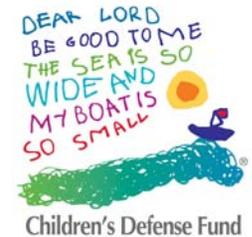


Great Expectations CDF Freedom School® and Educational Testing Services

Summer 2011



Great Expectations CDF Freedom School®

- Sponsor:** Communities in Schools
Thomas Owens (GE Freedom School organizer & Director of the CIS Mentoring Success Center – bio/background attached)
- Host Site:** Metropolitan Baptist Church
149 Springfield Avenue
Newark, NJ 07103-3037
(973) 642-2267
Pastor David Jefferson, Senior Pastor (see attached bio/background)
- Partners:** United Way of Essex and West Hudson
Mentoring USA
Essex County College
Greater Newark CARES Mentoring Movement
ETS
Children's Defense Fund
Students and Families of Oscar Miles Village (Public Housing)
The Eagle Academy

Background:

CDF-New York partnered with **Open Society Foundations Campaign for Black Male Achievement** in January 2011 to host a "Celebration of Mentoring" in New York City. The focus of the event was to celebrate and encourage African American young adults to support CDF's Black Community Crusade for Children and OSI's Campaign for Black Male Achievement by making a commitment to mentor young people, particularly African American boys. **Thomas Owens, Director of the Mentoring Success Center** in Newark, was a panel presenter at this celebration and remained interested in the work of CDF.

ETS presented the Children's Defense Fund with an incredible opportunity to encourage the start of a new Freedom School in Newark, NJ. We interviewed about 5 nonprofit organizations in Newark, NJ to gauge interest, capacity and connections to our community of concern (namely children in poverty) – and Communities in Schools/NJ quickly moved into action to respond to our call.

The site will focus its recruitment and efforts on African American boys grades 3 to 8. It has been named “**Great Expectations**” – inspired by the positive rap lyrics of young Diggy Simmons:

“They want me to fall. They wanna see if I make it
With my back against the wall, put my head to the sky
No, I won’t let ‘em break me!
I’ve got great expectations -- I’m Ready!”

Thomas Owens worked with the New York office and presented a remarkable plan for Newark’s children. Some of the elements include:

- **Gender specific** recruitment: A focus on African American males, grades 3 through 8. Great Expectations recruited 6 African American male college students from Essex County College – all with GPA’s of 3.5 and above.
- **Specific outreach to low-income families:** recruitment targets are the families of Oscar Miles Village, a public housing project located directly across the street from Metropolitan Baptist Church
- **Best practices programming:** Great Expectations has rounded out CDF’s Integrated Reading Curriculum with enhanced programming:
 - *Lunch with a Leader* –they are inviting Newark’s leaders to have lunch with the scholars two days a week
 - *Nobody Asked Me* -- In partnership with a local videographer and leaders working on school reform issues, scholars will be participating in the “Nobody Asked Me” documentary program. They will learn film editing and will screen the film at the end of the summer program
 - *Great Expectations Mentor Mondays* – in partnership with the Trinity Mentoring Project at Metropolitan Baptist Church, each scholar will be matched with male mentor of the first day of Freedom School! ***The church has provided 50 Male mentors who have been trained and evaluated through Mentoring USA, Newark CARES Mentoring Movement and Metropolitan Baptist Church – they are committed to carrying their relationships with the scholar beyond the summer program.***
 - *United Way Reading Wednesdays* – in addition to IRC, each Wednesday afternoon Great Expectations will welcome the staff and volunteers of the United Way of Essex and West Hudson for Reading with Scholars

CDF's Cradle to Prison Pipeline facts for New Jersey (2009)

Attainment of a high school diploma is the single most effective preventive strategy against adult poverty. Yet a significant number of students do not graduate on time with a regular diploma.

In 2007, a disproportionate number of Black and Latino fourth graders could not read or do math at grade level.

In New Jersey:

- 48 percent of White, non-Latino 4th graders cannot read at grade level.
- 77 percent of Latino 4th graders cannot read at grade level.
- **78 percent of Black, non-Latino 4th graders cannot read at grade level.**
- 37 percent of White, non-Latino 4th graders cannot do math at grade level.
- 71 percent of Latino 4th graders cannot do math at grade level.
- **75 percent of Black, non-Latino 4th graders cannot do math at grade level.**

Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely than their peers to drop out of school altogether.

In New Jersey:

- For every 100 Asian/Pacific Islander students enrolled in the public schools, there were 1.4 suspensions.
- For every 100 White students enrolled in the public schools, there were 3.7 suspensions.
- For every 100 American Indian/Alaska Native students enrolled in the public schools, there were 3.7 suspensions.
- For every 100 Latino students enrolled in the public schools, there were 6.9 suspensions.
- **For every 100 Black students enrolled in the public schools, there were 12.4 suspensions.**
- In New Jersey, 4.7 percent of youths ages 16 to 19 were neither enrolled in school nor high school graduates



Rev. Dr. David Jefferson, Sr., Esq.
Senior Pastor, Metropolitan Baptist Church
Newark, NJ

Great Expectations Freedom School Host Site

David Jefferson, Sr. is president and chief executive officer of JNET Communications, LLC, a technology services holding company that includes among its family of companies Vitel Communications and ServiCom LLC. Jefferson also serves on the board of directors of the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority.

