

# RESTORE MINISTRIES INC.

JANUARY– FEBRUARY

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## "Going the Distance"



Pastor Michael giving a Christmas message

I was reading our program evaluation and came across a phrase unfamiliar to me; "bench strength." Whatever it meant, I figured it was important to Restore's future. I googled it. Bench strength was used first in sports and now businesses and nonprofits have also adopted it. What it means is when a team, business or nonprofits have the ability to readily adapt to change and adversity. My Pastor calls it "going into the deep in thoughts, life and Spirit." Charles Darwin said it best, "It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change." (I also got that quote from my google search.)

Bench strength helps a team or organization go the distance. The same can be said for Restore. It has changed considerably over the years. Restore began as an informal time in which a group of high school and middle school students met regularly with the program's

founder and present Executive Director, Linwood Bagby. (That's me) It gradually came to take on a more formal, programmatic structure and to include students from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds.



Leader students and staff during a recent CPR and AED training.

Restore has survived departing of key volunteers and staff, lack of funding due mainly to the recent economic fall out, and to my sickness in 2014. (Don't worry, I am okay)

One thing I learned is that it is crucial that Restore have leaders on the

Board of Directors and in the field, staff who have developed a deep bench strength that can take the reins in any situation. Such leaders can ensure continuity and effectiveness of the programs and services regardless of the negative situations Restore may face. In doing so, we become more confident in taking healthy risks and are able to evaluate and improve our programs and services. We can rest assured we have what it takes to understand what works and what needs to get done to carry out our mission.

Since 2013, Restore Board and I have successfully hired a good team of people who have proven their worth and willingness to take Restore farther. In the past, I was too busy doing day to day operations that I was not able to focus on key infrastructure and leadership development of the programs, the staff and for myself. At that time, the present staffing was stretched thin and more support and "bench strength" were needed at all levels and in all programs. The incredible growth in numbers and in the quality of our programs is the direct result of our team and Board of Directors. Our staff members are going through rigorous training and staff development to move Restore forward. Not only do we get along, which is a nice benefit, but we are learning and understanding our roles and responsibilities which is making working at Restore a healthy place to grow professionally and as a community. Everyone on the Restore team is hard-working, thoughtful, honest, eager to take on challenges and passionate about what they do and who they serve. They are knowledgeable and compassionate leaders that possess the gracious authority needed to serve our members and the community.

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## ***“Going the Distance”***    *Continued from page 1*

**We still have two more positions to fill, but I would like this time to introduce the current Restore team:**

**Linwood Bagby** is a native of West Deptford, New Jersey and received his BA from The College of New Jersey and his Masters from Kean University. Both degrees were in Speech and Language Pathology. He resides in Union, New Jersey. Linwood is currently employed as a Speech and Language Specialist with the Elizabeth Board of Education. He is an active member of the community where he works. In 1994, he incorporated Restore Ministries, Inc. a nonprofit after school program for children and teenagers ages 9-18. He started Restore to have a safe haven for kids and teens. Linwood is an active member in the Presbytery of Elizabeth where he completed service on the Outreach and Social Concerns Unit and the Christian Education Unit. Linwood was elected in 2012 to serve as the Moderator for the Elizabeth Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (USA). Currently he fills his time at Restore and within community and church related organizations. Linwood is the president of Presbyterians Renewal in Spirit and Missions (PRISM), he's an Elder at Second Presbyterian Church, 1161 East Jersey Street, where the Restore program is located, and teaches Sunday school. He is a member of the Church's Session (the governing board). His hobbies are reading fantasy and mystery novels, playing guitar, cooking and riding his bike.



**Ximena Carrasco** is a native of Ecuador. She resides in Elizabeth, New Jersey. She began her tenure with Restore as the driver. Her natural gifts and talents with students and building programs were soon recognized and Ximena was given more responsibilities in which she proved successful. Ximena is currently the Program Director. She is responsible for coordinating all the programs and services of Restore and supervising and evaluating the employees and volunteers. She is an active member at Blessed Sacrament Roman Catholic Church. She is an active member of the women's group of "Marriages united in Christ ministry" which is dedicated to helping single women. Her Hobbies are going to the gym, reading, watching movies with her daughters and helping women in distress.



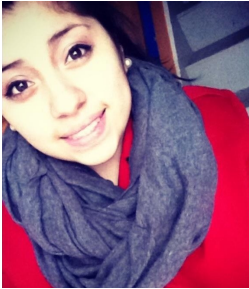
**Maribel Caraballo** is a recent hire to the Restore community. She is a lifelong residence of Elizabeth, where her and her husband, Louis, raised their two sons. She is a graduate of Newark Fine Industrial Arts within the textile industry. She has recently made her lifelong hobby, cooking, a career change. Maribel graduated from the Food Service and Training Academy at the New Jersey Food Bank in Hillside, NJ. Although only on the job for two months, Maribel has already transformed the eating experience at Restore. She brings creativity, passion and love as well as delicious healthy snacks and dinners. She is a member of St. Mary Roman Catholic Church in Elizabeth, NJ. Her hobbies remain in the area of the arts where she creates prints for children wear.





