

In The Know

HELLO 2009

By Dr. Gloria Jones, Executive Director

As Executive Director of the Heritage Foundation, Inc it is with excitement and enthusiasm that we enter 2009. Primarily because ITS OUR BIRTHDAY. Yes, the Heritage Foundation Inc is 20 years old. The organization was incorporated in February 1989. To “Celebrate Ourselves” our format for the newsletter will take on a different approach. Each newsletter will showcase one of our programs from past, present and future. I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to all of the individuals who have supported us over these twenty years. Despite all of the obstacles that we have faced over these twenty years, we are still standing. It is the result of hard work by a dedicated team who is called to serve those in need. We have grown from an ideal to an agency which has both state and national credentials which speaks to the level of care we provide to our families. So I am overjoyed and thrilled to lead this outstanding team into this birthday year. As we unfold all of the activities that we will have this year, we also stand committed to helping other organizations dream their dreams and support their goals.

We are compiling an “20th Year Anniversary” album similarly to the one that was published in 1994. This anniversary al-

bum will include the original album and current programming activities as well as future goals and dreams. We are encouraged despite the challenges we face because in treatment settings we look at challenges as springboards to our future. We ask for your continued support and prayers as we “Celebrate” our birthday. As I travel throughout the region, state and nation for various meetings and conferences, I am reminded how fortunate I am to lead such an outstanding team of professionals. So as Executive Director I would like to start this year by expressing to my team my appreciation of the great work that you have accomplished, I am proud to be your leader. I see this year as a new season of growth as we settle into the numerous changes that have occurred. I have no doubt that we will move forward united in our mission of providing quality services to the families of Southwest Georgia.

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HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE QUARTER

- *February 27, 2009*—General Staff Meeting
- *March 8th-11th, 2009*—Summit on Substance Abuse, Mental Health and School Safety Discipline
- *March 2009*— CARF Mock Survey
- *April 6th - 8th*—CARF Survey
- *April 23- April 25*—Rose Show Festival
- *April 29th & 30th*—Underage Drinking Summit in Macon, GA
- *August 31st-September 4th*—GA School of Alcohol in Savannah, GA

YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SERIES

By Deborah Miller, Program Coordinator, Prevention Specialist

The YES Program is an after school program that focuses on academic achievement and alcohol and drug prevention. I have been working with this program for eleven years now. There have been some wonderful times and achievements and there have been some trying times but through it all, it has made me and the program stronger and more determined to make a difference in the lives of the youth and the families we serve. I realize that I can't save every child that I come in contact with but if I have made a difference in one of those children's life for the better, I know that my working is not in vain. In the past eleven years, I have worked with at least a thousand youth throughout the city and county school system. When we see each



other through out our daily walks of life, we may not remember each other's names but we remember each other's faces. Throughout my working with the Heritage Foundation, we have had some youth who were a part of the program graduate from high school, go to college, graduate from college and come back to visit and help out during the summer. Some of those youth have even joined the military.

Some times I look back at how far we have come and the time and years I have been doing the same job and I ask myself, why am I doing what I do? God gave me the answer. His answer to me was, my child, this is what I have given you to do. We have to realize that what we want to do is not always what God has des-

igned for us to be or do. I also realized that I love what I'm doing. So at this time I am walking on the path that God has for me. In working with the youth, I take it one day at a time and I pray that my decisions be centered on God and not self serving. When I cannot decide which road to take, I ask him to please give me the gift of discernment to know His will and for him to make His will clear to me. Always guide my decisions. In moments of not knowing what to do, I will pause until His will is clear to me. So far this school semester, I have come in contact with over 80 youth from our community. It is very important that we let our youth know that no matter what they may be going through in their young life there is someone that will listen. God will aid us in making the right decision.

PROUD MOTHER OF YES STUDENT

By Pat Walden

As a working mother, I was so glad when I heard about the YES Program. I thought it was a wonderful program for our children to be in and to have my sister Deborah Miller as the facilitator was an extra bonus. My daughter Kristen could not wait to enter the program. She wanted to start as early as preschool because she had an older cousin and other family members and friends in the program, but she was not old enough. As soon as she turned the appropriate age, I quickly enrolled her in the program.

The program focused on homework, tutoring, drug prevention, and leadership skills. Kristen enjoyed all the services provided by

the program. Especially since, she was the only child left at home with mom. She socialized, sang gospel songs, put on skits and went on field trips. Having her enrolled in the



program helped boost her self esteem and gave her the skills she

would need as a young female entering middle school and high school.

The YES program has helped develop Kristen into the positive outgoing young lady she has become in the community and in church.

I thank Mrs. Gloria Jones, Executive Director and Mrs. Deborah Miller, Prevention Specialist for the outstanding job they have done with my daughter and continue to do with the YES Program participants. Now I'm proud to say that I am a mother of a former YES Student since she was 6 years old, now she is 17 and a junior at Thomasville High School and soon to be singing her Alma Mater in 2010.

YES PROGRAM in the COMMUNITY



This is where we would go out to different Nursing Homes at Christmas and Thanksgiving and spread a little cheer by talking to and singing to the residents and giving them gifts the children made or purchased.



Operation Christmas Child was an event that the children took pride in doing because they were doing something special for youth who were not blessed as they were. They would begin by collecting shoe boxes and the tops. We would purchase personal items to put into the boxes, wrap them in decorative paper and they would be mailed to other youth for Christmas.

