From the Director:

Last Fall, the Washington Metropolitan area was plagued by an unknown sniper. The uncertainty of his apprehension and the anxiety of his next attack unsettled emotions and reminded us all of just how fragile life can be. For most of the region the randomness of his attacks is what really strikes home. We are all vulnerable.

But what if there were some safe community unlikely for the sniper to access? What if in that supposed neighborhood, violence was not the order of the day? What if any would-be sniper could be turned away at the gate? What if that community offered a healthy low risk environment for you to live and carry out your ordinary necessary activities without the risk of assault? Wouldn’t we all want to spend time there? Well you’ve just gotten a glimpse at why The House is such a popular venue today in Southeast DC for teenagers. The threat we felt during these attacks in our manicured communities is a daily threat in the underserved neighborhoods “east of the river” like Anacostia. The House is that safe place for students to pursue their destinies and identify their gifts without the likelihood of abuse, or just plain hang out. Most importantly, students can meet the person who is love himself, Jesus Christ, through the creative teaching of the staff and uncompromising spirit of love at The House. And although we recently celebrated our third birthday, my colleagues around the city and country yet marvel at our growth and development in such a short time. God’s fingerprints are clearly evident throughout the vision.

This school year, The House has seen its most significant growth—more students, more staff, and more lives changed for eternity. It’s been a difficult road but as Beverly Stills once said, “There are no shortcuts to anywhere worth going.” We know we can’t get there without you! Continue to pray as we secure the safe place for students to grow…The House! Run to Win!

Steve Fitzhugh and Markeyter

Upcoming Event:

Brit Hume is our keynote speaker at The House Banquet May 1, 2003 McLean Hilton Tysons Corner, VA

Brit Hume was named FOX News managing editor and chief Washington correspondent in December 1996. He serves as host of the one-hour political news program, Special Report with Brit Hume, the No. 1 political program on cable.
The House took 16 students to Covenant Village in Flintstone, MD (about 2.5 hours away from DC). On this particular retreat we focused on the theme, “A Fatherless Generation.”

It was an awesome time of ministry. Students were able to address the issue of coming from fatherless homes, and being part of a fatherless generation. God ministered to areas where these young people felt the void of a natural father not being present. They began to open up their perception of God and Him being a “father to the fatherless.”

Activities included a hike to “THE RICHEST PLACE IN THE WORLD” — a cemetery — where we emphasized how so many people live life and never tapped into their full potential.

We hiked to the top of a hill with signs that helped direct us to the top. These signs served as voices from “Our Father” to demonstrate how He is always there to speak to our situations as we travel down unfamiliar paths.

We had a scavenger hunt that indirectly taught the attributes and characteristics of God as a Heavenly Father. We also had a talent show where students got together with team members to sing, lip sync, act, dance and/or do anything else worthy of being considered talent. The talent show allowed us to see what they learned on the retreat.

All students who went on the retreat said the prayer of salvation, embracing God as their father, and Jesus in their hearts. HALLELUJAH!!!

Chine, Michelle and Dominick --- Scavenger Hunt Champs!
Dear Sponsor,

My name is Tyrone L. Curry BKA Sleepy. I would like to show my deepest gratitude by saying I am very thankful and appreciative of the opportunity to see what it's like to leave S.E. AKA South East. This privilege gave me a chance to really talk to God and to get to know him alot better. I challenged myself that everything I learned while I was there, I keep and try to practice it one step at a time, day by day, minute by minute, hour by hour. In Jesus name I want to say thank you.

Spiritually Yours,
T.L.C. BKA
Sleepy

Dear Sponsor,

Hi. My name is Porchaya Poindexter, and I'd like to thank you for sponsoring the retreat. This retreat was my first retreat ever. I really learned alot from this retreat. I also learned and got closer to God. One of the activities we did was to take a trip to the "Richest Place" in the world. The richest place in the world is a cemetery. It's the cemetery because there's people there that never really got to do or have everything they wanted or was entitled to. The point of the activity was to stop and think about what we want to do with our lives, and what we want people to say about us when we're gone. This activity really made me think. That experience has helped me to change my life and habits. I'm glad I attended this activity because it has helped me. I wouldn't have been able to attend without you. Thanks.

