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FALL 2011

Welcome to Our 37th Year

By Nellie Hernandez

This year's F-M ABC house has five extraordinary girls: Janai Fraser (junior), Nellie Hernandez (sophomore), Sara Elzeini (sophomore), Alexandra Johnson (freshman), and Kesi Rivera (freshman) all from NYC. This is Janai Fraser's third year in the F-M ABC house. This past summer she was involved with the Global Leadership Adventures program where she did volunteer work in the Dominican Republic for a couple weeks. She was also involved in a girl's leadership program for two weeks at Princeton University. She is currently involved in many extracurricular activities in the high school. She is one of the co-captains for Step Team, is in charge of the Black History Month assembly with Character Ed, and she also plans on hosting a food and clothing drive for children in a refugee camp she visited in the Dominican Republic.

This is Nellie Hernandez's second year in the F-M ABC house. During the summer she worked in the Summer Youth Employment Program tutoring five to seven year olds. At school, she is involved in activities such as the high school

newspaper, mock trial, community wide dialogue, step



2011-2012 Scholars L-R: Nellie, Alex, Janai, Sara, Kesi

team, the Black History Month assembly with Character Ed and she is also planning to do indoor and outdoor track.

Another sophomore returning for her second year is Sara Elzeini. She has been really involved this year with the school and her duties as sophomore class secretary. She's also in the school play, step team, M.U.N, the Black History Month assembly with Character Ed, and she is planning on doing outdoor track.

The freshmen have been adjusting well to the school. They're already involved with several activities. This past summer Alexandra Johnson attended a camp for gifted young stu-

dents. She is part of the high school play, step team and she is planning on doing indoor and outdoor track. Kesi Rivera is in M.U.N and step team, and she is planning on being a part of the Black History Month assembly with Character Ed.

As a whole the house is doing great. The Resident Directors, Katie and Josh Grasso, and the Resident Advisors, Heather Howard and Yvonne Steward, all returned for a second year with the girls. At the beginning of the school year, the whole house attended a team-building challenge course at Cornell University's Hoffman Course. They participated in group activities that helped the house bond more and build a sense of teamwork. It was a great experience for everyone.



Congrats to our 2011 Graduate!



Janai, Odelia & Nellie at Odelia's Graduation

Odelia Ryan was Fayetteville-Manlius A Better Chance's 73rd graduate. She headed to the University of Rochester this fall to begin her undergraduate career. She is doing great and loving college life, even though the work can be challenging. We wish Odelia the best of luck in all her future endeavors!



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In Memoriam
 Theresa Ares
 Founder and
 Charter Member
 of the F-M ABC
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 Host Family to
 several of our
 scholars
 Thank you, Terri,
 for your love and
 commitment
 since 1974.

Thanks to our Corporate Community Friends who devote Community Service Days to make our house shine. We appreciate your help so much!

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The Alumnae Report



Mini-Reunion L-R:
Beth Hanson, Kiya Hope, Jenelle Berry, Jennifer Vasquetelles and children, Amelia Stone, May Ling Brantman and daughter, Shynise Stiff, Maribelle Ruiz Hernandez and daughter, Aleatha Ealey



Donna Stewart Richardson and her husband, Pastor Vaseel Richardson

Donna Stewart Richardson's children: VJ, Rebekah, and nephew Rasheed



Tammy Rosado Gruenberg – 1984

I started at Columbia's School for Public Health, the Executive MPH program, on 9/15/11. I will be getting a degree in Public Health and Health Care Management. It's an executive program which meets for 4 days per month for 24 months. I was able to pursue this very expensive endeavor through a fellowship grant from the Hispanic Center of Excellence at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine.

My son Zachary had his bar mitzvah last October and in Sept. started his first day at the High School for Math/ Science and Engineering at City College. It's a specialized testing HS - seventeen thousand applied and only 170 were accepted. Harder to get into than Harvard! I'm so proud of him. Seth is 9 years old and just started 5th grade today. He's a sweet boy who loves sports but also loves to write. Finally, Randy has started a new job in Wall Street with Citibank. It's a long commute from Riverdale, but overall a good move.

