

In Search of Office Furniture

As you can imagine, we are pretty hard on furniture down at Streets. If you or your company has old furniture that you are replacing, please let us know. We can easily provide you with receipts for writing off these tax-deductible contributions. We are in particular need of rolling desk chairs, small meeting tables (breakfast tables would certainly work!) and office chairs right now. Please email Rob Thompson at rob@streetsministries.org if you have any furniture you'd like to donate.

Email updates are available

In an effort to keep you better informed of the goings-on at Streets, we are now sending out regular monthly email updates. These updates include more information on what is happening at the ministry each month, as well as important prayer requests. If you would like to receive these email updates, please send an email to updates@streetsministries.org and type subscribe in the subject line. Please be sure to include your name in the body of the email.

Summer Internship Available

Streets is formalizing our summer internship program to train students on how to do ministry in the inner city. The internship is open to Christians from all walks of life, whether from Cleaborn Homes or East Memphis, and will include helping with Vacation Bible School, summer camps, movie nights, discipleship and recreation. For more information, please send an email to internship@streetsministries.org

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For you know the grace
of our Lord Jesus Christ,
that though he was
rich, yet for your sakes
he became poor, so
that you through his
poverty might become
rich

2 Corinthians 8:9

Does What Makes Me Angry, Also Grieve My Heart?

Education is certainly one of the hot topics of our day. It seems as though everyone you meet is *more* than willing to talk about it. Everyone has an opinion on it. But at the end of the day, most people don't actually *do* something in response to this social ill.

While most of us are frustrated, and even infuriated, by education in *theory*, in practice we are very pleased with the education that *our* children are receiving. And even though we are angered by newspaper reports that report low test scores, poor management of facilities and resources, and sexual abuse of students placed in the care of professionals, our hearts don't typically grieve. Why is this the case? I believe the answer is quite simple: There are no faces to go with these statistics, and in turn, there is an easy disconnect.

I met with one of our former Pathways mentors recently. He spoke about the possibility of running for the school board. Before he got involved with Streets many years ago, the educational plight of our schools made him angry. But after engaging in a one-on-one relationship with a kid in the inner city and seeing the struggles first hand, his anger over our educational system began to turn to grief for the thousands of youth affected by it.

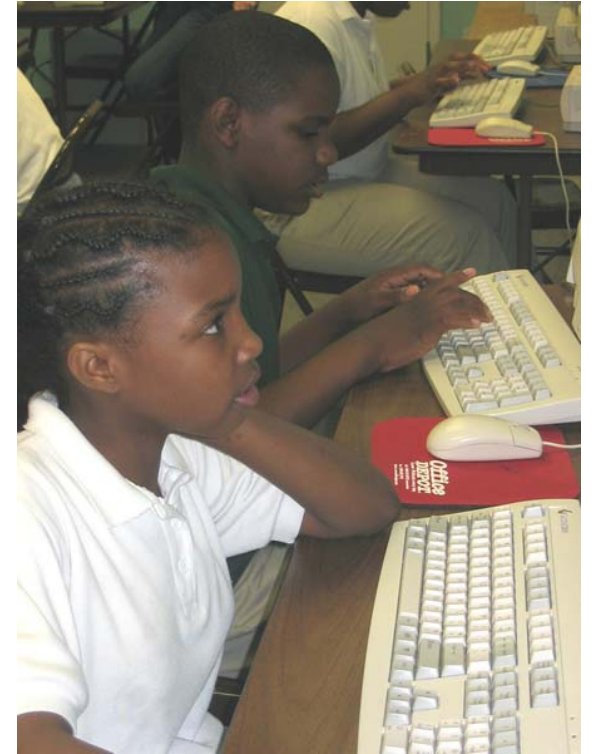
We are in jeopardy of losing an entire generation of kids. The outcome is predictable: The majority will end up on our nation's welfare rolls or incarcerated. But as the body of Christ, we are called by God's word to meet the needs of the oppressed and disenfranchised (Isaiah 58).

