



Appropos

Batshaw Youth and Family Centres

News from Michael Udy, Executive Director

BLACK HISTORY DAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2006

(Contributed by: Elisapi (Chairperson), Gabrielle (field work student), youth members of Ways and Means Committee)

The Ways and Means Committee, in collaboration with Mountainview High School on Prévost Campus, helped organize the Black History Day celebration. The celebration included an authentic cultural meal and a magnificent play performed by the Black Theater Workshop. There were activities with prizes and an award ceremony as well.

After the arrival of the guests, we all sat down to enjoy the multi-cultural cuisine prepared by Duret Foster, Arlene Crossdale and the Prévost kitchen staff.

The play was entertaining and educational. The actors were great and everyone enjoyed Djanet Sears' play, "Afrika Solo". During the play, the audience was given a questionnaire to fill out which gave them a chance to win a prize. They participated with enthusiasm.

Many thanks to the Black Theater Workshop's Tamara Brown (Main Actress), Just Aissi (Percussionist), Sandy Belfort (Keyboardist), and Tyrone Benskin (Play Director). Also many thanks go to:

- Prévost Kitchen Staff,
- Duret Foster and Arlene Crossdale,
- Mountainview High School, for setting up the day,
- The Ways and Means Committee, for organizing and implementing the event,
- Terrance and Elisapi, our MC's,
- Everyone who helped organize and participated to make this a successful event.

TALENT EXTRAVAGANZA

(Contributed by Michael Smith, Community Liaison Worker, Young Offenders Services)

On Friday, February 10, 2006, the 7th Annual Black History Month Talent Extravaganza was held in the auditorium at 6 Weredale Park. As always, the organizer, Mrs. Claire Clifton-Newton, put together a line-up of incredible young talent from the Batshaw and Montreal Communities. The event began with the presentation of the Young Achievers Awards, which were presented to Majenta and Johnathan Whyte Potter-Mäl. Stirring performances were given by the Gospel group Soul Chorale, up and coming opera sensation 16-year-old Khai Lewis-Welsh, and Kiralina. The crowd was also introduced to the Batshaw Youth Choir, the brain child of Sherwin Laptiste and conducted by C.C. Walker. Dancing was showcased by presentations from the Ethel Bruneau Dance School, including tap star Travis Knight, and Batshaw's own Ryan Scott Walker (son of C.C.). One of the many highlights of the day was Julian MacKenzie's reading of Martin Luther King's speech "I Have A Dream".

Special thank you to those in front and behind the scene who contributed their time and efforts to help make this event truly special.

FFA-AFRICAN HERITAGE-FASHION SHOW

(Contributed by Marie-Pierre Ulysse, Liaison with the CCC and FFA)

On Friday, February 17, 2006, on a terribly cold and windy day a few foster families, parents and workers gathered in the auditorium of 6 Weredale Park to celebrate Black History Month. The medium used for this celebration was fashion, and the models were foster children, foster mothers, and a few teenagers from residential services and from the community.

The youth were all happy and proud to be part of this activity as they were the ones giving the show. They presented the collection of Afri-Carib; a company specialized in African wear for the whole family. One of the youth prepared three jokes which he was happy to present to a very attentive audience.

The foster families strongly believe that these types of activities are positive experiences for the children, which will result in building positive memories. A certificate of participation was given to all the youth. The presentation was followed by a light supper which included West Indian dishes cooked by foster families, as well as pizzas, juices and donuts which were provided by the CCC. Despite the nasty weather, the fashion show was presented in a warm and cozy ambiance.

A STORY OF PARTNERSHIP

(Contributed by John Denham, Social Counsellor, Family Preservation Program)

Two years ago, Batshaw approached the community of Lachine in order to start a project to work with Anglophone families who are already identified as neglectful or at risk. We know from the work of Carl Lacharité and his team at UQTR, that to work with neglect it is necessary to work with the community in order to create the conditions necessary for families to be successful.

Since that time a partnership was created that includes the CLSC, 2 schools and 4 community organizations not to mention involvement with *la Table de la Petite Enfance*. This partnership brought to life the first services that are run in English: an after-school homework program, a parent's support group and a parent/child stimulation group, all of which are now successfully operating. All this is created without an exterior source of funding, but rather through the commitments of the member organizations.

Inspired through the work of the Duff Court Project, and with the help of its partners, on February 9th, the CSSS of LaSalle et du Vieux Lachine invited its community partners to a conference with Carl Lacharité in order to take time together to "think differently" about child neglect. This conference brought many different organizations together: the schools, community organizations. Enthusiasm was high and the door has been opened for more collaborative efforts to help create the conditions needed for families to succeed.

This is what partnerships can accomplish.

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

At the meeting of January 30th, the Board approved a policy on communication for clients in placement. The aim is to reinforce the security of youth, respect their rights and clarify staff roles. The Board also approved the creation of the post of Assistant Director in the Division of Human Resources and Administrative Services.

RETIREMENT PLANNING

There will be Retirement Planning sessions in April for you and your spouse. Hurry to register! Places are limited! Reservations are mandatory.

Call Josée Beaudin at (514) 989-1885, # 212.

THE BATSHAW CALENDAR

April 3: Board Meeting (for info: Thérèse Gauthier, (514) 989-1885, # 202)

April 23 to 29: Volunteer Week