



# A BETTER CHANCE

of Fayetteville-Manlius

Fall 2004

## Keeping Our House in Order

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Newsletter: Liz Kolodney

Even though we completed the Capital Campaign and restored both floors of our 200 year-old house just two years ago, things always need to be done. First--the gutters. We hired **Dan Arras** (son of board member **Jane Arras**) and **Ryan Twichell**, both 2003 F-M grads, to clean gutters and hired **Jeff Conkling**

of Down to Earth carpets to clean our rugs.

**Bob Garland**, our carpenter who can-do-anything, generously donated his time and materials and installed tile behind the sink, stove, and counters in the kitchen. We also hired Bob to make the attic safe for storage and to restore rotting wood columns on the front porch.

Corporations also signed up to help. Six members of **Anaren Corporation**, led by **Joe Porcello**, graciously offered us their time and muscles on August 6<sup>th</sup>. They washed all the windows, blinds, and floors of the house. When they discovered our broken DVD, they donated the money for a new one. Anaren's work made it so much easier for our board members to clean the house for the students' return in September.

On the morning of October 12<sup>th</sup>, eight employees of **VHA Empire State**, led by board member **Michael Johns**, painted the floor and benches of the front porch, most of the wooden trim inside the house, and the upstairs bathrooms. They even did yard work.

Last year, **Michael Johns** trimmed down the towering hedges and solved a backyard flooding problem. Resident directors

**Bev and Loomis Goode** mowed, trimmed and gardened all spring and summer.



Just before the girls arrived in September, **Carol and Jim Small** and **Scott, Cheryle, and Owen Kelley** repainted the room vacated by last year's seniors and donated a new rug. During the 2003-2004 school year, **Andrew Leary**, husband of board member **Clare** has kept

the computers running. Andrew has spent countless hours fixing problems and installing software to avoid additional problems.

We are so grateful to our dedicated volunteers. The house looks terrific. If you haven't visited in a while, why not call a board member to take you on a tour?

### Other Ways to Give

Here are some other ways to contribute to F-M A Better Chance:

- Bring your cans & bottles to F-M Recycling on W. Seneca St. and ask them to donate your proceeds to A Better Chance.
- Make an appointment to bring quality, already worn clothing to one of these Fayetteville consignment shops: The Fashion Exchange (251-0414) or Nearly New (637-3262). Ask them to donate your proceeds to A Better Chance. Please call first.
- Donate your old car. For more information, contact Barbara Sutton (Bsuehin@aol.com).

## The End of an Era: So Long, Evelyn



Evelyn Ring, the guidance counselor for the ABC girls since 1989, retired this August. We will miss her unceasing dedication to the A Better Chance Program and its students. Evelyn was interviewed during her final week at the high school.

### **What made you become a guidance counselor?**

I always knew that I wanted to work with people. As I was thinking about careers, I decided that I would like to work one on one. Counseling seemed perfect.

### **How did you get involved with A Better Chance?**

Clinton High School, where I was a counselor for 8 years, has an A Better Chance program for boys. When I started counseling there, I found that the names of many of those boys were in my part of the alphabet. We only had 2 counselors, so I continued to have many of the boys during the time I was at Clinton. When I came here, I was assigned the ABC girls because of my Clinton experience.

### **Was being a counselor for ABC boys at Clinton very different from counseling ABC girls at F-M?**

Well, boys have different issues from girls and, at that time, there were very few minorities of any ethnicity in Clinton, so the transition for the Clinton boys was difficult. They were lucky, however, to have the ABC house on the college campus because the campus was much more diverse than Clinton High School.

### **You've been devoted to the A Better Chance program for 23 years now. What is its attraction?**

A Better Chance gives kids an opportunity and I have always had an affinity for kids without opportunities. ABC students are given the chance to go to college and have a career. I love the way A Better Chance develops really independent young women. They need to learn to plan ahead; they have to figure out how to get rides, how to schedule their activities. While it's difficult and not glorious every day, I think girls would say that each day is an education. I think they appreciate everything they learn.

