

## Gift of Service: A Student Perspective

### Skyler, Pathways Student, BTW Junior

Similarly, Pathways has also had a positive impact on the way I view myself. For example, in the program each member is put with his or her own tutor. Initially, I was a little nervous about being paired with a total stranger, but fortunately, I was paired with Robyn Wolfe. Before meeting her, I would isolate myself from my peers and always felt uncomfortable interacting with new people. Yet, soon I found out that Robyn was a great listener and really wanted to know me as a person. She has been a true blessing to me. Robyn has helped me realize that it is ok to open up to new people and be honest with who I am. As a result, Pathways is creating a path for me to become successful and confident in school and other areas of my life.



Streets Ministries would like to thank Danka Office Imaging for their printing services.



This seal is our pledge that your gifts are used as you planned.  
Thank you for your support of Streets Ministries.

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
MEMPHIS, TN  
PERMIT NO. 1872

**STREETS MINISTRIES**  
430 Vance Avenue  
Memphis, TN 38126

CELEBRATING  
**20**  
YEARS

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

DECEMBER 2007

## Living a Full Life in Bedford Falls

Frank Capra's Classic, "It's A Wonderful Life", has always been a family favorite around the Bennett household. It takes you on the rollercoaster life of George Bailey. We all know the storyline of this man's desire to leave the town that he has lived in all his life, in order to see the world and live a seemingly fuller existence. Bedford Falls becomes a claustrophobic dead end for a man with dreams bigger than the world itself. It took a cold Christmas Eve night on a bridge, and an angel named Clarence to help George see his life through a different lens. It required stepping out of the clutter of the moment to realize the gift he had been seeking was there all along. It was right there in Bedford Falls.



We have a little tradition at the Bennett house. On Christmas morning, Debbie, myself, Kristin, Matthew, Emily and my mom wake up and gather in one of the bedrooms to read the Christmas account from God's word and pray together. It has always been a sweet time for us and one that we do not take for granted. Once the prayer is over, we let the kids go in the living room where they find three distinct piles of gifts. Each child has their presents wrapped in a certain paper that has been picked just for them. Their eyeballs quickly scan the piles to find that one special gift that they have asked for and been anticipating for sometime. It is not always easy to find, and sometimes the hunt can have a certain level of frustration. Boxes are shaken and scrutinized, but eventually the great gift is discovered.

Every Christmas however, something unusual happens. The thing or things that Debbie and I are certain they will love the most are not necessarily their favorites. Invariably, the kids end up enjoying a gift that we did not see a lot of value in or happened not to cost very much, but ends up being the one that brings them the most joy and contentment. When they were small, something even crazier would happen. By nighttime, they were back playing with that faithful old doll or car or whatever else. Wow!

At STREETS, we are committed to working to remove the clutter from broken lives so that Cleaborn and Foote Homes kids and their families can see and accept the gift that brings fulfillment now and forever. The STREETS staff has spent the past year inside and outside of our building sharing the gift of Jesus Christ through recreation, outreach clubs, educational programs and simple relationship building. These efforts are made possible through your generous gifts. Please take a moment this Christmas season and pray about a year end gift to STREETS. And by the way, "It's A Wonderful Life" was originally titled "The Greatest Gift".

On behalf of the entire STREETS Family, we pray that you find fulfillment in Bedford Falls! - wherever that is for you.

Your Brother in Christ,

Ken

**Ken Bennett**  
Executive Director

**Andreana Brown**  
Education Director

**Carmen Coleman**  
Education Coordinator

**John Cowherd**  
Middle School Coordinator

**Kevin Cox**  
Recreation Coordinator

**Paul Crump**  
Operations Manager

**Delvin Lane**  
Ministry Director

**Crystal Neal**  
Elementary Coordinator

**Richard Vining**  
Business Director

**Joyce Wilfong**  
Administrative Assistant



**STREETS MINISTRIES**  
(901) 525-7380  
www.streetsministries.org



## The Gift of Service: Volunteer Perspectives

As what has turned out to be yet another record semester in terms of attendance draws to a close, it is time to start looking ahead to next spring. Currently, several elementary, middle and high school volunteer opportunities remain. Commitments range from one time projects like "Club" Food, to full semester commitments like Pathways, Room Adopters, Ready Readers and Bible Study Leaders.

