Fall 2009

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35 Years!! Time to celebrate!

F-M A Better Chance is 35 years old and lookin' good! Take a look at the pictures from 1974 until 2009 and join us at the gala on Nov. 13th. We have so many reasons to rejoice.

Applauding our 5

current scholars: The involvement of our upperclassmen in the school and community last year is impressive. Shynise Stiff, a senior, participated in Mock Trial, Black History Month, and Character Education last year. She was also a facilitator and core leader for Community Wide Dialogue. This summer, Shy worked in the Information Security Division at Morgan Stanley in Brooklyn. Shy says that she

likes being back, likes being a senior and is looking forward to mentoring the two new arrivals.

Indigo Arthur, another senior, participated in Character Education and captained the Step Team last year. She also took jazz and ballet classes at the Dance Studio in Manlius. She is excited about the college process,

about choosing schools, writing applications, and being accepted to a college she likes.

Odelia Ryan, a junior, played JV lacrosse last year, went to lacrosse camp this summer, and ran track last

> winter. She was also a part of Black History Month and a volunteer, through her host family, in the fight against lung cancer and kidney disease. She's glad to be back, but says, "It's junior year. It's hard."

Our newest A Better Chance scholars are Janai Fraser and Deja Fisher. Janai comes to F-M ABC from the Manhattan East School of Arts and Academics. So far, she likes hanging out with the other

well," she says.



Odelia & Shy (standing lft to rt) Deja, Indigo & girls in the house. "We get along Janai (sitting lft to rt)

Deja comes from KIPP (Knowledge is Power Program) in Brooklyn. Her middle school, KIPP AMP is one of a number of KIPP schools earning kudos among NYC schools. Deja says that she likes to be in a new environment where she can try new things.

Delighting in the staff: All three of our staff are graduate students at Syracuse University. Sangeetha Ekambaram, our new Resident Director, graduated from Emory University in 2003. She completed an MA in religion at SU in 2007 and is now studying Music Performance and Voice. She likes "having a full house of girls. I'm never lacking for a good conversation."

Simone Martin, a new Resident Advisor, graduated from the Greylock ABC program (Williamston, MA) in 2002 and St. John's University in 2006. She is studying for a Masters in Public Administration at the Maxwell School at SU. She says that being in the house makes her feel as if she is reliving her Greylock ABC days, but it's even better. She likes that the staff is so much younger than hers was at Greylock and loves the chance to serve as a mentor.

Meaghan Malaney, our returning Resident Advisor, is completing her social work program in Marriage and Family Therapy. She says that she is happy to be spending time with the girls she already knows and connecting with the new ones. "They are a great group of girls and I love being around them."

Sangeetha





Meaghan (left) & Simone

Rejoicing in our alumnae!



Dexter Hogue Williams (1979)

ABC was a very important part of my life. I cannot believe F-M ABC is 35 years old. A large part of the success of the program is due to the fact that so many people in the community believe in ABC and work so hard to make sure that young women like me are able to obtain an excellent education. Please thank the other board members for their dedication and hard

Reunion 1994

work. I am still reaping the benefits of being an ABC alumna. I am very content with my life here in Cleveland. I keep in touch with Konnie Whitfield. My position as a magistrate with our county court is demanding, but God gives me enough strength to perform my duties well. My family is fine.

Lourdes Padilla Ramirez (1983)

Wow, time goes by so quickly!! I am now 43 and a parent of a 17 year old girl, Erica, and a 14 year old boy, Tomas.

I have a Hospitality Sales career and am currently surviving as a sales consultant for Affinia Hotels 3 days a week. If work permits, I hope to attend the reunion.

Sydney Davis (1983)

I can't believe it has been 26 years since I graduated. I remember my time in Manlius so vividly! I graduated from University of California, Berkeley in 1987 and never left California. I moved to Los Angeles after graduation to take a job



Sydney (lt) & Lourdes 1983

with Arthur Anderson in their entertainment division and stayed for 2 years. I joined Paramount Pictures in October 1989 and I'm still here. I'm in finance, specifically contract accounting, where I'm a director; I handle the payout of multi-million dollar talent deals — how the talent shares in the profits once the movie has been released.

