

The Sites that make TeamHCZ

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Team HCZ is the monthly newsletter of
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for the Team HCZ Calendar, please email them to
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Team HCZ is designed and managed by
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Did You Know? Employees Can Take Advantage of the Employment and Technology Center's Classes

The goal of the Employment and Technology Center is to increase the use and availability of technology in the Zone. Through intensive teaching ETC will provide committed residents and HCZ employees with the tools necessary to become computer literate. HCZ employees can also refer clients to the Community Room and Resource Center for job-seeking support.

Employees Can Take Advantage of the Employment and Technology Center's Classes

A waiting list for the classes is available at the receptionist's desk. After signing the list you will receive a phone call and letter informing you of the registration day. After registering for the class you will be provided with an additional letter informing you of the days and times for your class. All classes are FREE.

Evening Computer Classes

- Introduction to Microsoft Word
Tuesdays, 7:00 - 9:00pm
Required: Introduction to computers or knowledge of using a computer.
In this class you will acquire the skills necessary to use the Microsoft Word, word processing program, to create documents such as letters, resumes, flyers and mailing labels.

- Introduction to Microsoft Excel
Monday, 7:00 - 9:00pm
Required: Introduction to computers or knowledge of using a computer.
In this class you will work with spreadsheets to produce budgets and the results of survey. You will create spreadsheets to analyze the time value of money and the cost associated with borrowing money. You will also be able to create visually appealing reports with charts and graphics.

- Web Design
Wednesday and Fridays, 7:00 - 9:00pm
In this class you will learn how to create, design and manage your own web pages using HTML and other web design programs.

Computer Workshops

- Computer Repair
Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 1 - 3:30pm
This hands on course focuses on repairing, troubleshooting, maintaining and upgrading the personal computer (PC). In this class students will grasp and learn the terms and concepts that relate to each component, as well as the industry standard procedures used in installation and configuration.

Open to the Community

- The Community Room and Resource Center
Mondays - Fridays, 9:00am - 9:00pm
and Saturdays, 9:00am - 4:00pm
The Community Room and Resource Center is equipped with four computers with access to the internet and Microsoft Office for residents to surf the net, check email, research, type, print or just for leisure. There is a copy machine, fax machine and job resource books available to help with your job hunt. All services are free of charge! (There are no children under the age of 13 allowed in the building after 6:00pm that are not accompanied by an adult.)

Open to Children and Teens

- The Kids Saturday S.M.A.R.T. Program
Saturdays, 9:00am - 4:00pm
With a trained staff and literacy and recreational software programs, the Shaping Minds Around Reading and Technology (S.M.A.R.T.) program offers students individualized, comprehensive reading instruction, with tutoring support.

For more information and to sign up for classes at the Employment and Technology Center call (212) 369-5912



Harlem Children's
ZONE

Team **H CZ**

N E W S L E T T E R

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The **SMART** program

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HCZ is working to raise the reading scores of Harlem youth by setting up its new SMART (Shaping Minds Around Reading & Technology) Program at many of its sites and selected public schools. Using trained staff and the most advanced technology SMART offers students a structured approach to learning phonics and reinforces what students are learning during the day in class.

Funded by the Robin Hood and Picower Foundations, SMART is designed to increase students' reading ability over the course of a school year. Students must attend the program for one hour a week during their school day and for two hours a week during their after school program.

SMART provides teachers and staff with software to assess the skill levels of students and

identify instructional needs. Coordinators, SMART tutors and Peacemakers have been trained by HCZ and consultants to instruct students in the SMART program. Tutors work with the same students week after week allowing tutors to become familiar with student's particular needs and challenges.

But there's more!

SMART established the SMART Lending Library in each school it serves. Through the SMART Lending Library students are able to read on site or borrow books to take home. SMART also gives students incentives to learn. Students receive points for completing work, reading books and completing steps the program. Once students work hard and attend the program regularly they will accumulate enough points
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which can be turned in at the SMART Store for prizes such as a free bicycle or Xbox.

HCZ's Director of Education, Regina Garrett, who oversees the SMART Program, spoke about HCZ President/CEO Geoffrey Canada's motivations for establishing SMART at HCZ sites. "Mr. Canada knows the school system continues to fail our children. The majority of the children in Harlem are reading below grade level. Mr. Canada decided to bring technology to bear on this crisis thus establishing the SMART program in the Harlem Children Zone."

HCZ launched the pilot SMART program at Countee Cullen in the spring of 2002 where SMART was incorporated into students' school day and their after school programs. Because of a successful commencement at Countee Cullen, HCZ introduced SMART to P.S. 76 and

Booker T. Washington last summer as part of the Freedom and Summer School Programs. This past fall SMART was incorporated into the school day and afterschool program at P.S. 242. Recently, HCZ began SMART at the Employment and Technology Center, P.S.197(during the school day and in its afterschool program) and at the Harlem Gems.

