

Staff Spotlight: Whitney Hale

Streets is excited to welcome Whitney Hale on staff as our Development Coordinator. Whitney was born and raised in the Memphis area and is a graduate of Liberty University with a major in English. Prior to joining Streets, Whitney was poetry editor for *Ruminate*, a literary magazine that combines faith and literature, and has been involved in various other editing projects for both new and seasoned authors. She enjoys writing and editing and is therefore excited about the opportunity to become the primary grant writer for Streets. Whitney's other duties will include volunteer recruitment, program coordination, and intern management, so if you are interested in getting involved this next semester, please give her a call.

Whitney can best be reached at (901) 525-7380 x209 or at whitney@streetsministries.org during the day.



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

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

Walking Through Open Doors...Streets Expands

In today's culture, bigger is usually equated with being better. The passion is to always want more. The goal is to continue to grow and spread. When we started Streets in 1987, the fervor was to do a better job in the 38126 zip code of inner-city Memphis. Since that time, I cannot begin to wade through the number of pleas for us to move into other communities in Memphis, Arkansas and Mississippi. Even though we have been tempted at times, we never felt God leading us to expansion.

As most of you know, a huge part of our success over the years has been attributed to our relationship to the Memphis Leadership Foundation. In fact, we were the first ministry of MLF back in 1987. Larry Lloyd and I struck a deal in the basement of old East Side Cumberland Presbyterian Church and the rest is history. Since that time, we have maintained a great working relationship with the foundation as an affiliate ministry even though we have become our own separate non-profit.

MLF was established years ago to empower folks with a God given vision to do ministry in urban communities across Memphis. When those ministries are able to fly on their own, MLF has made sure that they help make that happen. The list includes Neighborhood Housing Opportunities, Memphis Athletic Ministries and Streets, just to name a few. Most of us shudder to think where we would be without the leadership of Larry Lloyd and Howard Eddings over the years.

Over two years ago, under the direction of Howard Eddings, MLF established one of their Red Zone ministries out of Highland Heights Baptist Church on the corner of National and Faxon just north of Summer Avenue. This ministry serves the Treadwell school district. The church has recently been purchased by The Collegiate School, an urban private school alternative for middle and high school students. While the details were being hammered out, Howard and I entered into dialogue addressing the possibility of this particular Red Zone ministry folding into Streets. Because of Howard and my long standing friendship, we felt as though this would be a good fit moving forward. In turn, Streets officially made our first expansion move on March 17, 2008. Our goal is to replicate what we have set in place on Vance Avenue. Obviously, the MLF has created an incredible foundation on which we can build.

Over the next three months, we will be adding staff and making program expansion plans while the old Highland Heights Family Life Center is being updated into a first class facility for continued outreach in this community. We covet your prayers as we strategically look at an area of town that is changing. Although much of the outreach work done to date has been to African Americans, there is a growing Hispanic presence in the neighborhood.

Our goal on Faxon is no different than it is on Vance, and the mission remains the same. We pray that kids' lives would be changed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and that we challenge them academically through our educational programming. Soon we will be actively recruiting volunteers for the Fall semester at this site. Please be in prayer about how you and your family could be involved in our efforts, and we will keep you updated on this exciting new venture. Let us always be in prayer so that we know when God is opening a door.

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

Whitney Hale
Development Coordinator

Delvin Lane
Ministry Director

Crystal Neal
Elementary Coordinator

Richard Vining
Business Director

Joyce Wilfong
Administrative Assistant



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



Giving, Sharing, and Consistency: by Delvin Lane

As Christ left his earthly ministry, he gave his disciples a perfect example to follow while they moved about the earth making disciples. While not Christ, Ken Bennett has given the staff here at Streets a Christ-like example to follow. He has labored for over two decades in the inner-city of Memphis serving kids and their families through word and deed. As a result, we are now charged with building upon the relationships Streets has formed over the years through our philosophy of giving, sharing and consistency.

Giving is one way we attempt to be Christ like in our mission. Each year, Streets partners with a Sunday school class at Independent Presbyterian Church that Ken and I are members of, to sponsor Streets families for Christmas. We divide into small groups and adopt each member of a chosen family. Then we choose a meeting date and throw several small parties to meet and greet with the families involved. It is a great time to see kids and adults alike enjoy the Christmas season with brothers and sisters in Christ who truly love them because of the Spirit instilled in us.

