

Thank You: College Tours 2008

By **Andreana Brown**, Education Director

College Tours is one of the most enjoyable things I do here, not only because of the level of exposure, but because of the dream being cast. At Streets, we ask our students to see themselves in a way that many of them never have. I can dream the dream, but I need them to dream it for themselves and then see it as obtainable.

It might not happen at the first college we visit, but by about the third, the proverbial light bulb comes on and the dream becomes tangible. It is in that moment the students begin to see for themselves what we have seen for them all along.

Thank you for continuing to inspire our children to dream big through your prayers and monetary support. Even though we are only gone for four fast paced days, the fruition of your support is definitely evident long after.



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Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Colossians 3:23

STREETS - BETWEEN THE LINES

APRIL 2008

A Text Message to Remember

I really just came in on the text messaging scene about a year and a half ago. I am typically a step or two behind the current technological trends. Texting has been one of those, and I am incredibly slow. I also love to run my mouth and hear a human voice at the other end, which does not make texting my favorite form of communicating. However, the neat thing about text messaging is that you can hold on to the messages. I have done that over the past year. Some I will hold onto for a day, others for weeks. I especially like ones from my kids. The other day, I was scrolling through my saved messages and found one that I have had in my phone since December 19th, 2007. It was from Antonio Burks.



Many of you know the story of Antonio Burks. As you may remember, the former Booker T. Washington Warrior, Memphis point guard, Conference USA Player of the Year, second round draft pick of the Memphis Grizzlies, and Serbian point guard for the Belgrade Red Star was a STREETS kid. You also know of his bumps in the road over the years. As you may recall, Antonio was one credit shy when it came time to graduate from BTW. We placed him in summer school in order to get that credit, and moved him into junior college in Madisonville, Tennessee. This was not where he had dreamed of playing ball while he was sinking shots on the outdoor courts in the Lemoyne Garden Housing Developments. After a rollercoaster first year, and through a series of events, Antonio walked on at the University of Memphis. The academic load coupled with basketball made for long nights at my house trying to get papers written and stay on course for graduation. Not unlike his prep years, when his eligibility ended, so did the educational train, and he was lacking a couple of classes for graduation. Antonio could have come back in the summer, but between the NBA summer league and other personal trials, school was no longer a priority. Two years in the NBA passed quickly, and his stint in Serbia was difficult. He is now waiting for a call from another Euro League team.

Now back to that text message from Antonio sent on December 19th. It simply said, "I passed B." It was the good news I had been anxiously awaiting. Antonio had just fulfilled his final requirement for graduation from the University of Memphis, and will now take his proper place in the graduation line this May at the FedEx Forum. The story I buzzed through in the previous paragraph could really be expanded into a book. It is the story of heartbreak, frustration, and desperation all rolled into one. It represents thousands of miles, hundreds of hours and gallons of tears.

In the pages that follow, you will read about some of the things that STREETS is doing to empower kids to live a life not only in obedience to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but also to equip them educationally and secure their place in this world. As you read, please pray for the future of these young people and that they may stay the course.

The old saying is "give a person a fish and they eat today; teach them to fish and they eat for a lifetime." Antonio will become a fisherman in May. Pray that he uses this moment to reflect on God's grace in his life.

Your Brother in Christ,
Ken

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College Tours 2008: Stories From the Road

From Tour to Reality: By Kerel

Coming to Streets has been wonderful for several years. From the camping trips, to the Bible Studies, to the weekly "Club" nights, I can truly say that the experience has been both enriching and fantastic. But what I have come to appreciate the most is the educational side of things that Streets has provided. For the past two years, I have been fortunate enough to be one of the many students who come to Streets and attend College Tours. The knowledge and experiences I have learned from these trips will stay with me as I make decisions about my future.

Growing up as an "inner city kid", Streets has provided me with a safe place to be off the street. More than that though, Streets has given me the opportunity to be a better person. I have been a part of the Pathways mentorship program since the sixth grade. I have also taken advantage of the many ACT and SAT workshops, tutoring services, and homework lab facilities. So while I would have to say that it was a wise choice to come to Streets, I have had a lot of fun at the same time. Now, with my grades up and the support of Streets and my tutors, I plan on attending college after graduation and making what was just a tour into reality.

Kerel is a junior at Booker T. Washington High School and a 6th year Pathways student. He would like to attend Middle Tennessee State University.



LaSherica, a sophomore at BTW, boards the bus prior to heading to another college on the tour.



LaQuita, Venise, and Tia take time to watch some of the other students walk by during their UT Chattanooga tour.

