A Stride Rite Scholar, Barbara Civill began with the Hyde Square Task Force (HSTF) in July 2006 for a co-op job in community service. She’d never worked with young kids before. “I don’t even think I really knew what to expect,” she said.

It was a summer program for elementary-school students, said the Schenectady, N.Y., native of her first job with the Jamaica Plain neighborhood organization. “We did activities, literacy, games ...” But something caught fire — for Civill and her supervisors. The graduating senior has been working with the Task Force since that first day, and she’s been offered a full-time post after commencement in May.

From the summer program, Civill moved on to working with high-schoolers, as much as 20 to 30 hours a week — yes, while still attending classes; she admits it’s been “a little stressful.” She’s now with HSTF’s Ritmo en Accion (Rhythm in Action), which employs teens to be dancers, learning choreography from a professional and performing as well as teaching younger kids.

Civill helps keep the dance troupe organized and on schedule, and it works; Ritmo has been so successful it was recently honored at the White House as a “Coming Up Taller” program, with awards presented by First Lady Laura Bush.

In between, Civill has found time to join two Dialogues of Civilization trips, to Mexico and South Africa.

She sees herself going to graduate school, for a master’s in social work, but not right away. “And I see myself living in Boston,” she said.

Barbara Civill
Class year: 2008
Hometown: Schenectady, N.Y.
Major: Human services and international affairs
Co-op coordinator: Lisa Foster