



APPROPOS

BATSHAW YOUTH AND FAMILY CENTRES



BLACK HISTORY MONTH 2010: A WELL DESERVED SUCCESS!

Margaret Douek, Executive Director

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all the members of the Planning Committee for the activities of Black History Month.

We are very lucky as an organization that through the active participation of our staff, we can benefit from such a rich program of events which is planned to raise awareness, educate, and stimulate discussion about the importance of race, and culture in staff and client relations. The members of the committee put together a very interesting program. The selected theme which inspired all the activities, the invitations to participants and the nuts and bolts which made it all work like a well oiled machine are the result of team work.

As a participant in the events of the month, I was proud of our organization that takes the time to reflect and give meaning to our daily work. We are richer as a result of our diversity and it is wonderful that we take the time to celebrate it.

Thank you to all those who volunteered their time to plan and actualize the activities. None of this would have happened without you. A very special thanks to those who worked with our clients and prepared them to participate and perform during the Talent Extravaganza.

Finally thank you to all the staff who showed up for the events, and were enriched by the experience. It made it all worthwhile.

Bravo!!

INCREDIBLE GENEROSITY!

Margaret Douek, Executive Director

On January 12th, an earthquake destroyed Haïti. We all know too well the extent of this natural disaster: deaths, thousands of persons injured, and disappeared, destroyed buildings... a country to rebuild. Then, the world mobilized to help this devastated country.

Here at Batshaw Centres, we pulled up our sleeves to contribute to the collaborative effort. In 2009, the spirit during Black History Month was festive following Barak Obama's election while this year, the atmosphere was one of solidarity and cooperation. Fund-raising activities for Haïti were added to the traditional ones organized to celebrate Black History Month. I do not wish to list all the great initiatives that took place because I could forget some. I just want to say that everyone gave a helping hand, our youths, our employees and our volunteers. To all of you who made, cooked, organized, gave your time, your money or who contributed in any other ways, I thank you!

I am proud to work in an organization that is so dedicated! Thank you again!

WORKING FOR HAÏTI

Kuldip Thind, Educator, on behalf of the Crossroads Team, DCFS

With the tragedy that recently occurred in Haiti, Crossroads decided not only to share in the world's pain but also to put into action a plan to help. With limited resources and opportunities to raise money (given the confidentiality factor), we decided to challenge the children to not only "earn" money within a three week period (January 20th to February 17th) but to "volunteer" to do extra chores. So, this means that a child has "done service" in order to help earn money.

Despite the fact that as individuals we have all probably donated a tremendous amount of money, Cathy Millar decided to further challenge and thereby encourage the children to do as much as

they could, by stating "I will match dollar for dollar every dollar you earn up to a maximum of \$25" Of course, since we were also doing an A.R.T group at the same time, I quickly jumped on the bandwagon by echoing Cathy's sentiments. This caused a domino effect across the campus as others requested to be added to our list of donors. These kind hearted people include Trevor Crawford, Linda Dion, Chella Brooks, Daniel Johnston, Alicia Wolfe and Bruce Cummings. This will bring the initial donation sum of \$25 to \$225 Just to ensure the goal of \$25 was actualized, J, put in her cash donation of \$2.99. Great job, J!

With the agency's adoption of the Circle of Courage which encourages belonging, mastery, independence and generosity, our children have demonstrated as citizens of the world with the ability to help, altruism has no age limit. The adults who work with these children have demonstrated what a group effort can accomplish. Sometimes, it is better for our children to see what we do, not only hear about what we do.

Our donation will be made to "Free the Children." This organization was the brainchild of Craig Kielberger who at the tender age of 12 years old decided there were injustices that took place in other countries. Rather than become complacent and wait for others to take action, he became a child activist and to this very day continues to be one. His international network encourages children to help children through education. At this present time, they are providing support in Haiti.

BRAVO TO THE YOUNG BLACK ACHIEVERS 2010

Sylvia Piggott, a new friend and admirer of Batshaw Centres

Editor's note: Mrs. Piggott is active in the community, including volunteer work at the Montreal Children's Hospital

I recently attended the Talent Extravaganza/Fashion Show/Young Black Achievers Awards event and was treated to a show created and managed by a group of talented young people. Not only was the talent extravaganza entertaining and showed the confidence and self-assuredness of the young people but we were treated to a moving tribute to four young black achievers who have overcome many obstacles in their young lives, and to use United President Obama's well used words, had the audacity to succeed.

These young achievers are:

- Anna who is 17 years old, is an active contributor to her community and her family, and is looking forward to finishing high school and going to college.
- Daniela is a 15 years old who arrived from St.Vincent in 2005, integrated herself in a positive way into her community, became bilingual, and is excellent in school.
- Dennis is a 17 years old whose life tells of adversity, determination, resourcefulness, resilience and success. He has learnt that surrounding himself with positive things and people keeps him focused on a bright future as a full contributing member of society.
- And there is Jennie a 15 years old young woman who was born without any lower limbs. Jennie has not used her disability as a reason not to participate fully in life. Not accepting 'no' she overcame the resistance of camps to accept her and went last summer. She performed so well that this year she is going back as a camp councillor! What a role model for those who can say I can't. Jennie has shown that 'yes she can'.

These four outstanding Young Black Achievers needed someone to believe in them and to provide them with help and guidance as they try to find their place in society. They are fortunate to have a dedicated and supportive group of workers at Batshaw Centres to fill that role.