The following paragraphs contain the stories of people who have chosen to impact others through Streets. As you read through them, please remember the words of

### Robyn Wolfe: Pathways Tutor

Step one: join the church. Step two: find an area to serve. By late 2006, I had step one down and was moving toward step two. Looking at the list of outside ministries that my church partnered with was overwhelming. Choosing one seemed impossible, so I began to pray and asked the Lord where He wanted me to serve.

Not long after, a friend of mine told me that he was considering volunteering as a tutor at Streets and, if I was interested, they were looking for more volunteers. I could not submit my application fast enough! I started volunteering at middle school "Club", but soon acknowledged that I am more of a one-on-one type of person and decided Pathways tutoring was a better fit. Here, I was introduced to Skyler, a sophomore from BTW.

Although the purpose of our tutoring sessions was, and still is, for me to tutor and help Skyler with her schoolwork and ACT preparation, I also felt that it was important for me to begin building a relationship with her. Easier said than done considering that there were not a lot of initial similarities we could see between us and latch onto. The task seemed intimidating at first, so again, I turned to prayer. I started asking God to strengthen our relationship and show me ways to connect with Skyler. I asked Him to help us be mutually honest and open with each other and to enable us to go beyond the tutor/student relationship. Slowly, over the course of our weeks together, I learned more about her family, background, interests and future goals. It was a true answer to prayer and testimony to God's faithfulness.

Isaiah. "If you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry, and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness and your night will become like noonday. The Lord will guide you always...You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail."

Please prayerfully consider giving of your time and talent this upcoming semester as you read the following series of "Volunteer Stories". May God richly bless you this Christmas Season and into the New Year.



Skyler, now a junior at BTW, works on a homework assignment with Robyn, her Pathways mentor.

Now, nearly a year later, I find it is sometimes hard to focus on what we are supposed to be there for. Skyler makes me laugh with her stories and side comments, and it is sometimes all I can do to stay serious and focus on helping with her schoolwork. But because of the relationship we have developed, when we do sit down to work, we listen to and respect each other.

Pathways has become my opportunity to serve our community in a small, but meaningful way to both Skyler and myself. Together we have struggled through math and soared through English, and I have even picked up a few hip words along the way - though it makes us both laugh when I use them.

## The Gift of Service: Volunteer Perspectives

### Robert Covington: Pathways Tutor, Board Member

I can still vividly remember my first Pathways meeting with Kerel. At the time, he was a six grader at Vance Middle School. I walked into Streets on that Monday "Club" night, with "Who Let the Dogs Out" blaring in the background, and sat down in a small classroom with him. That initial meeting began the building of a relationship. Expecting to train Kerel into the next great doctor or lawyer, my wife, a school teacher, warned me to focus on serving Kerel, not my ego. As usual, she was right. Five years later, I have learned that my time with Kerel was much less about tutoring and much more about loving him. In short, I needed to do my best to model Christ. However, Kerel has taught me much more than I have taught him. Despite his incredibly difficult life, the eldest son of six being raised by his grandmother, Kerel demonstrates that his worth is not found in his circumstances, but in God alone. As I reflect on my five years with Kerel and Streets, I realize what a wonderful blessing he has been both to me and my family.



Robert and Kerel take a break from the books to enjoy a good laugh. The two have been together in the Pathways Mentorship program now for five years.

### Fred Holmes: Pathways Tutor

Tutoring at Streets has crystallized a very important lesson to me. Loving God means serving others through sacrifice.

I enjoy giving back to the 38126 community Streets serves, and consider it a blessing to return to the neighborhood that I called home from kindergarten through my sophomore year in college. As a kid in the neighborhood, I can remember attending on "Club" nights, playing basketball with the other kids, and going to various camps in the summer with Streets.

In so many ways, the young man I now tutor in the Pathways program is like me. Our relationship began when he was in the seventh grade at Vance Middle School - where I also attended. Since that time, our relationship has evolved from tutor/student, to one of friendship and mutual respect. Over time I have watched him develop into a young man that is focused, involved in the community, works hard at school, and is determined to be successful. In fact, this upcoming fall he will enroll at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville - my alma mater.



Still getting to know one another, Fred and Delvin team up for a game of foosball five years ago.

