

# RESTORE MINISTRIES, INC.

## Pitching, Catching and Throwing It Back



Spring marks the return of baseball from which we draw many everyday expressions. One "strikes out" when failing at a task, while another "hits a home run" if successful. In adult/youth relationships, one often hears "I'm pitching, but he's not catching." When we throw someone the

ball, we want it want it back.

Working with adolescents often involves unreturned throws. The reasons why a kid does not catch the ball and toss it back with gusto are complex.

Like a subtle change in a batter's swing, teen moods defy analysis.

Yet, beneath layers of emotion, confusion and insecurity lurks a common cause for not playing - inertia.

Restore adults often see inertia at work. Try a new food? No thanks. Take part in a play? Not me! Read for pleasure. Used to. Edit your class notes. Don't take notes. Ask her out. Uh... Action takes courage and energy.

At Restore, we help youth overcome inertia – get in the game - throw back the ball. Much energy is required to move an object at rest. So too with people, especially youth.

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*We help  
youth get in  
the game*



## Executive Director's Message

It is a rainy evening. I just entered my house exhausted but thankful for time spent with the kids at Restore. Until we raise enough funds to hire one, I am the cook.

After work, I spent a couple of hours in BJ's buying the snacks and food needed for our after school program and nightly meals.

Tonight's meal was easy: hot dogs, chips, salad, mixed vegetables, ice tea with brownies and ice cream. The count was thirty. We are getting closer to our 2011 goal of 50 youth in attendance daily.

Homework Center went well today. The older teens were in the chapel. The wood paneling, red carpet, and 1950s

architectural design make for a collegiate atmosphere that is very conducive to studying.



Linwood Bagby

The younger kids studied in the fireplace room. Our volunteers meet one-on-one with students who are seeking help with schoolwork.

Before dinner, KK, our activities coordinator, set up for a large group game of volleyball.

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Linwood with kids in the Restore Office

*Sometimes a  
kid cannot  
imagine  
alternatives*

Fear of failure or embarrassment keeps many from trying new things. Even if it is unrewarding or unhealthy, we prefer the familiar to the new. Sometimes, a kid simply cannot imagine alternatives. That's where Restore can help.

What does it take to get an inert kid to catch the ball? Quick answer: "opportunity and encouragement." Consider: On March 19 seven Restore youth joined with professional musicians affiliated with Westminster Choir College of Rider



Idalis and Rafael practicing their parts for Shakespeare and Song

University to present "An Evening of Shakespeare and Song." The program featured the Bard's lyrics, scenes from his plays, and several sonnets.

Convincing city kids to act using Elizabethan English set to iambic rhythms required much energy.

But, their inertia gave way to the force of an encouraging pastor and an enthusiastic choir member from Second Presbyterian Church. Overcoming fear, the Restore kids caught and threw back the ball. The result was a joy to behold.

Restore kids are thrown many types of pitches: plays, arts classes, college tours, scholarship competitions, nonpublic school applications, dropout counseling, tutors, vocabulary contests, mountain hikes, bike trips, reading circles and discussion groups. All it takes is imagination to offer, a push to get going, and the will to accept.

Like baseball, life's game proceeds slowly. We derive great joy when a youngster, defying inertia, bolts from the batter's box, rounds

first with an "I did it" head of steam, decides to score while racing from second to third, and then slides safely across home plate holding a diploma.

Kids get to swing at or to take many pitches. When they dare to play and hit or catch the ball, it's a thing of beauty.

*When they  
dare  
to play,  
it's a thing  
of  
beauty!*



A moment of rest for the Shakespeare cast

## Executive Director's Message, Continued from Page 1

Gary coached Jovan for his narrator role in our upcoming "Shakespeare and Song" production and then, after homework, rehearsed with the full cast. Denny made sure everyone was doing what they should.

