualities to look for in children’s products.

Yet Imagine, CTY’s own magazine for gifted teens, was recognized recently on these criteria by winning a 2001 award from the Parents’ Choice Foundation, a nationally-focused nonprofit whose semi-annual awards for children’s products have become trusted seals of quality.

Published since 1993, Imagine is designed to help academically talented middle- and high-school students make the most of their precollege years and prepare well for the future. In five issues each year, Imagine covers topics ranging from academic competitions and summer programs to college advice and career profiles. Imagine is largely student-written and contains no commercial advertising, features that set it apart from many other teen magazines. More than 6,700 students subscribe.

CTY’s Melissa Hartman, editor of Imagine, said, “Our students and their parents have been telling us for years how useful Imagine is, and it’s a real thrill now to be recognized by a group as influential and respected as Parents’ Choice.”

To take a look at Imagine, go to www.jhu.edu/gifted/imagine

CTY Student on Public TV Call

Giftedness “A Blessing”

The studio of NJN, home to New Jersey’s public TV station, was the place to be on November 19 for 250 CTY students and parents. They enjoyed a buffet reception followed by a taping before a live studio audience of Bright Kids: Next Steps, a show that spotlighted five CTY students and the state of education through their eyes.

The evening was arranged around the screening of the one hour CTY-focused documentary No Place to Be Smart: The Brightest Kids in Public Schools, which was filmed at several CTY locations and shown around the US during 2001. That program offered student testemony of academic shortcomings bright students can face in obtaining an education that meets their needs, and the social difficulties and prejudices they encounter.

Good news emerging from the November 19 taping; all five students cheered the label of “gifted” and said that being smart was a blessing in their lives. “The five of us agreed, there is no way, shape, or form we consider it a hardship,” said Jacqueline Jennings, a CTY student from Chatham, NJ.

Readers who might wish to have their local public TV station host a similar event as part of their community outreach effort should contact CTY’s Office of Communications at 410-516-0186.
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The following pages highlight just a few of the 100+ courses available at CTY. Taught well above grade level and by caring and skilled faculty, CTY courses enable very bright students to learn in the company of others of like ability, while developing their talents to the highest possible levels.

Research is the Foundation for CTY’s Summer Programs
by Elizabeth Albert, Director, CTY Summer Programs

A BBC radio reporter who recently wanted to learn more about CTY for a program he was preparing asked me if we “had any Einsteins in the summer programs.” We get the “Einstein” question a lot. My answer is that if the next Einstein is to be found anywhere, it will be in our summer programs. Our mission is broader than finding the next Einstein. Our aim is to meet the current academic needs of thousands of bright children who join us every summer, and to hone their talents and direct their studies towards academic fulfillment.

When CTY summer programs first began in 1979, there were few models to follow, but research at Johns Hopkins in those early years charted our direction. We found that students who performed extremely well compared to their classmates on above-grade-level standardized tests could handle courses pitched at a faster pace and greater depth than what was considered “normal” for their age. In 1982, a major literature survey of 52 studies in gifted education found compelling evidence that highly able students grouped with their peers of like ability, as is done at CTY, achieve at significantly higher levels than gifted counterparts in mixed ability classes. When CTY summer programs first began in 1979, there were few models to follow, but research at Johns Hopkins in those early years charted our direction. We found that students who performed extremely well compared to their classmates on above-grade-level standardized tests could handle courses pitched at a faster pace and greater depth than what was considered “normal” for their age. In 1982, a major literature survey of 52 studies in gifted education found compelling evidence that highly able students grouped with their peers of like ability, as is done at CTY, achieve at significantly higher levels than gifted counterparts in mixed ability classes.

We also had much of value from CTY’s own Study of Exceptional Talent or SET, which conducts research on talent search test-takers who scored 700 or better on either the math or verbal SAT before age 13. First, gifted students thrive when they are given responsibility for their own education. The summer programs, where CTY students experience academic instruction and a degree of independence at the same time, accomplish this. Second, all gifted children do not follow a single path toward academic success. While one student will thrive in an algebra class given at an accelerated pace, another will see success by taking a course in an area of personal interest such as paleobiology. Third, access to role models (CTY instructors and staff) and intellectual peers (fellow students) both enhance talent development.

A fourth point is made by both CTY staff and Dr. Ellen Winner, well-known researcher at Howard Gardner’s Project Zero at Harvard University. Both support CTY’s practice of giving very bright students, in Dr. Winner’s words, “a chance to take fast-paced intensive summer courses in their area of talent.” This idea displays the importance of identifying talent in a particular academic area and then making the most out of that demonstrated academic strength.

Following these findings, a program for highly gifted children ought to offer them courses that are faster paced or cover material in greater depth; allow them to be in the company of students with similar abilities; offer them a range of choices in disciplines for which they have talent and motivation to excel; and provide them with talented instructors as role models who guide them in shared inquiry. And that is exactly what CTY strives to do.