

Path To Shine®

Spring 2017

From the Director



Thanks to your efforts, we raised almost \$7,000 with our **Share the Love** campaign so more of our programs can offer enrichment activities during the year. Please join us for the 9th Annual Ugly Pants event, our most fun—and also, our biggest fundraiser of the year. (Details on the other side.)

During the course of this year, we have been able to obtain additional school resources for some of the children in our programs who needed them, by bringing stakeholders together, and helping to navigate paper-work and testing. (See the Columbus article.)

And recently we found that we have 34 volunteers who have been with us for 3 to 4 years, and another 6 who have been with us for 5 years. That is remarkable, and we are so, so grateful. Thank you for all you do to keep us moving forward!



Columbus Collages



The children in our Columbus program made collages that focused on their goals for the future. One little boy, Alex (not his real name), explained his collage, stating that it showed him as a teacher wearing a suit with his (future) wife standing next to him. This is remarkable considering *he was failing - or at risk of failing - every subject last semester.*

Our program leader, Lisa, described Alex as a very sad child who would break into tears and throw a tantrum when asked to begin his homework. As Lisa talked to Alex's father and then to the school, it became clear that Alex needed some extra help but without psychological testing and evaluation, there was little the school

could do. She also found out that Alex's mother had left when he was just one year old so his father was the sole provider and caretaker for Alex and his sister.

Lisa worked with the family and medical professionals to have Alex evaluated, and he now has appropriate treatment. He's making tremendous progress, more in control of his emotions and sitting still long enough to read a book - which he reads with emotion and emphasis. His personality is coming through as he starts on his own "path to shine".

Morrow Moves

Sometimes events happen that appear to be negative; it's only afterwards that we see differently.

After disappointing news that precluded continued use of space at the local public library, our Morrow program moved "home" to St. Augustine's Episcopal Church. A little networking resulted in 12 children who come each week for reading and homework help, as well as enjoying their fair share of crafts. They have made potholders (which the boys enjoyed just as much as the girls!), decorated gift bags for Easter, made their own mini-pizzas, and much more. The children like to be helpful, and a few weeks ago they assisted by placing dozens and dozens of new chairs around the tables in the church's Parish Hall. We are thankful everything turned out as it did.



You Can Help!

- Volunteer: Be a weekly tutor. Previous teaching experience is *not* necessary.
- Be a Guest Speaker: Share the story of the challenges you overcame as a child.
- Donate: Send a check, or visit our website to use PayPal for monthly deductions or one-time gifts.



Join us for the **9th Annual Ugly Pants Event**, Oct. 15 & 16.

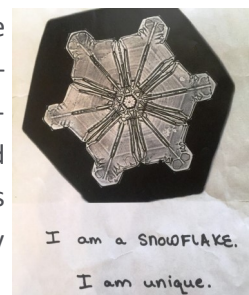
Choose Family-friendly brunch on Sunday, and/or golf on Monday with breakfast buffet & lunch included.

Use the QR code to register.



Curriculum Counts

Path To Shine developed its own curriculum to teach and encourage skills and values that might be in short supply for the children with whom we work. Many lessons focus on individual gifts, reinforcing for the children that they *always* have something to offer if they choose - something as important as kindness, good manners, or a smile. We include many stories about perseverance & courage such *Emmanuel's Dream*, *Rainbow Crow*, and *Howard Thurman's Great Hope*. The story of *Snowflake Bentley* was another favorite and these mementos reminded the children they are each as unique as a snowflake.



Fund the Gap Student Accepted

Opportunities have long been available to people with the right connections. But what if the academic scholarship at a nearby independent school is not on your radar simply because no-one told you about it? Or what if you know about it, and you win a scholarship but you still cannot afford to attend because of the extra costs involved in attending an independent school - costs such as transportation, books, uniforms, and more? Path To Shine provides financial support to "fund the gap" between a scholarship and the dream of attending an independent school. Thank you St. Benedict's Episcopal School for providing the scholarship, and thank you to the people who donate so we can "fund the gap".

Artist Visits Avondale Estates



Mr. Bill Mayer is a graphic artist who won a gold medal for his illustrated children's book, "The Monster That Did My Math," in 2007. Mr. Mayer visited our Avondale Estates program, and brought many sketches and working drawings that helped to demonstrate the process for creating illustrations. After reading the book with the children, he allowed them to choose one of the samples to take home. It was a wonderful afternoon, and the children decorated a large thank-you card for Mr. Mayer over the next few Path To Shine sessions. We're thankful to our volunteer, Margaret, for coordinating Mr. Mayer's visit.

Perry's Update

After a month of working on manners and honesty, the children in our Perry program enjoyed a special dinner at the Perfect Pear restaurant, complete with napkins and linen tablecloths. They also worked on the themes of dreams and hopes, and friendship, and made gifts for "secret pals" in the program. We knew it had been a successful series of lessons when two new students were quickly made to feel at home, overcoming their nervousness, and telling us they "didn't want to miss Path To Shine."



For more information about the articles in this newsletter and Path To Shine®, please visit our website at www.pathtoshine.org or contact us: Lesley-Ann Drake, Executive Director, Path To Shine, 2160 Cooper Lake Road SE, Smyrna, GA 30080. 678-279-4308 lesleyann@pathtoshine.org facebook.com/pathtoshine