Porchaya Poindexter

Dear Sponsor,

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to come one step closer to GOD. Many children never climbed or hiked a mountain, looked into GOD's face, witnessed life and nature at its best. I thank you for all of your support and I thank the Lord for you. And trust me... your support did not go to waste.

Thanks Alot,
Gods Child

Dear Sponsor,

Thanks for giving the house a chance to get away from the city. Also it was a good experience for us to learn about God and how he fathers us. We would like to return so we can experience the wilderness. I really like the game room and the farm house so again, thank you and feel free to welcome us back any time.

Sincerely,
Reginald Black
FORE!

Despite a driving cold rain, the third annual House golf tournament was played October 29 at Whiskey Creek Golf Club in Ijamsville, Maryland. Since the course was closed due to rain on the originally scheduled date (October 16), we moved to the rain date of October 29. That proved to be an appropriate designation as the rain began early in the day and did not stop. However, the wet, cold weather did not dampen spirits as approximately 75 golfers (down from the original 104 who were registered for the original date) braved the elements and enjoyed the day. After the golf round was completed, everyone was happy to dry out and warm up in the clubhouse over good food and fellowship.

Steve Fitzhugh touched hearts with a moving message about transforming lives through the work of The House. Prizes were awarded, and many participated in a spirited silent auction to benefit The House.

Approximately $50,000 was raised for The House through special sponsors, individual participants, and proceeds from the silent auction. Again we are deeply appreciative of Washington Stockbrokers For Youth who organized the tournament and provided most of the support and participation. The planning committee which did an outstanding job, included John Yetman of Wachovia Securities, John Gerold of CIBC Oppenheimer, George Dunn and Mike Engel of Salomon Smith Barney.

John Yetman summed up the reason the Washington Stockbroker group supports The House when he said to the group, “Do you think we have been in a bear market? The kids we are helping have been in a bear market for their whole lives.”

A special thanks to all the supporting stock broker offices, a large group of mutual fund and money manager organizations, and other friends of The House who participated in, and volunteered their services for the October 29 event!!

PROPS ARE HOT!!

Our “props” incentive system has gained new life this season as we are now requiring students to bring in their report cards in order to continue participating in our incentives. “Props” are points earned for cleaning, cooking and plugging into the various House activities. These points enable students to participate in special outings throughout the year, such as our first “top prop” outing this season to the Great American Steak and Buffet restaurant in Alexandria. The students ate to their heart’s content—and then some! We have also begun offering bonus “prop” points for completing homework assignments and for earning “A’s” on their tests. Needless to say, the students have a new found excitement about doing their homework and studying for tests!
VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Speaking of volunteers, one of our newest volunteers, Jackie Smith, a journalism major at Howard University, recently interviewed two of our “seasoned” volunteers about their involvement in the House:

Kelli Bagby

Kelli Bagby, a native of Birmingham, AL, began volunteering at The House two years ago after hearing about the ministry through her church (McLellan Bible Church). She attended a “House Party” at Kramer Middle School and was hooked ever since.

“I knew I wanted to get involved with a ministry with teenagers,” she says.

Youth ministry is close to her heart. When she was a teenager along with her two younger sisters, her parents switched churches because of the lack of a strong youth program in their former church.

At The House, Bagby has done a variety of tasks, including teaching students job skills through mock interviews and filling out employment applications in a program called the Real World. She has also coordinated the volunteers and chaperoned events. “A lot of times I just showed up,” she says.

“I’ve gotten so much out of looking at the staff,” she says. “They’ve given me a direction in where I need to go.”

Melissa Wallenbeck

Hailing from Niagara Falls, NY, Melissa Wallenbeck, 25, started volunteering at The House two years ago. As a middle school French teacher, she says volunteering at The House has caused her to reflect on her life more. The main objective when teaching is making sure that students learn. At The House, on the other hand, “you’re more of a friend.”

Wallenbeck first started volunteering Tuesday nights, but began to take on more responsibilities, including administrative duties such as helping to plan a retreat, working with the Real World program and the Bible study. Once relationships were established with students she even hosted a sleepover.

