

Week of August 4, 2010

THE VOICE

## CATALYST 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE GRADS ATTEND COLLEGE BEFORE HIGH SCHOOL

Recent graduates of both Catalyst Schools – Howland Charter and Circle Rock Charter – were selected to participate in the *First Generation – Countdown to College Program*, initiated by St. Mary's University of Minnesota and developed by Catalyst board member Ed Siderewicz.



*A graduating Catalyst 8<sup>th</sup> grade student looking ahead to high school and beyond.*

Student participants, accompanied by their 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers for the next four summers while they attend high school, take college courses, participate in college orientation activities, and build a network of first generation college bound students from across the country. These new friends will become part of their support network as they move through high school and choose colleges or universities to attend after high school graduation.

From July 24 to August 7, 25 students from Chicago, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, and Tucson attended the Countdown to College academic camp at St. Mary's University in Minnesota. They participated with their 8<sup>th</sup> grade teachers in activities that will help them prepare for successful college experiences. It will boost their skills, confidence and knowledge of how to negotiate the social and academic world of college.

Countdown to College offers free classes, recreation, field trips, and room & board. These same students will return for four consecutive summers, joined by new classes of 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduates.



*The graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grade class of Catalyst Charter School.*