## *“Going the Distance”*

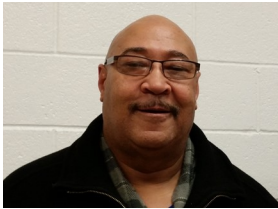
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**Michelle Ramos** heard about Restore from a friend who completed her high school community service hours. Michelle volunteered as a senior and continued volunteering after she completed her mandatory hours. Upon graduating from Alexander Hamilton Preparatory Academy, a public school in Elizabeth, NJ, Michele was asked to join as a paid staff. Michelle is a second year Arts student at Union County College. She plans to complete her two years and transfer to the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York. She brings her creative talents in arts and her ability to connect to high school, middle and elementary grades students. She is a member of Jesus is Lord Church in Elizabeth where she is an active young adult leader.



**Carmen Duarte** is also new to the Restore family. She is a resident of Elizabeth and was educated in the Elizabeth Public Schools. She is our college intern. Carmen is a student in the Early Childhood department at Union County College. She plans to complete her two years and transfer to Kean University. Because of a partnership Restore has with Union County College, Carmen comes to us and shares her unique gifts and skills at the college expense. Carmen not only shares her talents with us, she also signed up her two children in the Restore program. Carmen's husband is one of our most active parent volunteers. One of his multiple talents is his ability to assemble, fix and repair almost anything. Carmen and her family are church members at Blessed Sacrament Roman Catholic Church and love the Lord. Her hobbies are spending quality time with her family, yoga and reading.



**Jeffrey Townsend** joined our team this January 2015. He comes highly recommended by the Restore board president. Jeffery is a long time residence of Elizabeth. He and his wife, Madeline, raised their three children in Elizabeth. They were always involved in nurturing urban youth by hosting youth Bible studies and coaching girls and boys baseball teams. Now retired, he volunteers often at his church. Jeffrey will be our driver. He is an active member of Christ Fellowship Church in Elizabeth, NJ. His hobbies are basketball and sports.

## *Program Coordinator's Message*



Student leaders (Joshua, Jakub Richard, Tony), Mr. Bagby and Ms. Ximena

I would love to share with you what I believe are the key points in achieving good results at Restore. One thing is "building relationships." Building a relationship in the Restore family is not easy. Our commitment to one another as adults and our dedication to nurturing

our members is evident in the care and atmosphere of timeless love at Restore. A connection of trust and acceptance slowly begins and love becomes the norm. By doing this, our members allow us to be part of their lives and our Restore community becomes a second family.

Another important building block for Restore is team work. We have a strong group, starting with our Board of Directors, Parents/Guardians, Volunteers, members, student leaders, staff, and most importantly our Executive Director, Mr. Bagby, who is also the founder of Restore. The results of our good relationships and excellent team work is a mighty force of

love and community.

The number of members has increased to 34. The involvement and collaboration of parents in activities such as the family and friends dinners, the cooking classes, and our workshops are incredible. Our group of volunteers has grown as well, currently we have a total of nine. Phillips66 tutoring has made a big difference in the academic achievement of our members. Amir Foy is our cook assistant and Domingo Martinez, a parent, is our handyman.

The harmony and joy of our staff and children who undertake each of our projects are

spectacular. During the Christmas season, the students created Christmas cards and ornaments that were enjoyed by our sponsors. Our donors responded with very generous and beautiful cards. They answered the children with notes of thanks that made us very happy and satisfied. I can mention more positive things but what remains for me is to thank each of you who in one way or another help us sustain this safe haven for our children. Without you Restore would not be possible. Thank you!

*Ximena Carrasco*



## RESTORE MINISTRIES

# RESTORE AT A GLANCE

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*"Alone we  
can do so  
little;  
together we  
can do so  
much"*

*\_ Helen Keller*

Visit us on the web!  
Donate!

[wwwRestorekids.org](http://www.Restorekids.org)  
FB: Restore Ministries



## STUDENT PROFILE

### *Anthony Maldonado*



My name is Anthony Maldonado and I'm 15 years old. I am a freshmen at St. Mary's School of the Assumption in Elizabeth, NJ. I am going on my fourth year at Restore. It has become my second home. A friend of mine was a member and he told me about the program when I was in 6th grade. Ever since that day he introduced me to it, I've been going to Restore and I enjoy it.

Restore means a lot to me, but mostly it's about the family connection between all the adults, the teens and the children. Restore has influence me dramatically. Restore family helped me to become a better person by teaching me about leadership. Restore introduced me to St. Mary's which is so far one of the best things they have done for me. A group of friends and myself who attend Restore, invited many teen like us who are now still attending Restore. I plan to attend Restore throughout high school, because I have the best chance to increases my opportunities of achieving my future career.

REALIZING...  
POTENTIAL...  
MAXIMIZING...  
ACHIEVEMENT...

Anthony Maldonado

THANK YOU FOR YOUR  
YEAR END GENEROSITY  
OF \$34,172