

Pathways Mentorship : continued

Sharing our lives with the boys has been a lesson to us on the fullness of a life in Christ. Before we met the boys, we might have questioned our ability to "give up" our Wednesday evenings. Before they became family, our innate (and substantial) selfishness would have kept our Sunday mornings simple and our Sunday afternoons sleepy. But now our Wednesdays and Sundays are full, and we would be empty if it were any other way. When we care for his children, God creates new stores of energy where there might have been none. When we open our hearts to our brothers in Christ, there is no limit to the love God will allow to grow. We have stopped introducing Taurean and Robert as "two young men from Streets Ministries whom we tutor." Now we just say "these are our boys." God blessed us richly when he brought them into our lives.



Robert shows of a trout he caught last summer.

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Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and the oppressed. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

Psalms 82:3-4

STREETS - BETWEEN THE LINES

FEBRUARY 2006

The Picture Gets Clearer, In God's Time

He always seems to be troubled. Even though he is navigating school, life is continually in conflict both at home and in the community. Six years later he carries himself a little differently. In fact, as I enter the STREETS facility, I notice how he walks the halls with a quiet confidence, encouraging kids that seem to struggle and are reflective of his own past. He leaves them with a smile and a pat on the back that brightens their day. Three hours later he is on the front row of the bleachers in the STREETS gym cheering on his Crichton Comets. He is now in his freshman year of college under full scholarship through the ActSix program. Cleo's days are now filled with college classes in the morning, and directing after-school recreational programming at the STREETS Center in the afternoon. Sundays find him at local church. The picture gets clearer in God's time.



He shows up for the STREETS Summer Institute interviews. He walks through the door slightly disheveled and sporting a pair of glasses with lenses that are too dense for the frames supporting them. He speaks with very little confidence. However, as we get deeper into the process, there seems to be something very special about this kid. Although we can not articulate what it is exactly, he ends up being one of our most diligent students and graduates the following Spring with honors from Booker T. Washington High School. John now holds a 3.5 cumulative GPA in Political Science at the University of Tennessee at Martin and has become a Christian leader on campus. In his spare time, he works to bring Gospel groups from around the area to campus concerts. We still communicate on a regular basis. The picture gets clearer in God's time.

She shows up every week with a great attitude that hides a tumultuous life. She bounces through the door with an infectious smile. Her tutor has the traditional McDonald's bag and they begin to wade through her academic duties. She is not exactly sure where she is laying her head tonight. Sometimes it is at mom's, and sometimes relatives are called upon to open their doors to a kid that has been left to fend for herself. Nancy came through the doors at STREETS the other day clutching college book bill that needs to be paid. Every time she appears, tears well up in me as I remember the young girl with seemingly no future. The picture gets clearer in God's time.

God continues to remind us at STREETS that it is all about His ways and His time. We just have to be faithful in the moment. Over two hundred kids walk through our doors daily that we want to fix right now! As we move about let us be patient in the Lord as He uses us for His glory!

"He has made everything beautiful in its time" Ecclesiastes 3:11

Your Brother in Christ,

Ken

Ken Bennett
Executive Director

Miriam Avery
Director of Development

Andreana Brown
Education Director

Carmen Coleman
Education Coordinator

John Cowherd
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Releasing Spiritual Drive: by Veronica

Our twenty-four hour bus ride came to an end when we finally arrived at the Silverado Lodge. We checked in, got our skis and ski boots, and settled into our condo which consisted of two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a living room, kitchen, fireplace and cable. We were living the life! We then spent the rest of the evening eating dinner, attending club and enjoying our plush condo surroundings.

The next morning we dressed for the slopes and realized how much heavier we felt in all the layers. We then waited for the bus that would take us to the Winter Park Resort ski school. After much instruction and a long green run, we stopped for lunch to get refueled for the afternoon. After lunch, we continued to ski, but without falling quite as often. Each day we followed the same schedule until it was time for dinner, club and cabin time. By the end of the week, we felt like professionals as we were able to do more green, and even a few blue, slope runs. And when we did fall, it was ok as that was half the fun!