Secondly, we *share* in ministry with other communities by providing people who would not normally come in contact with our kids, opportunities to get involved. During football season, Streets has several business men and their families to come down on Friday nights with a hot cooked meal to feed hungry Booker T. Washington football players prior to each game. At the end of the season, the group hosts a sports banquet in the team's honor to show them that their hard work is not in vain. These men have invested in the lives of our kids by showing them love through the act of feeding, and have helped encourage them to live productive lives that are pleasing to Christ.

Lastly, *consistency* is a vital part of the success of Streets. Daily we have kids that struggle with all types of life issues. Somewhat recently, several of our kids have become defeated by homosexuality. One such young lady, a senior at Booker T. Washington, has been a part of Streets since her middle school years. She has heard the Gospel and is very familiar with what the Lord expects of her. She is also a cross-dressing lesbian. But Streets has not given up on her like most other people in her life. Streets has continued to love her in every possible way. To do this, we continue



Giving: Sponsored students and their families wait for their turn to receive gifts this past Christmas.

to meet kids on "their turf". We attend practically every school event there is in an effort to show kids that we support them. While at the high school prom recently, I had one of the greatest encounters of my life. As the music played, we took pictures of the couples that came through the door. I felt the air getting thin when, all of a sudden, the room froze. I looked around to see what everyone was gazing at. It was the young lady I just described, and she was absolutely gorgeous! She was dressed like a beautiful queen, and I teared up like a kid with dust in his eye. She was so elegant that it was agreed upon by those in attendance that she should be crowned 2008 Prom Queen. For the first time in a long time, the young lady had remembered who she was in Christ. Prayerfully, she has been seeking the Lord's help to be restored, and because of Streets' consistency, I can openly talk to her.

Over the next several months, please pray that Streets will be able to carry over these characteristics of giving, sharing and consistency as it ministers to kids and their families in a new neighborhood as they are the keys to our success.

Delvin is the Ministry Director at Streets Ministries
delvin@streetsministries.org

A Ministry of People: by Andreana Brown

The hardest part about ministry is people. It is easy to stand back and love God with all of your heart, but as 1 John 4:21 reminds us, "Whoever loves God must also love his brother or sister." Ultimately, ministry is all about people and you cannot effectively share the Good News of the Gospel without having a relationship.

Each community has its own set of needs and resources, but as any good business manager will tell you, people are the resource that is most needed to be successful. Although Streets exists to enrich the lives of children in our urban community through the Gospel, none of it could be accomplished without people who believe in God's power to transform lives through the simple act of love and service.

There have been numerous studies done to find the right combination of assets needed in order for a child to thrive and be successful. While some differ in tactics and needs, they all include one prevailing factor - caring adults. Of course if we lived in a perfect world, all children would enjoy loving parents and live in healthy family units.

Redefining More: by Richard Vining

As I drive around South Memphis, or any other neighborhood in need for that matter, I see a lot of what I call "monuments to good intentions". Facilities, parks, gyms and so forth, all built for a community in need, but whether it be through ineffective leadership, funding, or a lack of long term commitment, have not been successful over time. As a result, what was initially a good idea ends up being a broken down, overgrown, relic that is now more a part of the problem than it ever was a solution.

This is what sets Streets apart. Streets is now in its twenty-first year of serving the Foote and Cleaborn Homes community. I have only been on staff at Streets for a little over three years now, but in that time, I can say that my perspective on what makes Streets successful in this community has changed.

Initially I was all about getting big money to make big changes. My mind set was that what this neighborhood needed was more programs, more facilities, more

opportunities, more staff, more funding, more...more. Unfortunately in our current state, many children are not born into such an environment.

Streets' oldest and most successful program, Pathways, serves to bring a caring adult into a child's life while building them educationally for college. In past newsletters, we have shared stories about the influence that one person can have in a child's life. The simple tactic of changing lives through relationships is what continues to make Streets so effective.

There is no magic in what we do, but what we have found at Streets is that when you combine Christian adults with a child and let them engage in sharing the Gospel through the building of a relationship, great things happen.

Please pray for the people who will be pioneers as we begin to duplicate this simple concept in the Highland Heights community next fall.

Andreana is the Education Director at Streets Ministries
andreana@streetsministries.org

Fortunately, Streets has been blessed with "more", but the longer I am on staff, the "more" I see what really makes a difference. Yes, the programs we offer are incredibly important, but the problems that persist in this neighborhood are in my opinion, so deep, that the only way to change the community is through the Gospel. Streets' mission is an effective tool towards achieving that change. Thank you for your faithful support of Streets Ministries. Your prayers, volunteer hours and funding are making a difference in the lives of the people living in the communities we serve. And as we grow, let us be mindful of what it is that makes Streets work. Let us continue to invest in the communities we serve in such a way that our mission is achieved, and not just build another "monument to good intentions".