Donna Stewartson - 1984

I am currently not working and enjoying the time with my family. In fact, I just returned from a great 2 week vacation in Jamaica with my children, VJ 13 yrs., Rebekah 11 yrs. and my husband, Pastor Vassel Stewartson, who leads our Church of God of Prophecy. We also attended a church convention in Springfield MA this July.

Mayra Rivera Lewin – 1997

I am now teaching second grade. I have a huge new classroom that my husband and I spent more than a week cleaning and preparing for opening day. I miss kindergarten terribly, but I am looking forward to the challenges of second grade. This past June, I returned to LeMoyne for my 10 year college reunion. I stopped by the ABC house and was amazed at how lovely it looks. It was great to be in Syracuse and reconnect with old friends. My husband Kareem and I celebrated our one year marriage anniversary on Sept 10th. It has been the best year of my life and I look forward to a lifetime of happiness with him. We have three gorgeous dogs--Gizmo Nunu. a chihuahua-brussels griffon, Princess Madeline, a long haired chihuahua and Athena, a pitbull we rescued from the Animal Specialty Center(my husband works there). My husband, 3 dogs, teaching and going to the gym leave little time for boredom. I am getting physically fit. I have lost 30+ pounds and I'm looking to lose another 20. My mother and stepfather are on their annual trip to Puerto Rico. Kareem and I are vacationing in PR during the February recess--I can't wait!!!

Ingrid (Beth) Hanson - 1998

No new news to report on my end, but life is good.

We celebrated my mother and uncle's (twins!) 60th birthday this summer. It was a lot of fun to see family and friends from out of town and have everyone gathered in one place for the party.

Kiya Hope - 1999

I am still living in Brooklyn and working at Macy's. Currently, I am heavily involved in my dad's home renovation project. He passed away in June, and I would like to rent out his big brownstone, but it is in need of major repair.

We also had a cool, mini ABC reunion this summer, organized by May Ling Brantman, on Jenelle's apt rooftop. We BBQed, laughed and caught up with each other.

Aleatha Ealey - 2002

A lot of exciting changes taking place. I got engaged last November. McKinley and I plan to wed this November. In January I will be moving with my new husband to Ghana, Africa, as we both have accepted offers to teach with The Youth Institute of Science and Technology. I will be the Director of Early Childhood Education as well as the Information Communications Teacher. I'm really excited about everything that is taking place and plan to write about it all on my newly created blog. Feel free to join me on my journey by checking out <http://arosenbklyn.blogspot.com/>.

Mildred Flores – 2004

Everything sounds amazing at FM-ABC! I have a lot going on here, too:

My son Jason started kindergarten and I am really excited to see how much he is progressing. He is still not talking to anyone directly but he knows a lot of words and loves music. He spends most of his time singing and mixing music and videos. I see him as a music producer in the future. He is so talented, and so fascinating to watch. I am in my last terms of my associates degree in accounting, holding down a 3.94 GPA. I will graduate in June and move on to a BA/MS Accounting program, and then sit for the CPA exam at the end of it. I am still working with the Assisted Housing Division which manages tax credit compliance for the low income housing units we have throughout a few of our properties. I enjoy it very much, and hope to use my accounting degree to advance me in the other areas of compliance. I am also looking into purchasing my own apartment. I am participating with HSBC First Home Club which will match \$4 for every \$1 that I save. At the end of 10 months, I will have my down payment and closing costs. A nonprofit organization is also helping with the grants that are available for first time home buyers. I am so excited - 9 more months to go!!!! I have been in touch with my host families. They all say they are very proud of me. I miss them dearly, and we all have been talking of me visiting sometime soon. I have to plan everything out, but I definitely intend on making the trip. I can't wait to get the newsletter, I feel so connected when I receive it.

