

# RESTORE MINISTRIES, INC.

SUMMER 2012

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## *Traction*



**Restore participants hiking at  
Stokes State Forest**

Poverty is muck-like;  
its suction thwarts

every attempt to step  
onto firm ground.

However, some mired youngsters do find traction. Gripping the hand of a caring adult, they struggle out of the swamp into a better life.

But escape is a long-term process; it requires mindfulness, sacrifice and grit. Through God's grace via the kindness of strangers, some poor kids gain traction and climb toward their dream. At Restore, we witness that miracle year after year.

However, swamp gas lulls far too many kids to sleep. Early on, torpor sets in. TV

substitutes as childcare; adults remain adrift. Honest folks lack real money. Soon after puberty, peers drop out in mind, then body. Early sex befogs goals. With each school season, expectations wither as life's ooze thickens. College fades from view and options narrow. Year after year, the swamp welcomes new life – body and soul.

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## *Executive Director's Message*

Some Restore kids really get it. They show up, do their homework, seek out caring adults, and plug into Restore's goal-oriented program. On the other hand, I regularly meet young people who need help defining and pursuing basic academic and life goals. I often find myself in a quasi-parental role with these youth. Daniel is a seventh

grader who came to Restore through his church. He is too young to know what he wants to be or to understand how God is shaping his life. But he knows enough to come on the days we are open and to be receptive to what the program offers. Daniel speaks confidently about college. He knows that his family and Restore are behind him and will help him

reach his educational goals.

Unlike Daniel, Jose is an aimless high school student, whose family appears overwhelmed by life. Though at home, he may receive love, encouragement and material support, he doesn't get guidance about working toward goals – shooting for stars with effective ammunition.

Instead of plugging

*Before anything  
else,  
preparation is  
the key to  
success.*

*Alexander Graham Bell*

## Traction Continued from page 1



**Samuel, Linwood Bagby, Gary Reece  
and Jakub at a Golf tournament**

**“Shoot for  
the moon.  
Even if you  
miss, you’ll  
land among  
the stars”.**

Brian Littrel

Unaware of the peril, many impoverished kids begin as “tweens” to sink – to rot a bit. Finding traction in the muck requires sustained effort, intelligent planning, ongoing encouragement and a lifeline from shore. It’s the rare kid that self-extricates from poverty, because that requires awareness before one even recognizes the swamp.

By thirteen, most kids either do or do not see themselves as a “can-do” person with a future. The former group learns to organize, plan, think in writing, defer gratification, study, control impulses, persist, respect others, love themselves, show compassion, and cope with peer pressure. The latter group soon faces the cold reality

of being unready for college or work. They make barely a sound as they sink beneath life’s dark waters.

Over the past year or so, Restore Ministries has celebrated the success of young men and women who have found traction in its youth program. Sadly, we have lamented equally precious kids, who could not emerge from the morass of their lives. To reduce the latter group, we have redoubled our efforts with youngsters, ages 11 to 13. Some are overage in grade, but all are engaged early enough to cheat the muck.

Caring staff and volunteers at Restore now work sooner, smarter and more often with these impressionable youth. Supervised homework, regular tutoring, a weekly “read-aloud,” special dinners and trips, college-bound role models, access to NJIT and Conoco Phillips volunteers, and summer camp provide greater traction for these sixth graders. Each one expects to become a “can do” person.

After nearly twenty years, the Restore family knows too well that muck kills and that poverty is a voracious swamp. We also know that earlier intervention will afford our kids traction to climb its slick walls and build good lives on firm ground.



**Joshua, Ximena Carrasco,  
Richard, Wilfredo, Erik and  
Samuel**



**Staff and Board Members of  
Restore Ministries**

## *Executive Director's Message* *Continued from page 1*

into the Restore way, Jose seems always to be in opposition to what we are trying to accomplish. He hides when it is time for homework. He is always on Facebook instead of waiting until after homework. He has failing grades and claims not to know why. Last spring, he came fewer days and began leaving before homework.

Recently, Daniel received a scholarship to a nonpublic school. When asked what he likes about Restore, he quickly mentioned the food and being with his friends.

Thinking more deeply, he added: "The people at Restore really love us. They care about our homework and they are helping us get into college."