Richard is the Business Director at Streets Ministries
richard@streetsministries.org

What We've Been Up To

- On April 12th, Streets, along with several other area organizations, assisted **St. Patrick's Church** with Foote Homes Community Day. The event featured various volunteer clean up projects, games and crafts for the kids, and a Health Fair for area residents.
- On April 16th, **Action News 5** aired a segment on Streets as part of their "Taking Back Our Neighborhoods" series. The piece, which was put together by Joe Birch and featured Streets staff members Kevn Cox and Crystal Neal, emphasized several of the positive things Streets is actively engaged in in the Foote and Cleaborn Homes communities.
- On April 24th, John, Kevin and Cleo hosted a middle school lock-in as a reward for boys who had maintained perfect Bible Study attendance over this past semester. Held at the Streets Center, the overnight event included a mix of video and board games, a basketball "dunk" contest, a center wide hide-and-seek contest, several movies, and plenty of food cooked out on the grill.
- On May 5th, the Streets staff attended a performance of *Broadway Meets South Memphis* in the Booker T. Washington High School Auditorium. In it, a selection of scenes from *Ray*, *Dream Girls*, *The Piano Lesson*, *Porgy and Bess*, *Cinderella* and others were acted out on stage after being prefaced by short video clips setting the scene.
- May 15th, a group from **International Paper** led students on an educational hike and canoe tour through portions of the Wolf River Trail. A good time was had by all as students were able to see a portion of their city in a new way.
- In what will go down as one of the biggest come from behind victories in the history of organized basketball, the Streets Intramural All-Stars erased a ten point deficit in less than two minutes to defeat a team of Streets staff members.



Laravien, a 5th Grader at Downtown Elementary, works on her craft during the recent Foote Homes Community Day.



Taurean, a Streets Elementary Volunteer, spends time with Takia during the recent Community Day celebration.

- On May 16th, over 125 students from Georgia Avenue Elementary participated in a Rewards Day program held at Streets. In it, students who had exhibited excellent behavior throughout the school year enjoyed a cookout, danced to some of the latest music in the Rec. Room, and participated in games in the gym.
- In what has become somewhat of an annual event, Gary Powell, a Streets Pathways mentor, took a group of students fly-fishing on May 17th.
- On May 24th, Delvin loaded up the van and took a group of Streets kids to the home of the "threwed roll", Lambert's Cafe, in Sikeston, Missouri. The day long trip made for a good meal and some quality fellowship time.



What's Coming Up

- This summer, Streets has once again secured the services of two quality interns in Merriwether Paxton and Nathan Lucy. Merriwether, who attends the **University of Alabama**, is a 38126 Weekend veteran, while Nathan attends **Auburn University**. Both will be assisting with Streets Summer Institute, Elementary VBS, as well as daily recreation in the facility. Please help us make these two interns feel welcome this summer and pray for the time that they have here.
- Beginning this June, Monday night will be Movie Night at Streets. Students from both the Foote and Cleaborn Homes as well as the Highland Heights community will be filling the Rec Room to enjoy a movie, snacks, and a much needed break from the summer heat.
- In an effort to continue to be out in the community, Streets has scheduled several neighborhood events this summer including pool parties, a skating night, laser chase, and a softball game. It is a great way for us to share with those who may have not yet come through our doors.
- Aloha! Streets Elementary Vacation Bible School is headed to the beach with this year's theme being "Surf's Up with Jesus!" Beginning on June 9th, over thirty students from the neighborhood are expected on a daily basis to participate in games, crafts and bible studies. Please pray for these students during this time that their young hearts be open and ready to receive the Gospel.



Teria learns how to horseback ride during last year's Summer Camp trip to Windy Gap.



Shiria and Tanisha take time to smile during a recent Elementary Explosion Vacation Bible School.

- July 6th, Delvin will be taking a group of students to Young Life's **Sharp Top Cove** in Georgia for Summer Camp. Here, students will have the opportunity to learn how to horseback, ride a zip line, and bounce fellow campers off "the blob" and into the lake. A nightly "Club" consisting of group games, songs, and worship will then lead to cabin time discussions. Please be in prayer for these students as they travel.
- Be sure to tune in to *The Josh Davis Show* on 990 KWAM, Monday-Thursday between 12:00-1:00 pm for a *Streets Minute* with both Delvin and Ken.



Anartika gets off to a tough start on the ropes course during last year's camp. Eventually she made it to the top.