

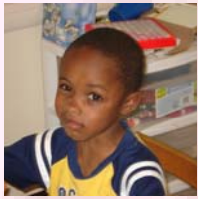


Empowering Single Mothers

Year End 2008 Newsletter

2008 has been an incredible year for Against the Grain; a new, more accessible class structure was implemented and many more women are now receiving training, the kids keep showing improvement in their school work and the many volunteers and partners continue to make sure that the work of Against the Grain continues. Although there were many positive things that happened this year, Meredith and Rob were challenged to pick just one highlight from the year.

Meredith - "I can only pick one? Ok, my highlight would be Shareta Wade graduating from college with a degree as a Medical Office Specialist and getting a job in her field. She overcame a lot of hurdles to get where she is; childcare, transportation and financial issues hit her all through 2008, but she stayed focused and never lost sight of her goal". Congratulations Shareta.



Rob - "My highlight is easy. This summer I worked with Julius on reading. It was never an easy task...he has a lot of energy and doesn't want to just sit and read. So I tried to make it fun for him; when we read a book about soccer...we went and played soccer, a book about basketball...we went and shot baskets. This fall he returned to school and started getting A's on his spelling test. When asked why he was doing so well he said 'Mr. Rob taught me how to read this summer'. It doesn't get any better than that"

As we look ahead, 2009 will be full of unique challenges and opportunities. The economy is at the front of everyone's mind right now and non-profits will face a tough year. This fall the Center for Non-profit Management held a seminar called "Weathering the Economic Storm". During the session they laid out a series of seven things that non-profits need to begin doing to prepare for the uncertain economy. Amazingly, AtG's Board of Directors had already implemented six of the steps and the seventh step was already being planned for. AtG is stronger than ever before and will enter 2009 prepared to fulfill the mission of empowering single mothers.

In January, AtG will begin to offer the 180 classes in Nashville to the women living in the J.C. Napier/Tony Sudekum neighborhoods. These two neighborhoods are separated by a street and house over 600 single mothers living in poverty. This class will meet on Monday evenings and the response from the potential participants has been overwhelming. Meredith has been developing relationships with the women and reaching out to people who are interested in mentoring this new group of moms. This group will be the first to be trained completely with the updated class structure and the newly designed curriculum.

To the class leaders, 180 group and individual mentors, tutors, Image Builders mentors, all who prepare food for the classes and all of you who have volunteered in other ways, we would like to say thank you. The work of AtG could not be accomplished without your dedication and hard work. We also would like to thank and recognize the financial partners who support this work. Please see the reverse side of this page for a list of the churches, businesses and foundations that partner with AtG through their financial support. We commit to use your gifts wisely and solely for the purpose to which they are given; to empower single mothers to become self sufficient, knowledgeable, productive members of society.



EDUCATION + MENTORSHIP = EMPOWERMENT



Empowering Single Mothers

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