### **What are your future plans?**

My plan is not to have a plan. I hope to stay active in the ABC program and see where life takes me.

## Welcome, Angie

Angela Kotz has replaced Evelyn Ring as the guidance counselor for the ABC scholars. She was interviewed in late August.

### **Tell me a little about your family.**

I am one of 5. I have a younger brother and younger sister, but my dad is one of 8 brothers and sisters, so I have a large extended family, both in Canton, where I am from, and in Maine.

### **How long and where have you been a guidance counselor?**

I spent two years at Mott Road Elementary School in Fayetteville working with kids in grades K-4. I loved working there. I earned a B.S. in Psychology and a Master's of Education in Counseling at St. Lawrence University. The five years I was there, I worked in the Admissions Office in a variety of capacities. I loved being involved in recruiting and in job placement. That experience made me want to work with high school students who are questioning what they should do after they graduate.

### **What made you choose counseling as a profession?**

I have always wanted to be a counselor. In high school I began to think about counseling as a career and knew that's what I wanted.

### **What are your first impressions of the high school?**

I feel excited and lucky to be here. I think these are wonderful kids – open, willing, eager, appreciative, and respectful.

### **What are you looking forward to as the counselor for the A Better Chance girls?**

I am hoping for a lot of contact. I really want to get to know them. I want them to see their time here as a positive experience and I want them to feel that they can always come in and talk about anything that's on their minds.

### **Save the Date!**

#### ***Breakfast with Santa***

**December 11, 2004**

**8-11 a.m.**

**F-M High School Cafeteria**

### **Volunteer Corner**

There are many ways to help! You could join our board, or be a host family, work on just one project, or give rides to our students. If you are interested in volunteering, please send an e-mail to Barbara Sutton at [Bsuchin@aol.com](mailto:Bsuchin@aol.com) or send a note to Barbara at the ABC house – 411 E. Seneca St., Manlius, NY 13104.



## Meet the First Year Students

### Holly Smith

With huge brown eyes and a ready smile, Holly Smith is the first student from Trenton, NJ to be part of the F-M A Better Chance program. Holly heard about ABC from her guidance counselor. She says that she didn't have many expectations. She just hoped "to learn from the experience."

Because Holly came to visit Manlius and tour the school in August, she didn't know any of the girls until the ABC orientation held at Princeton University late in the summer. She finds that living with 5 other girls is really nice because they get along well and go out together. In addition, she is adjusting to the two and a half hours of required study time each night better than she thought she would. She likes having a set time to work.

Holly likes her classes, especially Spanish, because it is new and completely different. "I think I will be able to use it later in my life," she says. She also likes studio art because she "can't draw and she is learning how to."

Holly, like Alicia, misses her family and everything her mom cooks. She thinks, however, that F-M will be a step to a future in photography, journalism, or communications where she will get a chance to do the kind of writing that she loves.



### Alicia Ramharack

She is small, slim, and full of life. Alicia Ramharack, one of our new first year students, comes from Queens Village in Queens, NY where she has lived in the same two family house her whole life. Alicia has three older siblings, two sisters and a brother. The Ramharacks are not new to the A Better Chance program since Alicia's brother was an ABC student at the Millbrook School in NY and her sister was an ABC student at Ethel Walker Academy in Connecticut.

Yet knowing about the A Better Chance program doesn't make it easy to live with 5 girls you haven't known. Alicia says that, fortunately, everyone gets along well, and that the other girls realize what new students are going through. "They feel your pain," she says.

Alicia feels that the rules at the house are similar to her rules at home, but the time frame is different. Having study hours from 7:00-9:30 p.m. each night takes some adjustment. "I'm used to doing homework after school and then spending time with my family at night," she says.