Over the past sixteen years, I have had the honor and privilege to work with some of the most dedicated educators at Booker T. Washington High School, Vance Middle School, and Locke Elementary School. Despite the dedication and determination of our educators, however, the problems that walk through those doors everyday are overwhelming. More than ever, these institutions need our help, not our criticism. They need our involvement, not our rebuke. And they need the love that flows from our grief, not our anger.

There are two ways to get involved. You certainly can call a school directly (there are at least a couple hundred choices) or connect to a ministry in the inner city that works closely with schools and has an educational component, such as Streets.

It is time to put our anger aside, connect to the disconnected, and truly grieve for those that are struggling educationally.

Your Brother in Christ,
Ken Bennett



Ken Bennett
Executive Director
Joey Collums
Education Specialist
John Cowherd
Middle School Coordinator
Brian 'Debo' Crawford
Recreation and Facilities Staff
Ashley Diaz
Education Coordinator
Grace Halliday
Education Specialist
Delvin Lane
High School Coordinator
Rob Thompson
Director of Development
Quinhon Turner
Recreation and Facilities Specialists
Joyce Wilfong
Administrative Assistant
Renee Wimmer
Education Intern


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Summer Institute: Polishing the Diamonds in the Rough

The assignment for last year's Summer Institute class seemed mundane enough: write a four-page autobiography. But giving a 16-year-old from this neighborhood the change to express his or her life story, we soon discovered, results in anything but the ordinary. Michael remembered age eleven, full of sadness and confusion, as he watched his mother grow sick with cancer. He became her personal aid by cooking, taking care of his siblings and even bathing her. Finally, continued Michael in his mistake-filled, yet powerful essay, she left for St. Louis to have surgery. The boy stayed behind, each day hoping he might hear news of her recovery. The phone rang one morning, and he learned that she would not be coming home.



Streets Summer Institute, Class of 2003

In expressing for the first time the agony he felt at his mother's death, Michael had ironically found something that made him come alive: writing. Since last summer, Michael's writing "career" has taken off. Already he has written several articles for *The Teen Appeal*, a monthly publication for Memphis City School students. Even more impressive, his article criticizing corporal punishment in city schools appeared in *The Commercial Appeal* last month, along with his picture.* Michael now aspires to a professional career in journalism.

Michael's passion for writing proves William Butler Yeats' theory that "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the

lighting of a fire." Unfortunately, the current condition of Memphis City Schools requires that most classroom instruction train students to pass TCAP Writing Assessments, Gateway tests, and the ACT. While educators across the nation labor to fill pails, the objective of Summer Institute is to light fires.

Streets Summer Institute requires students to attend 35 hours a week of class, with an emphasis on university-level writing, analysis, and communication. Coursework has covered topics such as the Civil Rights Era, philosophy, ethics, and the Holocaust. For the first time, this year's Summer Institute class will venture to the mountains to study for a week at St. Andrew's-Sewanee, a 130-year-old boarding school located next to the University of the South. In addition to studying, the week will feature new challenges to these inner-city teenagers, such as white-water rafting, hiking, camping and time for reflection. We also look forward to a unique platform of both adventure and tranquility in which to share the Gospel with these students.

In addition, Summer Institute alumni receive college scholarships from Streets. Of the 19 students who have completed the program and have graduated from high school (the 2003 Summer Institute students are still attending Booker T. Washington), 18 have overcome the statistics of the neighborhood and have gone on to college at The University of Memphis, University of Tennessee at Martin, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, Tennessee Tech, Lemoyne-Owen, and Southwest Tennessee Technical College.

One of the best parts of Summer Institute, however (at least according to the students), is the paycheck they take home each week. Through God's provision from donors, Streets is able to offer minimum wages for completion of assignments and faithful attendance. This allows students, who would otherwise spend their summer working, to focus on learning during the summer weeks. While the promise of pay may lure them here, many alumni, like Michael, find that Summer Institute offers much more.

* To read Michael's article for the *Commercial Appeal*, go to www.gomemphis.com and search for Michael Russom.