Future Nurse: By Venise

This spring break, I had a chance to ride the bus with twenty-five other students on Streets' College Tours. On the tour, we visited ten colleges and universities across Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama. Of the ten, The University of Alabama at Birmingham was my favorite by far. Walking around on the campus, it was easy to see that UAB has an outstandingly diverse and friendly environment in which to grow and learn. After meeting several students, they all seemed to be driven and passionate about their education experience. Additionally, as someone who sees herself as a future Nursing Major, UAB has a well known program in the field.

Before the tour, I had never even considered an out-of-state school, but thanks to Streets and their College Tour opportunity, my mind has been changed. As a result, I would recommend this trip to any student contemplating attending college. It was an eye opening, exciting, and positive experience all the way around. Thank you to all those who support and make it possible.

Venise is a junior at Booker T. Washington High School. She would like to attend The University of Alabama at Birmingham and pursue a degree in Nursing.

College Tours 2008: Stories From the Road

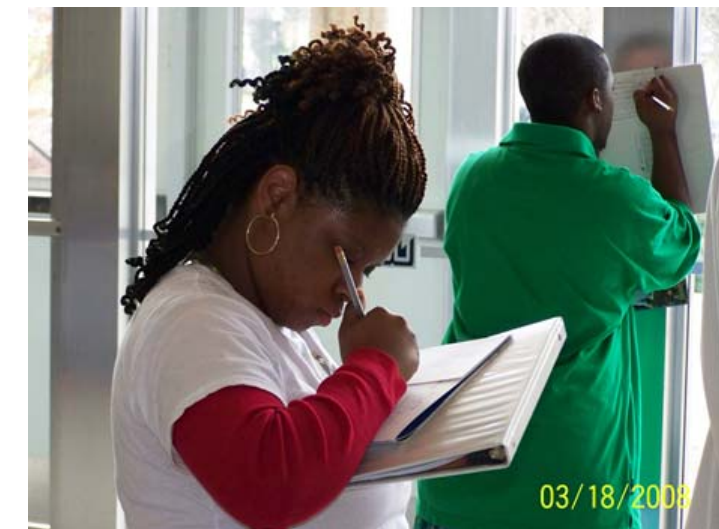
Relationship Building Bus: By Shantell

My experience on this past Streets College Tour was amazing. What I thought would simply be an informative look at college, turned out to be a great time as well. Even things you would think of as being a boring necessity, like the bus ride, turned out to be a lot of fun as I was able to get to know my friends better in a setting outside of the neighborhood. It was during this time that I realized that College Tours is so much more than what the name implies.

While College Tours did teach me a lot about the choices I have in my future if I continue to work hard in school, it mostly taught me about the importance of building relationships. Traveling for a week on a bus can do that to you, and, if fortunate enough to be asked, I would do it all again next year for sure. The entire tour experience was that rewarding for me.

Having now been on the tour, I feel that Tennessee State University is the place for me. It is big, has lots of different things for its students to do, has great places to eat, and nice places to live. Additionally, the students and teachers I spoke with on the tour all seemed to relate to me, and I do not feel as if I would have to work at fitting in. That is why I look forward to one day attending TSU as more than just a person on a tour.

Shantell is a sophomore at Booker T. Washington High School. She would like to attend Tennessee State University.



Roderica and Jerrico pause to take a notes during their tour of Mississippi State University, one of ten stops on the tour.

I Can See Myself Here: By Chris

On March 17th I arrived at the first of what would be ten different colleges on our tour. When I saw the campus, I knew immediately that college was not going to be anything like high school. It was all business! Since this was the first college I had ever been to, I thought that the campus was massive, but then I saw some of the other schools on tour. It was then I learned that college is big!

One of the major things I was interested in at each school were the dorm rooms. The first thing I noticed about them is how small they were compared to everything else on campus. I was also interested in the recreation centers. All were unique in their own way, but the one that caught my eye the most was Middle Tennessee State University's, a college that I definitely want to be in my future. MTSU has a fitness center, indoor pool, track, racquetball court, rock wall, and loads of other recreation activities available to students. I could really see myself spending a lot of time there meeting new people. The place just seemed to beckon me to attend with its diversity, facilities, and blend of student activities. While I still have one more year of school here at home, my goals for the future are now more refined after participating on this year's tour.

Chris is a junior at Booker T. Washington High School and a fourth year Pathways student. He would like to attend Middle Tennessee State University

This is College: By Erica

My experience on this year's College Tour was different than expected. It was exciting and fun! While I had never been before, I had anticipated the trip to be more like a school field trip. It turned out to be much more. The food was fantastic, we took time to go bowling, and were able to act like real college students at each school. The tour changed my mind about what college could be like for me. As a sophomore, I still have a few years before having to make a decision about college, but in my mind I have already decided to attend.

