



Holiday Edition

"A Better Chance... For A Better Future"

December 2004

727 2nd Street SW • Rochester, MN 55902 • (507) 289-4370 • E-Mail: RBC727@aol.com • www.rochesterbetterchance.org

Date Set for Annual Fundraiser



Mark your calendars now — the date has been set for the Annual RBC Fundraiser. It will be Friday, March 11, at the Marriot Hotel. Plan to join us for the silent auction, banquet, alumni speaker, and entertainment.

2004-2005 RBC Scholars

The 2004-2005 RBC scholars are pictured above in the dining room of the RBC House.



Top Row: Johnathan Orquiz, freshman; Andy Paul Duvall, junior; Ranferi Cruz, freshman.
Middle Row: Brett Gwaltney, unofficial RBC scholar, freshman, and son of resident directors Robin and Scott Gwaltney; Danny Leon, senior.
Bottom Row: William Orquiz, sophomore and brother of Johnathan; Marcus Mason, senior.

Thank You!

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! The RBC Board of Directors, the resident family, and the scholars extend deep appreciation to Lois and Quentin Krouch. They have planted and cared for the flowers at the front of the RBC house for several years. We are grateful for your work, your time, your caring!

Upcoming Events

- Tues., Dec. 21,
- & Wed., Dec. 22 . . .Scholars Fly Home for Winter Break
- Fri., Dec. 24Winter Break Begins
- Mon., Jan. 3Classes Resume
- Wed., Jan. 12, 7 p.m.RBC Board Meeting
- Jan. 18-Jan.201st Semester Final Exams
- Mon., Jan. 242nd Semester Begins
- Wed., Feb. 9RBC Board Meeting
- Wed., March 9RBC Board Meeting
- Fri., March 11RBC ANNUAL FUNDRAISER

Host Families

All of the scholars in the Rochester Better Chance program have at least one host family. Host families act as a second family for the scholars at the RBC. Host families are volunteer families from the Rochester area wanting to help out a little. Every Sunday the RBC scholars usually go with their host families to church and from then they go to their house and hang out for a while. Also, when the scholars need a ride and there is nobody to give one, the host family usually steps in and offers a ride.

Danny's host family is the Blys. Marcus' host family is Rob and Tanya Holt. Andy-Paul's host family is Mike and Laura Hartert. William Orquiz's host family is Charlie and Zelda Moore. Ranferi Cruz has the Petit family as a host family. Johnathan Orquiz is still looking for his host family.

Andy-Paul Duvall

President's Corner



This has been a busy and exciting fall for the RBC house. We welcomed two new scholars from California, Ranferi Cruz and Jonathan Orquiz. And we've added four new board members, Henry Hocraffer, Tonya Holt and Jamila Petite, all from IBM and Charles Petite from Computer Sciences Corporation. The new

boys are adjusting to our Minnesota weather and the atmosphere in the house is very positive according to resident directors Robin and Scott. All the boys are doing well in school with one of the highest house GPAs in a long time; 3.4 after the first quarter! The house is all decorated and everyone is looking forward to spending the holidays with family and friends.

On behalf of everyone connected with the RBC program, I'd like to wish you and your loved ones happy holidays and a prosperous new year. Be sure to consider RBC when planning your year end donations.

Renotta Young, RBC President

Rochester Better Chance, Yet Another of Rochester's "Best Kept Secrets"

Rochester Better Chance (RBC) began in 1972 and has remained dedicated to its mission, "RBC provides a mentoring and nurturing home environment, optimizing their opportunities to excel in school and community settings to bright, talented and aspiring minority candidates. This prepares them for an excellent college education and future leadership opportunities." What is impressive about this little grass roots organization is its impact. To date RBC has provided a caring, nurturing and academically focused program to over 75 graduates from John Marshall High School with 3.0 or better GPA's. Not bad for a group of students that would be today labeled as the bottom tier of today's "achievement gap". Some of the colleges recognizing the value and worth of RBC's scholars include Dartmouth College, Tufts University, Pomona College, University of Minnesota and four of California's best Universities. These scholars have not only the track record, but potential of becoming some of this country's finest leaders. The scholars and their families have chosen to trust the lives and education of their children to the dedicated volunteers of Rochester Better Chance. A host of area volunteers dedicate hundreds of hours monthly

mentoring, tutoring, transporting, living and playing with this talented group of young men. Host families volunteer their families and homes for each of the scholars to provide additional opportunities for relationship, personal and spiritual growth. This program truly models the wisdom of taking an entire village to raise a child.

Robin, Scott, Brett and Jenna Gwaltney share the RBC home, their family, morals, values, guidance and inspiration with the scholars. House leader, Juan Vasquez (a former scholar himself) steps in as "big brother" and holds the fort down when the Gwaltneys need to be away. Eagle Scouts, IBM Days of Caring Volunteers and many, many others help to maintain the 95+ year old house this non-traditional family unit calls home. Education staff and others from John Marshall High School volunteer their time to keep the boys on their educational tract. Mayo Medical School students spend evenings tutoring, while these scholars in grades 9-12 develop themselves educationally and socially far from their original homes and families.