A Kid's Story: This Year's College Tour

By Darryl Sanders, Booker T. Washington Junior

The day I was introduced to the "College Tour," sponsored by Streets Ministries, I thought of it as any other college tour trip that I'd already encountered. But when I was informed of the colleges and universities that I, along with other students, would be visiting, I figured that this trip might be slightly different. Surprisingly, it was different from my recent college touring trips. With Streets, we visited colleges and universities that I didn't know existed. A few of the colleges and universities weren't appealing only because they didn't have a certain major that interested me. Nevertheless, the hosts that guided us throughout their campuses are what made those not-very-appealing colleges or universities outstanding.

I admired all of the campuses that we toured. The trees, landscaping, courtyards, flowers, grass, sculptures, statues, fountains and all of the attractions that make a campus lovely were just simply flattering! Above all, Middle Tennessee State University captured every speck of my attention. Wow! That's exactly what I thought of MTSU. It seemed to be the perfect university. It had the course of study that I would choose as my number one major, a perfect campus, hard-working student body, and plenty of interesting extra-curricular activities. I saw MTSU as an all-in-one package that I was craving. Although, there are other colleges and universities that similarly intrigue me, Middle Tennessee State University will definitely stay in the top of my mind.

I also enjoyed the company of my schoolmates while on the trip. They were hilarious and as friendly as ever. I had the chance to create even stronger bonds of friendship with each one of them. We all had fun together enjoying our evening activities. Speaking of evening activities, they were especially intriguing! Could you imagine having an entire laser tag building and arcade to yourself? I didn't have to imagine it, because my schoolmates and I had the privilege during College Tours. Try to picture yourself having almost unlimited bowling, games, and a ton of food served to settle your appetite!

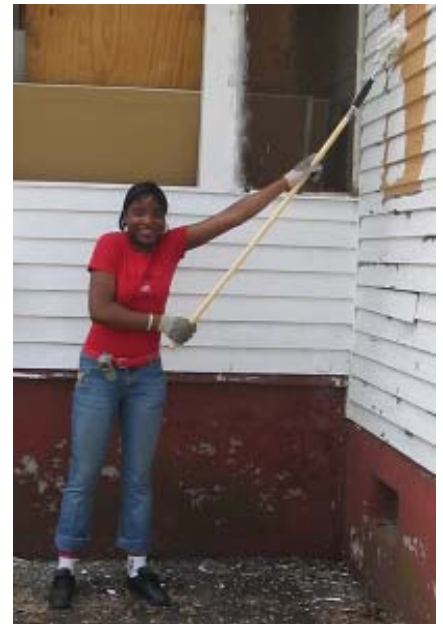


After a full day on college campuses, College Tours stopped to play in Atlanta

This college tour trip was the most awesome experience I've had this year. I would love to thank Streets Ministries for offering me the opportunity to become familiar with those wonderful colleges and universities. I must say that I've learned a lot about colleges and universities through this trip. I'm definitely looking forward to the next tour in the spring of next year.

What We've Been Up To

- The **Commercial Appeal** did two stories on **Vance Middle School 8th grader**, Timothy Ray Ware, on February 12. The article dealt with Ray Ray's basketball talent and the current High School recruiting war over him. Ray Ray is very involved with Streets and we ask that you pray both for Ray Ray and our staff as we have the opportunity to minister, not only to Ray Ray, but also to several other talented athletes. It is amazing how God is using these kids to help further His kingdom. Two weeks ago, Ray Ray decided he would not play in the 8th grade MIAA City Championship because he would have to miss the weekly Middle School club at Streets. To accommodate Ray Ray and some of his teammates desire, the school allowed John Cowherd to have club on Vance's campus before the game.
- Ashley took five girls to the **Advance Memphis workday** on **March 27th**. The girls helped clean up a house Advance Memphis is refurbishing in the neighborhood on Georgia Avenue.
- One of **Delvin's Bible studies**, comprised of 15 BTW High School students, spent the month of **February** going through **R. C. Sproul's series "From Dust to Glory"**.
- **Wendi Thomas of the Commercial Appeal** visited Ashley Diaz and Joey Collums **classes at BTW** on **March 2nd**. Wendi told part of her life story, including her road from Memphis City Schools to college and then to a successful career as a journalist. She offered students some great advice on accomplishing goals (especially for those interested in journalism). Joey and Ashley have been teaching classes (Advanced Composition and ACT Prep, respectively) on the BTW campus this semester.
- Delvin took 15 students to a **RiverKings hockey game** at the Desoto Civic Center on **March 4th**. The kids had a great time at their first hockey game, and were given the royal treatment by the staff of the RiverKings and the Civic Center. The kids were treated to lots of hot dogs and were featured on the JumboTron several times. A special thanks to the RiverKings organization for making this event possible.
- On **March 6th**, Ashley took Melissa Rhea and her family to the **Memphis citywide Spelling Bee**. As an eighth grader this year, Melissa was the Vance Middle School winner and competed against other kids from the rest of the city. She made it to the third round before being eliminated on the word "coquettish."
- Several **medical students** from the **University of Tennessee** helped Ashley conduct an **ACT Workshop** at BTW on **Tuesday, March 18**.