Recently, I went back to school to get my MBA so that I can move into the executive ranks within the studio. I'm interested in Government Relations and Community Affairs where I can work with people and represent the studio to the outside community. I'd be interested in developing more programs for children and teens.

I'm single, no children – so I spend my time traveling and seeing the world as much as I can. My travels have been fun: Australia (I went scuba diving in the Great Barrier Reef), Africa & S. Africa (safari in Tanzania), Tahiti/Hawaii, Hong Kong, Brazil. I'd love to go to Egypt and Japan and spend time discovering Europe.

I have a wonderful group of friends, and I'm always out enjoying the city (dinners, parties, premieres). My sister also moved to California; we live 10 minutes apart.

I started a small home based travel business where I focus on luxury travel, honeymoons and family reunions. I'm not sure if I will continue the business once I graduate. For now, I still have fun planning honeymoons and trips for people who love to travel like me.



Donna Graham Stewartson (1984)

I am doing well in cold Boston. I am an administrator at The University of Massachusetts Boston. I am the Associate Director of the Program for Women in Politics and Public Policy. I recruit women for this one year graduate certificate program. Also, I conduct research relating to gender, poli-

Andrew Young, Donna & Vassel

tics and race. I co-authored a research report, Titled: A Seat at the Table", which can be found on the Center's website: http://www.mccormack.umb.edu/centers/cwppp/publications.php.
I am married to Pastor Vassel Stewartson Sr. and have two wonderful children, Vassel Jr. who is 11 years old and Rebekah who is 9 years old.

Natasha Haynes-Smith (1990)

News (HLN). it's actually very different from anything I've ever done but it's a great new challenge. For the first time in my career I have holidays off!

Even when you don't hear from me, please know you are always on my mind because I'm so proud of my FM roots. I'm always willing to help when I can, so please give me a shout. I'm so looking forward to the reunion.

I am a producer for Showbiz Tonight on Headline



Natasha Forde King (1990)

What am I doing in Barbados? I am married with two great kids and I work as the Prime Minister's Press Secretary. I'll fill you in on the journey at the reunion. I can't wait to catch up and make a donation to the FM-

ABC House!

Isabel Chan (1991)

I still live in NYC – specifically, in Little Italy. It's the apartment where I grew up- my parents moved away. I am currently in the hedge fund industry and so far I've survived 2 rounds of layoffs in my firm. My husband is in the dental industry and apprently promptly and We have 2.

industry and currently unemployed. We have 2 girls - one is 16 and the young one will be 4.

I was at my 10 year F-M reunion almost 8 years ago but Natasha (Forde) & Donna (Kwan) didn't make it. I visited the house (it looks great, but it is so much stricter!) and also toured the school with its new science wing. I was able to connect with a few friends there but once again lost touch until..... Facebook. I recently saw Gloria Ho in NYC with all her kids.

Jenelle Berry (1999)

After getting my MBA at Columbia, I am starting my post-business school career. I am the Manager of Marketing for the Women's Health Division at Henry Schein, a medical distributor. Finally I can start on my career path and my road out of debt.



Kiya (lt) & Jenelle

Kiya Hope (1999)

I received a promotion in April of this year to an associate inventory planner at Macy's. I'm still in Brooklyn and keep in

contact weekly with Jenelle. I plan to apply to grad school for fall 2011. Can't wait for the reunion in November.

May Ling Brantman (attended F-M 1997-1999)

I've been keeping myself busy for quite some time since I left



F-M ABC during my junior year. I spent a long time lost and confused after returning to NYC. But in a strange way, my being lost allowed me to really cherish the blessings I have in my life. The first and most important is my gorgeous daughter Aimee. She's already 5- how time flies! But she gives me clarity and has instilled in me a strength I thought I lost a long time ago. She's very, very smart!! (future ABC scholar!!) Al-

though she's only in Pre-K, she's already reading and writing and

doing simple addition and subtraction. I'm still amazed sometimes how logical and clever her conversations can be.