Speaking on the future of the SMART Program in the agency, HCZ COO George Khaldun said, "Under the leadership of Mr. Canada HCZ will make sure that SMART becomes a significant component of our sites' programs. We are dedicated to making it a top resource for our young people."

Ms. Garrett is very excited to be directing this initiative for HCZ. "Seeing kids progress in their reading is very rewarding. The Harlem Children's Zone is an agency that sets high expectations

and does everything humanly possible to fulfill them. I can't think of a better use of time and money than to help community children learn to read."

But HCZ is also addressing a national educational initiative. With its SMART program, HCZ is answering literacy needs outlined in the recently adopted No Child Left Behind Act. Through this act, the President of the United States and U.S. Congress have called on schools nationwide to ensure that every child can read by the end of the third grade. HCZ's SMART program is empowering the youth of Central Harlem and America to meet this requirement.

Editors Note: Please check out this issue's featured director, Robin Hannibal, who reflects on how SMART has empowered the Countee Cullen Community!



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...morebuzz

SAMSHA GRANT

T.R.U.C.E. was recently awarded a grant from the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA). The young people of T.R.U.C.E. will use the grant to start the "Umoja Media Project." With this project they will establish a youth-centered violence prevention coalition and media campaign. The project will also dedicate itself to building stronger ties between African American, West African and Muslim communities within the Harlem Children's Zone.

To date, along with Community Pride, the Umoja Media Project has organized a series of community forums and completed the initial phases of recruitment, which has significantly increased the level of participation of West African participants at TRUCE.

FITNESS CENTER STAYING FIT & SMART

On March 7, 2003, seven students from the TRUCE Fitness & Nutrition Center competed in the Charlie Lee Nationals and walked away with 14 trophies, four of which were first place! Two students competed in the AmeriKick National Karate Tournament in Atlantic City winning a total of 3 trophies (one-1st place and one-2nd place). April 4th- 6th, four students competed in another national tournament in Rhode Island winning a total of seven trophies (two-1st place). But—the Fitness Center is not just about brawn! Fitness Center Youth Managers participated in an annual citywide public speaking/presentation competition at York College (Queens, NY) this

Spring and won "Best of the Best!" award for their presentation on Diabetes and Obesity among Central Harlem youth.

INAUGURAL STAFF TRAINING

The HCZ inaugural staff training was held March 18-21st. HCZ decided to begin training all staff in order to have a unified approach, standardized training, and a clear understanding of the mission of the agency. All new staff will also receive this staff training. Overall, HCZ hopes that staff training will help make the agency more efficient and effective in improving outcomes for the children we serve.

PEACEMAKERS ORGANIZE MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY EVENTS

The Harlem Peacemakers gathered food from public schools, HCZ program sites and donated food themselves for the annual Peacemaker food drive and distribution. Peacemakers distributed food to 33 families on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day at P.S. 242.



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TOP: 1,2,3. The SMART Kids!
BOTTOM: 4.Youth Managers from TRUCE Fitness & Nutrition are the Best of the Best! **5.**Harlem Globetrotters at Countee Cullen **6.**The young people of TRUCE in the SAMSHA program.

The Peacemakers also conducted a Conflict Resolution Workshop for 100 children at the Abyssinian Church and presented the annual "David Chen Joseph Peacemaker of the Year Award" to Renard Bivens. Congratulations Renard!!

Robin Hannibal Countee Cullen

Recently, TEAM HCZ had the opportunity to sit down with Countee Cullen Community Center Beacon Director, Robin Hannibal. From African dance to computer instruction classes, Countee Cullen offers a diverse amount of activities for the community. Their newest initiative is the SMART program. We asked Ms. Hannibal how SMART is benefiting Countee Cullen's young people and this is what she had to say.

The SMART program is one of the best things that has happened to Countee Cullen. It is allowing our students to appreciate reading and technology. And it will lead them to better standardized test scores. Our main objective with SMART is to improve the reading level of our kindergarten through fourth grade students. We're hoping that after using the program for one school year their reading grades will improve by one grade level. But if we see improvement by two or three grades we'll take it!

At Countee Cullen we start students off with pre-tests and diagnostic tests. This allows us to monitor what each student is doing. We're able to see how much students are in line with state requirements and what

areas the SMART program can help them improve.

Students benefit from the SMART program's daytime component and after school program. Almost three hundred students use the program in the day and an additional two hundred students use it during the after school program. During the school day they must use the program for one hour a week. In the after school program they must use it for two hours a week. They use the program on computers that HCZ put in the classrooms at Countee Cullen.

