

Upcoming Events:

10/18 **Real Saturday:**
11 AM SEMFS

10/25 **Real Saturday:**
11 AM Cameroon
Football
Development
Program Soccer
Tournament

11/09 Halloween
11 AM Party/Education
Day (Northview
Heights Gym)

11/20 International Week
12 PM /Letter Writing
Event (William Pitt
Union)

11/22 **Real Saturday:**
PittServes SAT
prep

Pictures from Keep it Real's new after school program! Check it out on page 3

Message from the Presidents

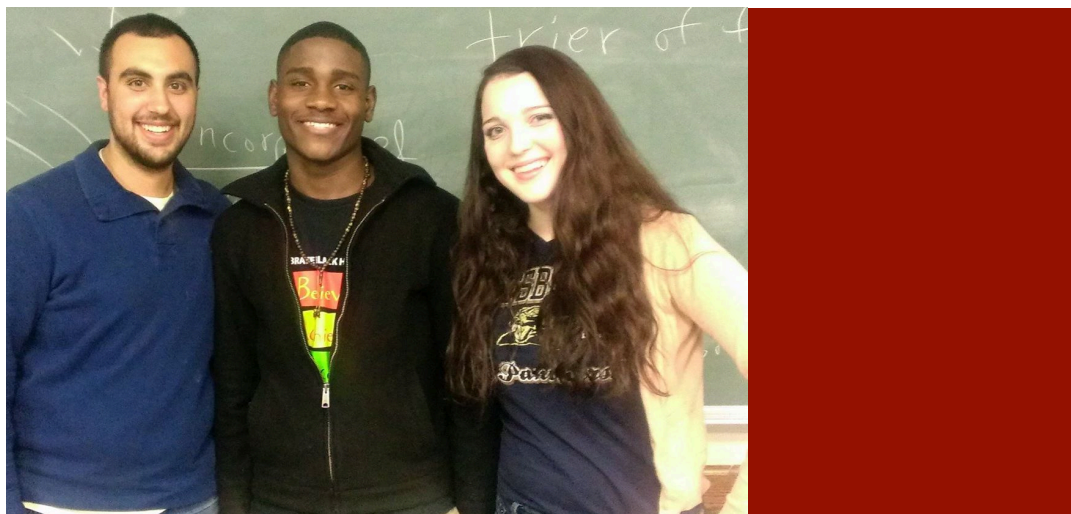
Hello!

Our names are Brett Orren and Lauren Benish, and we are so excited to serve as Keep It Real co-presidents this year. Tutoring is already off to a great start, thanks to the help of our board and recruitment events.

Recently, we had a training session featuring Ruthie Rea, the principal of Arsenal Elementary School, Kristen Tsapis, a Somali Bantu Community Liaison, and Commander Brackney, the Commander of the City of Pittsburgh Police Department's North Side Division. They shared information about the core curriculum standards, helpful tutoring resources, safety tips, and cultural norms in the Somali-Bantu community.

This year, we are sending tutors to almost all of the families in the Pittsburgh area and will be updating you on success stories in upcoming newsletters!

Keep in touch,
Lauren Benish and Brett Orren



(from left to right: Co-President Brett Orren, Abdullahi Mada, and Co-President Lauren Benish)

Keep it Real to Pitt Greensburg

Keep it Real is very proud to announce that Abdullahi Mada, who has been with Keep it Real since the very beginning, is one of the first members of the Somali-Bantu community in Pittsburgh to be accepted to a four-year university! Abdullahi was accepted to Penn State University of Greater Allegheny and the University of Greensburg. He is currently a freshman pursuing Electrical Engineering at Pitt Greensburg, and he plans to transfer to main campus next year!

When asked what he has learned so far in college, Abdullahi said, “College is hard indeed because of the pace, but other than that [it’s] really straight forward. You just have to be responsible in studying the material. If you don’t understand it, you have to [try to] understand [it because] what you learn here is what you will be taking [you] to your career. Aside from the academic responsibility you must have, you must also try to have a good time through getting yourself involved in the awesome school activities and play time with your friends. I guarantee [everyone] that college life will go for very smoothly for them.”

Arsenal After School Program

Our latest big initiative with Keep it Real has been our after school enrichment program for Arsenal Middle School students in Lawrenceville. The program is aimed at ELL students of all backgrounds, but it’s a plus that some of the participants have been familiar faces from Keep it Real families! We started last semester, and each Friday, students played games, completed teambuilding activities, and most importantly, worked on their own autobiographies! Each week they wrote, illustrated, and edited their books and in April, their completed copies arrived. Overall, it was a success, and although we are unable to facilitate the program this semester, we hope to bring it back in the spring.

Letter from KIR Alum

What's up KIR!

My name is Eric Moran, and I was a tutor with KIR during the 2013-2014 academic year. Just a little bit about myself: I graduated from Pitt in April with a B.A. in History and minors in Economics and Administration of Justice. Primarily through my experiences with KIR and with study abroad, I developed a fervent passion for social justice, which I never would have thought I possessed unless I had sought out those opportunities. You are all here, because you have a passion for education and for working toward a common goal of closing the education gap, particularly between American-born and immigrant/refugee children. Being a part of such a unique grassroots organization led by such passionate people and funded by such a great university is an experience which is rare and challenging, but ultimately rewarding (as you all know by now). Be proud of every minute that you spend with your families, because I can guarantee you that those minutes are some of the most meaningful for them!

I am writing to you today to tell you a little bit about my ongoing experiences after graduation. I am currently an AmeriCorps member serving with City Year Philadelphia, which is an organization that embodies many of the same qualities as KIR. As a part of City Year, I am committed to an 11-month, full-time term serving in one of Philadelphia's public schools (my school is Tilden Middle School in Southwest). I work with a site composed of the most diverse group of people that I've had the privilege of working with. The 11 other corps members on my school team are quickly becoming some of my closest friends and strongest supporters. I have the benefit of working with an organization that not only seeks to provide much needed support to at-risk students, but also works hard to provide me with numerous opportunities for reflection/personal growth, leadership development, career preparation, and networking. As a member of City Year, I am set up for success in every way possible, from the classroom to my future plans. And most importantly of all, I get to do what I am most passionate about every day!

If you are passionate about education social justice issues and are looking for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to directly engage in finding a solution and making a difference before grad school or the workforce, I encourage you to visit www.cityyear.org to check out our many service sites across the country. I also encourage you to reach out directly to either myself (emoran@cityyear.org), Claire Dempsey (KIR Alumni Relations Chair and 2012-13 Corps Member), or our Mid-Atlantic Recruiter Alissa Krutoff (akrutoff@cityyear.org), who is also a Pitt alum! I know already that if I had heard some firsthand accounts of what City Year was like, I wouldn't have hesitated to apply!

I wish you all the best of luck with your work at KIR! Keep the tradition and prestige of this great club going for a long time to come.

Check Out Our Brand New Website!

<http://keepitrealpitt.wix.com/keepitreal>

Keep it Real in the News:

<http://www.wesacelebrates.org/difference/keep-it-real/>

<http://pittsburgh.cbslocal.com/2014/06/26/young-brothers-from-somalia-learn-about-the-joys-of-baseball/>

Hail to Pitt!
Eric Moran