

FROM THEIR OWN WORDS...

Perry's Impact on Youth

Hi! My name is Eric Hines, and I have had a bit of change in my life. I go to an after school program called Perry School Community Services Center. I have been going there for about six to seven years. Before attending Perry School I was to go home, do my homework, and stay in the house watching my two little sisters until my mother got home. My little sisters now attend the Perry School with me. We go up there and do our homework. We also participate in fun activities like games on the computer, board games, and more. They also provide field trips to a lot of fun places. So now, instead of being at home or around the neighborhood, I am doing fun things at Perry School Community Services Center. – **Eric Hines, 14**



Perry School has changed my life by keeping me out of trouble and by giving me something to do after school. Perry School gives me time to do my homework and many other things. Perry School also lets me relax from school. They take me on trips and to do community service. They've taught me how to fill out a job application and how to get a summer job. Without Perry School I would not have all these chances I have now to succeed in life. – **Tyesha Day, 14**



Perry School has changed the way I talk to people. They give me help with my work for school, so now I get better grades in school. Now that I come to Perry School, I have safe activities that I can do after school. – **Janay Fayson, 14**

Hi! My name is Michael Webb and I have attended Perry School for four years. The changes that have happened to me are that I have become a more responsible person and have been getting very good grades in school. The Director of the Older Youth Program, Leon A. Samuels, has helped me with my homework a lot and has taught me easy ways to understand my work and how to do well on it. I think that Perry School is a good place to come after school. We also do fun activities here, so we don't just do work all the time. We even have a summer camp. Perry School also has a good Youth Director, Mr. Corey Poole, who also helps me with my work if he's not too busy doing his own. So if it wasn't for the people that work at Perry School, I wouldn't be getting good grades. – **Michael Webb, 13**



CHANGING LIVES...

Families Helping Families

Ms. Fusha Pollard is a single mother of two children: a two-year-old son and a four-year-old daughter. Ms. Pollard resides in a transitional housing program in Washington, D.C. After resolving her relationship with her boyfriend, Ms. Pollard is raising her two children on her own, one of whom has developmental disabilities. She deals with stress and frustration quiet often.



Ms. Pollard was desperately seeking help and enrolled in Perry Center, Inc.'s **Family-to-Family Mentoring Program**. As a participant of this program, she has learned to set personal goals and to weekly speak with her mentor for support. Ms. Pollard faithfully attends the program's monthly workshops. The monthly workshops have covered parenting skills, finance, and stress management.

Ms. Pollard has been matched with a mentor family who offers her support for continuing her independence. In February of 2007, Ms. Pollard gained temporary employment at a doctor's office as a medical clerk. Since that time she has been promoted to a full-time position at the clinic.

One of Ms. Pollard's goals was to manage her money better. She opened a bank account, which has helped her to attain that goal. Ms. Pollard still has several goals to accomplish, and with the support of the coordinator of the program, her mentor, and fellow participants, we are confident that she will reach them. ♦

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Message from the Executive Director

AFFECTING LIVES

THIS ISSUE OF OUR NEWSLETTER focuses on the many lives that Perry Center, Inc. affects and the many ways in which those lives are affected. Last year we helped over 2,200 people through our programs in youth development, social services, and economic empowerment. Carrying out our anti-poverty mission requires us to have a positive impact on people's lives. We strive to assist people to improve their conditions: to have better lives and brighter futures for themselves and their families.

Life is the greatest gift we can have. Everything else flows from that. However, the lives of many of our clients have a number of negative conditions that detract from its quality: poor health, addictions, lack of education, unemployment and underemployment, homelessness, and crises. Addressing a number of negative conditions requires a number of positive responses: life-long education, regular and affordable housing, and employment over time with wages that allow an adequate standard of living. Our programs are designed to provide these positive responses over time. Education starts at preschool, proceeds through elementary, and then secondary learning. People dropping out can get back on track through pre-GED and GED at any age. We have enabled people to find shelter, transitional housing, and stable housing. Regular employment can mean a number of steps: job training, job counseling, entry-level jobs, move-up jobs, and career jobs with increasing wages.

Quality of life is also affected by a number of traits and values that each person and each community may or may not possess. That is why we use the Junior Achievement curriculum in teaching life skills to our youth. While including many business and economic aspects such as savings, financial management, and entrepreneurship, the curriculum also emphasizes personal responsibility, self-esteem, appreciating individual differences in people, teamwork, non-monetary rewards, sharing, generosity, making good decisions, civics, and living and working in a community. Living a values-laden life has a significant impact on its quality.