This coming September, we expect to have 15 middle school students attending Restore. Most of them are in seventh grade like Daniel, but several are overage in grade – a high-risk category. Our prayer is that each will embrace the academic, character building and other growth opportunities at Restore -

dare to reach beyond their present grasp

We especially hope that each Restore youngster will bond with one of our adult staff members or volunteers. Such mentoring relationships enable young people, both the self-confident and those adrift, to achieve higher goals, while feeling God's presence in their lives.

*Linwood Bagby*



*Samuel rock climbing at the Liberty science Center*



*Younger kids with Conoco Phillips volunteers at the barbeque at Mattano Park.*

## *Program Coordinator*

Congratulations to the staff, volunteers and participants of Restore Ministries After-School Program for another successful year. On June 7, we celebrated with a fun-filled day of fellowship activities and eating at Mattano Park. From 3-8pm, staff, volunteers, participants, parents and the surrounding community enjoyed discussing and reflecting on the many goals and achievements accomplished by many Restore participants this year.

The greatest accomplishment all took place on May 19 at Second Presbyterian Church when the Restore community acknowledged thirteen gradu-

ating seniors who it has molded and guided: Glaricel Caminero, Carlos Santibanez Elmi Ventura Mata, Joey Singh, Christele Maignan, Idalis Alicea, Ridzia Philippe Brian Guallpa, De'Von Caldwell, Shantiona Grant, Beltran David, Debbie Pierre and Mitchel Gregory. This is the largest graduating class to come out of Restore Ministries by far and they have set an example for all future participants. Their achievements speak volumes about how Restore Ministries has assisted in their growth and development. Congratulations Class of 2012!

After the 2011-2012 school

program has ended. Restore Ministries will begin its Summer Enrichment Program on June 26 the program ran from 12:45pm-4:30pm Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. For grades 5-8. This year's summer activities included Art Therapy, Summer Reading, Summer Art Project, High/Low Ropes, and Group Games. For our 9-12 graders we offered Teen Summit, Life Skills, Current Events Discussions, High/Low Ropes, and Team Building Workshops. Every Friday was "Field Trip Friday" where the staff and participants went bowling, to movies, skating, and more.

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Restore will open its doors for the 2012-2013 school year to all participants on September 10. As a initiation to the new year we will have a Barbeque at Mattano Park Saturday, September 8.

Registration will be available on site. For further information call the Restore Ministries office at: 908- 352-5522.

Thank you Restore community for your prayers, encouragement and ongoing financial support. Hope to see you soon.

*Terrence Gilbert*

## RESTORE AT A GLANCE

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## CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2012!!

*Elmi Ventura Mata*

*Cleveland Institute of Art*

*Brian Gualpa*

*Carlos Santibanez*

*New Jersey Institute of  
Technology*

*Glarice! Caminero*

*Farleigh Dickinson University*

*Shantiona Grant*

*Jersey City State University*

*Beltran David*

*Ridzia Philippe*

*Da'von Caldwell*

*Debbie Pierre*

*Christele Maignan*

*Union County College*

*Idalis Alicea*

*United States Navy*

*Joey Singh*

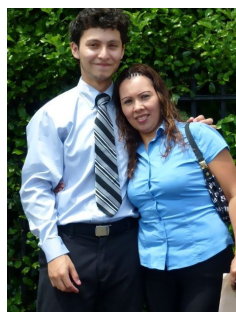
*United States Marine Corps  
Reserve*

*Mitchell Gregory*

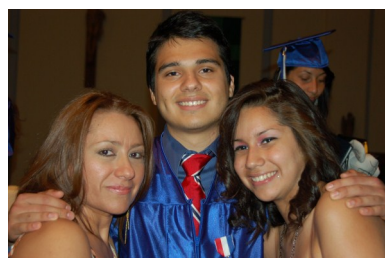
*Union County Vocational  
Technical School*



**Gary Reece, Elmi, Linwood Bagby,  
Carlos and Brian (L to R)**



**Elmi with his aunt  
Carmelina Ventura**



**Carlos with his Mother Claudia and his  
sister Claudia Santibanez**



**Brian with his Father  
Mr. Gualpa**