One night, Kandice, Jocelyn, LaQuita and I had a chance to cook dinner and share personal stories with the group. We also had a chance to see God's work on and off the mountain as we were able to meet new people and make

IPC Ski Trip: by Carmen Coleman

As we crossed the pass and headed toward Winter Park, the girls' eyes widened as they caught their first glimpse of the Rockies. Once arriving at the Silverado Lodge, dreams became a reality when four girls from Booker T. Washington high school tried on ski boots for the first time.

Bright and early the next morning, after some instruction from Miriam on the proper dress code for hitting the slopes, we headed out the condo in full gear. Trying to figure out how to walk ski boots while holding onto a set of skis and poles was definitely a sight to behold! Jocelyn and I could not keep our balance from the moment we put on our skis. This deficiency led to my being escorted off the mountain in a snowmobile later that day. Here, I had plenty of quiet time as I sat in First Aid with a rather large ice pack on my knee. So while I chilled, Miriam finished



Veronica and Jocelyn focus on staying warm while riding the Gemni chair lift in Winter Park, CO.

friendships that will last a lifetime. The trip really taught us about how to release our spiritual drive for Christ, and I will remember it for a lifetime. Thank you!

Veronica is a Senior at Booker T. Washington High School and carries a 3.7 grade point average. She plans to attend Tennessee State University in the Fall.

teaching the girls the basics. Before long, they were having so much fun flying down the mountain, falling in the snow and laughing their brains out. This was the story of the week to come!

After coming off the slopes each day, we thawed out in the condo and started making preparations for our "family dinner". Here, everyone had an opportunity to show off their cooking skills. Our favorite dinner had to be our New Years Eve Italian Feast with lasagna, pizza, garlic bread, green beans, spinach dip, cheese dip and cookies. The nightly activities ended with a "Club" where we saw pictures from the day, sang praise songs and heard a message on the claims of Christ by Scott Lowe.

What a joy it was to experience Colorado from the eyes of the students in the Cleaborn and Foote community!

Staff Spotlight: Andreana Brown

Streets is thrilled to welcome Andreana Brown to our team as our newest staff member. Andreana was first introduced to Streets while working for Hope Presbyterian Church's Urban Missions Department. While with Hope, Andreana coordinated programs that allowed church members to live out their faith by serving in the city. Now, as Streets Education Director, she has the opportunity to do just that everyday by working alongside administrators and educators to overcome the problems in our schools. Through this, it is Andreana's hope to increase each students' chance for success by helping them to compete academically on a national level and attend a four year college.

Andreana was born and raised in Memphis and is a graduate of Louisiana State University. Geaux Tigers! She is a member of Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church and leads a sixth grade bible study group here at Streets.



Jarqueez, a Vance Middle School 7th grader, works on a project with Andreana in the Homework Lab.

Pathways Mentorship: by Chris Lareau

My wife and I were introduced to Streets Ministries by Josh Spickler, a long time tutor and the de facto Streets defense attorney. As a result, I have been a Pathways tutor since August, 2004. I was originally paired with Taurean, but somehow his best friend, Robert, seemed to work his way into the equation. The two are inseparable, and I have enjoyed mentoring both of the boys.

The relationship started with Wednesday afternoon tutoring sessions followed by a trip to the Pizza Hut buffet for dinner. As weeks turned into months and I developed a relationship with the boys, I realized they were becoming a significant part of my happiness.

My wife, Kate, quickly suggested we skip the buffet and bring the boys over for dinner every Wednesday night. Then the boys expressed a desire to attend church with us. For over two years now we have them over on Wednesday night and take them to church every Sunday morning. They are like family. We go camping together, visit my in-laws' farm in Arkansas, fish, run errands, play X-Box (or rather they play and I get humiliated), hunt for Christmas trees, talk about what we learned at church, play "listen to 97.1 until the song gets inappropriate" together (that lasts about four seconds on most occasions), have birthday parties together, throw the football around, sit around the fire-pit, play Catch Phrase, work on our grammar and even sit around and get bored together. The boys are, truly, family.