School is going well. Alicia likes her classes, especially Spanish and photography. She loves the fact that she "can freeze a moment in time with a photo, a moment that will never come again."

Alicia misses her family and the spicy West Indian food that her mom prepares, but she can see that F-M will give her a chance to get the education which, one day, could lead to her becoming a lawyer. Right now, she's taking it "day by day".



## A Special Thanks

**Dewitt Community Church** for selecting A Better Chance as a Mission of the Month.

**Sensis Corporation** for their generous contribution.

**St. Ann's Church** for their generous contribution and, with **Christ Episcopal Church**, for continuing to donate the proceeds from their July 4th Pancake Breakfast.

**Christ Episcopal Church** for the use for their Hospitality House for our meetings over the last 30 years.

**United Methodist Church of Fayetteville** for their generous contribution.

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church** for their generous contribution and for lending us their community hall for our indoor yard sale.

**First Baptist Church of Fayetteville** for their generous contribution.

**Anaren and VHA Empire** for choosing us as their community service project.

**Drs. Karen Nardella and Philip Kaplan** and **Drs. Gary and Jake Revercomb** for the excellent medical and dental care they have given our students.

**The Student Government of Fayetteville-Manlius HS** for donating the benefits of the Welcome Back Dance to our program.

**Mary Sheila Scoones and the teachers and staff who worked on the spaghetti dinner at Fayetteville-Manlius HS.** The proceeds were donated to our program.

**Kathy Campagna, Jeanne Klein, and John Shafer of Fayetteville-Manlius HS** for the hours they willingly spent teaching us how to do the layout for this newsletter.

**Fayetteville-Manlius School District** for their support of our students.

Our wonderful staff, **Bev, Loomis, Nichola, and Corrie** for the care and support they provide each day. **Ngoc Huynh** for her thoughtful and interesting coverage of our scholars in *The Post Standard*.

**Many local businesses of Fayetteville, Manlius, Dewitt, and Syracuse** for their generous support of our spring Golf Classic fundraiser.

## Scholars' Summers

It's the age old first composition topic of the school year: What I Did on My Summer Vacation. In the case of the ABC scholars, the answers are interesting.

**Julia Dorcé** ('05) worked as a paralegal/receptionist and Spanish translator for a general practice attorney. In addition, on July 23, Julia was a group leader for the 3 day A Better Chance New Scholars' Orientation on the Princeton University campus. She interacted with the 400 new ABC scholars who came from all over the east coast. Heading groups of 20-25 scholars, each leader ran a series of workshops that aimed at building a sense of comfort for these students who would be leaving home for 4 years. Julia enjoyed sharing experiences and "making connections with individuals who shared my drive and the wonderful A Better Chance experience".

**Victoria Allison** ('06) attended the NAACP ACT-SO (Afro-Cultural Technological and Scientific Olympics) in Philadelphia, PA on July 8 -12, 2004. For Victoria, ACT-SO was "an amazing and overwhelming experience." She competed in Entrepreneurship, presenting her plans for a business called The Cookie Crunch, which offered cookies for diabetics. Victoria had worked on her entrepreneur project all spring and won the Syracuse competition. In Philadelphia, she felt that her hard work paid off. Even though she didn't win a prize, she met wonderful people from all over the U.S.

**Jessica Reid** ('06) volunteered in the Manhattan A Better Chance office for a week in August. She says that she "folded paper after paper and stuffed envelope after envelope", but time went by fast because everyone was so welcoming. She met scholars who went to schools from California to Connecticut. Jessica says that the workers were "funny and lively, the staff was great, and I would not mind working there again."

**Amelia Stone** ('07) worked at La Casa De Don Pedro in Newark, New Jersey, an area with a high percentage of Spanish immigrants. The building contains various organizations such as a bank, a day care center, a school and a law firm. Amelia worked in the law firm for a lawyer who practices immigration, divorce, and criminal law. She prepared court files and immigration files. "After my experience at La Casa De Don Pedro," Amelia says, "my admiration for the

practice of immigration has increased. I hope to do this again next year."