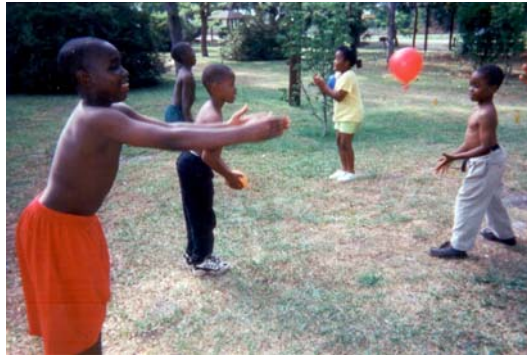
Former YES Participant

By Kristen La'Trelle Walden

I've had a Great experience with the YES Program as a peer counselor and a participant. As a participant, I learned a lot of things. We went to many workshops. We were taught how to say no to drugs, what to do in case of emergencies, and health issues. Some of the activities included talent shows every summer and singing to the elderly at nursing homes during Christmas time. Most of the activities included working in groups or individually. The workshops we attended were FANTASTIC!!! They taught us about our culture, how to make it in life, and helped us to plan our lives for after high school graduation.

As I grew up into the YES program, I was asked to be a peer counselor. It was a great job to have. I started working about the age of 10. My job included helping participants with their homework, cleaning up, fixing snacks, planning activities and teaching groups. I became certified to TOO GOOD FOR DRUGS cur-

riculum for kids in 2005 under the direction of Mrs. Gloria Jones and Mrs. Deborah Miller (my aunt). Every summer for the past few years, I have planned talent shows so that



the kids in the summer program can show off their talents to their families and friends. It varies from singing, to dancing, to giving poems about being drug free and praise dances. I've attended workshops like the teen institute at Albany State University College. This job has helped me a lot with what I want to become when I graduate from high school. Around 2007, I stopped working with the

YES Program. During the summer and mostly all the holidays, I always return to help my aunt. I also bring friends to help volunteer and help my aunt also (LaJeaune Cution and Kaneisha Herring). We take the kids to the park and mostly things that help lift the burden off of Mrs. Miller's back.

My experience with this program has brought me through many heights. I am now 17 years of age; I attend Thomasville High School; I am a varsity cheerleader, and captain of the band's color guard/drill team. In our small community there are many after school program ready and available for our youth. Though those options are great, parents still lean toward the YES program where they know their child will receive the education, structure, attention, discipline, and most of all FUN with Mrs. Deborah Miller. I would like to thank Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Miller for giving me the opportunity to work with so many wonderful kids and to be able to help out.



YES PROGRAM – MEMORY LANE



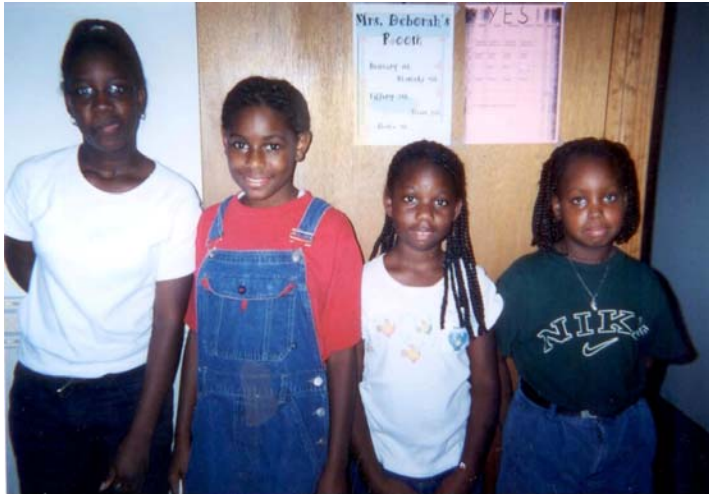
*Taking a Walk Down Memory Lane...
2000 Fund Raiser Car Wash for a trip to Wild Adventures!*



*Taking a Walk Down Memory Lane...
In 1999 YES Participants receives awards from Congressman Sanford Bishop as their families and friends beamed with PRIDE.*



YES PROGRAM—Past Participants & Peer Counselors



PAST PARTICIPANTS & PEER COUNSELORS

***ALWAYS READY FOR
THAT KODAK MOMENT!***



YES PROGRAM TALENT SHOW



Our end of summer Talent Show was always a success. This is where the children worked together and outlined a program, performed dance routines, sang songs as a group and solos for their parents and the other staff members.



VISION STATEMENT

“To provide to all persons served an opportunity to achieve a rewarding, healthy, and productive life.”

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Heritage Foundation, Inc. of Thomasville, Georgia is to promote a safe, therapeutic environment where all consumers are served through an array of programs where they can develop and thrive to remove those barriers they face.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

As we have grown over the past 20 years, so have our needs. But the ways in which you can help us has also grown. Of course, we encourage you to become a member, but you could also mentor anyone of the individuals which are served in our programs. We are always in need of personal hygiene items for the residents of Maya's House, so you or your organization could

make up gift bags consisting of toiletries for new residents. Our after school program is always in need of volunteers to work along with staff, particularly on special outings and functions. We encourage you to become an active part of our organization as we continue to *Celebrate ourselves!*



Please RENEW or BEGIN my membership in the Heritage Foundation, Inc. in the category listed below:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$15.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Business \$100.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Church/Civic \$25.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$150.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$30.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Contributor \$250.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donor \$50.00 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainer \$500.00 |

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City/State/Zip _____

Business Phone _____ Home Phone _____

Email address: _____

I am interested in working on the following Heritage Foundation Inc. programs:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Juneteeth Celebration | <input type="checkbox"/> Kwaanza Celebration |

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