Prior to his association with JNET, Jefferson worked for AT&T for over 30 years. He held a wide variety of executive level positions during his tenure at AT&T. Most recently, he served as executive vice president of AT&T Broadband Business Services, where he led a pioneering business unit charged with providing commercial video, telephone, Internet and high-speed data services. As a result of Jefferson's leadership, the company's Networks Solutions Business Unit performed at 44 percent positive earnings.

Jefferson is dedicated to community service throughout New York and New Jersey. He has worked with such organizations as the Association for a Better New York, N.A.A.C.P, and the National Urban League. He presently serves as director and co-chair of 1,000 Churches Connected Initiative, and as senior pastor of the Metropolitan Baptist Church of Newark, a 6,000-member congregation with an active agenda of inner-city socioeconomic issues. He also serves as chairman of the Grambling State University Black & Gold Foundation and Vice Chair of the Board of Directors of SBLI Mutual Life Insurance.

Jefferson is involved in a wide range of activities as a teacher, pastor, and civic and community leader. He is a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity and serves on the Board of Commissioners of the New Jersey Sports & Exposition Authority. He is a graduate of MIT and Capitol Law School, Drew Theological Seminary, and is a member of the American and the New Jersey Bar Associations.



Thomas Owens is the Director of the Communities In Schools of New Jersey Mentoring Success Center (MSC).

In this position Thomas provides support services, training, and technical assistance to Newark (Essex County) based mentoring organizations. He is also responsible for building mentoring relationships between Newark Public Schools youth and committed corporate and government partners. The MSC has developed mentoring partnerships with iMentor Interactive, CISCO, Kraft Foods, Port Authority of NY & NJ, New Jersey Institute of Technology and many others to bring mentors to students in Newark and Essex County.

A native of New York, Thomas has dedicated his career to creating better futures for at-risk children and families and building stronger more relevant not for profit organizations. He recently launched, in partnership with Youth Works (Belfast, Ireland), **Website design by NJIT Capstone Program We See The World* (www.weseetheworld.org) a Global peer mentoring Network for high school students in the U.S. and Northern Ireland.

A graduate of Benedict College, a HBCU (Historically Black College & University) located in Columbia South Carolina, he has also completed professional training at the Columbia University (New York) Institute of Not for Profit Management, Big Brother Big Sisters of NYC / Fordham University Mentoring Supervisor Certificate Program and others.

Thomas is a sought after workshop presenter (at-risk youth, mentoring, not for profit management, staff training) as well as an exciting and provocative speaker.

Gwendolyn Corrin, State Director
Communities In Schools of New Jersey

Gwendolyn “Gwen” Corrin began working for Cities In Schools (now Communities In Schools) in Newark, New Jersey in 1994. She has held several positions within the organization including Project Director, Executive Director, Director of Field Operations, Senior Vice President and CEO. She is a certified Communities In Schools Master Trainer.

Prior to working with Communities In Schools, Gwen served as Program Director and Senior Director of Operations with the Boys and Girls Clubs of Newark. As a former middle school teacher, she acted as team leader and liaison between Upsala College and Teacher Corps Interns.

Gwen’s many years of experience in youth development and education, combined with her knowledge of the community and compassion for kids has provided strong leadership for Communities In Schools of New Jersey. She has a certificate in non-profit management from Seton Hall University and a Bachelor of Arts degree from Clark Atlanta University. Gwen is inspired and humbled to do the work that must be done to empower our youth to stay in school and achieve in life.

Communities in Schools

For more than 30 years, Communities In Schools has been helping students achieve in school, graduate and go on to bright futures.

The story of Communities In Schools began in the 1970s, when Founder Bill Milliken, then a youth advocate in New York City, came up with the idea of bringing community resources inside a public school building – where they are accessible, coordinated and accountable.

In the span of a little more than 30 years, Communities In Schools has become the nation’s leading dropout prevention organization. We have a unique model that positions a coordinator inside schools to assess needs and deliver necessary resources that remove barriers to success.

Our mission is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life.

Our network is comprised of nearly 5,000 passionate professionals in 25 states and the District of Columbia. We serve the most vulnerable students in the most dropout-prone school districts, nearly 1.3 million young people in more than 3,400 schools.

We are actively engaged with policy makers, school staff, parents and business partners to ensure that Communities In Schools’ services are extended to as many K-12 students as possible and that those students have access to college.

Independent research demonstrates that Communities In Schools is one of a very few organizations proven to keep students in school and the only one to document that it increases graduation rates.

The study also shows that a higher percentage of students served by Communities In Schools reach proficiency in 4th-grade and 8th-grade reading and math.