Pepper helps paint at the Advance Memphis workday



Presenting the Ladies Lightweight Boxing Champion of the IPC Middle School Lock-In

- John Cowherd took 14 students to **Independent Presbyterian Church's middle school lock-in** on **April 2nd**. As the picture below shows, the kids had a great time playing basketball, dancing and just being middle schoolers.
- Streets hosted an **Easter egg hunt** for local children at our "park" across the street from our building on **April 5th**. Put on by **Advance Memphis and Germantown Baptist Church**, the egg hunt featured a Gospel message and hosted about 40 children from the neighborhood.

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What We've Been Up To: Continued

- On **April 7th**, John transported the new inductees to the **Vance Middle School Junior Honor Society** to Ryan's Steakhouse following their induction ceremony at school.
- Delvin ushered in Good Friday by staying up all night with about 15 High School boys for a **lock-in** at Streets on **April 9th**. The lock-in included games, music and lots of rough housing.
- Joey has been sharing his vast baseball knowledge with the **BTW boys baseball team** most Tuesdays and Thursdays since the beginning of **April**.



Fun and Games at the IPC Lock-In

What's Coming Up: Spring and Summer

- John is transporting band members and majorettes from **Vance Middle School** this month for the **Africa in April parade** the weekend of **April 23rd**.
- **Middle School** and **High School club** will be finishing up the semester the week of **May 3rd**. Please pray for these groups as we head into summer.
- **Pathways** will be finishing up on **May 7th**, and the **year end party** will be on **Tuesday, May 11th**, so tutors, mark your calendars!
- **Friday, May 21st** is the **last day of school** for Memphis City Schools. Please pray for our staff as we prepare for a busy summer! In celebration of school letting out for the summer, Carrie, our Middle School volunteer extraordinaire, will be helping host a **lock-in** at Streets on **May 21st** for about 20 girls from our **Middle School girls Bible study**.
- Streets will once again be putting on the annual Memorial Day Bash at Georgia field on **May 31st**, which will include softball, football, kickball and hotdogs and drinks for kids from all over the community.
- **Weekly Movie Nights at Streets** will start up in **June**. For the last two years, we've had a movie night for Middle School and one for High School each week. Virtually every week, we provide movies, popcorn and drinks, and air conditioning! Both nights average about 40 students each week.
- Delvin will be taking **High School** students to **summer camp** at Young Life's SharpTop Cove property in North Georgia **June 7 – 12**.
- John will be taking 32 **Middle School** students to **summer camp June 20 – 25** to For The Kingdom, Memphis Leadership Foundation's camp in Raleigh.
- **Streets Summer Institute**, which is featured in this month's article, *Summer Institute: Polishing the Diamonds in the Rough*, starts the week of **June 29th**. Students will come to Streets each day for classes for four weeks, and the fifth week will be spent in Sewanee, Tennessee at a boarding school, where students will complete term papers and participate in classes as well as several (hopefully) perspective-expanding experiences like white water rafting, hiking and camping. Though the cost is not insignificant (about \$1,500 per student for the summer), this provides a very unique, educationally significant and sometimes life-changing experience for these promising young students. If you are interested in helping to sponsor a student this summer, please contact Rob Thompson at rob@streetsministries.org or 901.525.7380.