As you review this issue of our newsletter, observe the many ways in which Perry Center, Inc. is fostering better lives for thousands of people. Please join and support us in these endeavors. ♦

Thank You For Your Support

We thank all donors whose generosity sustains our youth and family programs and allows us to respond to those in need. We note the following additional foundation, church, corporation, and organization donors, which have contributed to Perry Center, Inc. since our last newsletter.

- Children's Defense Fund
- Friends of Jesus Church
- Naomi & Nehemiah Cohen Foundation
- Northwest Settlement House
- Phase Foundation
- Union Center Plaza Management
- U.S. Bank Charitable Trust
- Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation
- Zients Family Foundation

In Gratitude

In addition to her longtime service as a Board Director and instrumental fundraising efforts over the past couple of years, Susan Baron kindly donated clothes and toys for Perry School clients in need. Included in that donation was also a sweet surprise for Perry staff members. From all of us, thank you Susan, for your tremendous dedication to Perry Center, Inc. and the Perry Community. ♦

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pennies for Perry

Perry Center, Inc.'s Outreach Coordinator, **Diane Hunter**, recently reestablished the "Pennies for Perry" community fundraising project that originated during the capital campaign to renovate the Perry School into the Perry Center in 1991. With a large water jug sitting on the reception desk, clients are able to continue the community tradition of contributing to Perry by donating their change. The money is emptied, counted, and deposited to Perry School's building fund at the end of each month. The end of March count totaled \$37.16, and we are very thankful for each and every contribution!

Adult Computer Training

The Office of Youth Development offers Computer Training to adults of all ages. Students learn the fundamentals of computers, how to navigate the Internet, and familiarize themselves with the user-friendly Windows XP desktop. Students also learn all the tools necessary to become a Microsoft Office Specialist (MOS) and how to go about getting a MOS Certification. In addition to these classes, be on the look out for a new A+ Certification class that will be offered for free very soon! Interested candidates should contact the **Youth Development Office** at **202-312-7157**.

Partnering for Health

Each Monday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., the **Women, Infant, & Children (WIC)** bus is parked in front of the Perry School, offering valuable nutrition information and assistance in finding healthy food alternatives. With March being Nutrition Month, WIC celebrated by serving healthy refreshments in addition to their weekly visits. Even if you missed this special recognition of health, you can still access WIC's services by visiting the WIC bus on Monday mornings or by contacting **Ms. Davene White** at **202-865-4564**.

An Alternative Way to Donate

Great News! Perry Center, Inc. has been approved for active participation in the **2007 United Way of the National Capital Area Campaign**. Our Agency designation code is **8415**. A contribution to the United Way Campaign is an investment in the human services that strengthen our community, and all "investors" should know the value and efficiency of the services they are helping to support.

You might be asking yourself, "How does Perry Center, Inc. benefit from a United Way affiliation?" First, Perry Center, Inc. can take advantage of United Way's consolidated fundraising efforts, which give us a dependable source of annual funding and improve our operational efficiency. Second, our United Way affiliation raises our visibility in the private and public sectors, improving our chances to win grants and other vital financial support. Finally, United Way gives us access to crucial planning resources, such as community needs assessments, so we can determine how our programs can best serve the public. Whether you contribute directly through the Campaign or point your friends and family members to give to the Perry Center, Inc. through this easy and cost effective way, your participation is important to us.

If you would like to find out more about how to give through the Perry Center, Inc. United Way Campaign, please do not hesitate to call **Sharonne Navas**, Director of Development, at **202-216-0454** to go over the options you have. Thank you for supporting the Perry Center, Inc. United Way of the National Capital Area's annual campaign! Your contributions ensure the continuity of health and human service programs that create positive change in our communities and in the lives of our neighbors, friends, and families. For all you do to improve the community in which we work and live, thank you. ♦

You can also support Perry Center, Inc.'s life-giving programs online or through the mail, and now you can donate by credit card! Whether by Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express, you can now charge your charity!

DONATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift of \$ _____

Please make checks payable to Perry Center, Inc.

Please charge my credit card: Card No. _____ Exp. Date _____

I would like to take a tour

My company will match my gift.

I would like to volunteer my time

I would like to host a Perry Center, Inc. information session.

For online donations, go to www.perryschool.org.

Mail form and payment to: The Perry School Community Services Center, Inc 128 M Street, NW, Suite 100 Washington, DC 20001



The many faces of peace.

FROM THE PEACE ROOM...

