



BBCSI 2010 Unity Project

TOU IDEA For High School Students Only

Building Bridges Coalition of Staten Island is Partnering with the Temple of Understanding (TOU) and will Recognize and Award Students completing training in The Temple of Understanding's Interfaith Dialogue and Education Action (IDEA) "A Youth Driven, Youth Inspired Community Program".

As part of our 2010 Unity Project BBCSI, has teamed up with The Temple of Understanding, and will award Staten Island high school students special recognition for completing **The Temple of Understanding's Interfaith Dialogue and Education Action (IDEA) "A Youth Driven, Youth Inspired Community Program.** The training will commence in the winter of 2010.

The Temple of Understanding, founded in 1960, is a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) affiliated with the United Nations. Its mission in creating IDEA is "To build leadership skill, critical thinking skills, and create strong bonds and friendships with other youth from their local community. IDEA differs from traditional faith based educational programs by allowing young people to explore their own faith traditions while at the same time learning about and exploring the religious traditions of their peers. To encourage and inspire young people to build on their existing knowledge and encourage critical thinking about faith, culture, traditions, and global issues in order to encourage them to become more empowered, active citizens of their communities, nations, and the world." The goals of TOU are virtually identical to BBCSI's goals and we hope many Staten Island high school children will choose to undergo this training.

Temple of Understanding (*TOU*) Interfaith Dialogue and Education Action (*IDEA*) training **will require a commitment to 30 – 40 hours of peer-to-peer interaction at various locations on Staten Island.** The training will be under the supervision of TOU staff. Participants will learn communication and crisis management skills that will better prepare them for the challenges of adulthood. High School students interested in the **TOU IDEA** youth mentor program should contact Bob Myerson (phone: (718) 698-7416 or bobmyerson@verizon.net), or go to our website: buildingbridgessi.org or by emailing us at information@buildingbridgessi.org. Most of the project materials can be downloaded from the website.

At its conclusion our Staten Island teens will qualify as mentors for other children in a relationship that we hope will last well beyond high school. We will have a separate awards ceremony, the summer or fall of 2010, recognizing youngsters who have completed the **IDEA** training.

We are proud of this partnership between BBCSI and TOU and excited over the opportunity being offered to our teens to connect all humanity on Staten Island. For additional information, please contact Bob Myerson at bobmyerson@verizon.net or (718) 698-7416.