As usual, multiple interruptions seem to happen whenever good days like this take place. Some distractions, like a parent showing up, are good. For example, today I had to stop cooking to discuss

with a mom enrolling her two boys in a one-week residential summer camp. And, later one of the younger kids peeked his head into the kitchen and asked for a hug.

A different type of interruption that night needed immediate attention. Stuff happens and this time two of the new fifth graders had gotten into a heated argument. So, I took them aside and explained that, at Restore, we talk out our

problems in a peaceful way. Arguing and name-calling are not the Restore way.

As I retire for the night, I still hear heavy rain. Thinking over the day's events, I realize that I forgot to serve the brownies and ice cream. I smile to myself and thank God for your prayers and support that keep me going. Together we have made a positive impact in our kids' lives and tomorrow will be a good day... rain or shine.

Linwood

## Denny's Update

On April 2, Restore held its annual Fundraising and Awards Banquet. It was an exciting time with a jam-packed program that featured several videos and musical presentations.

From a stirring professionally produced documentary about a Restore alumnus who survived drugs and prison to become a productive citizen, to a guitar-accompanied duet and rhythmic drumming, the evening offered something for everyone.

The banquet started with a "Meet and Greet" session over appetizers beautifully

served in the Fireplace Room. During this social hour, participants were treated to a slide show from the "Shakespeare and Song" project and a large photo display of Restore kids in action. This was a great opportunity for donors, staff, volunteers, and parents/guardians who share Restore's commitment to urban youth to meet one another.

Former NBA player Eric Williams began the night by handing out awards to several youth, who have achieved academic success and participated regularly in Restore's after school

program and other activities.

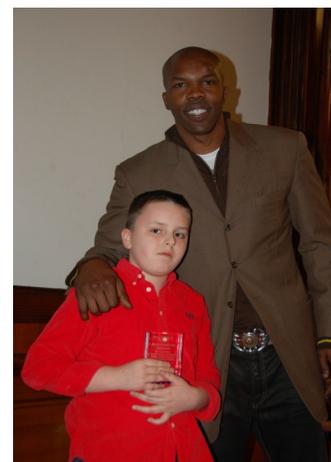
Newton Pierre, Shantiona Grant, Jakub Klimkowski, Brian Guallpa, and Amirah Hodge each received a 2011 Restore Distinguished Member Award. We hope that their personal growth and achievements are something other Restore students can admire and emulate.

Thank you to all who were part of this special night and to those other friends of Restore who couldn't attend yet share in Restore's vision and support its operation. With your continued help, Restore will strive to fulfill its mission of "Helping Urban Youth Achieve."



Brian and Elmi completed this 1,000 piece puzzle

*Arguing and  
name-calling  
are not  
the Restore  
way.*



Jakub and Eric Williams

# Restore at a Glance

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## REALIZING

POTENTIAL...

MAXIMIZING

ACHIEVEMENT

## Student Profile: Amirah Hodge



Hello, my name is Amirah Hodge. I am an 18 year old senior at John Dwyer Technology Academy in Elizabeth. For the past three years, I have been coming to Restore's after school program. Mr. Bagby, Ms. Mary Lou, Gary and Dennys have all helped and inspired me. And, I've met many interesting volunteers as well.

One of the many things I like about Restore is how the program keeps kids off the streets by letting them participate for free. At every session, the staff requires us to spend time on homework. Restore provides tutors on most days to help us with our school work, SATs, HSPA, and college applications. We also have fun activities that help us learn more.

Restore is an unusual program that feeds us and takes us home. We even have time to play in the gym and do other fun stuff. The adults at Restore do this with kindness of heart; they give us the opportunity to be part of another family.

We also have special holiday dinners and an annual picnic where kids, parents, donors, volunteers and Restore staff come together. These activities show all the kids that many people care about our future success.

To make all this possible, Restore raises money through its annual banquet and by sending newsletters to donors. This fundraising makes Restore possible for many families who cannot afford to pay for an after school program.

For me, the bottom line is that Restore is a blessing.