Peace is Not a Season: Peace is a Way of Life

— M.J. & Jerry Park

THE PEACE ROOM AT PERRY SCHOOL is a special place where children of all ages come and learn the art of peacemaking. Each class begins with the kids reciting the Peacebuilding Pledge, "I am a Peacebuilder. I pledge to talk nicely to others; to treat people with care; to make peace, not break peace; to build peace at home, at school, and in my neighborhood each day." The way to build a culture of peace is to have mentors who teach and model the art of peacemaking. Such role models have the wonderful opportunity to lead in the spirit of Ghandi who said, "Be the change you want to see in the world."

During January and February of 2007, **Georgetown Medical Students** in a service-learning program came to the Peace Room to share their time and talent with the children. Some of the lessons they taught included, "Healthy Eating," "Setting Positive and Peaceful Goals and Carrying Them Out," "Being a Good Friend," and "Following Good Role Models." The Georgetown students gave the Peace Kids confidence, courage, and faith to go the way of a peacemaker. We also had a former Peace Camper who is now in high school, **Sarah Saviet** from Cheverly, MD, come and share her gift of music. The children who participated in these music classes learned that music is a wonderful tool, because it can help bring, restore, and teach peace. Thank you to all the helpers and mentors.

We are very grateful for all the helpers and mentors, including Sarah and the Georgetown students, who come and do service learning with the children. Everyone can be an agent of change, helping to build a new world full of peace and harmony. We WELCOME you to come, volunteer your time, and share your talent and your peace with the children. The Peace Room is a special place of peace and the children love to have peacemakers come, teach, and give them the courage and skills to answer the violence and to live with hope and joy and peace. ♦

"There is no way to Peace...Peace is the Way."

Send a Kid to Camp Dream 2007

JUNE 25TH KICKS OFF our 9th annual **Youth Development Summer Camp Program**. Last summer we were able to engage over 120 kids in activities ranging from talent shows and the theatre to museums and libraries to the swimming pool and art and music shows, while offering many skill-building activities including computer learning classes, conflict resolution activities, and an interactive science lab. 2006's Camp was a huge success and this year we are expecting it to be even better!

Our outstanding staff is gearing up for another summer of fun and is looking forward to continue guiding our kids to become successful students, team players, and active community members. As you know there is **no charge** for kids to attend our Summer Camp. With your contribution you will help a neighborhood child avoid the dangers of idle time and negative influences.

Please help us to ensure that every child has an opportunity to benefit from our fun and educational Summer Camp Program by sending in a donation today. Give them the opportunity to build the self-esteem and life skills they will need to succeed for the rest of their lives. For more information or to make your contribution by phone, please call **Sharonne Navas**, Director of Development, at **202-216-0454**. Don't let another child waste away a summer. ♦

FROM THEIR OWN WORDS, continued from page 1

Some of the ways Perry School Community Services Center has changed my attitude is by providing different activities for other students and myself. An example of this is the Peace Room, which has showed me how to deal with various problems I have and



how to stop and see them through. The Peace Room also showed me a couple of things that I can show my friends. The Art Class has helped me to learn how to express my feelings and it has also helped with my attitude. "Sparkling Gems" for girls has taught me about diseases, hygiene, relationships, and other things. If it wasn't for the Peace Room and the Art Class, I would probably let my attitude control my actions. If it wasn't for "Sparkling Gems," I probably would only know the things I learned in school. These activities probably wouldn't be here if Perry School wasn't here, and that is how Perry School has changed me. — Tierra Day, 13

RECENT EVENTS

Staff Appreciation Luncheon

Before Perry's March Board Meeting, the staff was delighted to break bread with the dedicated Directors who so ably manage Perry Center, Inc. Initiated by the Board, in appreciation of the hard work and positivity contributed by each employee, the whole Perry team paused to celebrate the daily actions that enable Perry's anti-poverty mission. All enjoyed the delicious pasta, salad, and desserts catered by **Mama Lucia's**, and the down time to talk about non-work topics was a wonderful change of pace. Each staff member was touched to receive a token of the Board's gratitude in the form of a beautiful double candle set and silver heart charm engraved with a message of appreciation. All cheered **Paul McElligott's** special recognition for his organizational leadership and community stewardship as he received a St. Patty's Day bouquet. Perry Center, Inc. staff cannot thank the Board enough for this special treat and especially **Susan Nordeen** (Board Member) and **Karen Deans** (Friend of Perry/Frequent Perry Volunteer) for coordinating the lovely repast. ♦