Erica is a sophomore at Booker T. Washington High School. She would like to attend Middle Tennessee State University.

What We've Been Up To

- From March 6-9th, adult members from **Hope Presbyterian Church** hosted their annual "Urban Plunge" at the Streets Center. During this time, the group ate and slept at Streets, toured other ministries in the neighborhood, and participated in various service and work projects throughout the community.
- On March 14th, a group from **Mississippi State RUF** participated in a "38126 Weekend" short-term missions trip. As part of the experience, the group ran an "Elementary Explosion" VBS for students in the neighborhood, took a tour of the National Civil Rights Museum, and then ate dinner at the Four Way Restaurant, a local soul-food paradise.
- On March 22nd, with over 300 hidden eggs found in under 20 minutes, Crystal hosted what had to be the fastest Easter Egg hunt in history with 30 elementary kids in the neighborhood at the Streets Park.
- On March 26th, a group of fifteen juniors and seniors from **Evangelical Christian School** came to Streets for a "Day of Service". During this time, the students cleaned the facility as well as parts of the neighborhood.
- On March 27th, Christian Gospel Rapper, Lecrae, performed in the Streets Rec Room in front of over 100 students as a part of a mixed Thursday night middle school "Club" with **Independent Presbyterian Church** and **Walker Memorial**.



Ariel, a 1st grader, proudly holds a few of the books she chose with the First Books of the Mid-South grant.



Madison, a Pre-K student, enjoys filling her basket up with eggs during the annual Streets Easter Egg hunt.

- During the NCAA "Sweet 16", John, Delvin, and several other Streets staff members held a party for students in the neighborhood. The fun included a smoked sausage cookout, chips, and drinks while everyone enjoyed watching the games on the big screen in the Rec Room. A good time was had by all involved.
- On March 31st, **SouthernSun Asset Management** grilled hot dogs and hamburgers for students attending Delvin's high school "Club". Open dates for elementary, middle, and high school "Club" still remain, so please contact Richard at richard@streetsministries.org if you or your group would like to learn more or are interested in volunteering to serve.
- Thanks in large part to a grant awarded to Streets by **First Books of the Mid-South**, all students enrolled in Street Smart, Pathways, and Streets Summer Institute were able to purchase a book at Borders' book store free of charge.
- On March 26-27th, Streets sponsored forty-three students from Booker T. Washington High School in a Jane Ross Tutoring session. The two day course, which is designed to improve students ACT/SAT test scores, taught students how to maximize their time while navigating through the test.



What's Coming Up

- Beginning April 11th, over 150 elementary and middle school students from the neighborhood will be attending Mike Miller's "33M" basketball camp hosted at Streets Center gymnasium. Organized and run in association with the **Memphis Grizzlies Charitable Foundation**, the week-long camp will be staffed by many of the top high school basketball prospects in the country.
- On April 12th, Streets, along with several other area organizations, will be assisting **St. Patrick's Church** with a "Foote Homes Community Day". The event will feature various volunteer clean up projects throughout the neighborhood, games for the kids, and a Health Fair for area residents.
- From April 14-18, Georgia Avenue Elementary, Downtown Elementary, and Vance Middle School will be administering TCAP exams. In addition to proctoring several of the sessions, the Streets staff is also collecting new no. 2 pencils for the students to use during the exam. Please be in prayer for these young students during this important time.
- Beginning Thursday night, April 24th, John will be hosting a middle school lock-in as a reward for boys who had perfect Bible Study attendance over this past semester. Held at the Streets Center, the overnight event will include a mix of video and board games, basketball, hide-and-seek, and plenty of food.



Delvin catches up with Neshia, a former Streets student now attending UT Martin, during College Tours 2008.



As a part of a recent "Elementary Explosion" VBS, Georgia Avenue Elementary students participated in skits.

- On April 19th, a youth group from **Christ Presbyterian Church** in Oxford, Mississippi will be traveling to Streets for a "38126 Day" short-term missions trip. During their time here, the group will run an "Elementary Explosion" VBS for students in the neighborhood. If you or your group would like to take part in this or a similar mission project, please contact Richard at richard@streetsministries.org.
- From April 29-30th, **Second Presbyterian Church** will be hosting an Amy Sherman Financial Literacy program in the Streets computer lab for area adults.



During a recent "38126 Weekend", Mississippi State RUF students received X-Box lessons from Streets kids.