



"THE WORD"

A quarterly newsletter updating the recent news and events of the After School Program

**WINTER EDITION
FEBRUARY 2012**

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Help Make South Ohio Avenue a Safer Street

For those of you who live in the Near East Side neighborhood of Columbus, the intersection of South Ohio Avenue and Newton is notorious for car accidents and near accidents. The Ohio Avenue Youth Center sits at this corner; therefore, the staff and youth who attend often witness the frequency of accidents that occur there.

The youth of Ohio Avenue Youth Center want to do something about the potential danger by improving the safety for both drivers and the more than 60 daily youth pedestrians who attend the after school program.

As part of the Healthy Leaders group at Ohio Avenue, we want to take action to improve the safety of this traffic intersection. Please help support this cause, by contacting Director Mark Kelsey of the Department of the Public Service

for the City of Columbus with your ideas to improve the safety of the corner of S. Ohio Ave. and Newton Street. Join us by writing a letter or by calling with your concerns.

Because this one-way street is a South thoroughfare through the neighborhood, drivers often speed unsafely. In addition, there is little to no visibility on Newton to cross Ohio Ave. safely.

That is why we want your help to propose a change in this intersection. Speed bumps, pedestrian cross walks, a 3-way stop, clear traffic signs, and/or a traffic light could be the solution to preventing dangerous car accidents or even worse, a child being struck or killed while leaving the youth center.

We should try our hardest to change this unsafe intersection before someone really gets hurt. Please support us in making our

neighborhoods safer for everyone. Join our youth in a letter writing campaign by writing a letter to the department of Public Service. Please see contact information below.



Contact Information for Department of Public Service:

Department of Public Service
Director Mark Kelsey
109 North Front Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Phone Number (614) 645-3111
Fax Number (614) 645-7805

Ohio Avenue Youth Center Gets Positive About Positive Points.

For just over a year, the after school program has been utilizing a program called Positive Points to motivate and reward youth for great behavior, positive peer interaction, and overall excellence.

Each day during the after school program, youth have many opportunities to earn positive points. Each time students spend time doing homework, they get two positive points. Do homework everyday Monday-Thursday and youth will get bonus points with twelve for the week --just

for homework! Help out in the kitchen after snack, loading the dishwasher, wiping tables and tidying up and get five positive points! Each staff member gives points in his/her respective area for excellence in behavior, participation, and great work.

Each month, we have a party to celebrate everyone's hard work and positive points. Kids get to play games, enjoy treats, and get prizes based on how many points they earn. Parents, support your kids by encouraging them to earn positive points by doing homework, helping out, and having great behavior and participation!

Youth Perform at Columbus Zoo



her new passion for Ballet, dancing her part as the Snow Queen. “I was moved by the Ballet group’s pose and class while dancing,” stated Ms. Katie who attended the performance.

The girl’s dance class was fantastic on Patti LaBelle’s update of the standard, “My Favorite Things.” They looked polished in their Christmas themed red dresses.

The Ohio Avenue Percussion Ensemble made its debut on an instrumental version of the Christmas hymn “Silent Night.” Isaiah H. was a knockout on the center’s new Marimba and Ariel J. was featured on the center’s new steel drum.

Isaiah H. explained, “I picked up the marimba fast because I like [playing] it. My favorite song we played was “Silent Night”.” This ensemble was made possible with the generous donations of Mr. Holland’s

Friday December 9th was the premiere of the Ohio Avenue Youth Centers production “Poor Little Rich Girl” at the Columbus Zoo during their Wildlights event. The production was a joint effort of both the dance and music departments. After months of learning new music pieces and dance routines, students were ready to reveal their hard work. Eighteen students from the center performed in various scenes highlighting our new Ballet and Hip-hop dance classes as well



as our pop music ensemble and our new percussion ensemble. Several parents, siblings, and friends of the performers were in attendance.

The show started with an ensemble of both music groups performing Donny Hathaway’s musical classic “This Christmas.” Other performance highlights included Ballet student Blessing R., starring as the lead, joined by the ballet class dancing to an orchestral setting of The Beatles “Norwegian Wood.” Deneisha H. showcased



Opus Foundation and Montei Foundation. The show concluded with a rousing rendition of “All I Want for Christmas Is You.” The show was a great success and we look forward to making this an annual event.



Artists Participated in Ohio Health MLK Day Art Contest

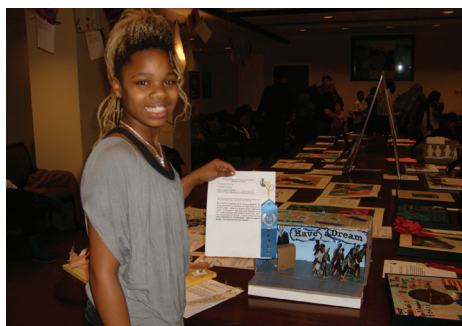
This December, Ohio Avenue Youth focused on the Civil Rights Movement during art class in preparation for Martin Luther King Day. The center was invited by Ohio Health to participate in an Art Contest to celebrate MLK day.

Youth looked at images of the Civil Rights Movement and watched the documentary "Soundtrack for a Revolution." During art class, youth discussed how they felt about segregation.



Dasha K. shared, "I am happy MLK stood up for what he believed in because otherwise I wouldn't be able to be best friends with Alexis, who is white."