As for me, I'm at the happiest point of my life. I moved to the Throggs Neck section of the Bronx, so Aimee can ride her bike peacefully in a driveway or just play outside and actually see trees. I've been working with Berkeley College in the city for over two years as an Admissions Associate. I help high school students with the college admissions process. I go to high schools and fairs and meet students and parents. I interview those students who wish to apply to the school and work with them until they graduate. It's a great feeling helping others realize their potential. It's amazing to actually wake up every morning and WANT to go to work, knowing I can change someone's life. I am still in the process of finishing my own degree. I attend classes full time online and will be graduating soon. I plan on continuing for my master's degree right after. I remember the house very fondly. I'm still in contact with several of the girls and it's great to see how accomplished they all are. Regardless of the end result, F-M ABC remains a positive influence in my life. My experiences there helped shaped me - even if I didn't see it at the time. I look forward to seeing you all in November!!

Maribelle Ruiz Hernandez (2002)

I was just named as the Base Ambassador for 2009!

For all you non-military folk there, the 13,000 people who work on the base recommended one person to represent their group. In the end there were 14 people left. We all went in front of a military/civilian panel.....and then the last 4 got to



meet with the base commander....then I and a male won. We both will be representing not only the base but the Air Force as

a whole to the San Antonio community. You all know that I like to take pictures so this is definitely the perfect job for me. It's an additional duty, but we are all excited.

Here is the web link to the base newspaper—bottom of p. 1! http://www.clickitsa.com/military/Tale 010909.pdf Note: Just got the official word I'll be heading to Iraq on Jan 4th until sometime in July. I will not be able to attend the reunion but I send my best to everyone.



Amanda Chichester (2003)

Amanda was laid off from an advertising agency (The Weinstein Company/Dimension Pictures & Films) last spring. But, she says, I am in the process of applying to law school. In addition to that, I am also working on founding 2 nonprofit orgs: a mentoring program for young men in the inner city and a program for young women interested in entertainment and media.



Amelia Stone (2007)

Amelia writes that she is a junior at the University of Rochester, majoring in Math. She is president of SOCA, (Student Organization for Caribbean Awareness). She says, I am also a part of the Ronald E. McNair program for doctorate and



2007

graduate school preparation. This year I will be conducting research in mathematics as a part of this program.



Shaunice Phillips (2009)

Shaunice Phillips attends Ithaca College where she won a place in the Martin Luther King Jr. Program. Everything in the program, from course goals to community involvement, concerns social justice.

Dorisol Inoa (2009)

Let me fill you in on my glamorous life. First of all my summer was great. I worked at Morgan Stanley. I spent most of my time in the Real Estate Department, a part of the company's corporate services. I was really busy because of the merger between Morgan Stanley and Citi Group's



Smith Barney. My responsibility was to make sure all of the landlords from the merger handed in a W-9 so that my group could pay the rent for those locations. I'm at Wesleyan now. Maria Dawson and her husband helped me move in to college which was cool. I'm continuing ballet, taking a ballet technique course for credit. I'm also taking a contemporary psychology course- which I love! My roommate is the shiznet!

Do you remember?





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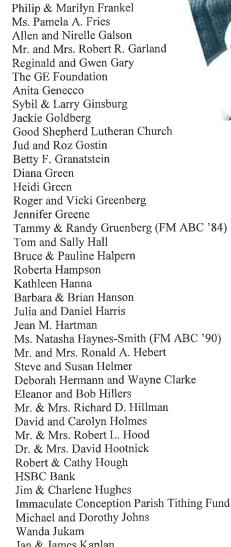
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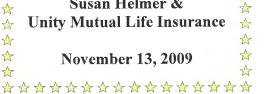
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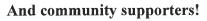
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