Some Drama in the Youth Development Department

Perry Center, Inc.'s Youth Development Department has collaborated with **The African Continuum Theatre** (www.african-continuumtheatre.com) to do a series of workshops with the Perry kids (ages 8-15). The youth engaged in an interactive play and aided in the "virtual writing" of an unfinished scene by suggesting how the theatrical piece should conclude. The actors then performed the aforementioned ending with the assistance of a Perry School teen, **Octavia Fletcher**, who played "Mom" of a soldier in the war. The A.C.T. will return during the week of spring break in April and conduct their next workshop. The youth enjoyed the experience and have been asking when the A.C.T. will be back. We should applaud the youth's admiration for the arts in ALL forms. ♦ – V. Kuroji Patrick



A staff member of the African Continuum Theatre showing Perry youth how to find their inner actor and actress.

Farewell

After seven years of cheerful greetings, Perry must say goodbye to **Jocelyn Hammer**. On February 8th staff held a lunch to congratulate Jocelyn on her new job as an Addiction Specialist for Howard University and to thank her for her dedication, upbeat character, and of course her joyful laugh! ♦

Bright Smiles, Bright Futures

Perry School was recently visited by **Colgate's** traveling oral health education and prevention program. The mobile dental van of the "Bright Smiles, Bright Futures" program parked in front of Perry School on February 1st. In addition to learning about good oral health, over 70 neighborhood children under the age of 13 received a free dental screening and departed with a bag full of coupons for dental health supplies, a referral to a local dentist, as well as a toothbrush and toothpaste. ♦

Youth Development Micro Auction



Perry Center, Inc. youth bid on prizes at the semiannual Youth Development Micro Auction sponsored by **Northwest Settlement House**.



An array of "micro auction prizes" redeemable with "micro dollars" earned for good grades, good behavior, and active participation.

Celebrating Black History



Leonite Irving reads a Langston Hughes poem during Perry Center, Inc.'s Youth Development Black History Celebration.

The Perry School Community

Services Center, Inc

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IN THIS ISSUE...

Perry 4 Lives

Perry's Impact on Youth . . .	1
Families Helping Families	1
Affecting Lives	2
Thank You for Your Support	2
Program Announcements . .	3
From the Peace Room	4
Send a Kid to Camp Dream	4
Recent Events	5
Improving Lives through Partnerships	6

Improving Lives Through Partnerships

NATIONAL STUDENT PARTNERSHIPS (NSP), one of the 11 collaborating anti-poverty organizations housed in the Perry School, is a student-led volunteer service organization that provides intensive on-site and referral services to link people in need with the resources and opportunities necessary to become self-sufficient. NSP works closely with **Perry Center, Inc.'s Career and Training Center** to enrich and strengthen our shared mission of enabling economic empowerment. NSP assists our employment specialists with resume writing, job searching, filling out on-line applications, setting up free e-mail accounts, and teaching basic computer skills. Other organizations in the Perry School, including **Bright Beginnings, Perry Center, Inc.'s Social Services** and the **Perry Family Health Center of Providence Hospital**, refer clients to NSP for similar services and are encouraged to do so for anything their client might need.

NSP is always open to collaboration on projects and suggestions for services that may be able to better help our shared clients. In the past NSP has adapted to clients' needs in various ways from placing phone calls on the clients' behalf to providing assistance finding housing, legal services, and clothing for the mutual benefit of the partnering organization and their clients seeking self-sufficiency. In fact, NSP is organized around this principle of positively impacting all involved in their program. The student volunteers from American University, George Washington University, Georgetown University, and Howard University learn from their service by becoming engaged with the D.C. Community and experiencing first hand the issues that low-income residents deal with on a day to day basis. To learn more about National Student Partnerships, please call **Nathan Kamesar**, Site Coordinator, at **202-289-2525**.



Ms. Catherine Grealis, a Georgetown Law student, assisting Ms. Stephanie Tyler in filing her tax returns.

A highlight of NSP and Perry Center, Inc.'s teamwork is once again the Tax Assistance Site at Perry School. Already, at the end of March, our joint effort has facilitated the filing of 171 returns resulting in **\$171,177** in tax credits and refunds that will be returned to the community.



HELP US MAKE A DIFFERENCE...

Meeting the needs addressed by Perry Center, Inc. requires the help of supporters like you. Private contributions are a main source of our funds. You can make a tax-deductible donation:

Online at
www.perryschool.org

By mail:
Perry Center, Inc.
128 M St NW #100
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