**Holly Smith** ('08) spent the first few weeks of her summer resting and relaxing, activities she loved. Then, after a week of summer camp, she went to Canada for the Caribana parade. She stayed in Canada for three weeks enjoying time with family. At the end of the summer, she attended the A Better Chance Orientation at Princeton University.

**Alicia Ramharack** ('08) was part of the summer youth employment program at Roy Wilkins Park in south Jamaica, Queens where she was an office worker and errand runner for the main office. While there, she attended such workshops as computer literacy, child care, and fiscal management. She also went to Florida for a week with her family and, at the end of August, attended the A Better Chance East Coast Orientation at Princeton University.

**Adrienne Williams** ('06), our virtual ABC student and host sister, competed in poetry at the ACT-SO competition. She then worked as a secretary in her mom's law office and used her salary to spend 5 days in NYC with Victoria, seeing what life is like in a city. Later she visited Gettysburg, PA and loved being able to "walk in the exact spot where Civil War history took place."



## Alumnae Notes

**Mildred Flores ('04)** is a first year student at George Washington University which she says is "great". Mildred is carrying a 17 credit course load. She says her courses are "time consuming – I study all week- but not too tough". She and her three roommates love DC and "are making a point to see everything."

**Desiree Tirado ('04)** is a first year student at Loyola University of New Orleans. She says that school "couldn't be better. I have gotten involved with almost everything that is going on.... Besides being very involved with clubs like the Black Student Union or intramural sports, I am looking forward to running for a Student Council position for the school of Arts and Sciences. "

**Amanda Chichester ('03)** is a sophomore majoring in public relations at the Newhouse School of Communications at Syracuse University. This past summer Amanda had an internship in NYC with Atlantic Records, working with radio stations to promote artists on her label. During this school year, Amanda will continue her internship by focusing on radio stations in the Syracuse market. Amanda has also become the events coordinator for the Black Artists League on campus.

**Aleatha Ealey ('02)** is a junior at Cornell University. As an International Labor Relations (ILR) major, she found an internship this summer at District Council 37, a municipal labor union in NYC. Aleatha worked in the research and negotiations department where she got first hand experience with everything she is learning about in ILR. She loved it.

**Maribelle Ruiz Marquise ('02)** is living in Texas on the Sheppard Air Force Base with her baby and her husband Chris. Maribelle says, "I've decided to join the Air Force in the medical field. I hope that within three years I'll be an RN. Then I'll decide if I want to continue in the service or go back to civilian life."

**Joslyn Roberts ('00)** spent one "amazing" semester of her senior year in Australia. She graduated from Le Moyne last May and is now planning to study for a nursing degree.

**Beth Hanson ('98)** recently returned from a three week vacation in England, Scotland, and France with her brother Josh. Beth says that the difficult driving kept her amused. Beth has also instituted monthly theme movie nights at her home. **Kiya Hope ('99)** and **Jenelle Berry ('99)** are frequent attendees.

**Mayra Rivera ('97)** is living in the Parkchester Condominiums in the Bronx with her boyfriend Ed. She has begun her fourth year as a kindergarten teacher and continues to work on her master's degree.

**Donna Kwan Chadhuri ('91)** lives in Ithaca with her husband Basu. She is working at Cornell's Biotechnology Center where she runs the Grant Resource Center for Entrepreneurs. Donna and Basu just bought a 3 bedroom ranch in Lansing and are expecting their first child, a boy, in December.

**Natasha Haynes-Smith ('90)** is an executive producer in charge of hiring and training new writers, producers, and reporters at NY1 in Manhattan. She credits her F-M externship at a Syracuse TV station with giving her life a direction she loves.