Rochester Better Chance is an impressive program maintaining 4 basic dimensions: Diversity, Education, Community Volunteerism and Opportunity. What it doesn't have is a large funding base. This program's future, as well as the futures of today's scholars fully depends on your financial contributions. Giving to Rochester Better Chance goes directly to impacting the future possibilities of these scholars. There are no large overhead or administrative salaries here; only lots of commitment and possibility. Won't you please consider a contribution of \$100.00 or more to help this viable program continue? Please feel free to indicate how you wish your tax deductible donation to be used. Whether it goes toward insurance, utilities, maintenance, newsletter and program promotion, food, mortgage or travel, it WILL BE GREATLY appreciated.

Mechelle Severson

Ranferi Cruz



Ranferi Cruz is a new freshman at the Rochester Better Chance House. He is currently attending John Marshall High School in Rochester, Minnesota to experience a four-year high school education. Ranferi has recently moved to Riverside, California where his family has been able to adapt better. He was born in

Santa Ana, California and has also attended Willard Intermediate where his friends now wait for his return. Although Ranferi has many relatives and friends waiting back home, he knows that the Rochester Better Chance House is a place where he is to maintain his grades at a

high grade point average. Ranferi is able to participate in this program because he is accomplished in many academic and sport activities. He enrolled in M.E.S.A (Mathematics, Engineering, and Science Academy) where he constructed and built many things with wood. He also participated in the pentathlon academy where he developed his learning skills. Ranferi Cruz is a sociable, intelligent person who likes to help his classmates in school or out. Ranferi's dream is to become a professional architect and successfully earn an honors diploma in high school. Ranferi has begun to work hard in school and is doing well. Even though he has a hard time because his parents are in California, he is on task. Ranferi is hoping to graduate from John Marshall High School in 2008.

Jonathan Orquiz

Our Alums



Juan Vasquez graduated from John Marshall in 2000. Juan is originally from the Bronx of New York City. He is of Dominican background. Juan came back to Rochester about two years ago to join Robin and Scott in the real estate business. Juan is also a paid employee of Rochester Better Chance; he is a resident director assistant. Juan helps out around the house with transporting the scholars to places they need to go. He also runs numerous errands for Robin, Scott, and the program. Juan came to Rochester as a tenth grader and was here for three years. He moved back to New York after he graduated. Then a few years later decided he couldn't stand being away from Rochester so long and had to move back. Juan is a major help with the program and we hope he continues to help us out.

Please consider these Donation Options:

Donations to RBC during the summer are slow, so your contribution now is vital to the operations and success of RBC and its scholars. As a result, we enter the fall school year financially stretched, so donations regardless of amount really help maintain ongoing expenses. If you can give \$75, 50, or 25 per month over the next few months it would help tremendously. Thank you for any gift you may be able to give.

I can HELP! Name _____
 Address _____ City/State/Zip _____
 E-mail _____

My pledge is: \$ 200 ___ one time ___ per month \$ 75 ___ one time ___ per month
 \$ 100 ___ one time ___ per month \$ 50 ___ one time ___ per month
 Other \$ ___ ___ one time ___ per month

Special Projects I'd like to help with time or materials (Name/Items): _____

Annual Fund Raiser Project: _____

Board of Directors Membership: _____

Please mail form/donation to: **Rochester Better Chance**
727 2nd Street SW, Rochester, MN 55902

Additional Options to Consider:

Rochester Better Chance is a 501c3 Non-Profit organization so your donations (including in-kind gifts) are tax deductible. There are a variety of ways to contribute other than a traditional one-time donation that may make it easy and work best for you. RBC enjoys minimal administrative expenses; the working board and resident directors contribute their time and personal funds, this enables RBC to put 100 percent of donations toward educating the students and operational expenses.

IRS Tax Exemption Certificate #: 41-1237746
 MN State Tax Exemption Certificate #: ES 26189

Endowments – Consider Rochester Better Chance in your 10 each pay period. (Contact (507) 287-6876 for electronic route #'s)

Payroll Deductions – Are easy and automatic, and if your employer has electronic deposits, donations can automatically be transferred with each pay period. (Contact (507) 287-6876 for electronic route #'s)

Stock Certificate Transfers – Stock certificates may be transferred to RBC as a one-time gift. Value of the Donation will be based on the unit stock price and quantity of shares transferred over on date of transaction.

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Resident Directors

Robin & Scott Gwaltney

We would like to extend our thanks
to all our friends and supporters who have
supported our community program for 31 years!

Thank you Rochester!

*A very special thank you from all of us at RBC to
our newsletter sponsor: **Mayo Foundation**
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