## What We've Been Up To

- On October 18th, Streets was recognized as a 2007 grant recipient by the **Memphis Grizzlies** during the Foundation's Annual Partner Breakfast. Further recognition was also provided when Delvin and Carmen were asked to join the Grizzlies on the court during a game as part of the Foundation Partners Night.
- For the second year in a row, a group from **RUF Alabama** made the trip from Tuscaloosa to Streets in order to participate in a "38126 Weekend" short term missions project. During their stay, the group hosted an "Elementary Explosion", assisted with a work project at **Advance Memphis**, worshiped at **New Beginnings Community Church** and **Redeemer Presbyterian Church**, and ate dinner at the Four Way Restaurant, a local soul food paradise.



Delvin, a senior at BTW, poses with Carmen and his HCCF Servant Leader Scholarship Award.

- On November 6th, **Hope Christian Community Foundation's** eighth annual Servant Leaders Banquet honored Booker T. Washington senior, Delvin Tubbs. The award, which is given to students for their service in the community, came with \$2,000 in college scholarship money. Delvin plans to attend the **University of Tennessee** next fall where he will major in Business Administration.
- Also on November 6th, Streets opened its doors to the families of the Foote and Cleaborn Homes community for Christmas Basket sign ups. In under two hours, the vast majority of the over 500 baskets scheduled to be assembled were spoken for.
- Earlier this month, the Children's Theatre class from **Rhodes College** performed a series of skits for Georgia Avenue Elementary students participating in the Street Smarts program. The skits, which emphasized self-esteem, teamwork, and friendship as a theme, were greatly enjoyed by the students in attendance.



The Rhodes Children's Theatre class performs a skit with Georgia Avenue students during a recent Street Smarts.

- This past month, the Tri-State Defender interviewed six Vance Middle School students for an article titled "My Community, My World - The way I see it!" In it, students provided a fair and balanced view of the neighborhood they call home and offered up solutions to some of the many problems they face on a daily basis.
- As a part of celebrating their 20th Anniversary in the Mid-South, **International Paper** invited Streets to take part in the Annual Grants Breakfast and was recognized as a Community Partner.
- Andreana, Carmen, Crystal, and Delvin took twenty Streets students to the December 11th showing of **Bellevue Baptist Church's** annual "Singing Christmas Tree".



## What's Coming Up

- The Board of Trustees from **Evangelical Christian School** will be holding their Christmas Fellowship meeting at the Streets Center. As part of this annual event, the group will eat dinner, take a tour and learn more about Streets' mission from both Ken and Delvin.
- On December 15th, **Independent Presbyterian Church** will assemble and distribute 500 Christmas Baskets for Streets. Each basket, which is loaded with over 40 pounds of food and cooking supplies, will then make the trip to Streets where volunteers are paired with a student to help deliver the baskets into the community. The annual event will be an engaging time for all involved, and a tremendous ministry to the community we serve.
- On January 8th, while the **Memphis Grizzlies** are playing the Los Angeles Lakers, Streets will be featured as an In-Arena Community Partner. As a part of the feature, Streets will have an information and volunteer booth set up as well as having its logo displayed on the video board while a 30 second spot is presented over the public address system. So if you plan on going to the game, please stop by and say hello. We will be located in the Main Grand Lobby Entrance just outside of the Grizzlies Team Store in the FedEx Forum.
- To celebrate what has been another successful semester, Carmen will be taking Pathways students out for "Lunch and a Movie" as a reward for a job well done.



Elizabeth Martin, a Pathways mentor, spends time with Johanna, a senior at BTW.



Georgia Avenue students pose during a recent Street Smarts.

- This past August, Delvin Lane, Streets' Ministry Director, received his BA from the **University of Memphis**. In honor of all those that supported him in this effort, Delvin will walk across the stage at the FedEx Forum to receive his degree this December.
- On the morning of December 27th, Delvin, Beco, and four Booker T. Washington High School boys will be loading onto a bus bound for Winter Park Colorado with **Independent Presbyterian Church's** youth group. After a twenty plus hour long bus ride, the group will be staying at the Silverado Lodge and, in addition to taking ski lessons, celebrate the arrival of the New Year and participate in nightly "Club" talks. Please pray for the safety of group as well as for open hearts as students enjoy the beauty of God's creation and engage in his word.
- As another record semester draws to a close, Streets is in need of new elementary, middle, and high school volunteers beginning this spring. Current openings include Bible Study Leaders, Pathways Volunteers, Ready Readers, Room Adopters and "Club" Food providers. If you are interested, or would like to learn more about these and other program opportunities that still remain, please contact Richard at either [richard@streetsministries.org](mailto:richard@streetsministries.org) or (901) 525-7380 x201. Thank you.