Having discussed Dr. King's quote: "The time is always right to do what is right," youth worked diligently to complete an artwork that showed Dr. King's legacy to end segregation in America, his dedication to activism and Dr. King's importance to our American History.

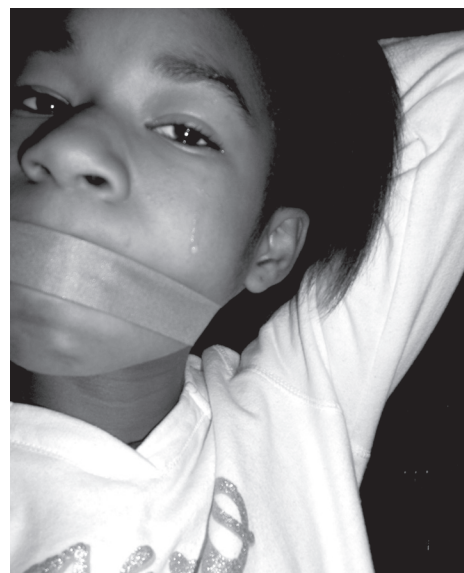


"My artwork shows what black people couldn't do and what only whites could [when there was segregation]. I also showed how things were after MLK helped change segregation." Teara C. explains her artwork.

Over 45 youth submitted artwork and nine youth artists were selected as winners. For each of three age groups, three winners were selected. For grades 3rd-5th, Kayla S. won 1st place, Courtney J. for 2nd, and James T. for 3rd place. For grades 6th-7th, Deara C. won 1st place, Destinae S. for 2nd, and Daiavonnah S. for 3rd place. For 8th grade and up, Darrius M.



won 1st place, Deniesha H. for 2nd, and Teara C. for 3rd place. Ohio Health provided a total of \$525 in cash prizes and funds for a pizza party for all artists who submitted artwork. Additionally, Ohio Health donated \$600 to Directions for Youth and Families for the Ohio Avenue Youth Center art program.



Self Portrait photography entry by Destinae S. She received 2nd place and won the People's Choice Award.

On January 16th, Martin Luther King Day, Ms. Katie and Mr. Vance accompanied the nine youth winners and their families to a reception held at Riverside Hospital to celebrate Dr. King's legacy and to recognize the youth's artistic talents.

Visit to Rock and Roll Hall of Fame

On January 3rd, three Ohio Avenue loyal music students visited the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame located in Cleveland, Ohio. It was a notoriously cold and blistery Cleveland day on Lake Erie where the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame is located.

Mr. Sam, the music coordinator, contacted the Museum for free tickets. Deara C., Daiavonnah S., and Ariel J. had a great day exploring music

artifacts and history. Deara explained, "I saw Stevie Wonder's music albums and records, Michael Jackson's glove, and dresses worn by Alicia Keys and Diana Ross." Deara went on to say "Daiavonnah would not 'shut-up' about Michael Jackson's glove." The youth had a great time at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. Hopefully they were inspired by the collection of music relics.



ROCK AND ROLL
HALL OF FAME + MUSEUM

Youth Volunteer at Community Dinner

Nine youth from the Ohio Avenue Youth Center helped bring some cheer to First English Lutheran Church's Community Dinner during the Holiday Season. As part of Mr. Vance's Healthy Leaders group, youth are taught the importance of community activism and involvement. On December 22nd, the first evening of Christmas break from school, youth volunteered their time to help others. Sally Padgett, Seminary Intern from First English, said, "It's nice to have kids help."



First English Lutheran Church, located on the corner of Main St and 22nd on the near east side of Columbus, has been holding community meals for nearly five years. Each week, the church serves 100-200 guests at their Thursday night dinners

and Sunday morning breakfasts combined. Eleven different Columbus area churches sponsor the meals.

At the dinner, Ohio Ave. youth helped set up plates, cups, and rolled silverware. They also helped clean up afterwards. In the week leading up to the dinner, students during art class made over 50 Holiday Greeting cards, which were passed out during the meal. Blessing R. explained, "It made me feel really good that I was helping my community. They were really happy when we gave them the cards."

Pastor Bob stated, "It's great seeing the young people serving our beloved community." The Healthy Leaders groups will continue to do to community service projects to connect Ohio Avenue Youth Center to Near East Side Columbus neighborhoods and to help improve the community as a whole.



Technology Booming at Ohio Ave.

An Update From Ms. Vic:

Students have been busy in the computer lab! The students are responding in an increasingly positive way as they begin to understand the importance of technology in their lives. They have received basic skills in Microsoft Office, including Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Publisher.

Our digital classroom, *Edmodo*, serves many purposes including files storage in the packback area, collaborative resource sharing, assignment drop, discussion boards and a calendar area. The students are gaining valuable experience in using social media in an educational environment. *Edmodo* networks our students and maintains the connections to their classroom community of peers.

Currently, students are working on their design layout themes and writing content for their personal websites. The user friendly application, *Doodlekit* is affording



students an opportunity to expand critical thinking and literacy skills as they craft decisions and scribe web content.

Students are also beginning to learn the basics of website programming utilizing the HyperText Markup Language (HTML). The students showed great enthusiasm while viewing their results during our first night of HTML class. In addition, students are using the online application *Pixlr* for creating logos and image editing. With just a little instruction of the *Pixlr* software, students were assuming the tasks of design, editing and creating original works. With a little encouragement we may see some of those original designs posted on their websites.

It isn't only the students who are encouraged either! As a teacher, it's so rewarding to see interest and comprehension light up the classroom.