Taurean, Chris and Robert celebrate prom together.

continued on back panel

What We've Been Up To

- December 4th, the **Memphis Grizzlies** donated fifty boxes of food which were then distributed to the families of Streets' "Club" kids.
- After going an entire semester without getting into a fight on campus, 75 Vance Middle School boys were rewarded with a cookout party. Hot dogs, music, games and a movie were all a part of the "Fight Free Friday" celebration.
- December 12th, several members of the **Memphis Grizzlies** came to Streets. The tour occurred during "operating hours", so there was much for the team to see and do while they were here.
- On December 16th, members of **Independent Presbyterian Church** assembled and distributed over 600 Christmas Baskets for Streets. Each basket, which was loaded with over 40 pounds of food and cooking supplies, then made the trip to Streets where volunteers were paired with a student to help deliver the baskets into the community. The annual event was once again an engaging time for all involved and a tremendous ministry to the community we serve. A special thank you to all who participated!
- On January 16th, Streets played host to a Vance Middle School basketball game. As a record crowd watched the Eagles win a hard fought game, teachers and administrators took a tour of the facility and learned a little more about where so many of their students spend their afternoons.
- January 17th, ten Streets **Pathways** students and their mentors took part in the **Memphis Grizzlies** Annual Mentor Night. In addition to listening to several key speakers, the group participated in a photo shoot with team mascot Grizz and saw the Grizzlies pick up a win against the Philadelphia 76ers.
- January 27th, **Second Presbyterian Church's** Crossroads class hosted an "Elementary Explosion" at Streets.



Bryant, a Vance Middle School 8th grader, gives John a hand at the grill during "Fight Free Friday".



Christy and Derrica enjoy themselves at the recent Vance Middle School basketball game hosted by Streets



McKenzie, a Junior at ECS, lends a helping hand during a recent "Elementary Explosion" at Streets.



What's Coming Up

- With TCAP, Gateway and ACT testing set to begin during the first week of February, please be in prayer for our students at Booker T. Washington High School and Vance Middle School. Pray that they are well rested and have calm minds during this important time.
- The nationally ranked **Crichton College** Comets are playing all of their home games in the Streets Center gymnasium this season. The atmosphere has been lively as students from the Foote and Cleaborn Homes community have been allowed to attend each game free of charge. There are still four regular season games remaining on the schedule if you are interested in attending. Visit www.crichton.edu/athletics for a complete list of games and times.



Jasmine, a Georgia Avenue 3rd grader, picks up an admirer while wearing her new winter coat.



Anthony plays under the parachute during a recent "Elementary Explosion" held at Streets.

- Last semester was a record one for Streets in terms of attendance as even more kids than we originally anticipated participated in our educational, mentoring and athletic programming. Plenty of key volunteer opportunities still remain, so if you are interested please contact MaryWilkes@StreetsMinistries.org.
- Thank you to **CMDS, ECS, First Evangelical Church,** and **Independent Presbyterian Church** for their participation in our Winter Coat Drive. Over 450 coats are being distributed to students at Georgia Avenue Elementary.
- A dance will be held for all the "E-Club" students from Georgia Avenue Elementary during the monthly "Elementary Honors Day" held at Streets.
- Members of **Germantown Baptist Church** will be participating in Streets' February "Elementary Explosion". Held on one Saturday each month, groups of 15-25 volunteers come to Streets and lead a VBS like program from 9:00-12:00 am. Here, over 100 students from the community participate in songs, crafts and games before eating lunch and hearing a gospel message. Group volunteer opportunities for future months are currently available. If are interested please contact MaryWilkes@StreetsMinistries.org.