Students have SMART tutors. Geoff insisted that children receive individualized attention so there is a 5 to 1 student tutor ratio. Attendance is tracked weekly and monthly. We keep a very close eye on attendance to know which students are getting the proper amount of time at the computer and which students we need to bring back into the loop.

The SMART store is an incentive component of the SMART program. Students receive points for good behavior. They receive points when they improve their school grades and when their parents come to school programs. Once students accumulate a certain



amount of points they can use them to buy items such as Timberland clothing or electronic games. In the future, Countee Cullen is going to build a lending library at Countee Cullen. Students will be able to accumulate more points if they read two books a week.

The SMART program couldn't run smoothly without open communication between my staff, the SMART staff and me. We all see our students as intelligent human beings. Sometimes they get a little tired. They're not robots, but as their leaders we work with them so they can stick it out. We motivate them so they won't lose hope. We want them to know that SMART is rewarding and will contribute to them having a better quality of life.

employee of the month

Belinda Garcia—Price Project CLASS

Belinda Garcia—Price is known as the "ACS Queen" of Project CLASS. The topnotch social worker earned this title because she knows more than most about the ACS system and shares her knowledge generously.

Since she started working for HCZ in 2001, Belinda has informed countless clients how to earn an extra \$300 per month in ACS housing aid. She's even worked with ACS representatives to provide safety for children in unstable homes.

"I try to show my clients that they should take charge of their situations. If they have knowledge of what services are out there they should go and get them instead of waiting," says Belinda.

Belinda always has resources for her clients. She instructs them on everything they need to know about applying for section-eight housing as well as how to apply for free bedding and furniture. She has also referred many clients to job trainings and business links.

Project CLASS director Anthony Mills commented on the importance of Belinda being so resourceful: "A knowledgeable and resourceful Social Worker is a great asset to any social work organization and team. Most of our clients are challenged by a

plethora of issues requiring case management and advocacy on behalf of a variety of entitlements. Belinda does this work daily with a persevering attitude as she fights the good fight."

As a social worker Belinda is out in the field a lot. She meets with clients in their homes where she provides them with supportive counseling on parenting, drug intervention and family management. Two times a week she aids social workers at Booker T. Washington with their youth participants. She helps the youth with their homework, coordinates meetings with parents, and reaches out to youth to evaluate if they are in need of services.

Regina Garrett reflected on working with Belinda when Garrett directed Project CLASS. Garrett remembered Belinda's ability to learn and grow: "Belinda came to the agency new to the field. In a short amount of time she learned to be very resourceful and proved to be a team player. She became the program's expert because of her dedication to knowing what's going on."

Belinda hopes to continue growing. She plans to apply to graduate school to earn her Masters Degree in either guidance or counseling. She especially hopes to study how to

work with families that are affected by substance abuse. She has her eyes on directing crisis intervention programs in the future.

When asked how she's able to stay strong Belinda said, "My passion and love for the work is what drives me and makes me want to continue working in this field. I know this work is the right thing to do and doing it with HCZ makes me feel good."

And it makes us feel good that she is this issue's Employee of the Month. Team HCZ salutes her and the work she is doing with families in the Harlem Children's Zone. Go Belinda!



children&family Mizetta Wilson Harlem Peacemakers

There is no doubt that Mizetta Wilson is a splendid product of HCZ, Inc. Although a current Peacemaker Supervisor, Mizetta's relationship with HCZ started when she was 16. She worked with Neighborhood Gold and the Jackie Robinson Senior Center. For four days a week she would deliver food to homebound seniors and attended various wellness workshops.

Although she was gaining a lot of skills, what stood out to Mizetta was the workshops. "The workshops at HCZ were one of the most important things when I was a teenager. They dealt with self esteem and finding ways to advance my own personal growth."

Since she wanted to be a teacher, Mizetta's avenue towards personal growth was becoming a Peacemaker. As a Peacemaker she would tutor students at PS 242, and facilitate reading groups and conflict mediation workshops for students. Now that Mizetta has been promoted to being a Peacemaker Supervisor she also administers interns. Having the opportunity to work as a supervisor taught Mizetta that she would prefer to hold an administrative position in a school rather than teach.

"There's a very big difference between the responsibilities of a school's teacher and administrator. Being a supervisor showed me that I want to be more involved in

the operation of things."

Mizetta has hopes to obtain a masters degree in school administration so that she can become a principal and open a charter school in the future. She credits her HCZ experience for fostering her dreams.

"I don't think I would have developed as quickly if I didn't get hands-on experience in HCZ. I might be at another place wondering what I want to do if it weren't for my experience here."

And the world might have missed out on Mizetta Wilson. She is a shining light and true testament of HCZ's good work.