Victoria Allison –2006

In May I graduated from UPenn with a Masters in Education. I now teach kindergarten at a school called Leadership Prep Bedford Stuyvesant which is part of a network called Uncommon Schools. Uncommon Schools, as the brochure states, "starts and manages outstanding urban public charter schools that close the achievement gap and prepare low-income students to graduate from college." My school's principal is a Wellesley alum so it's amazing to have the leadership of someone who is a graduate of a women's college! I am so happy to be doing what I believe is my purpose in life. Of course it is challenging to start a new job and working over 70 hours a week is tiring. But I already love the kids and I am eager to see their growth over this year

Jessica Reid - 2006

I just started at New York University's Wagner School of Graduate Service where I am pursuing a Masters of Public Administration in Public and Non-Profit Management and Policy. I really love my program. I am also working at the Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy as a Research Assistant and exploring such research topics as affordable housing and neighborhood change which fascinate me.



Amelia Stone – 2007

I just started graduate school at the University of Southern California. All in all, it has been a nice transition. The work load is intense but not more than I can bear. I have not yet gotten the chance to explore Los Angeles -- there does not seem to be enough hours in the day -- but I will.

Dorisol Inoa – 2009

I'm now a junior at Wesleyan University. I'm majoring in Psychology and Economics and this semester I'm studying abroad in Denmark! I love my time here. This summer I was a participant of the SEO program and completed an internship at Goldman Sachs.



Dori in Denmark

Shynise Stiff – 2010

Now that I'm a sophomore, I'm closer to finding my niche at Cornell. This semester, I have a loaded schedule of marketing, financial accounting, statistics, and entrepreneurship courses. On campus, I'm involved in Les Femmes de Substance, a black women's pre-professional group. I'm also a Big Sister for Ithakids, a local mentorship program for Ithaca's youth. This year, I've been off to a wonderful start and will strive to continue.

2011-2012
FM ABC
Scholars
at the
Hoffman
Challenge
Course in
Ithaca



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The 36th Reunion Gala



2011 Welcome Back Picnic



L-R: Nellie, Yvonne (RA), Janai, Heather (RA), Alex, Josh (RD), Sara, Katie (RD), Kesi

Upcoming Events:

Santa's Workshop & Holiday Celebration

Hosted jointly by FM ABC and the Manlius Historical Society

When: December 3rd, 11am-3pm

Where: FMHS Cafeteria

Join us for crafts, storytelling with Karen Porcello, magic shows by the Jackman twins, and Santa Claus, of course! It's a perfect way to start the holiday season!

Tickets are \$5/person, in advance, and can be purchased at the Manlius Library, the Fayetteville Library, Feats of Clay in Manlius and the Manlius Historical Society.



The Fayetteville-Manlius A Better Chance Program (FM ABC) is affiliated with A Better Chance, a national, non-profit, academic talent search organization with the mission to increase the number of well-educated young people of color ready to assume positions of responsibility and leadership.

Our scholars are offered the chance to learn in an exceptional educational program, to participate in extra-curricular activities including, but not limited to, the arts, athletics, clubs, and community service, and to develop confidence and independence as they prepare for college and a successful future as active, effective contributors to society, all while living in a family-like environment, supported by their parents, staff, board members, teachers and host families. Our program is located in a 200 year old house in the center of Manlius, NY. Check out our website and facebook page for more information or contact us to learn about one of the many ways you could get involved!

Board of Directors

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Thank You!

Thanks to Joe and Karen Porcello for donating two brand new nooks to the house!

Thanks to the Carbone Auto Group for their donation of a new washing machine!



A huge thanks to all of our wonderful host families! Your love and support of our scholars is appreciated!



Thank you to the Girl Scouts Troop #845 for raising funds to provide tutoring for our scholars!



Thanks to Peter Farnsworth and the TopSpin 2010 Fundraiser!