**Tammy Rosado Gruenberg ('84)** is celebrating both her 10<sup>th</sup> year reunion at Cornell Medical School and her 10<sup>th</sup> year of marriage this year. She, husband Randy, and sons Zach (age 7) and Seth (age 2) just moved into a 1917 Tudor home in Riverdale, a mixed Jewish and Puerto Rican area in the Bronx. The house is lovely but needed so much work that they "are still living in a construction zone." Tammy continues to practice obstetrics/gynecology but hopes to transition to geriatrics gynecology.

*We are proud of our 64 graduates and would love to continue writing about our alumnae. Please email Liz Kolodney (ekolodney@aol.com) with alumnae news.*





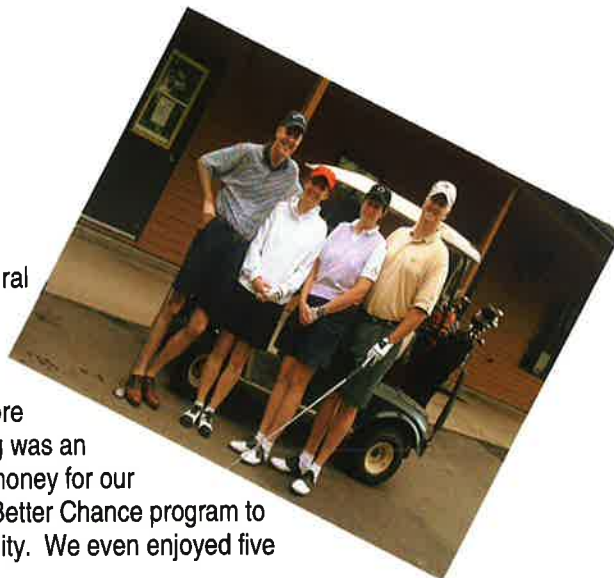
Golfers enjoying the day.

**Save the Date!**  
**2nd Annual Golf Classic**  
**Woodcrest Country Club**  
**May 21, 2005**

## **Fore!** **by Cheryle Kelley**

F-M A Better Chance hosted its inaugural Golf Classic on May 22 at the Woodcrest Golf Club. The fundraiser included a round of golf, dinner, door prizes, and event prizes for our more accomplished duffers. The outing was an overwhelming success, raising money for our scholars and introducing the A Better Chance program to an untapped segment of the community. We even enjoyed five hours of rain free weather.

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Golf Classic is scheduled for Saturday, May 21, 2005. We're excited to welcome an even larger field and look forward to another good time. Mark your calendars!



**Save the Date!**  
**3rd Annual Indoor Yard Sale**  
**Sept. 24, 2005**

## **Is That Your Best Price?** **by Pam Steele**



Yard sale workers ready to begin

We did it again! On Saturday, October 2, 2004, A Better Chance held its Second Annual Indoor Yard Sale at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd in Manlius. After the success of last year's sale, we knew we had a new way to raise money for our program, and also raise community awareness of A Better Chance.

Pastor Jim Bresnahan offered us the parish hall at Good Shepherd; it was just right for our sale. We solicited donations of goods from our board members, through the use of fliers at many locations, and through newsletters published by community and school organizations. The response was OVERWHELMING! Yard sale committee members were at the sale site Monday through Thursday evenings to sort and price the donated items. By Tuesday, the hall looked packed, but more kept coming. Friday night brought a last minute flurry of setting up new tables, reorganizing our space, and making sure everything had a price tag.

Saturday, 7 a.m. dawned bright as we assembled, wearing our red shirts, to start the business of fundraising. Our first customer kindly snapped a few photos of all the workers, and the sale was on! Business was brisk. We all cheered as some of the biggest items sold for good prices (we'll miss you, Santa). We closed up at 4 p.m. and assessed our efforts. We had sold an amazing mountain of stuff, had spent a good part of the day talking about A Better Chance, and had met some wonderful people.

Many thanks to all those who donated their time and effort to the sale and to everyone who gave us items to sell. Happily, we counted \$2500 in profits. We could not have done it without you!