“It’s a little more relaxed than in the classroom,” she says. “It’s a place students feel is safe—there are people who care for them.”

“Being around the students causes me to be thankful,” she says. “I look back to see where God has brought me and you realize how human you are, you’re humbled.”

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The 4th Annual GOLF TOURNAMENT is scheduled for Sept. 18, 2003 at Whiskey Creek Golf Club
More Than an After-School Program, It's a Ministry

By Jacqueline Smith

It's 6:45 on a Friday night, and there are nearly 50 students in the former four-unit apartment building. The living room is full of high school age students practicing band steps, playing video games, and playing on the piano. Reading the sign on the wall, they are sure, though, not to bring any food into the living room.

The House serves the Anacostia community by providing computer and cooking instruction, a weight-lifting program, a Bible study, advice on surviving in the real world, and just a place to chill. But the most unique aspect of The House, and what separates it from other programs, is its recording studio.

Consequently, J.T. was also introduced to Christ through the recording studio. He was hired to produce one of the CDs and was shocked to find that The House staff members were Christians. “I had never met some strong Christian men. I always associated being saved with being soft,” he says turning slowly around in his chair and quieting the music. “And when I saw lives getting changed, my life was changed too.” This project included a fully mastered re-issue of Thompson, 35, says as he twiddles knobs on a huge soundboard. J.T. has produced all of The House CDs for more than two years.

Containing what J.T. calls the first Go-Go remake of the classic “This Christmas,” “Christmas at the House,” completely sold out and received widespread recognition, playing frequently on local radio station Heaven 1580. Along with D.C.-birthed Go-Go, the CD includes Hip-Hop, R&B, and Spoken Word.

“Transition,” will be complete early this year and will take The House to the “next level,” as far as J.T. is concerned.

“Every song will have full production and be fully mastered—it will be at the industry standard,” he says.

“We’re going to use this vehicle, and introduce Christ through this vehicle.”
Performing Arts Academy

The House is continually refining and tailoring our program to maximize our effectiveness. We have examined our strengths and found that the Arts/Music component of our program has attracted and helped to maintain an overwhelming majority of our target audience. This is not totally surprising considering that music, art, and entertainment are universal languages, and we live in an entertainment and media-driven society. We also realize that the Arts can encompass all of our objectives and allow us to be more focused and strategic in our daily activities.

In order to capitalize on the momentum that has been building through our arts program, the Arts (which includes music and media) will be the main medium for accomplishing our objectives. Our athletic and academic components will serve to support the arts program, while the bulk of our resources and program direction will be focused on strengthening the arts component. The program will consist of the following:

- Drama
- Scriptwriting
- Makeup Artistry
- Culinary Arts
- CD recording and manufacturing
- Graphics and Design
- Dance/choreography
- Set design/construction
- Hair Design
- Music production
- Video recording and production
- Promotions

These activities will enhance the students’ skills in reading, writing, and mathematics as well as the principles of teamwork, initiative, perseverance, empowerment and self-esteem. These skills and principles will help prepare the students for success in the academic and professional arenas. We need your prayers and support in order to make this program successful.

Website Update:

The House has a new look! Please visit our Website (still under construction) at www.thehousede.org

Volunteering:

If you are interested in volunteering with The House, please contact our Volunteer Relations Manager, Suzy Ptaszynski at: Volunteer4The House@yahoo.com

Thank you to our many volunteers and funders. With your support we can continue to impact the lives of the youth in Southeast, Washington, D.C.

Major Contributors in 2002:

Gannett Foundation

The Fannie Mae Foundation

McLean Bible Church

The National Christian Foundation

Washington Stockbrokers for Youth

Individual Donors
THE HANDWRITING IS ON THE WALL

These are just some of the quotes you’ll find on our first House mural. We commissioned local Christian artist Summer Dye to paint a special mural on our dining room wall so the students could “pick a brick and leave their script.” The mural, which features the House logo flanked by a young man and woman, was painted in Anacostia’s school colors of red and blue and includes “bricks” for the students to leave their “autographs.”

“Remember, always put God first in all you do”—Lora

“Always remember to smile”—Ashley

“Workin’ a little harder, thinkin’ a little smarter”—Jonathan

“Chantayle

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